



# NEWS FROM TANZANIA!

## Bimbling along, but starting to see chinks of light and hope for the future!

Where have the last few months gone? Probably a similar sentiment asked around the world... What a strange time it has been. Tanzania has been relatively untouched by the pandemic in terms of numbers of serious cases, though a second wave came through in January, but is now under control as far as we know (given that there's not much data 😊). It has been a huge blessing to be able to carry on life as normal without lockdowns, albeit using distancing and precaution. Our thoughts and prayers are with nations suffering so much right now.

However, it has been a time of major transition for Tanzania as our sitting President died unexpectedly in March, and has been replaced by his successor (the first female President of Tanzania) who is changing many things - in a very good way. We feel full of hope for the future here in Tanzania. Despite our region of Tanzania struggling with unemployment from the tourist industry collapse, and many people and businesses still facing an unknown future, it definitely feels positive everywhere.

SWTz has been "bimbling along" (move along at a leisurely pace), with most of our programmes still running while we wait for international travel to open up so all projects can resume. It's been a useful time to work on the quality of our programmes; work with government bodies to improve our services; and work on strategies for the future.

Despite the slower pace recently, there is always a lot going on. Here are some highlights:

- After Standard 7 Primary School national exams in October 2020, Fred and Petro were repatriated with their families. They had both been at SWTz for some years but are now teenagers, able to look after themselves and contribute to their families. For Petro (*right, with his grandfather*), it was important to be back at home to spend time with his much loved grandmother who was seriously ill (and sadly passed away soon after). Fred (*left*) also has an elderly grandmother who loves him very much. They both did well in their exams, are now in Form 1 in secondary school, and we look forward to hearing about their future progress.



- Mariam (*left*) also finished her primary schooling and has decided not to continue to Secondary. Right now she is learning basic tailoring skills from a local tailor and she is loving it - we are looking for a full-time course for her to attend. We are so happy for her - she will be able to earn a living from this and sustain her life for the future.

- James, Ally, and Zainabu (*right*) also completed primary school and got great results in their exams - they are now in boarding school for their secondary education. Ally and James managed to use all their pocket money in two weeks, buying doughnuts at school, and asked us for more - we said "No!". Hopefully they will budget better for term 2. Their school happens to have one of only two skateboarding parks in Tanzania, and skateboards for students to use!! Wow - fun!!



- We said "Goodbye" to Lauren (*left*) who has been at SWTz for the past 2.5 years. We came across Lauren while building goat sheds in a nearby village - she had gone through some terrible experiences, was living alone aged 17, and we knew she was not safe, so we gave her

shelter. She was interested in bakery, and by Lauren cooking doughnuts, which we sold during Nord Anglia expeditions, we raised enough funds to put her through a 2-year bakery course. She excelled, and has now moved to Dar es Salaam to seek work in the bakery business.



•We have been blessed with wonderful volunteers - Tanzania is a great place to come to get away from pandemic restrictions! We had Luke from Belgium at the end of 2020, and currently have Clara and Sofia (*left*) from Austria for a few weeks, and marketing intern Maëlys from France for an extended stay. It's lovely having different faces around, and we are so thankful for them giving their time and energy to our children.

•We had some staff changes: Manager Neema came back from sabbatical (and is about to go on maternity leave!), and Adam left at the end of 2020 to go travelling around Tanzania. Congratulations to Michael who got married in November! Also, 3 of our staff have just completed an Advanced Counselling course, which will improve the quality of our counselling care to our children and families.



•We have been continuing to help vulnerable families in the community: from building a chicken shed for one family; teaching two families on caring for chickens; helping a single mother re-construct part of her house to stop rains flooding in; building a desk and paying for uniform and school fees for a student at Kiwawa Secondary; to providing on-going medical help to a family and visiting other families to assess their situations. The needs in our community are great, and we help where we can with the aim of also teaching families to become more sustainable.

• A **HUGE THANK YOU** to everyone who gave to our September Kiwawa School fundraiser!! The target was met (both the team covering the kms by various means from Oxford, UK to Arusha, Tanzania, and also the funding target) and we were able to complete work needed to be able to hand over the first set of classrooms (*right*), administration block, and student toilets to Kiwawa Village. The school is beautiful and opened this year, with 75 students in Form One. It is so cool to go there and see teachers, students, cooks and see and hear the buzz.



•Seeway Nursery School graduated another class of students in December 2020, including our first graduate from our special needs class! We opened in January for a new school year and are full again! We are in the process of registering with the Ministry of Education - it's a long process and we are about half way there - it's all going well, and the officials who have come for various inspections love what we're doing!



These are just highlights - there's so much more going on every day! We're so thankful to every one of our supporters, partners, and friends. YOU make it possible to help children and families in our community, and change lives positively!

*Thank you for making a difference in Tanzania!!*