

Supporting Tanzanian
STOW
Orphans and Widows

STOW NEWS

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Sokoine University of Agriculture in Morogoro

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Dear Members

Here's wishing you all had a really good, happy Christmas and that 2019 will be full of joy and peace for all of you kind and generous people. We know we are in for uncertain times with Brexit still looming unclearly but what is certain is that STOW will continue to support vulnerable children to gain an education. We have already evidenced over many years how enabling this disadvantaged group of orphans to attend school is crucial for their future. I will be giving you some updates on our older students and also one of our "leavers" whom we met up with in Dodoma in October. He exemplifies the positive effects and self-esteem that education brings to young people and also how their education enables them to be active members of their community.

Continuing and Generous Support to STOW

STOW is so lucky to have a membership that has grown over the years but also so many, many members who have supported STOW over so many years. It is this consistent and long-term membership that enables STOW to have a steady approach to financing the project. I have had some heart-warming notes from members who have remembered STOW at Christmas with an extra donation. How kind is that!

Value of Monitoring Trips—Mwajuma

In this day and age you'd think that, with emails I would have a regular link with TUMAINI – not so! Often Schola is unable to access the internet and lately her email hasn't been working at all! So, what is good about these trips is that not only do I get to see first-hand how our students are doing but I also get news of those that I can't get to see as they are too far away. I also get a chance to talk over with Schola what works well for the students and what extras are needed.

Mwajuma is a good example. I last saw Mwajuma in October 2017. She was just about to sit her GCSEs and felt confident that she would do well. I then heard when I visited Tanga in January 2018 that Mwajuma had passed with a Division 3 – fab! This meant that she could go on and do A-levels.



Mwajuma in 2017

However, when I was out in Tanzania in October 2018, I heard that Mwajuma wants to be a primary school teacher in science and maths. With her GCSE grades she was able to go straight to college to do a 3-year course which she had started in September. She is living in a hostel close to Tandala College in Njombe. STOW is paying her college and hostel fees as well as meals. She had proudly reported to Schola that, although Njombe is over 500 miles from Tanga, she managed the journey fine, with an overnight stop in Dar-es-Salaam.

The Students

I must confess it was quite a gruelling trip in October, strangely enough. We spent a lot of time in the car, with all of us ever on the alert for heavily loaded lorries both oncoming and behind us, always keen to overtake. Needless to say, we saw a few overturned lorries too! I'll let Jem tell you about our journey. I will focus on the students.

Amiri

The first student we saw was Amiri who is studying animal husbandry at Sokoine University of Agriculture (see front cover and below).



Sokoine University of Agriculture—main block

He proudly showed us his diploma which enabled him to carry on and convert to a degree. We didn't keep Amiri too long from his studies, as a government minister was visiting the university and he had just slipped out of the meeting to meet up with us. He told us that all was well, college food was good and he was



Amiri and Marie, October 2018



Amiri's bibi in her café in 2011



Amiri with his doves in 2012

really enjoying his studies.

Amiri has come a long way from the young lad who kept doves to sell and helped his indomitable *bibi* run a café with a loan from STOW. Amiri told me that the café is still going strong!

Boniface and Salimu at TRACDI

The next day we went to TRACDI in Dodoma (the Tanzania Research and Career Development Institute) and found Boniface and Salimu waiting for us. We had been in trying to find our way there for some time! Boniface – in the middle of the picture below – is inspecting the new pair of trainers he had asked us to buy for his sporting activities. The envelopes Schola is giving the young lads contain extra subsistence money to buy school materials.

We had a wander around the facilities, escorted by two of the tutors who told us that there are 900 privately funded students in the college and that most of the lessons are conducted in English.

We had a good look round the campus which included: a small chicken house, rabbits, goats and

Boniface and Salimu at TRACDI



very neat plots with different types of crops. The students practice on these and each row has the name of the student. They also

grow grapes – the only fruit grown in the Dodoma area. The students go to the college farm each weekend as it is large and a bus ride away from the college. At the farm there are cows, hens, goats and the students learn about managing them, even learning how to inject the animals.

Haruna

We were due to see another student, Haruna, at Dodoma University but got a text to say that his sister had died the day before and he was in Tanga for the funeral.

The last time we met Haruna, just over a year ago, was when he was studying at a college in Dar es Salaam. However, I heard when I was in Tanga in January 2018, that Haruna was no longer in Dar. The Government had decided that his college was not fit for purpose and so had closed it. The Government now stipulates that all colleges and universities have to provide hostels for students.



Haruna was transferred by the government to Dodoma University which has specialist facilities for those studying to be teachers. We managed to meet up with him later that week in the bus station in Dar on his way back to Dodoma. We booked him into a hotel nearby ready to take the 7 am bus the next morning. He was keen to get back to his Education course. He proudly said that, once he had graduated, his career would start immediately as the government would place him in a school at once.

Christa

After seeing Haruna safely to his hotel, we hurried on to the port in Dar to meet up with Christa. She had come over by ferry from the other side of the peninsular to meet us – the first time she had taken this route and the first time she had been in the port, what a brave young lady! She is studying pharmacy at college and said she was really enjoying it. She hopes to work in a hospital when she has finished her course and is confident that she will get a position as there is a shortage of qualified hospital pharmacists.



It was very rewarding to see how well these older students are doing at college. They made me feel so proud of them and thanks to you, our members, their studies will make a huge difference to their future lives and ambitions.

News of former STOW students

Hamisi

While we were in Dodoma, we met up with Hamisi—one of our recent school leavers. He was working in the town and wanted to show us what he was doing now that he had qualified in Business Studies and left college. I couldn't believe my eyes when we met up – such a tall, smart, confident and happy young man was before me! He took us up to the top of a not-quite-finished office block



where he and a colleague were holding a seminar. What a difference from the boy I first met in 2008! Then he was living in a traditional house with his grandmother, now he lives in a bed-sit in the middle of Dodoma, complete with glass-top coffee table and gas cooker!



Richard

STOW funded Richard a few years ago to do Land Management and we bought him a second-hand computer, as he said that this was very necessary.

On our way to Morogoro, we passed Kibaha which reminded me that Richard had gone on a field trip there. He did so well that Kibaha District Council offered to employ him as a land surveyor when he graduated. I then learned a year ago that he had indeed been successful in getting employment there. Schola told me this time that he was still working there and he had recently visited her to say thank you for all STOW's help.

Issa



Issa at Tanga Tech

During the many discussions I had with Schola on this trip, I also learned about Issa, whom STOW funded to go to Tanga Technical College to study electrical engineering. He lived far out of town so we rented a room which he and two other STOW students lived in during term time. This meant that they could all get to their lectures on time!! When Issa first graduated, he worked for a Chinese company using his newly acquired qualifications. Schola told me that he is now self-employed and installs electricity in private houses. There is plenty of work and he is doing well – great news.



Richard with his STOW laptop

Budget discussions

These trips are also valuable for the chance to discuss budgets in detail. Schola and I spent many hours going through the 2019 budget. It was great to be able to talk through proposals that STOW's Trustees had agreed and see how they could be realised. One of these was to give a "Leaver's Grant" of £50 to students when they left their STOW-supported education or training. This will help them to pay for their rent, food etc for the first month – before they hopefully get their first pay cheque!! In addition, STOW will offer a loan (under the IGA scheme) of £50 should any Leaver need to buy equipment for their new career (eg sewing machine or set of tools). Schola thought that this would make a huge difference in the students' transition from college to work.

We also talked about STOW's proposal to support 8 more children. I will be meeting them when I go out this month and I look forward to telling you about them at the STOW summer event on 8th June (see next page) and in the next newsletter.

Best wishes to you all,

Marie, Founder and Chair of STOW

Dates for your diaries!

Beetle Drive!



Friday 29th March 2019 at 6.30 pm

Hotdogs, wine, beer & squash, followed by the
Beetle Drive with a break for ice cream, cake & coffee!

St Johns Church Hall, Saxmundham

(Parking available up the church drive or Waitrose)



Adults: £5, Children: £2
(minimum age 6 years)

Family ticket (2 adults, 2 children): £12

To book tickets phone 01728 663583 or pay on the door



Midsummer in Kelsale!

Saturday 8th June 2019 at 7.00 pm

Welcome drink, supper, entertainment, auction, raffle
News of our work in Tanzania

Kelsale Village Hall, IP17 2PB
a beautiful Grade II listed building

Tickets: £15.00 per person available from:
STOW, Acorn Cottage, Kelsale, Saxmundham, IP17 2QY
Tel: 01728 603348, email: info@stowcharity.org

New Year musings from the Treasurer

In some ways, perhaps, STOW could be seen as a small island of relative calm and stability in a seemingly crazier, turbulent and more unpredictable wider world.

The recent turn of the year with its usual looking back and forward media coverage got me pondering. It seems ironic that the ever-more surprising, unpredictable and sometimes uncontrolled goings on here in the UK and what we used to refer to as the 'first world' over recent times is seemingly at odds with the long-term education and stability that STOW funds continue to provide for our many sponsored vulnerable young people in rural sub-Saharan Tanzania. STOW funding ensures that their long-term education is able to continue for as long as they benefit from it. We know from our own direct experience of our ex-students over the years that our help has been their entry ticket to a much more successful and stable adult life.

Before Christmas, I met with some of my fellow Trustees to look at the detailed budget proposals sent us by our long-term Tanzanian partners. This outlines their plans (and costs) for the coming school year for each of our supported children. I can confirm that much tea, coffee, and cake is consumed during this process.

Because of the information gained and the trust built up over many years during STOW's twice-annual monitoring visits, we were able to quickly agree to fund almost everything planned for the coming year following just a handful of requests for clarification and a few suggestions going back and forth to our Tanzanian colleagues. We now know with confidence how much we need to send to Tan-

zania over the coming year and what this will cover and hence how much income we will need to raise to avoid having to dip into our reserve fund.

So why does this seem to work so well and with surprisingly little drama? In part I believe it's because STOW receives much of its income on a long-standing and regular basis from members and supporters. We are also confident that, as in the past when times have been a little financially stretched, many STOW supporters, when asked, have generously been able and willing to dig a little deeper into their pockets.

However just a few words of caution. Having been hit before by unpredictable Tanzanian inflation and unexpected charges, along with currency fluctuations, I fully expect to see further financial bumps coming down the road during the coming months.

With an annual budget of around £40,000 (almost all of which goes direct to Tanzania,) we do therefore need to keep some money in reserve. The Trustees try to ensure we have at least 6 months' expenditure remaining on deposit here in the UK.

As always, many thanks go to all our members and supporters. Please keep sending the money, and perhaps recommend us to a friend. Your money really does help change poor and vulnerable children's lives for the better. For the long term benefit of both their own and their families' lives, I remain convinced that **education is the hand up (and not the hand out) that really works.**

Martin Stevens, Hon Treasurer, Jan 2019

Monitoring trip October 2018

I last visited Tanzania in October 2016 when I went to Tanga as usual, this year however I got the chance to go to two places I'd never been before: Morogoro and Dodoma.

Morogoro

We travelled to Morogoro on the Sunday. It took us 5 hours because of the traffic—lots of lorries and petrol tankers on a 2-lane highway. With Dodoma the same distance further on, the prospect of a possible 10-hour drive all the way back from Dodoma to Dar was not appealing. So we decided to spend another night in Morogoro on the way back. This plan worked out perfectly. Although we did have some trouble locating the hotel in Morogoro as we were told it was called the Hi-Lux but in fact, as its sign proudly proclaims, it's called the Cherry.



I discovered a new twist to 'taking a taxi'. Since Schola did not always know her way around in town, she'd often ask a motorcycle taxi rider who would then charge us a fare to show us the way on his bike.



Dodoma

Dodoma is in a semi-arid region, one consequence of which is that there are lots of baobabs around. This was just as well because the car over-

heated about 60 km out of Dodoma and we were able to seek shade under one while this was being sorted out.



Shady baobab

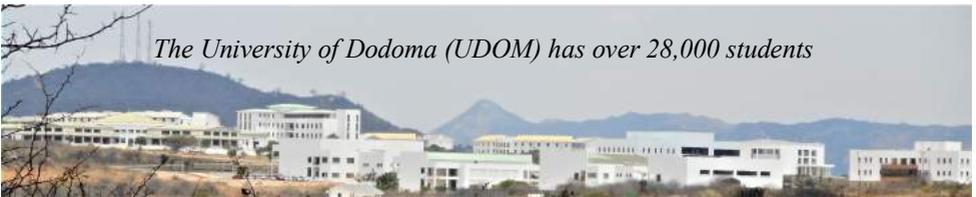


Watering the car

The other things that grow well in the Dodoma region are vines. A few miles after the car was back on the road, we stopped again so that Schola and Athumani could buy some grapes from a roadside vendor. We finally reached our hotel in Dodoma 5½ hours after setting out with me nervously watching the temperature gauge the rest of the way! A new radiator cap next day did the trick.

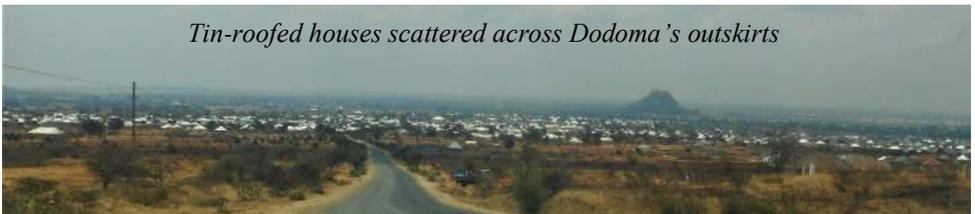


Dodoma vines



The University of Dodoma (UDOM) has over 28,000 students

Dodoma's outskirts are expanding rapidly as can be seen from the picture below of the view coming back down the hill from the University.



Tin-roofed houses scattered across Dodoma's outskirts

All-in-all a fascinating glimpse of a part of Tanzania I didn't know and well worth the (self-funded) fare and visa. (I also wielded the camera.)

Jem Adams, Hon Secretary, STOW

Since STOW's founding in June 2005 we have funded over 2,600 annual school and further education places, helping well over 350 children to get education and training with many going on to paid employment.

The UDOM celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2017



mydonate



We are on the BT MyDonate website (www.btplc.com/mydonate) to help our fundraisers and to enable people to use a debit or credit card to donate to us. Just enter 1112424 or STOW in the MyDonate search box to find us.

Every penny of the money donated (excluding minimal card charges) comes to STOW including any Gift Aid due. We like to thank our donors so, if you use this service and want us to know who you are, please email us separately at info@stowcharity.org with your name and the amount you've donated.

Supporting Tanzanian Orphans and Widows (STOW)

Registered charity no 1112424