



*SWTz - January 2013*



January is definitely our busiest month as the new Tanzanian school year starts just after New Year. This year we had several children changing schools. School uniforms, shoes, supplies, bags, school fees to pay, transport logistics to organise...phew! Once everyone is back in school we feel we can take a couple of days off and simply breathe again!

- This year we are blessed to have received two more scholarships from The Foundation for Tomorrow (TFFT) for Freddy and Faidha to attend private school! They already sponsor Careen and David.
- We now have 13 of our residential children at private schools and we see a huge difference between the education they receive to those attending government schools. But private school is expensive especially at secondary level and so we are only able to put those children, for whom we receive additional support, into private education.
- 6 of our children are sponsored for their private education by other charities (TFFT, Toto Aid, and Cornerstone Leadership Academy).
- 8 of our 24 residential children are at secondary school now, with 5 of those boarding during term time.

Birthdays in January: Freddy (7)

For this month's newsletter we want to focus on our nursery school!

In April 2009 we started a small daycare class in a garage at one of our rented houses with four of our young residential children and one teacher, Eliza, who is now Head Teacher of SWTz Nursery. Four years later we have a beautiful purpose-built 3-classroom facility with capacity for 40 children split between the two main classes and capacity for another 10 children in our new "baby" class (which is for two and a half to four year olds). As of today we have 33 students, with more arriving each week. Most of our students go home at 12pm, but many stay all day (including all of our non-paying students) and have lunch at the school. We have uniforms available for those who wish to purchase them (and most parents do!).

We have 3 qualified Tanzanian teachers: Eliza who teaches Class 2, Rose (who started with us as a cook/cleaner 6 years ago and has since completed a Diploma in Early Years Education and is now studying social work part time) teaching Class 1, and new staff member Neema who is teaching our Baby Class. We also have a young cook/cleaner, Dorthie, a single mum who came to us asking for help with her two small children and ended up with a job - she is now cooking for 14 children and 4 adults Monday-Friday. Finally, we have volunteers through Projects' Abroad volunteer agency, who help tutor our students and organize arts and crafts and sports activities.

Last year, Class 2 graduated 5 students, 3 of whom passed entrance exams to private primary schools.

Many children in Tanzania never attend nursery school because their parents cannot afford the fees, and they start primary school without the basics that they need (reading, writing...). The vital learning years are lost to them and it is difficult for them to catch up. The children attending our school are those from the local community who would otherwise not have the opportunity to attend nursery school. For those families that can afford it, there is a nominal fee. However, many of the children attend our school completely free, stay until 4pm, and receive a nutritious hot lunch at the school - for some children it may be the only hot meal they get (plus we serve tea & biscuits or "uji", local porridge, at 10am).

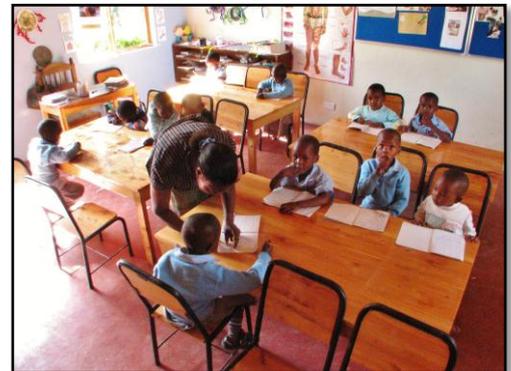
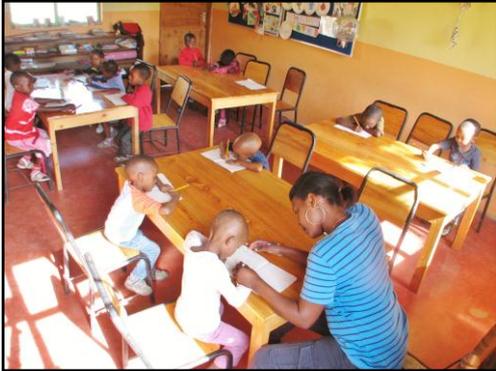
Our teachers find that their job is not only teaching, but addressing the holistic and social welfare needs of the children. Many of the children coming to our school have emotional problems (for example some children are orphans living with extended family, some come from situations of severe poverty, one had been abused and was frightened of all adults) or physical problems (one boy is deaf). Our teachers make home visits, and have identified some children that need additional assistance (e.g. food, clothing, medical help) and we provide help as resources allow. One of them, Frida, came to live in our residential home in September last year - she was from an abusive background, but is now a happy girl and always laughing.

We get many compliments from visitors, who are amazed at the classrooms, the bright colours (thanks CCW Team!), the pictures, and art work. The children are happy and love coming to school, the teachers love being here, and we know that in the long term, the foundation the children in the community are getting at the school will ultimately benefit them and the community as a whole.

It is always an amazing sight for us when we spot SWTz Nursery students walking around the village! It reminds us that God can use ANYONE to see His plans come to pass, as Wendy and Rebecca certainly don't have the "qualifications" to start

a school and Teacher Rose was an unqualified school leaver from a small village high on the slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro with few prospects when we first met her... It reminds us that when everyone works together (our tireless fund raisers, our donors, visiting work teams, our Tanzanian staff...), we can create something far greater than the sum of the individual parts...SYNERGY. It also reminds us that back in 2004 when we started SWTz with 4 boys in a tiny house we had no idea that we would one day grow this big - we simply need to walk the path set before us ONE STEP AT A TIME and know that God is with us every step of the way!

Here are some pictures from the school - we hope it gives you some idea of the beautiful children we see every day who, without the school, would be at home waiting to reach age 7 when they would go on to compulsory primary school.



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