



# Eyes for East Africa (UK)

January 2006 Newsletter

Registered Charity No: 1053222

Honorary Ophthalmic Consultant: Dr. Roger C Humphry FRCS FRCophth

**Supporting Dr Helen Roberts and the Kwale District Eye Centre in Kenya**

**Website** - Please take a moment to visit our updated, new look website at: [www.eyesforeastafrica.org](http://www.eyesforeastafrica.org)

**Contact** - Eyes for East Africa (UK), 19, Dunmow Hill, Fleet, Hants, GU51 3AN, UK

vol 2/iss 4

Our address for all communications:  
**Eyes for East Africa (UK)**  
19 Dunmow Hill, Fleet, Hants,  
GU51 3AN, UK

Jazz Concert in aid of EFEA



At Concorde Club  
Eastleigh, Hants

On 16th January 2006

Tel: 023 8061 3989 for tickets

**Jazz for EFEA**



tickets only £10 from  
023 8061 3989

Food and drinks available  
[www.theconcordeclub.com](http://www.theconcordeclub.com)

**Happy New Year**

to everyone from

Dr. Helen Roberts, the staff  
at the Kwale District Eye  
Centre, Jan and her helpers  
at the Diani Beach Charity  
Shop and from the trustees  
and consultant of your

**Eyes for East Africa (UK)**

**Eye Go Fishing**

One November weekend in 2005  
- North of Mombasa 15 boats set  
out to compete in the Eye Go  
Fishing competition.

Fishermen need to be able to see  
very well in order to perform their  
sport and so perhaps this  
community are more aware of  
their sight than most.

Shocked at the fact that one in  
every one hundred people is blind  
in Kenya, most cases of

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which are preventable, the fishing  
Community of the Mombasa  
Coast are determined to do  
something about it.

The idea of holding a competition  
to save eyes was conceived by  
the fishermen 10 years ago.

Now an annual event, the 'Eye  
Go' as it is fondly known, raised  
Ksh230,000 (£2000.00) in 2005.

'We had many generous donors  
including companies, hotels and  
local businesses who gave to the  
raffle and auction. We had some  
very special prizes' says Dr Helen  
Roberts MBE; 'the support of our  
work from this community is  
fabulous'.



Dr Roberts is the Medical Director  
of the Kwale District Eye Centre,  
the charity situated 10 kms. south  
of the Likoni ferry at Mombasa.  
This charity battles to reduce the  
rate of blindness in Kenya. 'The  
commonest cause of blindness in  
Kenya is cataract, which is only  
solved by surgery.' Explains Dr  
Roberts. 'Many people cannot  
afford to pay even the subsidised  
cost asked of them for doing this,  
and so we, the community, need  
to help so that people can see  
again, many of them for the first  
time in years.'

**Thankyou!**



**The late Mrs Beatrice Dixon**

Thanks to the generosity of the  
late Mrs Beatrice Dixon who lived  
in the Republic of Ireland, the  
Kwale District Eye Centre has  
received its first charitable legacy.

Mrs. Dixon's daughter is not sure  
how she heard about our work at  
Kwale, however it appears that  
Mrs Dixon had experienced a full  
life helping others less fortunate  
than her herself and had  
particular interest in counselling  
those in need of eye care.

Her daughter, Mrs Margery  
Godinho, told us that her mother  
had a glass eye having lost an  
eye to a malignant melanoma  
many years ago. On one occasion  
the glass eye fell out, rolled away  
and in spite of much searching  
could not be found. Perhaps it  
was picked up by a child thinking  
it was a pretty marble!

Mrs Dixon donated her body to  
medical science, but did not tell  
the medical school about her  
glass eye. She sometimes  
speculated about the unfortunate  
medical student who would  
discover it. Clearly she was a lady  
with a great sense of humour.  
Here you can see the twinkle in  
her eye.

We are very grateful to the  
thoughtfulness of the late Mrs  
Dixon. Please consider this  
method of making a contribution  
to the work of the Kwale District  
Eye Centre, by planning a  
donation to Eyes for East Africa  
(UK).

## Bahati – A POSITIVE CHANGE

By **Mwinyihamsi Mwachepha**,  
KDEC Rehabilitation Officer

Bahati, her name meaning good fortune, was poorly named at first.

When she was only ten she was injured in both eyes and admitted to the Coast General Hospital for two months where she went blind.

Neither Bahati nor her parents would accept that she would never see again.

They went to many traditional healers and hospitals and spent a lot of money on false and often painful treatments.

Despite her parents care, Bahati became pregnant. The parents soon had three grandchildren to care for as well as their blind daughter.

Our rehab team became involved. 'I depend on my parents for everything' she told us when we met her. We asked her what it was that she could not do because she could not see. She replied 'everything, I am fed up of depending on my poor parents for everything, I want to be more independent'

So Bahati came to a training session at KDEC for a week. She had great fun, meeting for the first time other ladies with similar lives. She made friends and learnt how to cook, clean and look after her family, despite being blind.



Here we see her with our rehab lady (in black) training to use a white stick with her baby on one hip.

She went home and did so well that we thought that she may do well on an income generating programme. She was cooking and cleaning, helping her mother harvest and prepare and cook food.



Here we see her cleaning maize cobs ready for grinding into flour.

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The family had land that they were farming - mostly with maize. We bought her seven goats with an income generating grant. She looks after these with care. She wants to use the money which these bring in to educate her own children.

On her last visit her parents. Smiling happily, they said ' she is still blind but she is no longer a burden. May God bless those who contributed to this positive change'

## Community Based Worker saves baby Kombora Muye

Kombora is a 3-months old baby boy. His mother is only 20 years of age and has 2 other children.



He was brought to a field screening centre by the KDEC Community Based Worker for the area because of his eye condition. On seeing the baby the field nurse could not hold back her tears because the child was so severely malnourished.

The eye problem (right eye had corneal scars due to lack of vitamin A) became a secondary problem and the urgency was to look at the child's general health, as he would not take the milk or any other fluids.

Urgent referral to the Coast General Hospital for further management was the only solution where further investigations revealed that Kombora had a digestion problem making him vomit anything that he was being fed. Urgent surgery was done to rectify this and a blood transfusion given at the same time. He was put on a high protein diet for two weeks and discharged from hospital but needs constant follow-up at the paediatric outpatient clinic.



Our Community Based Worker could not believe his eyes on his next visit. Kombora had made a marked improvement – the child looked bright, was feeding well,

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retaining all his food and had started putting on weight.

Although nothing can be done in regards to his right eye, KDEC takes the credit for having saved the child's life thanks to their policy of working in the community and not concentrating solely on activities at the eye centre. The parents are now very grateful for the role KDEC played in saving their sons life.

## Donations

Please send your donations to:  
**Eyes for East Africa (UK)**  
**19 Dunmow Hill, Fleet, Hants,**  
**GU51 3AN, UK**

[jim@eyesforeastafrica.org](mailto:jim@eyesforeastafrica.org)

**Making the most of your donations to EFEA**

**Standing Order** If you would like to make regular monthly donations by Standing Order to Eyes For East Africa (UK) please ask Jim Crow (address above), for the necessary details to fill in form from your bank.

**Gift Aid** Donors are reminded that EFEA (UK) can increase the value of most donations made by UK taxpayers by 28%, if donors complete a simple form under the UK Government Gift Aid Scheme. Higher rate taxpayers can benefit by reclaiming Income Tax on the difference between the basic rate of tax and the 40% rate for any donations made from personal income. These benefits are of great value to the charity and if you have not already done so, please ask Jim Crow, at the address above for a gift aid form.

**Wills** Have you thought about leaving EFEA (UK) a legacy in your will? We hope you have. At present less than 5% of the adult population include a charity in their will. Please think about us.

**The Payroll-Giving Scheme** One of the easiest ways of making donations to the Charity is through the Payroll-Giving Scheme now being adopted by many employers. Not only do donors receive tax benefit at source for such payments, but the charity also gains an additional 10% benefit from the Government. For more details please contact Jim Crow at the address above.

*Thankyou!*