



WE'RE BUSIER THAN EVER...

How are you? Time is flying here - it feels like it was only just New Year with children here starting a new school year, and planning for upcoming expeditions in full swing, but suddenly here we are with schools closing for the long winter holidays, and with the 2022-2023 expedition season over we're already planning for NEXT expedition season...

What a few months it has been, and what progress has been made in all our programmes, with big changes to some, and tweaks to others. Good news is that the long end-of-summer rainy season is in full swing has been good so far with hopefully adequate rainfall to enable a full growing season.

Let's take a look at what has been happening programme by programme:

Residential Care Programme



When we began residential care in 2005, life was quite different in Tanzania with many families struggling from the HIV epidemic, and there was a need for residential care, often for the longterm. NGOs were basically doing the work that government bodies should have been doing, but at the time resources were few. Society and life has changed, with better medical care available and huge investment into the Ministry of Social Welfare and other government bodies, so that NGOs like SWTz can be supported in the work they are doing (not financially sadly!), and together we can find solutions at family and community level which means residential care for children is

generally becoming more short term.

Innumerable studies show long term residential care can have a detrimental long term effect on children and teenagers, and we have been working hard to reduce the time children stay in our residential programme by employing more social workers; working together with government bodies and families to find solutions; and repatriating children where we can (while still ensuring they are receiving schooling, nutrition, and healthcare at least until the end of their primary schooling).

Since December we have repatriated 5 children (*Benjamin and Saruni going home, right*). It is wonderful to see children able to return home to be cared for by their families, and we visit all our children regularly in their schools and make sure they are doing well. We also made a decision to place all older children in boarding schools, to help them feel more like other students who board then get collected from school by their families at the end of term as opposed to students who go



home to a residential home each night. However loving SWTz might be it is still a care home, and there is a stigma attached to that.



We recently received 3 more young children/teens (*left*) who had been abandoned by both their parents. All 3 attend primary school and had continued living in their family home, going to school, and surviving on food given by neighbours. Wow, what amazingly resilient young people, motivated to overcome their situation. We were alerted to their plight, and are working together with the Ministry of Social

Welfare to ensure that their home (which is a tiny derelict mud hut which we will rebuild as a two-room brick house) is kept secure for them when they can return. Right now they are so happy to be at SWTz, sleeping in clean dry beds, eating nutritious food, and surrounded by love. If you would like to give to their housebuilding, please contact us!!

We have also made changes to ensure all residential children spend school holidays with family or foster care. Currently we have 6 children in full-time residential care during school term time, plus another 18 boarding at school or living at home and on our home support programme.

Nursery School and Special Needs Programme

We're super excited to announce that we are preparing to open our second dedicated classroom for special education. We have been incredibly blessed to



receive funding to cover the salaries of teachers and assistants for the new class as well as to furnish it. We hope to open it in August, when one of our teachers completes a course in special education.



We are working hard on inclusivity - while our special education students still have dedicated

classrooms, teachers, and equipment, they are also spending time in the other classrooms, and activities such as play, arts and crafts, and lunchtimes are organised so everyone is together more. This is new in Tanzania, and it takes time to change ideas and methods - one step at a time!



Community and Service Projects

January-March was packed with teams of Nord Anglia Education (NAE students and teachers coming to Tanzania from all around the world) to take part in community and service projects.



At Kiwawa Secondary we worked on the dining hall foundations, which are now finished and ready for walls to be built. Students also worked on creating a permaculture garden, a project overseen by ECHO East Africa. It was exciting to see the progress and produce already being used in the school kitchens for lunch - providing better nutrition to students will make a huge difference to their ability to learn and retain knowledge.



Thanks to some extra funding from a NAE school we have been able to continue work in the laboratory we began in 2020, and this just needs painting and final bits of work before it is complete. We have invested heavily in Kiwawa Secondary and now it's time to spread the love to another area so in October we will be moving to another area to increase capacity at primary school.



We also worked with 34 vulnerable families building goat sheds; donating a female milking goat; installing solar systems; and building a



rocket stove. Families have been struggling more than usual due to 3 years of drought - we saw that many families had sold all their furniture to pay school fees



as they were unable to grow food to sell or donate to schools. We are so thankful to the NAE students who fundraise so we can, together, help families in the communities around us.



We also received some fabulous donations from NAE schools including complete team sports kit and lots of football boots, which we have distributed to schools.

What Other News?

After the NAE expedition season, and the Easter holidays, we have been moving a little bit slower. Time for a rest. But do we stay still - oh no, we don't!

- We're already planning the next NAE expedition season - we know the school we will be working at, so we're building relationships with the local community, working with government officials, and working out logistics.



- Some of our care staff wanted to know how to build a goat shed so we taught them one day, as we had come across a family needing help - they did a great job!

- We're renovating our old nursery school and converting the 3 classrooms into 2 offices and a store room - we currently have more staff working from our one small office than we have desks or space for...

- We're planning a teen camp to take place during the long winter school holiday to help our teenagers with communication skills, career guidance, and addressing some of the myriad of other issues teenagers face here in Tanzania.



- It's volunteer season again and we're loving having Lina and Sharlène with us from Switzerland. Here's Lina showing her art skills, making posters for the nursery. We are always so thankful for the difference our volunteers make.

- Finally, for many years we have supported Linda Sarakikya (right) who is an orphan living with her grandmother high up on Mt Meru. After finishing high school, she wanted to take a course in hospitality, so we raised funds for her (by selling doughnuts to NAE students!), and she started in February. So far she has been on field trips to Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar and had work experience in the kitchens of a 4-star hotel. She is now on the front-of-house part of the course, and then will go for a longer field experience (the hotel in Dar es Salaam are already head-hunting her for this!). What great experiences she is getting.



We are so thankful to each one of you for being part of making a difference in Tanzania!!