

Issue 8
March 2025

Welcome to Let Them Shine

*Welcome to our
NEWSLETTER*

Welcome to our latest newsletter, published on our website and emailed to sponsors and supporters. I do hope the contents hits the spot. But if not please do let me know at info@letthemshine.org.

UPDATES

Anthony Summersell

I have just returned from a trip to see the activities of the Charity and the Centre. It was fabulously hot with storm clouds gathering over Kilimanjaro every day – and as expected (and with immaculate trip timing) the long rains started the day after I left. There is nothing like being 'on the ground' to take stock.

There is no better place than Lukani, Tanzania to run a charity ! And we had a busy and satisfying time. We were happy to see 19 of the Centre children move onto Primary school – an event mixed with delight knowing that they are very probably better prepared than other children but also tinged with nostalgia as we had so enjoyed giving them a fantastic start to life at the



Centre. Nineteen familiar and loved little characters starting their first steps into formal education. But it did mean we could welcome 18 new recruits into the Centre.

Let me tell you about just one of these – Beatrice. Our Head Teacher Ester had heard about this little girl and suggested we visit her home. We set off on a long 'safari', down precipitous roads through the banana palms and jungle vegetation, along hard packed clay roads that were unlikely to have seen many cars before. At some point, we



had to abandon the car and walk on foot. The photo shows the route to the house. It was a traditional compound, with a mud hut, and adjoining huts for the cows and hens. Despite the poverty, the compound was spotlessly swept and kept by her mum. We were

introduced to Beatrice in her best red dress (as you can see). She was painfully shy and despite all our best Swahili jokes we failed to raise a smile. It was agreed she would start at the Centre the next day.



Doing home visits is very inspiring – you find children who are loved, but whose home arrangements are so poor that the usually single parent (mum or grandparent) is only too delighted to know that their child will be safe, get three meals a day, education and love. We visited three further homes – Lena, Isaac and Neome – all living in similar circumstances.



Back at the Centre, we were busy. The kitchen has been moved deeper into the site allowing more space for the children to play, and importantly out of the way of the water flow that appears during the long rains. The

swings which I put up on my last visit had been enthusiastically pounded and needed some serious repairs. We decided to brighten up further the dormitory and as you can see from the photos, commissioned the local artist



INFLATION

Harold Mushi to paint a large animal at each bedhead.

As ever there was office work with Ester, our Head Teacher, going through budgets. The most noticeable cost increases were for meat, and to maintain our commitment to all children having meat twice a week, additional funds will need to be sent out monthly. We have been seeing rapid inflation over the last couple of years, particularly for food.

Many sponsors very kindly pay than £25 a month – thank you! If you do still sponsor your child for £20 (our figure based on 2016 prices), I would be so grateful if you could consider increasing this to the £25 if possible. 100% of your donation goes to the Centre!

LET THE BAND PLAY

A wonderful sponsor kindly organised a collection of kids musical instruments. To name a few - recorders, tambourines, bongos, rattles and maracas pretty much filled a large bag. Massive hit! In no time at all the Lukani Children's Centre Band was formed and a video of them playing and singing is on our website

<https://www.letthemshine.org/news>



THE TANZANIA TEAM

As I am only in Tanzania twice a year, I like to try and spend as much time as possible with the teaching staff. We have a team to be proud of and under Ester's leadership there is a wonderful atmosphere in the



school – where children are motivated, can see their teacher's creating fun and most important of all they know they are loved and cared for. This time, at the weekend, I took them all out for lunch down in Boma, the nearest town. It was a fun day and a great way to say thank you

and to ensure they know how much their work is appreciated. And in case you're wondering I was very happy to personally pay the bill.

BONDENI FLOWERS

Over the recent years we have been working on building relationships with the local Dutch owned flower farm and we were absolutely delighted this time by a visit from their CEO Leon who, knowing the territory very well, was very complimentary about the cleanliness and orderliness of the school and not only agreed to sponsor three children but to allow us to collect firewood for free from their estate, which is a real help as all the food is cooked over a fire. Thank you, Leon!

10 YEARS ON...

Finally, something to look forward to – a moment of celebration as our Centre has its 10th anniversary next year! More about that later of course – but it was a moment for me to reflect on how this amazing adventure has, through your support, turned into something special. We now have just under 100 children in our care at various stages of education. And I see it every time I visit how we are together changing lives. Thank you.

REPORTING

We have started sharing reports and pictures of sponsored children with their sponsors this month and will run through into May.

YOUR MONEY

All our administration, travel and other costs are met personally. Just a reminder that all sponsorship income received is sent in full to the Centre around the middle of the month. Salaries and food are our biggest expenses.

YOUR FEEDBACK

We never know whether you receive the right amount of information, too little or too much. Please feel free to let us know. In fact, please get in touch with any feedback, thoughts, or suggestions.

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**Let Them Shine is a registered
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