

*Supporting Tanzanian*

**STOW**

*Orphans and Widows*

**STOW NEWS**

March 2023

Issue number 32



*TUMAINI with Tanga Tech students*

[www.stowcharity.org](http://www.stowcharity.org)  
Charity registration no: 1112424

Dear Members,

It seems a long time since Christmas but I hope it was a happy one for you all. This newsletter comes with my good wishes for a peaceful 2023.

I thought you might find it helpful for me to give you a brief summary of which schools and colleges the children you all support are in. The numbers have gone down significantly but the budget continues to rise... and rise ...!! Field trips (work experience placements) alone for this year for 11 college students will cost nearly £2,000!

STOW now supports 1 child in his last year at primary and 31 students at secondary — 21 of whom are at boarding school. Nine of these students are studying A-level and are spread across the country. The other children are in boarding due to their extremely vulnerable home circumstances. We have 7 students at Tanga Technical College (see 6 of them in cover photo) who are studying between them to be electricians, plumbers and bricklayers. We have 10 students at other colleges dotted around the country studying vocational courses, such as teaching diploma, nursery, sports academy, community development, record keeping and management. Lastly, we have 12 students at university on various courses eg: medicine, medical technician, teaching, mathematics, public administration.

All students in Form II of secondary school have to pass national end-of-year exams to progress to GCSE. Unfortunately, many of our Form II students are having to repeat this year. I was very surprised at this, but Schola told me that the government changed the syllabus halfway through the year and this led to many students across the country failing these exams — our students were not exceptions!



The government has also built many new secondary schools so some of our students have had to move schools, some to Ummi Mwalimu Secondary and others to Kihongwe, meaning that they are even further away from home. Hence several bikes were bought whilst I was there! We had to bargain hard to bring the price down, but they still cost a lot

more than last year. I was impressed how the students carried on with their studies despite large construction vehicles moving around the grounds.



## Catching up with Issa and his family (see July 2021 and February 2022 newsletters)

Issa is our youngest student and is our last primary school student. He is in his last year and was reluctant to join us in a home visit as he told us that he had extra tuition after school, getting ready for his final end-of-primary exams.

Matatiso had paid for half a term's extra tuition for him and STOW paid for the rest of the year. Issa was so pleased, he told us that he wanted to go to Usagara Secondary School, which is in Tanga. We know the



*Solar panel on Issa's new house*



*Issa with his bibi in the house that Matatiso built*

school as both our medical students went there, it is one of the best in Tanga. We encouraged him to study hard and assured him that we would only make a quick home visit and bring him straight back to school in time for lessons and tuition. I was so very pleased to see that his grandmother is now back living with, and caring for, him. She was over the moon with the house that Matatiso had help build for her and Issa. Issa now has his own bedroom and they even have a small solar panel on the roof for a light, which a neighbour gave them. His grandmother has another room and Hadija sleeps with her during school holidays – she is at boarding school in Zingibari.

## Mariam

We visited one of our A-level students, Mariam, who is boarding at a college not far out of Tanga, called Mkingaleo, where she is studying Arts subjects. The school does not provide text books and Schola told me that she had bought her some very expensive ones last week.

Mariam told me that she is not finding the lessons difficult and her dream is to go to the University of Dodoma to study to be a teacher. I encouraged her in this aspiration and told her that all the Heads of the schools we visited – particularly the newbuilds – say that they are very short of teachers.

She also told me that the school only provides 'salty' water to drink and many parents buy large bottles of water for their daughters so I gave her money to buy several bottles of drinking water which she could get at the school shop.



*Mariam in her dorm at Mkingaleo*

## **Mariamamu – studying plumbing at Tanga Technical College**

Although we had seen Mariamamu at Tanga Tech college, we had not been to see where she is now living. We arranged for her to meet us on a road that Schola knew and take us to where she lives.

I noticed that she was limping and saw a gash on her ankle. She said this had happened when she got off the motorbike taxi, coming home. As soon as we got to the house I sent her off to wash the wound and we later took her aunt to a shop to buy some antiseptic cream.



When we arrived at her house, which looked quite grand, I asked her aunty why Mariamamu was no longer living with her grandparents. She told me that Mariamamu was not able to study when she was living there as her grandparents had her doing everything: cooking, shopping, washing etc. Her aunty told me that sometimes Mariamamu would go to college not having had anything to eat, so they decided that, whilst she is a student, she should live with them.

The living room was bare apart from a couple of large freezers. Mariamamu said her uncle gets fish from the ocean, stores it and sells it on in smaller amounts to local shops. Although they have electricity in the house, there is no running water yet—they collect it in buckets from the garden. Mariamamu showed us where she sleeps, a pleasant room with a large bed, which she shares with “a little one”, as she told me.

## **Updates**

### **1. Anthony**



*Anthony with Esther, Schola and bibi*

I was so pleased when I learned last year that Anthony had finally passed his Standard VII exams and moved on to secondary school. He must have got good marks as he progressed to Japan Secondary. However, when we went to Japan Secondary this time, we were told that Anthony has hardly been at school this year and had failed to enrol for Form II.

So we went to Anthony’s house and met him on the way carrying shopping which he told us was for grandmother (bibi). Anthony lives with her and has an uncle who doesn’t live with them but is often around and apparently, lately, has been borrowing Anthony’s STOW bike to move goods around.

Anthony says he doesn’t like Japan Secondary, he keeps being told off. We suggested that this could be because he hardly ever shows up at school! We also reminded him that Japan is the nearest school to him, any others would be even more difficult to reach.

We managed to persuade him to return to the school. After much discussion with the Head, he agreed that Anthony could start in Form II but that he would need a lot of extra tuition to catch up. We have now paid for this extra tuition for him.

Anthony is a bright young lad and we've stressed to him that education is his route out of poverty. Both Schola and Esther have since been going to Japan Secondary regularly to see how Anthony is getting on. Teachers have told them that he is now a regular attender. So fingers crossed he will keep this up. He has important exams in November which he needs to pass to go on to Form III.



*Anthony back at school*

## **2. Silas**

You may remember from previous newsletters (issues 28 and 30) that Silas's mother died very suddenly in 2021. He managed to get through secondary school and went on to study Masonry at Tanga Technical College. During the week he would live in rooms rented by STOW for our Tanga Technical students and go home at weekends to check on his house. Unfortunately the friends who "looked after" the house during the week let him down. Last November he decided he had to give up his course and work from home. He has been doing casual labour for a builder, trying to earn enough to keep him, his younger sister and brother at home during the school holidays. Schola has been hosting them in her home for parts of the holidays too.

We talked about how getting his certificate if he completed his course would open up more opportunities for work for him. I said that maybe he could continue to work part time and complete his course at the same time. After quite a bit of discussion, Silas agreed to return to Tanga Tech to finish the course (he's in the picture on the front cover).



*Silas and Schola in discussion*

## **3. Mwadora**

I wrote about Mwadora, whom we managed to get into the Sports Academy in Dar, in the February 2022 newsletter (Issue 30, page 7). Quote: "Over 11 years of STOW....not giving up on him has finally paid off!" We decided to catch up with him a year later to see how he was getting on. I asked Schola if she had let him know that we were visiting and she assured me she had.

After a very long journey across the crowded roads in Dar, with many diversions due to road works, we finally arrived at the academy only to be told that he had gone off to Mbeya as part of the under-20s football team and wouldn't be back until Sunday 25th February! Although disappointed not to see him in person, I was thrilled to learn that he had been picked for this team – I bet he is having the time of his life!

#### 4. Zamda

We had seen Zamda in February 2022 at Coastal High School. She was in her first year of A-levels studying several science subjects. We bought her some text books as the school doesn't provide these.

When we passed by the school this January, I suggested we popped into see how she was getting on but Schola told me that, due to Kenyan teachers being sent back to Kenya, there were not enough teachers at this school so Zamda had been moved to Same High School. It is one of the largest A-level schools in Tanzania and is in the Kilimanjaro area—quite a long journey north of Tanga and nearer Moshi than Tanga. The poor girl is likely to be getting quite cold there!



*Zamda in February 2022*

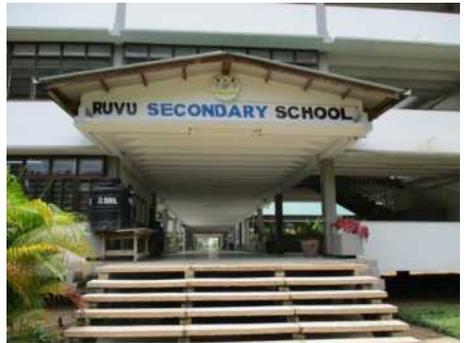
#### Margaret

We did a long and convoluted trip to see Margaret, studying A-levels at Ruvu Secondary School. At one point, where there was a lorry stuck in the mud, blocking our route, I thought



*Lorry stuck in mud*

we'd never get there! We eventually found our turning off the Morogoro to Dar road and drove through the mud up to the school.



*Ruvu Secondary School*



*Margaret*

All was quiet as the girls were in class. When they came out, they were all quietly jogging. Apparently, no walking is allowed between classes! All seemed very organised and calm. A teacher told us that there are 860 students at this school and many of the teachers also live on site during term time as the college is quite remote.

Margaret is studying A-level History, Kiswahili and English. She told us that “graduation” for the upper 6<sup>th</sup> was in March and she was also expected to attend, even though she is in lower 6<sup>th</sup> and would have to pay as food is provided. Margaret said that she had finished her pocket money as she was using £5.35 per month for food. She told us that breakfast is uji – a sort of thin porridge. Lunch is ugali (thick porridge) and beans and she was buying vegetables to go with this as well as fruit. Margaret said that she needed these “extras” to have a healthy diet. We gave her some cash for extra food and also paid for the graduation costs, so that she would not feel left out.

### **New STOW student—Jackline**

Jackline's parents separated and she and her mother moved away. She lives very far from the school—almost at the Kenyan border and has to come by bus. Sometimes she does not have any bus money so she walks! At other times she comes to school not having had any food. The teacher we were talking to knows the family and says that often there is no food in the house.

Jackline asked if she could be a boarder. She cried telling us her story and told me she wants to go on to study science at A-level. She will be sitting her GCSEs at the end of this year. We agreed that she should start immediately as a boarder at Zingibari. We introduced her to the 8 students STOW supports there and bought her all the necessary kit.



*Jackline with her new kit for Zingibari*

### **Small business loans**

We had given **Halima** funds last year to build a café. She told us that the “hoteli” was going well, though profit was small. However, the government is laying a pipeline just next to where her café is and she expected to be selling food and drink to the workers. She said there would not be enough room in her little café so wanted to expand and also to be able to buy ingredients in bulk, to save on costs. We paid a visit to her café and sure enough there were the workers, starting on the pipeline. Well worth another loan!



*View of pipeline construction from Halima's cafe*

### **Asha's wood business**

Asha goes into the forest, brings wood back by cart (pulled by donkey) and sells it locally. The hire of the cart costs about £2.50 a day if they don't go far and about £4 if they go further. She makes up bundles and sells them for about £1 each. She brings back around 6 or 7 bundles a trip so makes about £3 profit a day. She works every day. STOW lent her another 150,000/- (just over £50).



*Kind regards and heartfelt thanks, Marie Adams, Founder and Chair of STOW*

## **Tanzanian Snippets**

### **Repeal of ban on party rallies**

The ban was imposed by the late President John Magafuli in 2015, saying the country should instead focus on national development efforts. It led to frequent confrontations between opposition parties and the police and repeated arrests of opposition politicians.

On 3rd January 2023 in a meeting with leaders from 19 political parties, President Samia Suluhu Hassan announced that the ban should no longer apply. She said: “Permission for political meetings will be granted. Hold your meetings safely, but you have to adhere to the rules.”

### **The Tanzanian Liquid Natural Gas Project in Lindi**

Tanzania LNG will be a joint project with Shell and Equinor. It is believed that it will be the largest energy project in Africa’s history in terms of capital investment. It could increase Tanzania’s GDP by \$7billion a year. It represents a potential transformational economic impact: between 270,000 and 600,000 direct and indirect employment opportunities; between \$2billion and \$6billion in fiscal contributions to the government a year and between \$3billion and \$8billion a year in balance of payments contributions, depending on different future price scenarios. *(From report by Stanbic Bank Tanzania)*

### **The Julius Nyerere Hydropower Plant nears completion**

President Samia Suluhu Hassan attended the start of the filling of the reservoir in December. This is another transformational project. It will generate 2,115 MW of electricity (as against Tanzania’s current total installed generating capacity of 1,606 MW). *(See photo on back cover).*

### **Rishi Sunak’s East African connections**

In 1966, Rishi Sunak’s maternal grandmother sold all of her wedding jewellery and bought a one-way ticket to the UK, leaving her husband and three children behind in Tanzania. She found a job as a bookkeeper, saved every penny and a year later was able to pay for her husband and children (including Rishi’s mother, Usha) to join her.

Usha went on to study pharmacology at Aston University where she met and married Yashvir Sunak whose family had moved to Britain from Nairobi during his young adulthood.

*Jeremy Adams*

# Dates for your Diary

## Beetle Drive!

**Friday 24th March 2023  
at 6.30 pm**



Bacon butties, wine, beer, soft drinks, and ice cream

Beetle Drive

followed by a raffle, coffee and a delicious selection of cakes!

**St Johns Church Hall, Saxmundham**

(Parking available up the church drive or Waitrose)

Adults: £5, under 16s free! Raffle: £1 a ticket  
(minimum age 6 years)



To book tickets phone 01728 663583 or pay on the door,  
cash or card!

## *NOTICE of STOW Annual General Meeting*

This will be held at 3 pm on

**Sunday 1st October 2023**

at Cavendish House, The Spinney,  
Saxmundham, Suffolk, IP17 1AR

(Please park on Brook Farm Road)

## Thoughts from the Treasurer—March 2023



I write as we move towards the end of the current STOW financial year, and following Marie's report a few days ago to the Trustees concerning her very recent monitoring trip to Tanzania.

This financial year will have seen over £53,000 go direct to Tanzania for the benefit of STOW students.

Looking towards the end of the financial year, it looks as though expenditure will be some £12,000 or so below our predicted income. This deficit will be covered from our reserves as agreed with the Charity Commission. We had expected to need to use some of our reserves this year but the amount has been significantly higher than we would have wished for or predicted at this time last year.

As Marie has indicated both earlier in this newsletter and in recent discussions with the Trustees, there has been significant unexpected and unavoidable additional costs this year outside the budget agreed previously with our Tanzanian partners TUMAINI. These include: higher than expected inflation, unpredictable exchange rates, curriculum changes which led to several of our students having to repeat a year, field trips for students and new mandatory charges for food during the school day.

It now seems almost certain that these will not be additional costs just for this year but also in large part for future years. Fortunately our reserves should be able to bridge this level of increased funding for about another 3 years or so – but only if

we do not take on any new students. Any additional students' educational and support provision would otherwise need to come entirely from our reserves.

As you will be aware, STOW unlike some other educational support charities, makes a clear commitment to continue to fund students for as long as they continue to benefit from their education. Ideally we should like STOW to have used the major part of the reserve funds as our last student completes their education in a few years time.

I realise that we now live in more difficult financial times, BUT if you are able to review any standing order you have with STOW in the light of inflation, or can attend and donate at one of our coming fundraising events, or make a one-off donation, or 'persuade' a sympathetic friend or family member to join us..... please PLEASE do so. Details of how to donate can be found on the back cover of this newsletter and on our website ([www.stowcharity.org](http://www.stowcharity.org)) where you can also download a membership form, or you can simply contact STOW by phone on 01728 603348.

As always thanks again for your continued support – your cash really does make a lifelong positive difference to some of the most underprivileged young people anywhere in the world.

For them education is a leg up – not a hand out.

*Martin Stevens,  
Hon Treasurer,  
March 2023*



During the 19 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](http://www.stowcharity.org))
4. Contactless card payments are now available at events



Construction of Julius Nyerere Hydropower Plant in Tanzania (*Photo: Elswedy Electric*)

This issue of the newsletter is supported by Simon Ratcliffe

Supporting Tanzanian Orphans and Widows (STOW)

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