



NEWS FROM TANZANIA!

*Merry Christmas
and a Happy
New Year!!*



We hope you are doing well wherever around the world you are right now. It's seven months since we last wrote - it feels like an eternity ago as the world still grapples with COVID, climate change, and so many other pressing urgent issues. It feels like a very different world to early 2020, when life was still "normal".

Tanzania has gone through huge change since April, when a new President came into office. The atmosphere in the country is hopeful with positive changes in policy and processes (incentives for foreign investment and business being a major step forward). COVID was finally acknowledged as a problem here and vaccinations made available freely (and vaccination certificates accepted internationally). Travel is now fully open, and tourism is slowly regaining ground.

Despite our major funding still being unavailable until the world and pandemic settles down, we have been amazed and blessed by other unexpected donations and fundraising for SWTz that has kept us going - we are so very thankful. Unemployment in our area is very high, with a large number of workers in the travel sector losing jobs - thanks to your generosity, we have retained all our staff - so important to us as there's no government help for the unemployed, and those who have lost work are desperate now.

Some highlights:

- We received our charity status from the Tax and Revenue Authority!! A 2-year long stressful process, but the financial benefits in tax savings and other reduced payments is huge! It sounds like a fairly mundane thing to have received, but not everyone who applies gets it, and we are over the moon!



- After several inspections, a boatload of paperwork, several visits to Dodoma (the Tz capital), and changes made to satisfy engineers and inspectors, Seeway Nursery School has received full registration from the Ministry of Education! We often think back to when we started our fledgling school (*left*) in a garage in April 2009 with 1 teacher (Eliza, now Seeway Nursery's head teacher) and 3 students from our residential care programme, James, Ally, and Zainabu (all 3 now in secondary school). Honestly, we didn't have a clue what we were doing back then!!

- Now we not only have a registered school and a lot more staff (*right*), but we are also fulfilling another huge need by providing special needs education at nursery level - a very challenging work, in its beginning stages. The biggest challenges aren't working with the children, but overcoming the stigma of being different and working with families and local communities to teach them



to value each child (and adult) equally. Inclusion and acceptance are fairly new concepts here. We just graduated 20 students (*right*), including 2 from the special needs class!

- For our final (!) bureaucratic process of the year we applied for, and received, our licence for our residential centre from the Ministry of Social Welfare. Licences were not issued for several years, but have recently restarted, and we are very relieved to have ours!
- We recently received two children into residential care on a temporary basis via the Ministry of Social Welfare, while their family situation was investigated. We've wanted to be used by Social Welfare as a safe home for children who need short term care for some time, so this was a good step forward. The two children have now been resettled with their mother.
- Staff news: Michael and his wife celebrated the birth of their first child! Teacher Apia also celebrated the arrival of her second child, as did Manager Neema and her husband! Hongera wote!! In June Mama John retired after 13 years at SWTz - she was Mama to many of our children and alumni, and we had a huge party to honour her (*pic at top of newsletter!*)



•News of our residential children and alumni: Faidha (*top left with her grandmother*) and Idrisa have just taken their O level exams! Elibariki (*right*) got married! And Riziki (*bottom left*) is starting her final year at the College of African Wildlife Management; Hamis graduated from law school with a Diploma in law; Fatuma is at teacher training college; and Arnold has started his first year at university in Dar es Salaam studying industrial engineering! Finally, Mariam and Mahija celebrated their 18th birthdays this year (*right, celebrating with their favourite Chinese meal!*). It's amazing to see our "kids" growing up (and makes us feel a little old too...).



•We continue to work with vulnerable families, and have been giving chickens and providing training. Some recipients have already increased their stock considerably!



•At Kiwawa Secondary School we began building two additional classrooms in August as the school expects a huge influx of students in January for the new school year. We took on responsibility for the builders, and Kiwawa village agreed to provide the building supplies. We had hoped to receive funding to cover the costs of the builders but that fell through due to covid. The village also received funding from the government to build two more classrooms, which are almost complete, so in fact there are 4 classrooms currently under construction!

- Finally, it's the long summer holidays here for Christmas. Schools are closed and for the first time in many years, all our residential children have left to stay with families or staff members for Christmas. It is so quiet! We had a party before everyone left (*right*), to honour Wendy's mum who passed away in the USA in November - she was like a grandmother to all our children.



Thank you for making a difference in Tanzania!!