



Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work

News Update from COSW

UPDATE ON THE YOUNG CARERS WORK

The COSW Board was very pleased to note that a Christmas appeal for the young carers work raised over £3,000 through charitable donations which has been added to the Noel and Thea Jones Fund. This means that we can now plan with some confidence for the future work, which will include not only work with young carers but also, through that work, support for development of social work in Africa. This new income means that the fund now stands at over £5,000 and we can therefore consider charitable registration. In addition to this income, the visit of the two young carers from Kenya has also generated university fees sponsorship for one individual, an offer to help set up a chicken farm for a young carers group and support for other projects.

A renewed bid to the Commonwealth Foundation based on spreading the work to other Commonwealth countries in East Africa could be made when things are more stable in Kenya.

See a video on Young Carers uploaded onto youtube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kn2VV9WECsw>

Noeland TheaJonesFundSupportingYoung Carers

COSW is pleased to hear of the establishment of a modest fund through the initiative of David N. Jones, IFSW President in memory of his late father Noel. The purpose of the fund is listed below. A young carer in Nairobi has been appointed as a project worker to develop the proposal and it is hoped to support young carers in various ways in three localities in Kenya. Links with local non-governmental agencies will be sought and the Fund is interested in developing formal links with COSW.

The Jones family are setting up a small fund to develop work with young people, primarily in Africa, who have been orphaned and are caring for siblings and/or who are caring for parents who are dying. Hundreds of thousands of children and young people in Africa have lost their parents through illness (primarily HIV-AIDS) or war.

FAST PROJECT

IFSW (Asia Pacific) Disaster Management Conference was held from August 27-30 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The FAST Project, which COSW co-sponsored, received the final reports presented at the Conference. See the updated report sections for details of the FAST Project.

INFORMAL MEETING OF SOME BOARD MEMBERS

The IFSW Steering Committee was due to meet in Nairobi in February but had to be moved to Brighton, UK because of the tense political situation in Kenya. This gave an opportunity for Charles Mbugua, one of the Joint Chairs, to meet with other Board members, namely Fiona Robertson (Treasurer), Nigel Hall and David N Jones. He was also able to have several meetings with donors and others about the young carers project and COSW development.

Charles and David had an hour long meeting with Sally Keeble, a British MP who had attended the Nairobi young carers conference in 2006 and had very recently returned from a visit to Kenya. They had a discussion about the tension in Kenya and opportunities for community reconciliation. She was very interested in COSW proposals for a reconciliation process in Kenya and the potential to link this with work in other divided communities such as Rwanda, Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka and Israel. She was due to meet the British Foreign Secretary to discuss Kenya a few days after the meeting with COSW and she undertook to raise the COSW perspectives and proposals with him.

The COSW Board members endorsed the proposal from Charles and the Kenyan association for a quick reconciliation project to identify the community needs and to prepare a report on what is needed. This could be used as a bid for funds for a bigger project later in the year. The proposal will be formally considered by the COSW Board with a view to making a quick decision. IFSW is being consulted about these proposals and has indicated an interest in being a joint sponsor.



Friends on the Commonwealth Foundation

Check it out at

<http://www.commonwealthfoundation.com/friends/whyfriends/>

At the Commonwealth Foundation Meeting on Feb 19, 2008, attended by the Director Mark Collins and several staff, it was confirmed that David Jones, COSW's representative, is one of the Trustees for the newly reformed Friends. David also attended the final meeting of the Board of the 'old' Friends which has now wound up and its limited funds have been transferred to the new body.