

German volunteers say Africa has great potential

By Zephania Ubwari
The Citizen Bureau Chief

Arusha. Africa can have success stories once its leaders get down to business to manage the economy well and improve governance issues, visiting German volunteers have said.

They said negative reports about the continent in the foreign media at times do not portray the reality on the ground.

Speaking to reporters here, Mr Uwe Thomas Carstensen and Mr Martin Grohgan said Africa has great potential for economic growth and commit-

ted leaders. They made the remarks here after visiting a youth development centre

supported by the German Foundation for World Population (DSW) at Moshono area in Arusha.

The two volunteers, who are visiting various countries in Africa to inspect projects implemented through DSW support, said the continent has often been painted negatively by the foreign media.

"In Europe information about Africa is about famine and economic crisis. You cannot get a good view of

Africa on TV or newspapers," they said.

However, Mr Carstensen pointed out that Africa can have success stories, noting that the economic integration in East Africa which he described as a good idea and a step forward in development.

The two are flying to various countries in Africa on a six-seater Cessna 206 plane and have been to DSW projects in Ethiopia, Uganda and Tanzania.

Mr Carstensen, an electronics engineer, sold his firm in 2002 and chan-

nelled a half of the proceeds to DSW projects and programmes in Africa.

In Arusha, the two visited Faraja Young Women Development Unit (FAYOWODU), an institution in Arusha training young women in different vocational fields for self employment. Currently, the centre has 40 young females who are borders, 16 of whom are young mothers (living with their children).

They are undertaking courses in cookery, tailoring and handicrafts.

According to Mrs Martina Siara, the coordinator of the centre established

in 2006, they were targeting women for admission in Arusha, Manyara, Tanga and Kilimanjaro regions.

Others are orphans, victims of human trafficking, young mothers with children aged one to two years, primary and secondary school drop-outs and adults who are seeking vocational and crafts advancement.

DSW country offices in Tanzania are located at Tengeru near Arusha and has been implementing several projects, including those addressing sexual and reproductive health of girls.