



# NEWS FROM TANZANIA!

## New Year...New Adventures...New Blessings!

Happy New Year everyone! We hope you had a good Christmas, and are ready to take on the challenges and adventures of 2020...we certainly are!

The new decade promises to be full of new adventures and challenges, especially for the residential programme as we continue to transition to providing short term residential care for children who need a temporary safe haven rather than long term care, by working together with government agencies and other partners to improve families' ability to care for their children where they are at rather than in residential care.

In addition, we are under pressure to complete at least one set of classrooms at Kiwawa Secondary as fast as we can, as Tanzania continues to be desperately short of secondary level classrooms in the public education system... We hope to get the first set of classrooms open by end of March/April this year.

Here's the main news from the past few months:

- December is the end of the school year in Tanzania, and it's our busiest time of the year at SWTz - not only do we have graduation at our daycare, but we also visit schools to get reports for our residential children, and catch up



with children coming home from boarding school; it's time for our Christmas party where we also catch up with our home support children; time for our residential children to get ready to go home to stay with families and guardians for the Christmas break; time for making Christmas cards and writing to children's sponsors; time for staff to get some rest before we return for the new school year in January.



Then January is a chaotic time of getting children and teenagers enrolled back into school (some into new schools); sorting school supplies and uniform; and getting back into a routine after the long summer break...



- The 2019-2020 Nord Anglia expedition season began in October (though preparation work for us began back in May!). This season is our most ambitious yet - in conjunction with the Ministry of Education and local government officials, we have begun construction of a secondary school for Kiwawa village, not far from SWTz. The school is very much needed, with students currently having to travel several miles each day to reach the closest public schools. At a village meeting where we



discussed the plans, villagers told us that their teenage children are having to leave home in the dark, return in the dark, and some are being hit by vehicles as they walk along dark roads and tracks, others are being attacked...and the students are so tired from the energy used to get to/fro school they are too tired to study.

The project will last at least two years and Kiwawa Secondary School will eventually have a capacity of 640 students. Since October we have built the administration block (just the many “finishing” tasks remaining), and have started work on the first set of classrooms. The Nord Anglia teams we have worked with this season so far have been fantastic, and really worked hard - we have been astounded at the rate of progress!

- Together with Nord Anglia we are still working



with vulnerable families (goat sheds and goats; solar systems; rocket stoves). Our team have been researching families for several months and we are truly helping the most vulnerable in several locations. This season we have also partnered with ECHO East Africa, a local NGO, part of the worldwide ECHO group (<https://www.echonet.org/east-africa-impact-center-1>). One of ECHO’s initiatives is to increase food security by improving the goat breeding stock in Tanzania, and to do this they import goats from Ireland, who have been proven to do well in the climate here. We were the recipients of some of these goats (*right*) which we have given out to families (along with seminars and training packs on how to look after them).

- We had wonderful volunteers India and Johanna with us for a couple of months - they were full of energy, creativity, and fun. They left behind a lot of wonderful artwork both at the residential centre and the daycare, and many happy memories, not least of which was the hilarious sports afternoon (*right*).



- We said “goodbye” to Faidha (*left*) as she began the transition to live with her family during school holidays (she attends boarding school during term time). She is still very much part of SWTz, and we will continue to see her regularly and make sure she has everything she needs to complete her education (she still has another 4 years to go!). Faidha has been with us for many years, and we will miss her quiet wisdom, but we are so happy that she has been able to go home to live with family.

- Our Special Needs Unit (SNU) goes from strength to strength. We recently had a local physiotherapist visit to give our staff and the families of our students some teachings on massage and physiotherapy techniques. We are slowly getting our SNU students onto health insurance so their families can take them to hospital to get proper treatment or medication - this will make a



huge difference to their well-being. The positive difference in our students from 8 months ago is incredible, and we are so proud not only of the progress of the students, but also of the wonderful care and empathy provided by our staff.

We are being overwhelmed with requests to help families - the need is huge but we are very small - it is heartbreaking to turn people away.

- James “Mdogo” (*right*) graduated from primary school with an average C - a huge achievement considering he has suffered on-going health issues ever since he came to us 18 months ago. At the end of November James felt well enough to come out on a couple of goat-shed builds but since mid December his health has been on a rollercoaster, and he has been hospitalised since before Christmas. We are seeing signs of improvement, and James is a determined boy. There’s a long road ahead, and we would appreciate your prayers, and good wishes for him.



- Neema (*left, with NAE students*) graduated from primary school and got an average B in national exams! She is excited about starting secondary school this January. Whilst between schools, she worked with Nord Anglia students on expeditions, teaching them how to make rocket stoves. We were very impressed at her leadership capabilities and great attitude.

- We just received national exam results for some of our children. Highlights were Kaposhi (*below, right*) getting an A grade for Standard 2, and Faidha and Idrisa (*below, middle*) getting Division 1 top marks for their Form 2 exams! David also did well in his O level exams, getting Division 2 (*below left, at his graduation with visitors Grace and Pippi!*). Well done guys, we are really proud of you!!



- Finally, Riziki (*below*) was accepted to Mweka Wildlife College to study for a degree in tourism. AND, she received a scholarship from a partner organisation for her studies! Way to go Riziki!!!



That’s a lot of news! And a lot of pictures! We hope you have enjoyed reading about what’s been going on here in Tanzania.

We are so thankful to every one of our supporters, partners, and friends, who make this possible. Together we are reaching hundreds of children and families in our community, and changing lives positively!

*Thank you for making a difference in Tanzania!*