

A belated newsletter for March as the "Editor" was away for 3 weeks! In brief, everyone is doing well, and we had a super time over Easter with all our boarding school students home for a week. Church followed by chicken and chips and several birthday celebrations made for a perfect day!

Birthdays in March and April: Fatuma (14); Faidha (9); James (6); Goodluck (15); Kanuti (22); Derek (8).

Some great news: Kanuti was successful in getting a full scholarship for his A level studies at Cornerstone Leadership Academy! He started in mid-March and loves his new school.

We want to concentrate on two stories in this news issue:

Firstly, we want to give a HUGE thanks to Saorlaith Brhoin who, every Saturday rounds up a group of volunteers from the UN to come for an hour and play football, do arts and crafts, and get to know our children. Their visit makes a massive difference to our children and is the highlight of their weekend!

A couple of Saturdays ago, Saorlaith came prepared with games including a treasure hunt and egg and spoon races (the egg being Cadbury's Cream Eggs!). It was a lot of fun. Here are some of the pictures from that day...



Saorlaith prepares the contestants



serious stuff this...



girls race in action



The young 'uns prepare their eggs and spoons



Riziki giving out prizes after the treasure hunt...and reading a clue



Racing off to find that treasure...

The other news we want to share this month is about a future project we want to start at SWTz - helping families to become sustainable by teaching and assisting them to start small businesses.

In the past few months we've had many requests from families to take their children into our residential care. But firstly our residential home is full, and taking in more children would reduce the quality of care that our current children receive (small is definitely better when it comes to residential children's centres). Secondly, research shows again and again that it is usually best for children to stay with their biological family if possible. At SWTz we WANT to keep families together; we WANT children to be living with their mums or dads if at all possible; we ONLY take children into our centre if there is no other option for them.

Many of the requests we get are from families who are living in severe poverty, often because of some "bad luck" event that has happened. For example, a widow with 4 small children whose husband operated a motorbike taxi and was killed by a gang of thieves, or the shoe-repairer whose wife ran away when their youngest baby was 1 yr old because she wanted a different life, leaving him holding the baby and unable to go out to work and earn a living...

But, these family members are healthy. In many cases they simply need a fresh start to be able to organize and run their lives in a sustainable way - e.g. by starting a small business, or perhaps having a small-holding.

We have a family that we want to help as our pilot project - with their knowledge and agreement we want to share their story. Stella is a widow and lives with her two sons Gifti and Collins. Gifti is a teenager and is in his last year at primary school. SWTz just paid his school fees for 2012 as his mother didn't have the resources to pay. Collins is 11 years old and was born with hydrocephalus. The shunt treatment he had didn't work and Collins is now severely physically and mentally disabled.

Stella's husband died 9 years ago now. They had built a house, which Stella and her sons live in, but the windows are just open spaces so rain, wind and cold can get into the house. In some of the rooms the floor is still simply the rough stones of the foundations. The toilet is outside at the rear of the house and Stella has to carry Collins there, in all types of weather.

Stella has a room from which she runs a small business selling soda, banana wine and the "1-shot" plastic packets of gin and whisky that are popular here. Her clients tend to be men and are often drunk. Stella doesn't like selling alcohol - what she really wants to do is sell items like rice, flour, tea, oil...the essential ingredients used on a daily basis in any Tanzanian home. There are no other shops in Stella's neighbourhood and she is sure she can make a go of it. Her problem is that she has no capital to buy her initial stock. SWTz proposes to help her by providing a small amount of capital so Stella can start buying stock, and also teaching her how to run a shop and, very importantly, save from her earnings.



Stella by the bed she shares with Collins



...with Collins...



...in her shop...



the outside toilet Stella carries Collins to...

This will be a learning process for all of us, and we know there will be many challenges to make this work, but we have someone who is willing to work and wants to keep her family together, so we are willing to help.

We will keep you posted with how the project progresses!

Finally, we do still have several children in our residential care and our nursery school who need monthly sponsorship to cover their basic living costs plus their education. Know someone who would like to help a child and be a part of this amazing adventure? Write to us at info@swtz.org

Thank You for helping to make a difference in Tanzania!!!!