



LETTER FROM AFRICA

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Welcome to the fourth issue of *Letter from Africa!*

Since our last edition, APP has been going from strength to strength thanks to the continued hard work of its staff and volunteers, including the charming Hannah Meadows, medical student and charity volunteer. Read about Hannah's unparalleled commitment to the charity in her profile on page 6. We have also been lucky enough to receive more donations and more pledges of help from kind individuals. Every morsel of advice we receive from other organisations is important so thanks to everyone who helps out. For now: enjoy the latest issue of *Letter from Africa!*

African Prisons Project is a young charity founded to improve the welfare, health and education of detainees in Africa. For more info, see page 8.



An inmate and her baby at Gulu Prison in northern Uganda, where APP is planning a healthcare centre and maternity ward which will serve not just the prisoners but also the guards, their families and even the local community.

– Adam Smith, editor

Volunteers drive APP fundraising into 2009

As APP continues to grow, the charity has developed a new fundraising strategy to ensure it attracts donations.

APP volunteers have been coordinating their efforts online to generate new ideas and research possible sources of funding. The new programme includes contacting wealthy individuals who have been praised publicly for their philanthropy, small charitable foundations and grant-making trusts, and even organisations APP volunteers have previously been affiliated with, such as schools and universities. Google Apps, the groundbreaking webspace created by search engine Google,

has enabled APP volunteers to coordinate actions whether they are in London or Kampala.

Jo Souray, an APP volunteer based in London, said: "It's great to be involved with sending out funding applications. It takes a lot of time researching the relevant organisations and individuals but any money raised this way will be a real bonus to APP's work. We're hopeful that APP will land some major funding in 2009, and looking forward to spending the money on our projects. The beauty of a small charity like APP is that donors feel they have really made a difference."

BasicNeeds *BasicRights*

APP teams up with BasicNeeds to deliver a pioneering mental healthcare programme

APP launches pioneering psychology project

In partnership with BasicNeeds, an international charity working to build a better world with mentally ill people, APP volunteer Kerry Ann Akers is spearheading a project that will start in early February to give condemned inmates access to mental healthcare for the first time.

“Condemned inmates are among the most likely, in any society, to develop mental health problems,” said Akers. “There is only one mental health hospital in Uganda and it lacks a maximum security unit. Consequently, mentally ill inmates are detained on death row, where access to any form of treatment is severely limited.”

Both prisons and mental health schemes are among the most underfunded sectors in Uganda so APP is particularly pleased to be involved with this important new project.

For more information email kerryannakers@africanprisons.org.



YTFN Update!

Regular readers will remember from issue 3 the news that APP had been invited to pitch to a crowd of willing donors as part of Youth – The Funding Network (YTFN). The joyful evening in October 2008 was a huge success for the charities involved. And the event raised over £2,200 for APP! Thanks to everyone involved – especially those at YTFN who made the event possible.



APP makes use of old buildings at Luzira Maximum Security Upper Prison

Work gets underway on university library

In conjunction with expanding the APP library in Luzira Maximum Security Upper Prison to include thousands of new books, a university correspondence network is being put in place to allow inmates to study, from basic literacy through to degree level, but as ever, funds remain the only obstacle.

APP volunteers in Uganda have begun sorting donated books into skill level categories – including O and A level – to allow them to be transferred once construction is finished. Gordon Binomugisha, APP's engineer, has been busy preparing quotes for the project. In addition, Alexander McLean, APP's director-general, is the chair of the University Library Infrastructure Committee, on which representatives of Uganda Prison Service sit, so he has oversight of the entire project even beyond APP. Volunteers have also secured funding for all the furniture in the library.

(continued...)

The final challenge is to find the funding needed for the actual construction.

“We estimate that the cost of building the structure will come to £10,000,” said Rowan Emslie, administration and project officer. “We have been looking for funding from various different sources and are very open to hearing new possibilities for obtaining this final lump sum that will allow us to implement the project.”



Inmates put in the legwork on the library at Remand Prison, Kampala



Above: APP volunteers Toby Brown, Adam Smith and Nicholas Brown (all far right) with patron Lord Ramsbotham and 'incarcerated' ICAP employees

Left: Lord Ramsbotham speaks to an ICAP trader



ICAP, therefore I fundraise

A special report
by Adam Smith

At first glance, it appeared that employees on the trading floor at ICAP's London headquarters had lost their minds. Dressed as giant babies, gingerbread men and World War Two soldiers, the traders muttered into telephone handsets, flicked their eyes between a dozen bright computer screens and yelled secret code words to each other. But this was just another day at the world's largest interdealer broker (except for the

costumes, of course). The date was 10 December 2008, ICAP's annual charity day on which the global network of interdealers donates all its profits to a pre-selected group of charities. Thanks to a thorough application put together by Toby Brown, Nicholas Brown and Alexander McLean, APP had been chosen as one of the lucky charities – and even invited along!

Michael Spencer set up Intercapital in 1986 to trade in foreign exchange. Just 23 years and a few mergers later, ICAP is the premier voice and electronic interdealer broker in the world. The company, which offers brokering services to professionals who trade in the wholesale financial markets, used to make rolling, ad hoc donations to charities. But 16 years ago ICAP formalised its philanthropy into its single, global Charity

Day. ICAP selects over one hundred charities per year to participate. Then, on a specified date, the brokers donate the day's personal commission to those charities – and wear outlandish costumes into the bargain. ICAP even adds its own commissions to the pot.

On 10 December, Toby, Nicholas and Adam Smith went along to the Charity

ICAP raised £11 million, a figure which will be split between charities around the world

Day at ICAP's headquarters in the City of London. The APP representatives were proud to be accompanied by APP's patron Lord Ramsbotham. An ICAP representative toured the group around the building and across the various trading floors where deals were being made by ICAP brokers dressed in all sorts of fantastic outfits. The members of one team were dressed as characters from the Harry Potter novels while another crowd wore Battle of Britain fatigues. The APP contingent soon tracked down a team of ICAP employees dressed as prisoners for a canny photo opportunity.

Other charities were represented by very high-profile individuals, including Prince Harry and London mayor Boris Johnson. APP representatives managed

to chat to banking entrepreneur Duncan Bannatyne, who received his OBE for philanthropy, about the charity's work in Uganda. Bannatyne said he understood the cause, after having recently shot a short film in an Ethiopian prison for Comic Relief.

The 2008 Charity Day was an enormous success for the charities selected to receive donations. ICAP raised an amazing total of £11 million, a figure



Lord Ramsbotham (second from right) with APP volunteers Toby Brown, Nicholas Brown and Adam Smith

which will be split between all the charities selected from around the world. APP would like to thank ICAP for supporting its work and hosting such a fun-filled event at its London headquarters, protected on the day by a squadron of Stormtroopers.



APP patron Lord Ramsbotham seals a deal!



Former trustee Toby Brown with long-term volunteer Hannah Meadows outside APP headquarters in Kampala

Diamond in the rough

An interview with Hannah Meadows, APP's administrative director

How did you first hear about APP?

I met Alexander McLean, APP's director-general, at Nottingham University, where I am still a medical student. In the beginning there was a group of people who were interested in helping APP. We all split up according to our strengths and thought about what we could offer APP. Along with some fundraising, I helped collect the books for the university library project and with the early charity administration.

How did you end up in Uganda?

When Alexander decided he was going to take a team out from Nottingham, I wasn't sure I had the right skills to help. I didn't want to make a short-term input and then disappear but I thought I'd be better in the future when I had more skills. So I accepted a one-year job directing a Ugandan hospice which was part of TEWIDI, a charity for widows. It was the perfect learning opportunity. I managed the doctors and nurses, and took charge of the administration and planning for the future. I oversaw everything and was reporting directly to the trustees. I started meeting up with Alexander in early 2008 in Uganda and realised that the skills I had learnt in the hospice would be useful for APP. The person I had become in Africa was completely different from when I first went.

So you became more involved with APP?

Yes, I visited the prisons with Alexander and started seeing what was going on on the ground. Alexander and Toby [Brown, the then legal director] started considering that

I would have a leadership role. I had decided to leave the hospice when APP asked me to join. It was perfect timing; I wouldn't have been able to help APP as I have without the experience in the hospice.

So what work did you do in Uganda?

Everything! Admin and the accounts first of all – they were a huge challenge. We started when there was just a couple of people there and very little money. It really needed a process so I tried to simplify it by logging all of the money in a basic way. The main problem was trying to analyse our expenditure and ensure that we were spending it in the right places. I feel a real responsibility for our charitable funds so I tried to maximise them. Then the other main aspect of the role was managing the staff: developing good relations with prison staff, APP staff and partners. Uganda has a completely different culture to work. What's expected of an employee is completely different to what I'm used to, even coming to work on time every day is an issue. It's difficult to deal with when you're a boss.

And what is your role now?

It's still administrative director, but my role is changing as I will now be based in the UK. I'm still involved heavily but my role is not on the frontline anymore. The administration remains the same whether I'm here or there. We're working out a volunteer coordination aspect to my role,



Hannah with former APP driver Isaac (left) and former APP project officer Tonny Asiimwe (right)

whereby I'll be selecting UK volunteers who can offer APP something, and then making sure they're up to speed before they go.

Do you still visit Uganda?

Yes, I was there for eight weeks over Christmas. That was a real motivator. Sometimes it can be difficult to keep yourself motivated when you're bogged down in administration but getting back on the ground and seeing the work we're doing and the people we're supporting makes it a lot easier to maintain my enthusiasm and dedication.

What are the projects you and APP are working on currently?

I've worked so hard to get the university project off the ground and the work has finally started. Also, I worked closely with the engineers to plan for the healthcare centre at Gulu, which is going to cost £35,000 – we have raised £25,000 but urgently need the remaining funds because it's such an important project. The centre will serve not just the prisoners (who desperately need basic healthcare) but also the guards, their families and even the local community.

What would you say to people who are eager to get involved?

Have a vision for what you want to accomplish, something you feel you can offer the organisation. We have a selection procedure because we want volunteers who come with a vision of what they want to do and then we support them doing that. We can't hold hands; it's not sustainable. And unless you have a real heart for prisons there's no point. It's the kind of work that you can't do with the wrong motive.

AFRICAN PRISONS PROJECT

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Thanks for reading...!

We hope you enjoyed the newsletter. Why not forward it onto friends and family who might be interested in finding out more? And please get in touch if you have any suggestions.

Email the editor, Adam Smith, at: adamsmith@africanprisons.org

You can read the latest APP news on our website, now with a .org domain!

www.africanprisons.org

And check out Alexander's blog at:

www.scottmelhuish.com/africanprisonsblog



And remember we still need your donations. Please give what you can so we can continue to help improve the lives of prisoners in Africa.

African Prisons Project (APP) is a young charity founded to improve the welfare, health and education of detainees in Africa. We aim to restore the dignity of prisoners by providing humane conditions and improving welfare, access to medical facilities and the opportunity to learn. Our principal projects are the creation or refurbishment of prison clinics and libraries.

Africa is a continent in transition, and its problems are magnified within the detention system. The plight of detainees is rarely noticed; therefore they receive little help from charitable organisations. Yet they include the most downtrodden and vulnerable - babies imprisoned with their mothers, the mentally ill, children and the illiterate.

In general, the conditions in African prisons are painfully poor. Many are severely overcrowded, lack sanitation and are unable to provide adequate nutrition. Access to books and education is limited or non-existent. Medical facilities are wholly inadequate. Few countries have universal access to legal representation, whilst many retain the death penalty and corporal punishment. Prison sentences can be significantly longer than in developed countries and it is not unusual to spend long periods in prison without trial.

Since its foundation, APP has been run by young volunteers - students and young professionals who want to make a difference. Increasingly we are supported by our advisors and partners. We provide school leavers and those from disadvantaged backgrounds with the opportunity to gain experience and skills by assisting a project in Africa. Our volunteers then act as ambassadors when they return home.

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