

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2009

Tiwala had the privilege of having Linden and Kirsten from Links International (www.linksinternational.org.uk) visit us at Tiwala Farm this month. The entire Links team has been a great support to **Tiwala** and their recent visit came as a great blessing and encouragement to the **Tiwala** team, kids and the mothers group.

Alternative Learning System (ALS)

In **Tiwala's** village there are a few children who are categorized by the Department of Education as 'Out of School Youth' as they have dropped out of school at a young age. In addition to these particular children, it is most likely that the children who come to live at Tiwala Farm under our Foster Program (see below) will be in the same category regarding their educational level. Hence, **Tiwala** is in the process of setting up an Alternative Learning System (ALS) program, which is an accelerated tutorial program for



such children, aiming to bring them up to their required educational level before reintegration into local schools. In the interim, while we set up the ALS program officially, **Tiwala's** ALS Teacher is teaching basic literacy to these children, daily.

Foster Program

Tiwala has shifted our previous plans for establishing a standard orphanage to developing a working co-operative on Tiwala Farm, which will accommodate a community of foster families. The foster parents will reside on Tiwala Farm with the children (boys) whom they will foster. The boys will be enrolled in **Tiwala's** educational and other programs (together with the village kids) and will thereby have a large input from **Tiwala** on a daily basis. Over and above the services we will provide these boys, we will offer financial compensation where necessary for their additional needs, provided their foster parents fulfill their designated responsibilities within the co-operative.

Tiwala believes that once established, this new concept will provide a natural and stimulating environment for the boys (between ages 5 and 15 years) who need to be fostered into loving families for reasons such as being orphaned, abandoned, abused, neglected and/or left to reside on the streets. Furthermore, this concept removes the stigma of being 'institutionalized', thus allowing the children to feel 'normal' and naturally integrate into the community. While the boys are staying at Tiwala Farm, our Social Workers will continue working with the children's original families with a view to reintegrating them into their families in the future, after family counseling etc. Should it not be possible for the boys to return to their relatives, **Tiwala** will look for other options for them such as long-term foster placements (at Tiwala Farm) or adoption. Should the boys become of age, **Tiwala** will train them for independent living.

Tiwala currently has one child, Jonathan, enrolled in this program. Jonathan is residing at Tiwala Farm under the care of his foster mother, Sally, who is also working as our ALS Teacher. Jonathan was previously the leader of the street boys, having to 'prove himself' as being cool, strong and 'grown up'. He now spends his days looking for spiders, climbing trees, fishing, attending ALS classes, playing guitar, doing artwork, helping with chores etc. Jonathan has been given the chance to



be a child again and the freedom this brings him is evident in his behavior and attitude. Jonathan has integrated well with the kids & their families in the community and has expressed feelings of deep security, because of their acceptance of him.

In 2009 **Tiwala** hopes to get this program off the ground for the sake of the many boys who need to be rescued, as we believe this approach is holistic and God-centered and will therefore impact their lives tremendously. We are hoping to build at least 3 foster homes this year, which will accommodate 30 boys and their foster parents.

If you would like more information on the ALS or Foster Program or if you would like to be involved in any way, please contact us via our website www.tiwala.org.

Many thanks,

Gail Narramore
Founder