

# Mudzini Kwetu Centre

Teachers and pupils from Bedwas have engaged in exchange visits with Bahari Parents Academy in Mombassa for the last three years.

This year following a successful bid, grant funding was secured from Welsh Council for Voluntary Action (WCVa) Exchange visits

continued in 2010 with the focus on 'Quality twinning partnerships' between the villages of Bedwas, Machen and Trethomas with the village of Kikambala.

Utilising the existing partnership between the school and Mudzini Kwetu Centre Trust the grant focuses on the planning, building and

development of a new school within the village. Two exchange visits have now taken place involving Mrs Tina Elms the schools Business Manager and Mrs Sian Rees the Office Manager.

## Trip of a Lifetime

By Sian Rees

**Monday** – We arrived at Gatwick for our 9 p.m. flight, heavily laden with not much clothing for ourselves but plenty of clothing and gifts for the children.

**Tuesday** – arrived at Mombasa Airport at 6 a.m. dressed for UK weather and queued in unbearable heat awaiting visa clearance and customs check.

No sooner had we left the airport we were faced with the extreme poverty of the surrounding area.

**Wednesday** – Meeting with the staff and managers at Mudzini Kwetu centre. My first impression of the home and its surroundings were its peace and tranquillity. We met the girls briefly before leaving. They arrived in the home's brightly coloured bus, with equally bright happy faces.

**Thursday** – A visit to Shimo Latewa Prison where we met representatives from the Christian Legal Advocacy Service. We also took in a tour of Mombassa Old town in heat of 40+ degrees where we saw street traders, wood carvers and numerous shops selling the most amazingly colourful fabrics.

**Friday** - The morning took us to the village of Kilifi to meet the Director of Children's Services one of only two social workers for the whole of the district.

In the afternoon we visited Kilifi Primary School (1,084 children). We met with the Headteacher and visited the classrooms some of which were supervised by "prefects" and no teacher. Classes were overcrowded with insufficient resources

**Saturday 20th** – we spent a lovely day meeting and getting to know the children at the home. We spent time helping them with their homework and exchanging gifts we had taken.

**Sunday 19th** – The morning took us to Nyali Baptist Church for Sunday Service. The girls from the home were dressed in their "Sunday best" and looked very smart. A lovely afternoon was spent at the beach with the girls – a place they obviously enjoy very much.

**Monday 21st** – We visited the girl's private school Bahari Academy. A much improved school in comparison to Kilifi Primary. The heat had again reached a massive 40+ degrees and we then went on to Mombasa town to experience "shopping". "bartering with shop traders" and riding in a Tuk Tuk (mode of transport) on roads and in traffic like you would never believe. Health and Safety obviously does not figure as an important feature in Mombasa – but we lived to tell the tale.

Our day ended at Mudzini to spend some more quality time with the girls and to say our final farewells to everyone. On the way back to the hotel we did a quick stop at the site where it is hoped that a school can be built for the children of the Kikambala village.

**Tuesday 22nd – Homeward bound. Truly a trip of a lifetime!!!!**

