

**OPERATION IMPREZZA RURAL TRAINING CENTRE**

My husband Richard and I have been involved with agricultural training in Kenya since 2006, thanks to the support of a small UK donor organisation. As with the trustees of Operation Imprezza our involvement is entirely voluntary and our annual trips to Kenya totally self-funded, so that all funds raised go direct to the projects. Richard is a retired lawyer and my background is agricultural. My interest in Africa has grown from childhood, working in South Africa in my youth and supporting development work in East Africa. We have known Chris Hulme for many years through the Devon Supporters' Group of the NGO FARM-Africa.



When our small project in NW Kenya reached maturity, we decided we should do what we could to promote the principles of Conservation Agriculture (CA) in Kenya, the benefits of which have been found to help farmers – both large commercial and smallholders --- in drought-prone countries that are severely affected by the damaging effects of climate change, such as soil erosion and reduced crop yields. If adopted correctly, CA has been found to help farmers increase production, whilst at the same time reduce man hours spent working in the fields. (The 'experts' have told us that it is not possible to achieve this whilst also adopting organic principles, as it is usually necessary to apply some herbicide to control weed growth.)

In Zambia through the support of a Norwegian NGO (NORAD), many smallholder farmers have adopted CA because it increases yields, reduces costs and labour inputs and improves the utilisation of on-farm and purchased resources. It also helps mitigate the effects of climate and is environmentally friendly, but first and foremost CA is about enhancing productivity, which is what truly interests any farmer. The fragile soils of Africa are suffering from severe degradation and yet farmers in Africa are nowhere near achieving the potential of most of the crops that they plant --- the potential for improvement is enormous. Those African farmers using CA principles have turned their enterprises into productive businesses from living on the edge of subsistence and depending upon handouts from NGO's. We wanted to set up a centre to carry out this training and it was at this point that Chris suggested we base the centre at Imprezza Academy, which we had visited some years earlier when we met Catherine and some of the students.

This training will be for the benefit of farmers in the community and the students at Imprezza. who will also

**Save the Date**

**Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

*Operation Imprezza 10th Anniversary Celebration  
Evening in Torquay.*

*(Details will be published soon)*

*Coming Soon!*

*Our latest **Legacy Leaflet**.  
If you or someone you know would like to make a bequest this is the leaflet you will need. It will be available for download from our web site shortly.*



# Operation Imprezza

Self sustaining, equal-access education in Kenya

[www.operation-imprezza.org](http://www.operation-imprezza.org)

Registered Charity Number: 1148240

***Our Mission is to enable students, both boys and girls, who would not otherwise have any access to secondary or decent primary education to succeed.***

Be taught the principles of CA. The training will also cover certain income generating activities that fit well into a smallholder's set up, such as 'improved' bee-keeping and possibly even silk worm production, to enable farmers to diversify and learn other useful skills to enhance their families' income. Last year Richard and I spent three weeks at the Academy during which time we organised some of the infrastructure for the training centre.

A hut was built for us which we used as our 'camp' – we set up our tent inside the hut which gave us some shelter from a couple of ferocious thunderstorms – not to mention the



sun, as there is little shade on the campus. We quickly realised there was a problem with the water supply at the school and as luck would have it, were able to organise a pipeline connection to the nearby community water supply which runs down the public road, some 350 metres away. A large water tank was also installed for the benefit of both the Academy and the demonstration garden, which will eventually supply the school with produce for school meals. Whilst we were there we organised the fencing of this plot to keep the neighbours' cattle/sheep/goats out! This April went out to Kenya for a brief visit to recruit our Project Manager Trainer and through contacts in the CA world, found someone who has been trained and worked as an intern for another NORAD funded project (PAFID), which teaches CA to smallholder farmers in Kenya. James Odwori is in his late 20s. is a local man known to the

farmers and speaks their language – vital as many do not even speak Swahili, let alone English! He is very committed to working with the community and enthusiastic and started work at the beginning of June. His first mission will be to prepare the demonstration garden using CA principles – topsoil is in places very thin or just rock! Catherine used some of our funds to rent a small field, which is fertile and has been very productive over the last year for the school thus greatly reducing food bills. James will be responsible for managing this plot as well.

He will eventually go out into the community to recruit interested candidates for the short training courses, most of which will be carried out on the Academy's campus, eventually using the garden for demonstration purposes. Any income-generating activities taught, will have a demonstration unit at the Academy, which will be for the benefit of the Academy.

Posy Stockman

## **How You Can Help**

- **Donate online** at [www.operation-imprezza.org](http://www.operation-imprezza.org)
- **Make a cash donation** to one of the Trustees or Operation Imprezza collection boxes around South Devon, (if you know an establishment that would be willing to have a box on display, please get in touch)
- **Set up a standing order** – contact our treasurer Lesley Smith [lesley@operation-imprezza.org](mailto:lesley@operation-imprezza.org) for details
- **Send a cheque** payable to Operation Imprezza to 14 Elm Grove, Teignmouth, Devon TQ14 8SA.

Thank You