

Supporting Tanzanian

STOW

Orphans and Widows

STOW NEWS

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Schola with one of our students at Ruaha Catholic University

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Dear Members

This newsletter comes to you much later this year as the Tanzanian government has moved the start of college and university terms even later this year. Schola and I had decided, whilst planning this trip, that it would be good for us to visit the older students, many of whom would have just started or be in the process of registering for their courses. We could then help out with any difficulties they may be having – for many of them it was their first time away from home and so far away. We sent out in advance with the second instalment of the budget an extra £1,000 before the visit so as to cover any trip costs and additional student needs. So, I went out the last week in October and returned on 6th November. Schola and Freddy picked me up at Dar es Salaam airport and we made our way straight to Morogoro – very, very slowly due to heavily laden lorries that seemed to travel at 10 miles an hour!

DODOMA

We stayed overnight in Morogoro before heading to Dodoma, the capital of Tanzania. Schola had decided that it was too far to go all the way from Dar in one day. I was quite grateful as I'd just disembarked from an overnight flight! We stayed two nights in Dodoma and managed to see all of our 8 students in that area. Four of them were just about to start their courses. It was “registration week” and they told us that they were spending hours in queues!



Queueing for registration

Ramadhani and Wilson Our first port of call was to Berega College on the outskirts of Dodoma. Ramadhani and Wilson are both in their first year of a 3-year Pharmacy course. When I asked why they had chosen to study Pharmacy, they said: “Because it is interesting for us”. I asked if all their lectures etc. were given in English. They said: “Yes they are, and we do find it hard to understand!” Although both students had done their GCSEs and A- levels in English, and had got high marks, they were still struggling with the language. However, they said it was easier to read English than to speak it and didn’t seem at all fazed by the challenge!



Ramadhani and Wilson at Berega

The two live in a hostel nearby and travel by local bus to the hospital for their studies. We gave them funds to buy a white shirt, sports shoes and a white laboratory coat each. Both seemed relaxed and really enjoying their new environment. Schola told me that there is a bus that goes direct from Tanga to Dodoma – it’s a long, long trip!

Emanuel Our next visit on the same day was to see Emanuel at St John’s University, where he too is studying Pharmacy. Schola told me that the government allocates students to both course and college location. Sometimes students get the course and location that they chose in their application – other times they do not! Emanuel told us he is finding it very cold living on the outskirts of Dodoma. Schola told me that she had bought all the Dodoma students a blanket each. Emanuel was full of smiles and seemed very happy to be at his university. He asked us if he could have a smartphone to help with research. We returned the next day with one. As you can see from the photo, he was very pleased. Raphael, who we were to visit later on and who is in his 3rd year at College, had met Emanuel off the bus from Tanga and had shown him where his college was. Lucky Emanuel also got an “orientation tour” of the area!



Emmanuel with new smartphone



Adamu Whilst out shopping in Dodoma town we also bought trousers, a shirt and a sweater for Adamu, also studying in Dodoma. He is studying

Accountancy, Business Administration and Human Resource at the College of Business and Education — a 3-year course — and is hoping to find a career which will enable him to return to live in Tanga.

Like his fellow Tanga students, Adamu was feeling the cold and so very pleased to get a sweater. We bought him a smartphone in February to help in his studies.



Adamu and his sister in 2015

This is a young man that I have known since 2015, when he was at primary school and living with his grandparents. He and his sister used to grow mchicha (spinach) and sell bunches to raise a bit of pocket money. Hasn’t he come a long way!

UNIVERSITY OF DODOMA

We then took a crazy route to the University of Dodoma (UDOM). There is a perfectly good tarmac road that goes up to the university campus from the main Morogoro-Dodoma road and from Dodoma itself. However, Google maps decided otherwise and so we went on a “scenic” dirt road through the back of beyond and finally reached the campus after a long and bumpy trip!



A UDOM canteen

The university campus is absolutely massive. It's like a big town. Each faculty has its own "campus" and we needed to go by



A UDOM class block

car between each of these faculties, although we noticed a few shortcuts taken by students. We have 3 sponsored students here – Jabiri, Janet and Yustina.

Jabiri We met Jabiri - who is in his second year – at the Administration Block of the Natural and Mathematical Sciences. I had been told that he was studying medicine. Indeed the government had selected him to do this. However, on reaching the university over a year ago, he was switched to a "Medical Laboratory" course. He told me that he was learning about radiation, how to take X-rays, do CT scans etc. He was very disappointed not to be studying to be a doctor. I know that had been his dream for some years past and he got exceptionally good A-level grades. "They destroyed my dream," Jabiri told me. Despite his disappointment Jabiri is studying hard and said that maybe when he has



Jabiri in 2010

completed his degree he will be able to use the qualification to enable him to study medicine. Fingers crossed for him.



Jabiri at his desk

I have known Jabiri since he was 8 years old. I first met him in 2010. His mother had died and his father had abandoned him. His grandfather, together with other members of his extended family, had taken him and his sister into their home. He has always worked so hard to get where he is today. STOW wishes him very good luck.

Janet We discovered that Janet too had had her course changed when she enrolled on campus. She had been selected by the government to go on a "Medical Laboratory" course but had been switched when she arrived to an ICT degree course. She too, was disappointed with the change but, like Jabiri, was making the most of the opportunity. Like all the children STOW sponsors, Janet had a difficult time growing up. Her parents died when she was very little and she went to live with Anna, her "auntie" (as she called her).



Janet and her auntie in 2010

In more recent times it has been Janet who has been the carer, looking after Anna. Janet has been very worried about her aunt. She told us Anna had had TB last year and the doctor advised her not to cook every day because of the smoke fumes. We had previously given Anna a loan to start a business cooking fish from home and selling it on. However, this business had had to now be done by her daughter Mariamu, and it would have to be elsewhere.

Schola reassured Janet that she would continue to keep an eye on her aunt and make sure that she was OK. I know that Schola had visited Anna a few months ago and given her a food parcel on behalf of STOW.



Janet at UDOM

Yustina We were then joined by our third Dodoma University student, Yustina, who is in her first year. Yustina was still in the process of registering. She had been selected by the government to study teaching and was keeping her fingers crossed that the university wouldn't change her onto another course!



Yustina



Janet and Yustina in the canteen

Yustina said they had a good canteen so I invited the students to have lunch there. Jabiri declined as he had lectures. Both girls had a hearty meal and a soda. STOW allocates funds for each student to buy food at their colleges as meals are not included in the college/university fees.

I asked Yustina if her mother was still collecting wood from the forests to sell on in small bundles. She too had had a loan from STOW. Yustina said that she was and that the business was "going OK". Here is a picture of them both in 2015, showing part of the wood collection in the background!



Yustina and her mother in 2015

STOW has been supporting Yustina since 2012, from primary, through secondary, then A-level and now on to university. Just goes to show what long-term continued support can do to change a person's life chances!!

Raphael

We then went back into Dodoma town and headed for The Institute of Rural Development Planning to see Raphael. After going

the wrong way down a dirt road – as instructed by Google Maps – we asked a motorbike taxi to lead us to it. For the small price of £3, he took us right to the door!

Raphael was at the front gate to greet us and showed us around his college. He is in the third year of a Development Planning diploma. He told us that he would be looking for work with the council offices in Pangani where he comes from. Raphael needed a new smart phone as his old one was broken and “not big enough anyway” as he said. We took him to town to buy one – he was delighted! His hostel, where he sleeps and eats, is on the college site, so no travelling for him, though he told me the food was expensive! We do budget for meals for all our students but I gave him (and all the other students) extra funds to help them out. Raphael told us he was enjoying his course and hopefully looking forward to a career in local government. It was so pleasing to hear how well he is doing after such a difficult childhood.



Raphael with his new phone

IRINGA

After a second night in Dodoma we headed off to Iringa (a special place for me as my mother was born there). We reached it mid-afternoon and found a Lutheran Hostel which was quite near town and checked in for two nights. On our way the student we were due to visit, Mwananvua, texted Schola to say that someone had stolen her jumper and shoes. As it can be very cold in Iringa we went to the market to find her replacements. Later I took Schola and Freddie to see a lady whom I had known whilst I was a child at school in Mbeya. Schola and I found it fascinating to hear stories of her long life in Tanzania.

Mwananvua

The next morning we set off to find Mwananvua at the Ruaha Catholic University. She is in her second year studying Computer Science. She said: “It is hard work but I am doing OK”. She lives in a university hostel nearby which has a canteen. “I don’t have breakfast because of the budget,” she told me, “but I do have lunch and dinner”!



She has a laptop which is one I took out earlier this year - someone had kindly passed on their old laptop to STOW.

Mwananvua proudly showed me round her college and into one of the classrooms. It was extremely busy with new students registering for their first term.



Mwananvua

We then drove off her campus to where the dormitories were. She shares a room with 3 other students. There was a lot of giggling whilst we were visiting!

RETURN TO DAR VIA MOROGORO

The next day we set off on the long journey back to Morogoro, just to stay the night. We had a very, very slow trip down an escarpment with a constant flow of heavy goods lorries going at around 10 miles per hour with their brakes constantly in use. After some hours the road went right through Mikumi National Park. We saw several giraffe and some antelopes, which was great.

After a good night's sleep we set off for Dar es Salaam to visit the last of the students for this trip.

Amiri

When I met Amiri on my monitoring trip in January 2020, he was so excited to tell me that he had done well in his GCSEs. He had got As in all subjects (except a B in Geography and a D in Kiswahili). He proudly told me that he was 1st in his class of 99 students! His ambition was to be a mechanical engineer. STOW sponsored him to do his A-levels, studying sciences.

I was delighted to hear this year that he had done so well that he is about to start a 4-year engineering degree course at Dar es Salaam University. His dream was coming true!

Amiri was in the process of registering, which he had been doing for the last week, so we couldn't keep him for long. He said there were many, many students trying to get registered and lectures were due to start in two days!

My goodness – what an enormous campus! Probably as big as the one in Dodoma, again with each faculty having its own set of buildings.

I plan to see Amiri when I go out in January next year, on my way back to Dar airport. I hope he will have been registered by then and will have a bit more time to chat.



I hope you enjoyed reading about my trip and some of the students you, as STOW members, are supporting. What a difference you all are making to the lives of these vulnerable young folk by giving them the opportunity to carry on with their education, enabling them to have careers. A future that not only supports them but also their extended families and indeed the wider Tanzanian community. Thank you all SO much.

Best wishes for a very Happy Christmas and a 2024 that is filled with love and peace.

Kind regards and heartfelt thanks,

*Marie Adams,
Founder and Chair of STOW*

Tanzanian Snippets

Solar Power

Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar have each initiated groundbreaking solar power plants. The projects respectively represent the first grid-linked solar power project on the mainland and a major step towards reducing Zanzibar's dependence on undersea power cables. The mainland one will eventually produce 150 MW and the Zanzibar one 180 MW.

Anti-poaching efforts paying off

There has been a steady rebound in elephant and black rhino populations as anti-poaching campaigns and ongoing enforcement and intelligence work continue to reduce the impact of poaching. Black rhinos have increased from 163 in 2019 to 238 in 2022 and elephants from 43,330 in 2014 to 60,000 in 2022 – Africa's 3rd-largest population.

New plants discovered

Six new plants have been discovered at various remote locations in Tanzania.

"The six newly listed plants form part of the 30 strange shrubberies we recently found at various spots in the country's landscape, the other 26 are yet to be fully studied," revealed American botanist Barry Yinger who discovered the new plants alongside his Tanzanian associate Robert Sikawa.



One of the six new plants discovered

Mr Yinger was visiting Tanzania in 2020 and found himself stuck following the Covid outbreak so he decided to spend lockdown going around the country studying plants. Scientists have reason to believe the new plants are endemic to Tanzania as they are yet to be seen anywhere else in the world.

Jeremy Adams

Some of the Higher Education establishments where our students are studying



*St John's University
of Tanzania*



Ruaha Catholic University



University of Dar es Salaam



University of Dodoma



*Institute of Rural Development
Planning*

Thoughts from the Treasurer—November 2023



I write following our AGM in September to share, with those unable to join us then, a brief outline of STOW's financial position at our financial year end (31st May). I would also like to share some thoughts, having

spoken with Marie a week or so ago following her return from a successful monitoring trip seeing a number of our older and more difficult to visit students.

In brief, during the 2022/23 year (ending on 31st May) we continued to raise and receive sufficient funds (£49,938) which, when supplemented from our reserves, allowed STOW to continue to fulfil our agreed commitments to all STOW students.

During the 2022/23 year some £58,000 was sent to our partners in Tanzania to directly support students, or given as one-off grants during Marie's two monitoring trips.

In addition to regular and one-off donations from members and supporters, some £1300 was also raised at STOW 'events'. Such events also serve to raise the profile of STOW, sometimes leading to unexpected additional donations and to new people becoming members of STOW.

Inflation in both Tanzania and at home along with changeable exchange rates continued to give our Trustees a degree of concern.

As we had planned for, our reserves fell from £66,722 to £54,046 during the year. We would expect STOW reserves to fall by a similar amount during our current financial year. As regards the current year, our income

continues to arrive at a steady and sustainable rate enabling us to continue to support all our students. Funds in hand as at 18th November total £39,672.

We are now, following conversations held with our Tanzanian partners during the recent monitoring trip, awaiting updated budgetary information. It is likely we will need to agree to a modest increase in the funds sent to Tanzania during this year, which we can reasonably fund from current income and reserves.

In short, our students are falling in number but those that remain are getting older and are often in more expensive higher education. Most of these older students in addition need increased levels of social and living support.

I realise that we all continue to live in less predictable financial times. However, should you be in a position to be able to consider an increase to your standing order or to make an additional one-off donation, you can be assured as always that the money will be put to effective use supporting our students.

STOW provides an excellent value 'hand up, not a hand out' to some otherwise very disadvantaged young people. It provides a real educational springboard for adult life enabling students and their extended families to live a more settled, fulfilled, and sustainable life.

As always, thanks yet again for your continued support. As we know from nearly 20 years of STOW experience, your donations really do make a positive difference to the life chances of those students YOU support and their wider communities.

*Martin Stevens, Hon Treasurer,
November 2023*

Receipts and payments 1st June 2023 to 18th October 2023

RECEIPTS

Members' subscriptions **£878**

Donations (including **£20,661**
£16,380 from Australian
Rotary)

Bryan's Barn 2023 **£1,366**

Child Sponsorship **£3,156**

Gift Aid **£5,846**

Total receipts **£31,906**

Deficit of receipts
over payments -£15,588

Balance brought forward
from 1 June 2023 £54,046

**Funds in hand at 18th Oct
2023** **£38,458**

Account balance:
HSBC Charitable account **£38,458**

PAYMENTS

**Grants to TUMAINI
for 2023/24** **£44,000**

**Grant money spent on Oct
2023 monitoring trip** **£1,500**

Total Tz payments (96%) **£45,500**

**Visa for
Oct 23 monitoring trip** **£42**

**Return flight for Oct 23
monitoring trip** **£1,483**

Public liability insurance **£378**

HSBC bank charges **£91**

Total UK payments (4%) **£1,994**

Total payments **£47,494**

Martin Stevens, Hon Treasurer, Oct 2023

During the 19 years since STOW's founding in 2005 we have funded over 2,800 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



University of Dar es Salaam

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www.chacs.co.uk

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