

Supporting Tanzanian

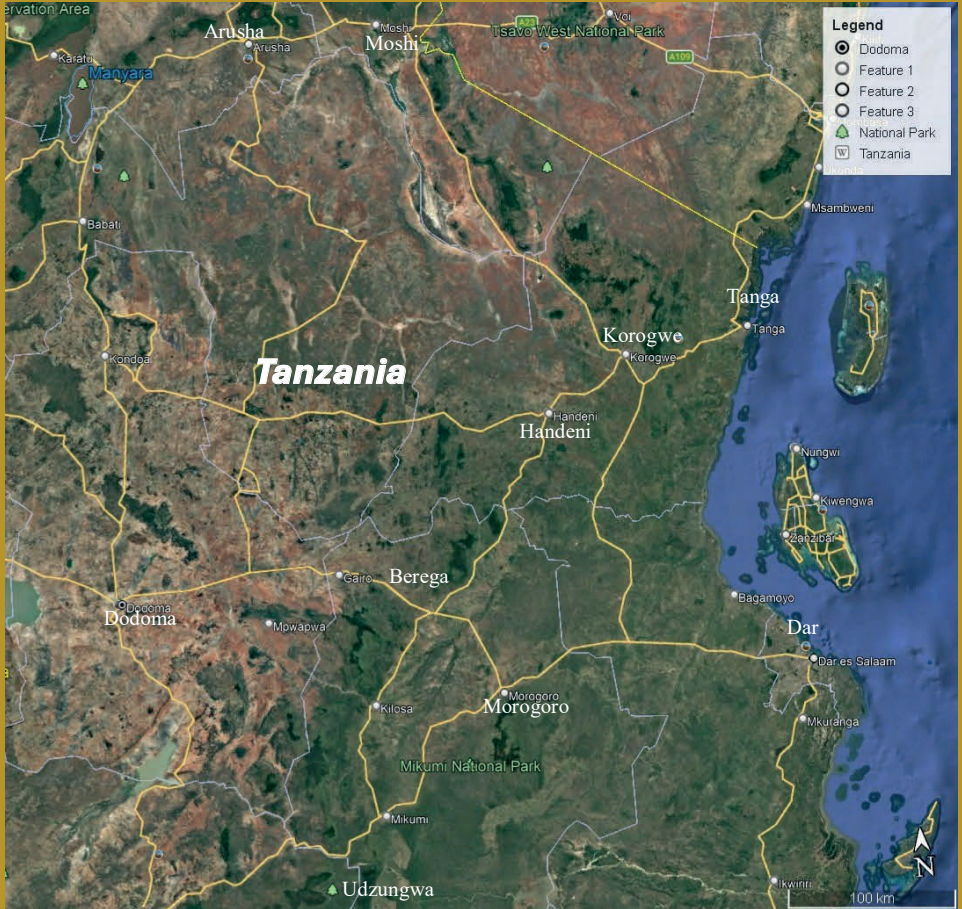
STOW

Orphans and Widows

STOW NEWS

March 2026

Issue number 37



Places visited during February's rescheduled monitoring trip

www.stowcharity.org
Charity registration no: 1112424

Dear Members,

I am so pleased to be able, finally, to report to you how our STOW-supported students are doing. I was all ready to fly out at the end of October and had even checked into my flight for the following day when I heard the news that the Tanzanian government had closed all the airports, shut down the internet and closed all schools and colleges. This was all because of protests during their national elections.

However, I am pleased to report that I was able to go out at the end of January and managed to get round to see most of our supported students. It meant covering many miles (see map on the front cover). We started in Dar es Salaam, then onto Tanga, then up to Handeni, across to Korogwe and up to Moshi, then Arusha. After 3 days there, we went across country to Dodoma on the most amazing smooth tarmac road with few cars and almost no lorries. Seven hours later we were in the capital! Three days later, we went down to Morogoro – diverting briefly via a dirt road to Berega. We spent two nights in Morogoro because Schola was determined on the 2nd day to visit our student on a placement in Udzungwa National Park. We then headed back to my starting point – Dar es Salaam. I managed to see 33 students plus one who graduated this year with a BA Hons.

In years gone by most of a monitoring visit was spent in Tanga but now we only have 10 students there: 4 at Secondary Schools, 1 at A-level College and 5 in Technical Colleges. So we were only in Tanga 2 and a half days.

Now that I've given you some geographical context, I'll talk about the students that you all so very kindly support through STOW.



Yusuph

Tanga

Our first visit was to see *Yusuph*, our last student at Kihongwe Secondary School. Yusuph is in Year III and asked us if he could transfer to a boarding school so that he could study better. "I like studying", he said. "But it is hard to study at home, because my stepmother makes me help in her shop/café and I have to go and collect water for her." We talked to his teacher to see if a transfer would be possible and later that day, when visiting Zingibari boarding school where 3 other STOW students attend, we arranged it. The next day we

went shopping for all Yusuph's needs - mattress, sheets, mosquito net, cutlery, plates, mug etc plus his new uniform.

However, before that, we visited Yusuph's grandmother, who we have known for several years as STOW has supported several of her grandchildren over the years. We talked to her about the situation and she agreed that it would be a good move. We left her with a food parcel. I also noticed Yusuph's bike that we had bought him was in a bad state of repair. We took his brother to the bike "fundi" to get it repaired. At least he could use it to get to school!



Bike repairs

Please see back cover for notice of our AGM

Zingibari

Our next stop was to Zingibari boarding school where we spoke to the Head about Yusuph's transfer.

We chatted to the 3 students who STOW sponsor there and told them about the new-comer, asking them to look out for him, especially the two that are in the class that he will be joining. We gave them their new school shoes, uniforms, pens, paper etc. which we do every year. *Richard*, who is in his last year here, told us that he is very keen to go on to do A-levels. Let's hope he gets good grades!



Issa, Richard and Bakari at Zingibari

be better off getting a qualification which would stand her in good stead later on for the army. She agreed to go to Handeni college, where STOW are already supporting 2 students. This was arranged by Schola when we were at the college a couple of days later and Asma caught the bus there 3 days later!

Tanga Technical College



Samwell, Ezekiel and Salimu



Samwell in his room

We saw 3 of our 5 Tanga Tech students. One of the others was starting his last year the following week and the 5th student, Juma, we saw later see page 5). They were all doing well: 3 are studying electrical installation, 1 plumbing and Juma car mechanics.

We took *Samwell*, the newest student, to check out the room we had rented for him. It was pretty bare, with just a mattress on the floor so we bought him a table and chair to use for studying and some cutlery and crockery. He told us that he would be sharing meals with the other older students who had a room nearby and had a cooker and pans that we had bought for them in previous years.

Whilst we were at Zingibari a recent "graduate" from the school – *Asma* – came to see us. She wanted to join the army but the teacher explained that there was a long wait to even get as far as the tests. She would



Asma

Small loans for income generating activities (IGAs)

We managed to get round the villages to meet up with some of the families that had been given loans last year to see how their businesses were getting on. We met up with Fatuma's mum, Msekwa (Fatuma is doing a degree in Arusha, see page 6.). She had not had a loan before and told us that her main business is making charcoal, collecting and selling wood and she also makes mats. She told us that her businesses were going well but she would like a loan so that she could hire a cart. This would enable her to collect more wood in one trip. She was later granted her loan at the IGA meeting.



Fatuma's mum, Msekwa with wood for her charcoal business



Salimu's mum, Anna, in her chef's outfit

After that we visited Sarah, whose son, Ezekiel, is at Tanga Tech. Last year she had started a café but told us it was not doing very well so she is raising chickens and has now set up a small shop. She was pleased with her new venture. She got another loan as she wanted to buy more chickens and increase her vegetable stock.



Ezekiel's mum Sarah's shop

We then visited Salimu's mum Anna. As reported in a previous newsletter, we had given her a loan to buy a sewing machine. She managed to repay almost half of this loan. She is still dressmaking and selling snacks at the nearby secondary state school. Her youngest son was there and she told us that he had been run over by a motorbike so was at home recovering.

Our fourth visit was to Wanje. STOW is sponsoring her daughter, another Fatuma, who is studying cookery and food hygiene at Handeni Folk Development College (see below). Wanje had been breaking rocks last year but due to ill health she is now collecting wood. She has 3 young children at home. She would like to buy a "guta" (see pic) and at the meeting was given a loan to use as a down payment. This will help with her back ache and enable her to collect more wood in a single trip.



Guta

Our last visit was to Halima, Samwell's (from Tanga Tech) mum. She asked for a loan to help with her café project. She said that she would also use the loan to help her daughter who is doing tailoring. She would put some of this money towards a sewing machine and the rest of the money she would find from selling a small plot of land that she owns.

Handeni

On Wednesday we went to Handeni FDC to see a different Halima and Fatuma who are studying there. We also got permission for Asma to start a 2-year tailoring course and agreed that she would arrive in 2 days.

As Halima is in her 3rd year, she has to sleep off campus. We checked out her room to see if all was well there. As you can see from the photo, it is very basic but Halima said she



Halima and Fatuma with Schola



Halima in her room at Handeni

was OK and that it was near college. We gave her money to pay for her water and electricity bill and gave her a food parcel that we had brought with us from Tanga. She will finish her course in July this year.

Korogwe

Later that day we saw our garage mechanic student Juma who is doing his 'practicals' here for 3 months. He was not feeling too well as he had malaria but managed to have a soda and chat with us for a bit before

heading back to his placement. Allan (on right wearing a cap), who was my project driver when I was on VSO in 2018-2020, had met up with us as he lives nearby and he took Juma (blue T-shirt) back to the garage.



Moshi

From Korogwe, we drove to Moshi, where we stayed the night. Next morning we met up with *Ali*, who is in his last year studying Accounting and Taxation at Moshi University. He is hoping to have a career in government.



Lucy

Schola introduced me to *Lucy*, who is also studying at Moshi University and looking for sponsorship. She is in her 2nd year and has another year to go. Her father worked in government but when he died, 2 years ago, his family came and “took everything”, she told me. Her first year has been sponsored by her local Tanga church. Her mother has cancer and having chemo treatment at Arusha hospital, which is not far from Moshi. Schola told me *Lucy* is from Musoma, of the Kuria tribe, who are big, tall people. I said that, sadly, the STOW budget currently did not allow us to take on another student but I promised I would see if I could find her a sponsor who could provide the £1500 needed for her last year and a half when I returned to the UK.



Ali

Arusha

We have 6 students studying here but one, *Azizi*, was away on field work placement, we caught up with him later (see page 8). We were greeted by the 4 students at Arusha Technical College: *Fatuma*, *Martha*, *Hadija*, and *Upendo*. Previously, *Fatuma* had been studying plumbing in Handeni. She achieved such high marks in her finals (all As) that she was able to come here to gain a Diploma. She finishes her course next year. She was very pleased to get her new smartphone. STOW provides these because all the students get their timetables sent to their phones.

The other three are all studying Industrial Laboratory IT.



Martha

Martha started here in January this year on a 2-year certificate course and would like to do a 3rd year to get her Diploma.

Hadija is also on a 2-year certificate course. Like *Martha* she would like to continue to gain a Diploma. We gave her a laptop and asked her to share it with the other students.



Fatuma



Hadija

Upendo also started her course this January.

We took the girls out for lunch at the campus canteen.



Upendo



Jackline

After lunch we met up with *Jackline* who is studying Hotel Management and Catering at the National College of Tourism in Arusha. She sleeps in a room outside the college compound and showed us where they are currently building a hostel on site. She takes a “boda” (a motorbike taxi) to college every day (1,000/- each way, about 30p). She told us she needed a curtain for her room, a bucket and a small iron so I gave her the funds to buy these. She was very proud showing us around the campus, taking us to the canteen, and the two large kitchens for student practice. She finishes her course in November 2027.

Dodoma

Next day we headed for Dodoma on an **amazing** new and almost deserted tarmac road, arriving 263 miles

and 7 hours later.

STOW supports 3 students at St John’s University here—all studying pharmacy. The girl, also called *Jackline*, told us that she had two exams that day. She would like to stay in Dodoma when she finishes as she has made a lot of friends here. She thanked us for her new smartphone and said how useful it would be, both in keeping up to date with lecture changes and also with her friends.



Emanuel

Emanuel is in his 2nd year. He told us that he had found the exams easy so far.

Edward is in his first year. We gave him a scientific calculator and a smartphone but omitted to take his photo!

We saw *Adamu* at the College of Business Education. He is studying accounting and taxation. *Adamu* told us that he had done field-work in the Government Audit Office in Dodoma and has been offered voluntary work there when he graduates. He will get a small weekly allowance and said the experience would stand him in good stead for his career. We gave him a laptop (see next page).



Jackline



Adamu with his new laptop

Mary is doing a degree in Business Administration and Management. She did her practicals for 3 months in Tanga at Tanga Municipal Council, which she enjoyed.

Berega



Ramadhani

University of Dodoma (UDOM)
STOW supports 3 students here. We saw *Yustina* first. She is studying Education and is in her last year. She told us that she wants to teach history and is not worried about her finals. She will come back in November for the graduation ceremony and will throw her cap in the air!

Fatuma is doing a nursing degree. We gave her a laptop.



Yustina, Fatuma & Mary at UDOM

Here we saw *Ramadhani* who is studying at the College of Health and Allied Sciences. He hopes to work in Berega Hospital which is on the same campus as his college and where he has done his practicals. He feels confident that he will get a good pass mark.

Morogoro

We saw *Agape* at the University of Morogoro where she is studying Nutrition. We went to one of the cafés on site to chat and have a soda. She told us that she had had 2 exams that day and said they were “not so hard”.



Agape with Schola

Udzungwa National Park

Azizi is studying Tourism and Languages in Arusha but is on a 3-month placement here.



Schola and Freddie with Azizi

This is his 2nd practical, his first was in Arusha National Park. He said he was really enjoying the experience and hopes to become a state-registered professional tourist guide. We were not allowed to enter the Park so sat and had a soda at the Park’s tourist accommodation.

Dar es Salaam

STOW is supporting 4 students at 4 different establishments here. *James* is at KAM College of Health Sciences, studying to be a doctor. He was full of enthusiasm for his course and proudly pointed out the private hospital which is also on campus. We agreed he could have a laptop to make his studying easier.



James



Amiri

Amiri is on a 4-year Engineering course at the University of Dar es Salaam. He will be doing field work in July, specialising in highway routes and water supply. He completes his degree next year and expects to find full-time employment soon after graduating.

Mariamamu is studying at the National Institute of Transport. She

is a footballer and has played for the Tanga Regional Team, though she is focussing more on her course at the moment. She told us that after the 2nd semester she will go on to field work, possibly with the TAZARA railway, which links Dar es Salaam and Zambia. *Mariamamu* told us how good it was that she had a smartphone (given to her by STOW) as the students are told by phone each day where their class is being held. She said that sometimes they have classes until 9 pm.



Mariamamu



Hadija

Hadija is studying for a B.Ed in Geography at the Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy. Schola told me she got exceptionally good marks at A-level. She seemed very happy with her choice of college and is enjoying her course very much. She told us that she will be doing teaching practice in July and would like to teach Geography and Kiswahili when she graduates. She shares a room with 3 other students and they use saltwater for washing. “We have got used to it” she said.

Each time I visit these students I am so impressed with how positive they are about their future. Growing up in poverty has not dented their enthusiasm and hope for the future. Thanks to you, STOW members, they are enabled to have life chances that would not otherwise be possible. THANK YOU!

Best wishes for 2026 and onwards, kind regards,
Marie
Founder and Chair of STOW



STOW continues to provide stability and support in turbulent times

As our members and supporters will be aware, it is the ongoing long-term commitment to students' educational and social needs until they have completed their education which has made such a difference to so many of them over now more than two decades.

Looking back there are many, many STOW stories of otherwise very disadvantaged children and young people starting at primary school, continuing successfully in education and going on to University or Technical College. We have for example had young people go on to study medicine, nursing, teaching, becoming drivers, electricians and administrators. Many go on to build successful lives and careers and are able to support both themselves and often their wider family and community.

For our supported students, recent months have seen increased upheaval and turbulence both globally and closer to home. There have of course been other 'bumps along the road' over the past 21 years which STOW has often been able to help smooth over for students, often during the all-important monitoring visits. These help us ensure reliable, continued, educational, financial and social support at a local level with our Tanzanian partner NGO, Tumaini.

There have been some very positive changes in Tanzania's state-funded education in recent years especially for primary school children who are no longer charged fees to attend school. However, as students get older, costs for exams, materials (these days often including smartphones and laptops), accommodation and fees have continued to mount and be met from STOW's funding.

For this academic year, 2025/26, we have sent £55,000 out to Tanzania in support of 37 students. For 2026/27, we expect to have to provide some £48,000 to support 28 students.

So wearing my Treasurer's hat I ask that if you're able to do so as a member and/or donor please continue to support STOW as you have so generously done to in the past.

As always my thanks go to my fellow Trustees for their wisdom and support, to Pam Stevens for her day-to-day detailed assistance, and to Jeremy Wagg for his annual oversight of our books.

STOW continues to provide a 'hand up' rather than 'hand out' through supporting long-term education for some of the most disadvantaged young people in Tanzania.

*Martin Stevens,
Hon Treasurer, March 2026*

Receipts and payments 1st June 2025 to 18th February 2026

RECEIPTS		PAYMENTS	
Members' subscriptions	£1,391		
Donations (including £15,641 from Australian Rotary; £230 from Benhall PCC)	£25,908	Grants to TUMAINI for 2025/26 budget	£54,000
Donations in memory of Joan Craighead	£35	Grant to TUMAINI for Jan 26 monitoring trip	£1,000
Bryan's Barn 2025	£1,784		
		Additional cost for flight for re-scheduled Jan/Feb 26 monitoring trip	£171
Child Sponsorship	£12,081		
Gift Aid	£5,645	Public liability insurance	£403
		HSBC bank charges	£89
Total receipts	£46,844	Total payments	£55,663
Deficit of receipts over payments	-£8,819		
Balance brought forward from 1 June 2025	£40,798		
Funds in hand at 18th Feb 2026	£31,979		
Account balance: HSBC Charitable account	£31,979		

Martin Stevens, Hon Treasurer, Feb 2025

During the more than 20 years since STOW's founding in June 2005 we have funded over 2,750 annual school and further education places, helping well over 350 children to get education and training with many going on to paid employment.

Note: you can donate to us by a variety of methods.

1. Ideally, because this does not incur bank charges, by BACS online transfer to 'STOW' sort code 40-40-20 account number 61264370
2. By cheque made payable to 'STOW' and sent to Acorn Cottage, Kelsale, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 2QY
3. By credit or debit card via our CAF page (<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/19885>) or use the 'Donate' button on our website (www.stowcharity.org)
4. Contactless card payments are now available at events

NOTICE of STOW Annual General Meeting

This will be held at 3 pm on

Sunday 11th October 2026

at Cavendish House, The Spinney,

Saxmundham, Suffolk, IP17 1AR

(Please park on Brook Farm Road)

This issue of the newsletter is supported by 'Christian House and Church Swap'
www.chacs.co.uk

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