



Nyakasura School

Background

Nyakasura School was established in the Rwenzori Mountains in 1926 by a Scot referred to as the Commander rising to national prominence due to the high standard of European style of education. Even today many of Uganda's movers and shakers both in business and in politics were taught there. Unfortunately due to a lack of investment the structures at the school have become dilapidated, with broken windows, leaking roofs and collapsed ceilings a commonplace sight, but thanks to renewed enthusiasm among staff and the continued support of the UK Friends of Nyakasura a programme of refurbishment was undertaken. This has come following funding being secured nationally to rehabilitate other buildings on the grounds.

Representatives from the UK Friends contacted One Brick at a Time (OBAAT) staff in 2010 to explore the possibility of running a One Brick training programme at the school as a means of refurbishing classrooms. After much discussion and a meeting held personally with Dave and Anne Cameron by Dr Martin Carey a framework for a joint initiative was agreed which in turn began the initial consultation between concerned parties locally and nationally in Uganda.

From the start of 2011 onwards a series of meetings were held both at the school and in Kampala by OBAAT staff to seek a consensus between the board of Nyakasura School, the Alumni and the UK Friends on a building programme that would meet the requirements of the school. Ultimately it was agreed by all parties that the refurbishment of building 136, the old geography classroom block, referred to by some as the 'mother building', as well as a wing of the main building should be the focus of works.

The Work

In coordination with our partners in the UK (Chester and District Housing Trust, Volunteer Missionary Movement, Liverpool Hope University, Halton and many others), Mountains of the Moon University and St Joseph's Technical Institute, the training initiative began on 5 September 2011 after the arrival of the first group of UK Participants. The mentoring scheme was run in conjunction with local staff (instructors) from the technical institute and provided a specialised opportunity for 25 Industrial Trainees and 2 Assistant Site Manager Trainees.

All trainees on the programme were shadowed while planning and delivering various elements of the building in Bricklaying, Concrete Work, Plastering and Multi-skill which have been documented through a series of photographs taken by Assistant Programme Coordinator John Kule creating individual workbooks for each apprentice which can be shown to prospective employers in due course. On completion of the works all apprentices also received a certificate of participation and a scholarship to assist with their on-going school fees to encourage course completion.



School Statistics

Students: 775

Males: 578

Females: 197

Boarders: 775

Teachers: 46 - Male: 39 Female: 07

Classrooms: 16



Before

Delivery of the Work

The works were delivered over two phases with two groups from the UK attending for one month each. The atmosphere at the school was excellent and a real sense of camaraderie evolved between those working and training on-site and the staff and pupils of the school. It was easy to see why this place has such an effect on people. Certainly those that flew over from the UK were stunned by the beauty of the setting in the foothills of the mountains.

A degree of incredulity surrounded our ability to rehabilitate such a decrepit structure but the smiles and cheers of the Chairman of the Board Prof. Edward Rugumayo, the Head Teacher Frank Manyindo, the students of the schools and all those participating in the One Brick programme are a testimony to the standard of the finish and the renewed pride associated with the work.

Work Done

The VMM facilitated OBAAT Architect Lynsey Clark and Site Manager Rob Davies designed and modernised the building, keeping its surroundings and successfully adapting the oldest classroom block at the school into a modern, bright structure that will serve generations to come. The block is also fitted with water harvesting systems that are hoped to serve as an important resource stocking 3500 litres of water at a time offering obvious savings to the school long term. All grounds around the building were reshaped and a stone wall added creating a usable space from the hillocks and troughs that were there previously. It is intended that this approach alleviates the rivers of water that were flowing to the foundations of the original block. The work will be reviewed in 6 months to assess if there are any issues arising from the build and to plan for light maintenance.

One Brick at a Time would like to both thank and congratulate all partners on the obvious success of this initiative which has shown by example the ability of the local community to deliver renewal for their own education structures and invites you to visit the project at your earliest convenience.

Ciaran Lavery

Prof. Edward Rugumayo officially opening the Building





After



Before



