

NEWS LETTER KARIBU NYUMBANI ORPHANAGE Autumn 2020

The Children

In the last newsletter (Feb 2020), we reported the arrival of David and Isaya to the Karibu Nyumbani (which means 'Welcome Home' in Swahili) family. That brought the number of children to 22. Since then there has only been one addition to the family, if rather temporary! A little girl called Dominika came to the orphanage. However, Dominika has now returned to be with her Aunty. A bit sad, but she was happy.

So there are still 22 children at the orphanage – aged from twelve (Queenie) to less than two (David). The current facilities at Karibu Nyumbani can accommodate up to 40 children, but until the current monthly living costs are covered by regular donations, the number of children will be restricted. More information on this can be found in the 'Message from the Trustees' section at the end of this newsletter.

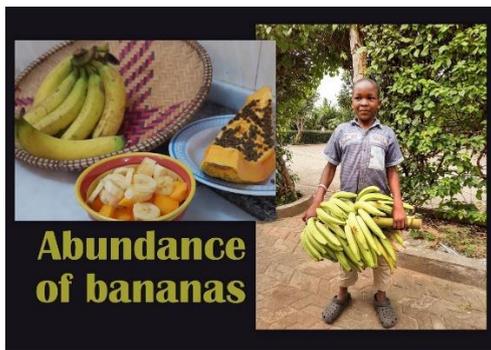
Covid-19 : Life under lockdown

Tanzania was quick to lockdown when the pandemic spread across the world earlier in the year. Schools were closed, businesses shut and everyone entering the country had to self-isolate for 14 days. As a result, infection rates and deaths from Covid-19 were initially kept under control. However, at the beginning of May, the Tanzanian Government stopped reporting infection and death rates for the country because the President said that releasing the figures would cause unnecessary panic. At that time, 509 infections and 21 deaths had been recorded. It is not known what the figures are now.

Fiona decided that the orphanage should lockdown to prevent the possibility of the virus affecting the children. No-one was allowed to enter or leave the Orphanage. It was a time of drawing closer to the Lord.

Fiona recalled at the time: "There are 40 of us in the house, and the children are having tuition every day with Ester's niece and nephew, and the 12 small children are having lessons with Madam Kat from England. Every afternoon we gather to pray with the children, Aunties and Uncles.





We have been harvesting our cassava and drying it in the sun. Our driver has joined forces with our farmers, and they are working hard. We thank God for our milk and meat from home and for the simple menu of beans, rice and ugali (maize meal)! Our bananas are helping, and the oranges will soon be ready to eat!"

People in the village did not understand why the Orphanage was isolating themselves, despite the fact that the President said that everyone needed to stay at home and not make any unnecessary trips. However, the poverty in villages and small towns makes it almost impossible to isolate, shut down and socially distance.

Some of the children recorded their thoughts on the virus and the lockdown. Advent David (12 years old) wrote: "From my heart, I see the coronavirus has been a desert time, not only for us in Tanzania, but all over the world people have suffered. We



have been praying for all the Nations every day. I see that the place here where I live is beautiful and we have not been affected here by the virus, and I thank God for that. I also thank God that we were able to have school lessons at home here during this time. We also had a very blessed week of teaching on inner healing and it was very meaningful to me. Thank you God, and thank you to our friends who have been praying for us too."

"Hi, my name is Daflosa. Whilst we have been home, I have been so happy to learn how to sew with a sewing machine. I have been helping Mama Mia mending clothes and even making new clothes for other children. I continue to pray for our nation of Tanzania along with other nations that God takes away this sickness."



Schools were re-opened on 29th June and around the same time Tanzania's border restrictions were relaxed. The Orphanage came out of lockdown and movement of people in and out of the Orphanage was allowed again. Thankfully, no-one in the Orphanage has been affected by the virus. Long may it continue!

Faith Matters

A Week's Retreat

It had been on Ester's heart for many years to lead the children in a time of inner healing. What a better time than during the lockdown caused by the pandemic! Hotensia from Agape Community was invited to come and stay and to lead the week of prayer, reflection and healing.



It was a full-on time for everyone, with teaching morning and afternoon and individual ministry for anyone who wanted it. The children found time to chat to Hotensia about things on their heart and the Aunties and Uncles all expressed great joy after times of individual prayer.

The little ones over this time were having fun with Madam Kat and on the last day they had a morning of singing and dancing with a special time of prayer.



The School

As you may recall, the School opened in January 2019 with the first Nursery (Pre-primary Year 1) class of 20 children - five from the Orphanage and the remainder from local villages and the nearest town. In September 2019, the second phase of the School project began with the construction of three new classrooms and a toilet block.



At the beginning of this year, the first pupils in the school moved up to Pre-primary Year 2 and a new intake of pupils began in Nursery (Pre-primary Year 1). A total of 46 children attended the school. Madam Kat arrived from England to become the English Teacher.

The doubling in pupil numbers made it necessary for improvements to be made to the cooking facilities, where porridge is made for the children. Available facilities were basic. The picture opposite shows the progression from a log fire in a shack to a gas stove in a small store. What was needed was a proper kitchen. The proposal was to build a small kitchen store which could eventually be converted into teachers' accommodation when the school dining hall is built. Through a generous donation from a family in Germany, this project will now be implemented.



The academic year has been disrupted by the national closure of all schools in Tanzania because of the coronavirus pandemic. The school was closed for three and a half months.

First Day Back at School

All seven of the young ones from the Orphanage who go to the school were desperate to go back, and all the village children too. All 50 of them turned up beautifully and ready to learn and play. It was great to walk around the school and see everyone so happy.



Madam Kat, the English Teacher at the School writes: "My time teaching here has been varied. I have enjoyed the slower pace of life and the possibility to be creative making my own resources to use in my lessons with the nursery and pre-unit children and preparing homework for the children to do (this is done by hand because we don't have a photocopier). I taught the nursery and pre-school class for ten weeks before lockdown started. For the last month of teaching at the school, I had two fantastic volunteers to help me prepare teaching aids and to help the children with their writing.

After lockdown, the school closed and the volunteers returned home. I began to home school the seven younger children at the orphanage (one from nursery class and six from the pre-unit class). Teaching the children at home was a new challenge and at times it was difficult for the children to have school in their own home. Now, after three and a half months, we have returned to school again. I am very glad to be back with all the children and have missed them very much.



On one hand, it has been a challenge for me to teach here. The way of teaching is very different to what I have been used to teaching pre-schoolers in Poland and the UK. The children sit at desks learning formally and with limited resources. However, on the other hand, I have never met such joyful children in my life. Every day I am

greeted by children with beaming smiles who are so happy to be at school, to have a school uniform and school bag and who delight to play on the slides we have on our school grounds at play time. Here the children teach me to find joy in such simple things. For example, the children in my classes are so delighted when they get to use a pencil with a rubber on the top and colouring pencils are treasured items used for special work. This is in great contrast to how things are in Europe where children have everything available to them from Duplo blocks to interactive whiteboards. My dream is to have a laminator and laminating pouches so I can prepare resources that can last. I am learning a lot from teaching here. I look forward to the next season of teaching. We have two new teachers who are very lovely and it's great to work as a team. I hope together we can help every child learn successfully."



Registration of the School

In 2021, the School will be going into its third year. The children who started in the Nursery class are soon to finish Pre-School and go into Primary Class 1. Becoming a primary school requires the school to be registered. Fiona and Ester have been working hard on completing the registration process and they heard very recently that in order to be registered the school needs to build three new classrooms and a library – all before the start of the new academic year in January 2021!

Phase 3 Building Programme

Fiona and Ester were fully aware that they would need to build further facilities to cater for another year group at the school, but the extent of the building requirement to meet the registration conditions came as a shock. Praise God that funding for all four new buildings has been so generously provided by Jane, Patron of Karibu Nyumbani. Thanks also to donors from Knowle in the UK who have raised funds to go towards the cost of fitting out the new classrooms and library with desks and chairs, blackboards and cupboards. Now prayers are needed that the buildings can be built and kitted out in time for the start of the new year!

Visitors

In 2019, at least seven groups or individuals visited Karibu Nyumbani from overseas, bringing with them their energy, ideas and love. Both the children and the staff benefit from these visits.

As Fiona reflects: "Because of the pandemic, very few volunteers have visited this year. We have missed not having volunteers come. We truly love people to come for whatever amount of time to enlarge our family.

In March, because of the pandemic, we said goodbye to our two lovely volunteers from the Czech Republic who had only been with us for one month of their planned three months. It was very sad, and since then we have not had any volunteers. Not only do the children miss the presence of the volunteers - helping them with

homework, playing, going for walks etc, but I miss the help that I often had with work in the office, Mama Mia misses it in the shop and Madam Kat misses the help she was getting in the school.

Not only have our visitors from overseas been curtailed, but also our Tanzanian friends have not been able to come as they would have before bringing not only their love and prayers, but from time to time, church groups used to bring us food, and all that has stopped. This has made a big change to our budget.”

Supporting the local community

Ever since Fiona and Ester arrived in the village and started their orphanage, they have engaged with the local community. Local staff are employed at the orphanage, little children found playing in the dirt road outside the gates were taken into the compound to learn, sing and play games for four hours each morning. Surplus milk from the orphanage cows is sold to the locals, piglets provided to help them start their own farms. Services are held for villagers in the Chapel in the Orphanage.



However, the opening of the school has brought Fiona and Ester into close contact with parents of the pupils. The school is fee-paying (although the fees are kept as low as possible) and many of the parents struggle to pay the fees. This has provided opportunities to give financial assistance to local families. Fiona writes:

“Quite a change for us is now having parents in the village of the children in our school. It has brought us closer to the needs of the families around us. We have been so happy over the last year to have helped a few families.

For instance, we lent a small amount to a neighbour to help increase their shop. After 6 months they have returned their help and paid for their child at school and their business is thriving. We are now working with three other families with similar situations. Yesterday after finding a loan, we were able to help a family by giving the father a motor bike. He will pay back each day an amount that will mean that after one year he will have bought the bike and paid for his little girl at our school. One mother has asked for money for seeds so she can sell vegetables. Another mother has started to sell shoes and she is able to pay each week for her little girl. Somehow my heart is overjoyed that we are teaching the children, as well as helping parents to be able to help their families.



Some parents have shown an interest in learning English, maybe if we were to have a Volunteer English teacher for a year that would be great!!! I can't say how much we are missing the help we get from volunteers.”

The school is blessing so many children and families. It has brought the Orphanage truly into the heart of the village. We pray that they will be able to continue helping parents with advice as to how they can provide for their children and with funding to help them set up small businesses so they can move away from their poverty

The Karibu Nyumbani family

Karibu Nyumbani is not an orphanage; it is a family home for orphaned and abandoned children. The heads of the 'family' are the three 'Mamas' – Mama Mama Pipi (some of the children had difficulty pronouncing 'Fiona' or 'Fifi!'), Mama Ester and Mama Mia – Ludmilla, a nun from the Czech Republic who came to visit and stayed! They are currently supported by four 'aunties' and four 'uncles'.

The aunties cook, wash, clean, tend to the vegetable patch – as well as look after the youngest children during the day and sleep in the Girl's House at night.



The uncles do the heavier work – digging, clearing, sweeping driving and maintenance work. They also look after and play with the children and they too sleep in the Boys' House at night.

Fiona relates: "We have had a complete turnover of young aunties. We have two new ones - Auntie Ester and Auntie Mariam - working closely

with our two older aunties, Auntie Rehema and Auntie Mama Mdogo. We also have a lady come in from outside to help us with washing the clothes each day. (This lady and her family are overwhelmed with the little that we give them. It has changed their situation, and also blessed us so much.)

As for men, we are helping two young men to find funds for their future. One wants to be a driver and needs a licence and the other wants to go to college to learn to be a builder. He was the apprentice with our builder at the school. These two are working with us for six months. They have been doing some needed maintenance and painting. They are also very lovely with the children.

So, we have four aunties and four uncles. Together with Kat, from England working in the school, and Auntie Joyce who is a cleaner in the school. The three Mamas are doing well, thank God. Mama Mia still very closely caring for David who is now one and a half."

Message from the Trustees

An update on the funding position from Glenda Galvin, chair of the Trustees for WHTT, the charity which supports the day to day needs of the Orphanage:

“Dear Roger,

..... Looking back at the donations over the last few months, we have nearly £2,000 a month coming in before claiming gift aid. Our aim is to give Fiona £2,500 a month. Her monthly needs are £3,000 but she fills up the gap with contributions from volunteers. Although there haven't been volunteers recently, the "patron" Jane Rose has made up the shortfall. Recently our one-off donations have been lower as there are generally fewer fundraising activities due to Covid but although the monthly income does fluctuate and there are some quite large semi-regular donations, we are getting into a much more comfortable position but we cannot afford to be complacent!

Please can you give our heartfelt thanks to your group of regular donors and thank you too!

God bless,

Glenda”

For more information on how you can donate, go to:

<https://www.karibunyumbani.org/help/donate>