

# CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF THE MARA LINK

by Allan Dowson

As part of our celebrations of 20 years linking with Mara, many link parishes made their own arrangements.

The main service was one organised by the Mara Link Committee in conjunction with the Cathedral and Bishop Stephen and held in Wakefield Cathedral on July 13th. This service linked with the timing of the Lambeth Conference. We were pleased to welcome one archbishop and four bishops from across the Anglican Communion, including our own Bishop Hilkuh, who preached. Gifts and greetings were exchanged within the service.

On sale was the history of the 20 years of the link "shoulder to shoulder", written by Bill Jones, who

with his wife Maureen had founded the Issenye Secondary School. [We still have a few copies left, should

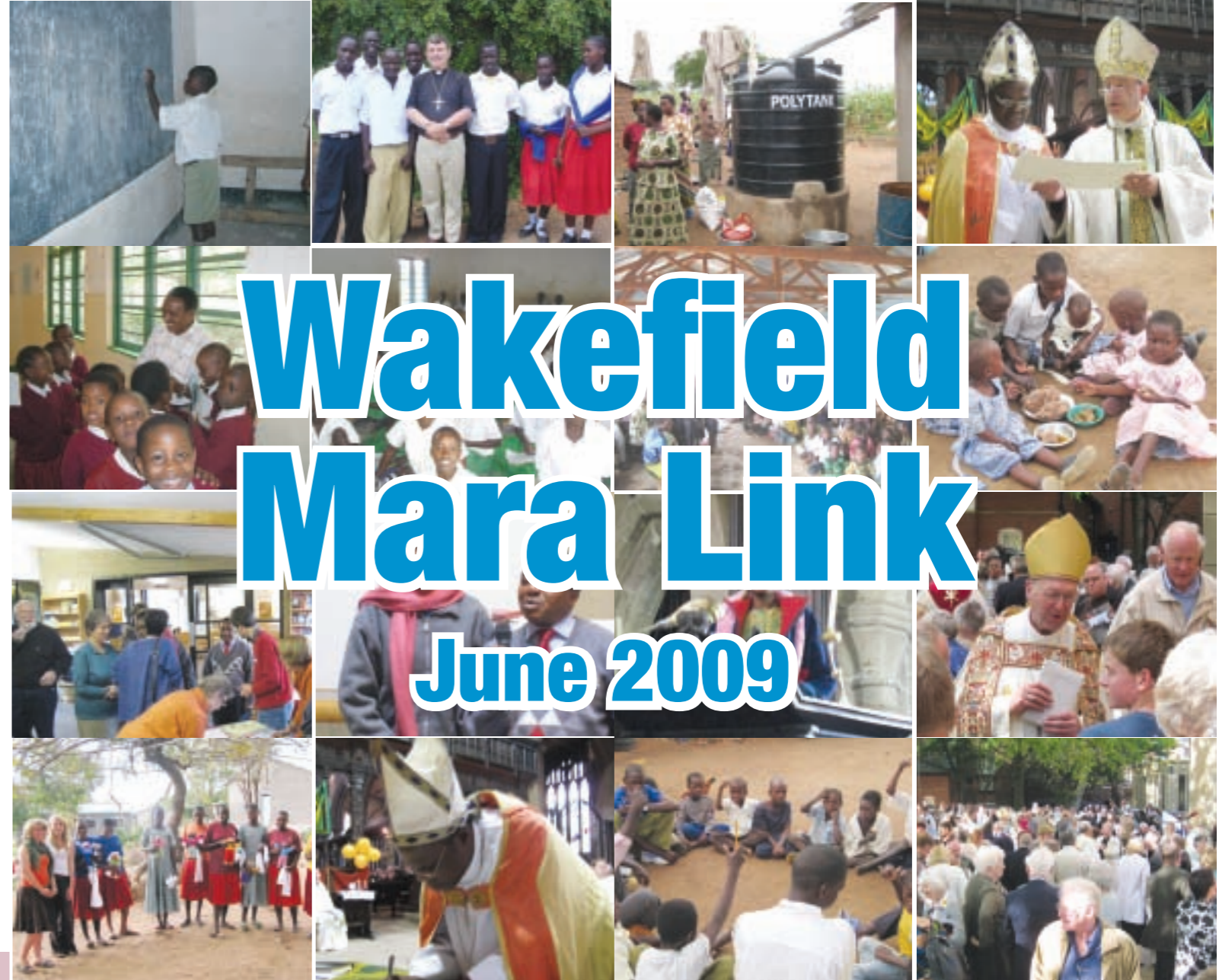


anyone like to purchase one]

**The Travelling Mwenge** - The Independence Torch. This was another organised event throughout the Diocese. It visited all the Deaneries, a total of 51 parishes

including the Cathedral in Wakefield. The MWENGE is like a light for Tanzanians, after gaining its independence in 1961 and each year a flame is lit on top of Kilimanjaro and is taken around the country in celebration of this day. It is turned off on 14th October to commemorate the day the first President, Julius Nyerere died.

Mwenge means a "LIGHT OF PEACE." One side of our Mwenge is a "SWALA" an antelope and the other side a "KORONGO" a crane, representing the Serengeti. Both are very peaceful animals. Part of the Serengeti is in the Diocese of Mara. The Mwenge tableau consists of the Mwenge carving, a Tanzanian cloth, a laminated prayer card and several information leaflets. This year the travelling Mwenge will visit a further 26 parishes.



## BOOK REVIEW BOOK REVIEW BOOK REVIEW BOOK REVIEW

**Shoulder to Shoulder – the making of the Mara Link by Bill Jones**

If you are interested in finding out about Mara-Wakefield Diocesan Link, I highly recommend Bill Jones informative and inspiring book. This not only relates the setting up of the link in 1998 but also conveys a real flavour of what it has meant in terms of the building of friendship and Christian fellowship between two different dioceses. I can attest to this from my own experience of visiting Mara and meeting visitors here in the UK, going back to the visit of Issenye Secondary School choir to Golcar. The challenges of communication between such different cultures are honestly described as well as the way these challenges have been creatively dealt with over the years.

The overwhelming impression from the book is the way the link has enlarged and enlivened the vision we all have of what it means to be members of Christ's body together serving the world in His name.

Tumshukuru Mungu! [Thanks be to God]

**"Mara was somewhere in Africa that we prayed for but knew little about. However when we welcomed a visitor from our link parish, the situation changed from written word and spoken prayer to full relationship - from distance to closeness; from limited knowledge to deeper understanding."**

**Book review: by Gini Crompton**

### Contacts.

**The Mara Link Officer, Peta Moffat 07854323107 or by email on [wakefieldmara@googlemail.com](mailto:wakefieldmara@googlemail.com)**

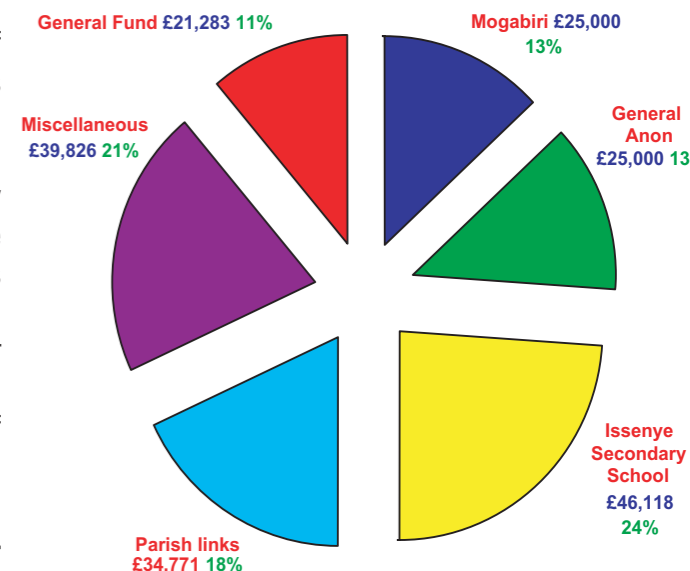
**Canon Arthur Mauya -Mara Link Officer, Diocese of Mara (ACT) PO Box 131, Musoma, Mara, Tanzania. E-mail [maralink@juasun.net](mailto:maralink@juasun.net)**

# Thanks a Mi££ion

The total sent to Mara over the last 20 years

## Contributions to Mara in 2008-£192,000

These splendid figures demonstrate the wonderful level of giving in 2008, during which a record annual total was achieved. Half the giving has come in three ways:- Mogabiri (a farm extension programme), General Anon (both by an anonymous donor) and Issenye Secondary School (many contributors). The items which make up the other half are the contributions made by many, many individuals and parishes of our diocese. Of especial joy is the increased giving through Parish Links, the heart of all we try to do. Every year since the link was made in 1988, the number of links and actual money sent has gone up to the 2008 figures of £34,771 and now 100 Wakefield parishes directly involved. Detail of giving over the 20 years of the link is available from the treasurer, Canon Michael Storey tel 01484 713663, e-mail: [mickthevic@googlemail.com](mailto:mickthevic@googlemail.com)



# MARA-WAKEFIELD TWENTY YEARS ON

2008 was an exciting year for Mara-Wakefield relations, writes *The Very Revd Jonathan Greener Dean of Wakefield and Chairman of Mara Link Committee*. We had a great 20th anniversary celebration in the Cathedral on the eve of the Lambeth Conference, and there was a similar



service in Musoma, when people from all over Mara Diocese gathered to welcome our bishop. We set ourselves the target of establishing 20 new parish links in the course of 2008. I'm not sure whether we quite reached that number by the end of the year, but we've recently hit our century: with 100 Wakefield parishes now linked to parishes in Mara. It's these parish-to-parish links that make our relationship with Mara unusual in the Anglican Communion, and that help to develop real bonds of commitment and love between Christians who live so far apart.

The practical support we give to Mara flourishes in a number of directions: the planting of trees; projects for water and health; finance for new agricultural methods; particular support for diocesan schools, and more recently for theological education; and our regular shipment of goods which are joyfully distributed by the bishop to all sorts of grateful recipients across the diocese. Funding for this Faith in Action container has for some while been precarious – many people who donate items forget that it costs us a good deal to transport them to Mara – so we have been especially grateful to three substantial donations which have paid for the most recent shipment. For the future, we shall work hard to raise awareness of the need for financial support as well as material gifts.

We are now making plans and looking forward to welcoming our group of ten visitors from Mara in September. This is their chance to find out what goes on in the churches of Wakefield, and it always plays a vital part in existing friendships and building new ones.

If you would like to know more about the Wakefield-Mara link, please get in touch with our link officer, Peta Moffat. We remain greatly indebted to her and all the committee for their care and enthusiasm, which continue to help our link to prosper and flourish.

# Water for Life

by Tineke Bentley

Water for Life/Health education working groups is an ambitious five year project of providing at least one sustainable pump in each of the twenty-one Mara deaneries together with training and a programme of health and hygiene education. Our target for the first year was to raise £15,000 to have two people trained by Pump Aid, to set-up a workshop and to build a prototype pump.

## So where are we now?

Max and Isaac received their training, a survey took place in Kowak, a rota sludge was built and water was reached with it in Nyakiswa at a depth of 30m. And all that thanks to your generosity - £14,000 received so far! Thank you so much, Asante sana!

## So where from here?

We expect that over the five years of the plan we will need £75,000. This will include the establishment of 3 workshops in different parts of the diocese to train people in welding and maintenance of the pumps as well as health education. It would be fantastic if Wakefield could raise this amount of money. We are hoping, that other parishes will follow St John's Rastrick's example: they are linked with Nyakiswa and have raised £2,200 for a pump and water harvesting. However, we will also be applying for grants. If you have contact with or know of bodies providing grants for water provision, skills training or health education in third world countries, please let us know.

**If you like to know more or make a donation, see our leaflet on the website ([www.wakefield.anglican.org/overseas/mara](http://www.wakefield.anglican.org/overseas/mara)).**



# Mara Day

by Allan Dowson

In November, the Mara Day took the form of a series of presentations running concurrently and they were repeated so the attendees were able to gain knowledge on the different subjects being presented in the workshops. The choices included Visits to Mara, Development projects, Finance, Running parish links.

In the afternoon we had presentations from Grace and Arthur.

Grace studied for seven years in Tanzania and then two years in Kenya, she became pregnant left school and got married. Her husband died leaving her with three children. Grace became involved with the church and went training for different modules and became an Evangelist and a Sunday School Teacher. While being involved with Youth work, she studied theology for three years and obtained a theology diploma. She then became an assistant co-ordinator for youth work and

was appointed co-ordinator. In 2007, she was appointed to work with Arthur in Musoma as assistant Link Officer.

Arthur explained the communications are become easier but written communication and e-mails are tricky. He asked that all e-mails and letters are sent to him for easy distribution as few parishes have letter boxes or computers for e-mail. Arthur said that when an e-mail is sent, either Grace or he reads the communication and then it is sent out to the parish immediately if it is close to Musoma. If it needs translating into Swahili they will do it for us. For parishes away from Musoma, it is held in the office until some-one from the parish is visiting Musoma and will collect it or it will be put on the morning bus and then a copy the next day to ensure one of the copies arrive at the village. Arthur said that letters are important and without letters we cannot know what is happening there and they do not know what is happening in our parishes in Wakefield.

# Project developments



Agricultural Training Centres at Mogabiri and Buhemba work with local farmers to set up co-operatives and work on developing disease resistant crops, the latest being cassava. To improve milk yields they teach zero grazing units for livestock. HIV/Aids continues its roll out with

the ABC awareness behaviour and care programme. CHEPCO, with its Malaria and health programmes, and the appeal money raised in Wakefield diocese provided health education for over 8,000 people and 2,700 HIV/Aids test have been undertaken. Rehabilitation is just starting and

many mobility aids are being produced. For people without legs, hand made bicycles are produced out of scrap metal but many people with disabilities are hiding as there is a stigma attached to these people.

# 0 TO 100 IN 20 YEARS

by Ernest Gelder

Shortly after the Mara-Wakefield link was started in 1988, Bishop David Hope asked all the Parishes in Wakefield Diocese if they would like to make a link with a Parish in Mara. At that time there were some 220 Parishes in Wakefield but only 24 Parishes in Mara Diocese plus the newly created Issenye Secondary School.

Some 20 parishes; 4 Team Parishes [13 Churches] and a Group of Parishes [4 Churches] said "YES, we would like a link please", and were allocated a Link. The table shows the slow but steady growth of our link over these past 20 years.

Year	Mara Parish / School Linked to a Wakefield Parish	Number of Wakefield Churches Making a Link	Mara Parish / School Linked to a Wakefield Secular body	Type of Institution Making a Link
<b>At Start of Parish links</b>	25	37	1	
<b>Links made between 1990 &amp; 1995</b>	5	5		
<b>Links made between 1995 &amp; 2002</b>	6	10	1	School
<b>New links made in 2003</b>	1	1	1	School
<b>New links made in 2004</b>	5	12	2	School & Trust
<b>New links made in 2005</b>	5	9		
<b>New links made in 2006</b>	3	4		
<b>New links made in 2007</b>	8	12	3	Schools
<b>New links made in 2008</b>	9	10	2	School & Secular body
<b>Total to 31/12/2008</b>	67	100	9	

The Mara-Wakefield Companion Link, has like Topsy, developed and grown over the years and today there are Parishes who support the Wakefield link in other ways than through a Parish to Parish link. Some are 'Prayer partners', others support Mara through "Faith in Action", others by supporting one of the Mara Diocesan Projects to do with Agriculture, Education, Health, Housing or Clean Water. There are even individuals who support the link.

For your parish to receive information about what is happening in our link Diocese of Mara, you need to have a Mara Parish Representative who can be a contact for the Wakefield Mara Link Committee.

In addition to receiving information, the Mara Parish representative will be invited to participate in a Diocesan Mara Day, held once a year to discuss matters to do with our link, to learn about Mara, and to meet with and share experiences with others from the Mara & Wakefield Dioceses.

## MARA ACTIVITIES IN 2008

by Sylvia Cornfield

Every parish in the Diocese was probably overwhelmed with ideas to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of our Link with Mara Diocese. Many of the activities that were suggested already take place on a regular basis, but 2008 gave a real focus to our endeavours.

We were reminded about supporting such worthwhile projects as Water for Life and the Tree Project as well as Pennies for Mara. Other options were to learn Swahili, to hold a coffee

morning in your parish and also to engage and interest all young people with Mara via libraries and websites. There was something for everyone to attempt, if not in 2008 then 2009 and onwards!

Our particular event at St. Peter's church in Gildersome was to host a Mara Day in November and we were privileged to have Canon Arthur Mauya and his assistant Grace Enoch with us. It was a splendid day and everyone came away with minds and memories refreshed about what the

Link with Mara Diocese is all about.

Overall it is the giving of love and support to fellow Christians. It is about staying in touch with our Link Parishes and learning more about Mara for ourselves. For example, lack of rain in Mara means crops fail and there is drought and hunger. So our prayers are always needed whatever the year.

In truth, it is infinitely more than the giving of money and fund raising. In effect, Bega kwa Bega / Shoulder to Shoulder should be our message.

# Issenye 2008

by Lizzi Wainwright and Hannah Miller

**What do you get when you mix eleven High School girls, a couple of teachers and an adventure to Africa? On 10 July, 2008 at 4.30 am we congregated at Leeds/Bradford airport to find out!**

After a nine hour flight with a brief stop at Amsterdam we finally arrived in Nairobi, a little bleary eyed but looking forward to the trip of a lifetime.

Over the next two days we continued our journey into Tanzania, crossing the border with Kenya, and eventually arriving at Issenye Secondary School. We had been told to expect living conditions with no running water and only limited electricity, but were pleasantly surprised when we arrived at 'Savoy', the area of the school that was to be our home for the next ten days. Having previously planned lessons in England we were thrown in at the deep end the next day, teaching English to Form One, who ranged in age from 11 to 18, using books which had some relevance to African culture.

But it wasn't all hard work; we also had fun overseeing PE lessons including football, netball, volleyball and rounders, despite the rules regularly being misunderstood (or simply ignored)! In the afternoons we spent time with the older students,

discussing life in England and Tanzania, and sharing photos we had brought from home. Following lunch, we had free time to spend with the students - netball, football and volleyball tournaments were organised, and some of the most interesting and rewarding afternoons



were simply spent talking to the students. We also visited a local junior school, and had the chance to play with some of the teachers' children, entertaining them with bubbles and ball games. Having spent some time 'livening-up' the on-site nursery, we all had the opportunity to spend a morning helping Jo Denison to teach the younger children, developing their English and numeracy skills, as well as playing with play dough we had made on an open fire.

Unfortunately, the time eventually came to say goodbye to Issenye, and

our final evening was spent at a staff meal in one of the classrooms (relocated due to a torrential rainstorm). We were all delighted to be presented with traditional African outfits, which had been made especially for us.

All of us were touched by Issenye, particularly the happiness and spirit of the students and their enthusiasm to learn, and we were glad to be able to provide new beds and toilet facilities for the boys as well as financing a training course for a teacher with the money we had raised. Leaving at 5.30 am the next morning we all felt the experience we had shared had brought us closer as a group and helped us to develop as individuals.

The trip continued with a 2-day safari in Samburu in Northern Kenya, during which we saw all of the Big 5 (lions, elephants, buffalo, rhinos and a leopard). We also stopped at Elsamere and enjoyed a boat trip to Crescent Island. All too soon it was time for us to leave Africa (except Val and her daughters, who headed for the beach!) safe in the knowledge that we had made some great new friends and truly had the trip of a lifetime.



## THE FUTURE OF THE MARA LINK

by Peta Moffat

After a successful 20th anniversary year during which our link with Mara has grown enormously the Mara Link committee looks forward to 2009 as a year of consolidation. There are now 100 separate links between Mara and ourselves and this causes

us to celebrate with joy. But it is well known that as an organisation grows it is harder to offer hands on help – nevertheless the Mara Link Committee hopes to do just that! The following questions were asked and discussed at the workshop day held in St John's Cathedral, Musoma

in May 2008 when a group of 14 Wakefield visitors were present. So it is in the spirit of Bega kwa Bega – Shoulder to Shoulder – that we ask you to continue the discussion.

- 1) What do you think the link is for?**
- 2) Where should the link go in the future?**
- 3) How do we achieve these aims?**

# VISITORS BRING MANY BLESSINGS

by Peta Moffat

Tanzanian culture places visitors firmly in the centre of their way of life. Hospitality, if only an offering of time to listen, a glass of water or the shade of a tree, is a given. It is not possible to refuse the giving of hospitality – that would be seen as refusing the hand of God.

The Wakefield Mara link has reciprocal visits as its

lifeblood. Arthur Mauya, Mara Link Officer visits the UK each year and Peta Moffat our Mara Link Officer visits Mara annually. Over the last four years Peta has escorted over 80 people to Mara. Some go to their link parishes others to projects. After this visit some people return to Mara, now confident of the culture for extended stays and work. All return to their parishes full of personal stories, enlivening their links and wanting to do more for Mara.

Increasingly Wakefield parishes are sponsoring Mara into Wakefield visits and this September we shall have the pleasure of giving hospitality to some 10 Tanzanian visitors. Next February, 2010 there will be a Wakefield visit to Mara for about 14 days. The itinerary will include lots of visits to Mara development projects as well as opportunities to spend time with your link parish or with an educational project.

There are many past visitors to Mara who would be delighted to come and give a talk. Please use the contact details to book.



## Faith in Action The Container News

by Caroline Booth

On Saturday 7th February 2009, the 23rd Mara container was packed ready for transportation to Dar es Salaam port. It sailed from Felixstowe on Sunday 15th February and was expected to arrive in Dar es Salaam port on 5th April. On route there will be a stop off in Salalah. It has taken just under a year again to fill the container ready for sending to the Mara Diocese.

This year a variety of goods continue to be sent, but we are also sending numerous mechanic kits, tool kits and building materials on board, thanks to a generous donation of goods and funds from a charity called 'Tools With a Mission' and Blackheath Church in London. A decision had been made to pack the container on the 7th February in order to try and send the container in plenty of time before the FIA coordinator Caroline Booth had her baby. However as things turned out, we picked a perfect time as Caroline went into labour that same evening! Unlike last year when there were problems with the lorry getting down Addington Lane, due to the size of the lorry and the narrowness of the lane, this year everything went smoothly. The container arrived on a smaller lorry, and the driver was waiting for us at 7:30 am when we arrived, and the container had been packed and sent on its way by 9:30 am. The new container and location appear to be working well. Unfortunately the estimated cost of sending the container has risen from £4,300 last year to £6,625. This is due to the UK Pound / Dollar exchange rate which has weakened and also due to some rises in port costs in Tanzania.

For the last few years we have enjoyed a healthy exchange rate, and this steep increase came as a shock. The clearing agents in Tanzania CCT Wama, have to be paid in dollars as do part of Maersk's bills. Therefore for container 24 we have had to increase the cost per litre for putting goods into the container from 20 pence to 28 pence. We would therefore ask that everyone bears this in mind when donating goods and/or funds. Mara has been contacted and notified about the price increases, and we have been assured that Faith In Action continues to be considered as one of the most important parts of the link.

# Mara profile

by Allan Dowson

Mara region is situated in the north of Tanzania and borders Kenya to the north, Mwanza and Shinyanga region to the south and Arusha to the east and Kagera to the west. The population is estimated to be 1.57 million people. Mara region has 432 villages. Agriculture supports 80% of the population, 14% engaged in fishing, office workers 4% and 2% in industry. Cassava, sorghum, maize, finger millet, sweet potatoes, bananas and rice as food crops with cash crops which include cotton and coffee are grown. There are 1.3 million herds of cattle, 400,000 goats, 200,000 sheep and 3,700 dairy cattle.

Mara region has a total road network of 2,677 kilometres and is made up as 179 km of tarmac roads, 527 km gravel roads and 1,971 km of earth roads. Most of the roads are impassable during the wet season. There is one airport located at Musoma for light aircraft which is designated entry/export for tourists and business.

The region has seven hospitals with a total of 969 beds, with 15 health centres and 211 dispensaries. Each Health Centre serves 80,000 per year compared with the national average of 50,000.

There are 670 Primary Schools with a total enrolment of 208,531 pupils. The lack of adequate classrooms, teachers' houses, shortage of furniture, teachers and toilets is the main problem facing the region. The region has 160 secondary schools, 40 are government owned and 15 are privately owned.

The main source of water for both domestic and industry in the region is Lake Victoria. Shallow and deep wells serve about 586,000, approximately 42% of the population in Mara. In the rural areas, 52% of the population still use unsafe water. Lake Victoria is the second largest inland fresh water lake in the world and covers some 7,750 sq. km.

The Mara region is one of the regions in Tanzania bestowed with vast wild life potential with the Serengeti National Park, Gurumeti and Ikorongo game reserves. The Serengeti National Park covers 7,000 sq. km

## “IF YOU THINK EDUCATION IS EXPENSIVE TRY IGNORANCE”

by Peta Moffat

So says the notice on the headmaster's study wall at Issenye Secondary School. The Tanzanian education system is up and running fast and the Anglican Church is part of it although, unlike here in the UK, Tanzanian church schools do not attract any government funding.

In Tanzania there is now universal primary education complete with nursery provision and the new shiny

roofed secondaries in each political ward give evidence of an expanded availability. Gender considerations are often agenda items and the challenge now is to persuade the girl pupils to take advantage – to come out of their comfort zone of passive reception. The Anglican Church is at the forefront of developing education priorities and Issenye together with the Anglican Primary in Musoma regularly top league tables with their

excellent results

Wakefield parishioners always want to help Mara children- always want to help their education. Sadly it is no longer possible to administer personal bursaries but we can promise that every pound given by a donor here in Wakefield will arrive as a pound in the bursary fund overseas. Please use the contact details to find out more.

