

Ilula Orphan Program



Dear IOP friends and family

This month was filled with a lot of celebrations. We had the big opening for Sollerud Kindergarten Tanzania and Young Mothers Empowerment Center, birthday party, arrival party and Easter celebration. We have enjoyed every second, and we are looking forward to another month here at IOP.

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EXAMINATION HALL-

Monthly Update

The hall was supposed to be finished in November to conduct the National Examinations. Unfortunately it was not finished in time. Representatives from the Kilolo district education office, security office and the Kilolo district police office came to inspect how IOP had complied with the established standards. It was obvious that the hall was not completed. Due to that we needed to get the officers allowance to conduct the National examinations in ordinary classrooms. They inspected all classrooms but found none was acceptable to the given standards. There was no other way then to plead.

At the end they allowed the Examination to be conducted in the school mini library block, which was three meters square bigger than the classrooms. After a long struggle we managed to do the first National Examination safely. The Officers insisted that everyone is aware of the fact that this favour will never be given again.

It is IOP responsibility now to ensure that the hall is completed by September 2016 when they will come to conduct another inspection. With the availability of building materials for example roofing sheets and an on-going construction work IOP could convince the Representatives that the standards will be fulfilled next year.

Big thanks to IOP supporters who enabled IOP to save the day.

The budget for finishing the hall to the point of being usable is 336,000,000 TSH in total (about 176,843 USD). IOP still needs an additional Tsh.146, 000,000/= (76,843 USD). The amount has gone higher due to fluctuations and additional works. The remaining works are roofing, plastering, plumbing, electrification, windows, doors and other many works related to finishing. IOP is requesting goodwill and assistance from our IOP friends inside and outside Tanzania, so that our school can use the hall as required by the government.

To this end we have broken down the budget into smaller fundable parts, so that it is possible for anyone to donate for a particular purpose - for example cement, windows, et cetera. We would like to thank our friends and supporters for always helping us in times of need. Also, we thank Knowit Company and Engebråten High School in Norway for donating the start-up funds for the construction of this hall.

NEW GIRL AT THE CENTER

This is Prisca!

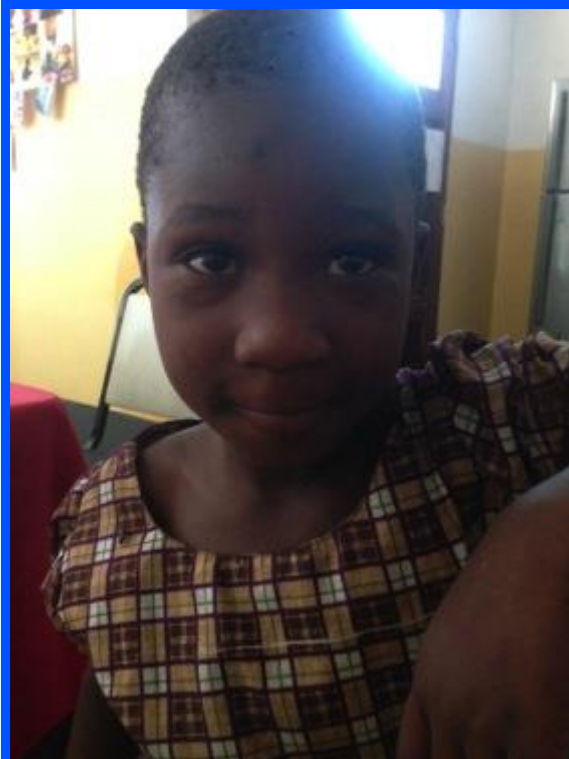
She is 6 years old, and will turn 7 in June. She arrived on the 29th of February, and was welcomed with open arms by everyone at IOP.

She arrived the same day as Osmund-group arrived, so it did not take long before she got a sponsor. Her sponsors name is Sonja, and I am sure they both enjoyed spending some days together and getting to know each other.

Prisca has already started in Sollerud Kindergarten Tanzania, and is enjoying her time there. It is amazing to see how all the girls are helping her to get used to her new home, and how life at IOP is. In other words, she became their sister the second day she arrived IOP.

Prisca is a kind girl, and she is getting to know her new surroundings with each passing day. That also makes it easier for us to get to know her.

You are warmly welcome dear, Prisca. We are looking forward getting to know you even better.



A DAY IN AFRICAN FAMILY



It is a great experience in Africa when volunteers spend a whole day in an African family. The aim is to share and learn experiences from each other. Osmund's family got this chance and spent some hours in very low-income families whose daily income allow them to get at least a meal and but don't have access to clean and safe water. The volunteers were grouped in four families who went to different villages i.e. Uhambingeto, Itungi, Mahenge and Mtandika.

Before going to the village they went to different local markets to buy some cooking items like rice, potatoes, tomatoes, vegetables and onions for the families. It was important buying the items in Ilula town because in the village they don't have an easy access to that. They also got the chance to be involved in various activities like fetching water, weeding the farm, cooking food and fixing solar lamp. Before eating the family and the visitors shared their stories including how many people they are in their family, how many meals do they eat per day, where and how long to fetch water, what is their income, just to mention few. In fact most of the families that they visited, had more that 5 people, had two meals per day, usually ugali(made of maize corn) and green vegetables, and they had to walk 2/3/4 km to get water, depending on the location of the house.

Having prepared the lunch, they ate the lunch together with the families. You can imagine how the families enjoyed the day with new faces, with food which they had rarely or have never eaten (spaghetti) and so much interesting histories on food acquisition. There is a saying that "*when your fellow cries you need cry as well*"

Thank you so much Osmund group and all lovely friends/volunteers/donors/sponsors from Europe and America for all the support you have provided and you continue providing to reach the IOP vision "*New standard of Living for the Tanzanian Community*"

THE OFFICIAL OPENING



On the 3rd of March it was finally the time for the official opening of Sollerud Kindergarten Tanzania and Young Mothers Empowerment Center.

The Norwegian ambassador, Hanne-Marie Kaarstad, was there as our guest of honor to make the opening official. Other guests that attended was the Acting Region Commissioner of Iringa, Member of Parliament, District Development Officer, Chairperson of Kilolo district, Division Officer, a representative from Y-Global, Norwegian Church Aid, Norges Vel, media and many others.

A lot of speeches were held and we were all very happy that we made it. IOP's slogan is "Elimu na Malezi", that means "Education and Care". Through the new kindergarten and the Young Mothers Empowerment Center, IOP will be able to offer education to 120 children and train 30 young mothers on different issues on economic empowerment and life skills.

We also had another fundraising for the school bus, and this time the pledge reached Tsh 21,810,000 TZS (that is around 9 982 US dollars). We are moving close to the goal of buying our own bus! We really appreciate all the contributions that have made this amazing school project happen. Thank you so much, each and every one of you. Special thanks to the Osmund's group, Sollerud kindergarten Oslo, and Y-Global in Norway.



HEALTH PROJECT/MATTERS FOR ELDERLY



A few weeks ago, Berit sent out letters to 15 people, to start a Senior Citizen Club. Four Dutch volunteers, who are studying to become skin-specialists, were challenged to have the first meeting. The meeting would contain 30 minutes of instructions, 30 minutes of exercise, 30 minutes with games, and then dinner at the Center.

No one knew how many would show up, and if anyone would show up. All together 12 people showed up. They started the meeting with a True/False-quiz. Everyone got two pieces of paper, one green (true) and one red (false). Some of the questions that were asked were: *Is it good to eat three times per day? Should men eat more than women? Is it wise to sleep 8 hours every night? Do we need to wash our hands? Do we need to drink milk daily?*

After the exercise part, they turned on the music, arms up, wave in a circle, march in place, run (if you can) while holding on to the back of their chairs, sit down and clap your hands under your knees, lift your legs horizontal out in the air and wave them back and fourth. The seniors thought of this as a very strange behavior, but they laughed and laughed, so it was good to see that they had a good time

For the game part, we played BINGO. Faces were studying the cards with a pen in hand, but they had no idea what to do with them. One Dutch read the numbers, while the rest helped finding them on the cards. The first to get BINGO, was Mwanaheri (79). She was called up front to get her prize: A bag with one turnip, one carrot and one cucumber. What a joy! We tried again and again and again – until all 12 had a prize to hold on to.

Senior Citizens in Tanzania do not have much government benefits, unless they have had a job and paid into a pension plan, or maybe they have family who can care for them. There are no regular health services for them, nor any monthly “check-ups”. Nutritious, balanced meals every day are just a dream to most, if they even know what that means.

The meeting ended with a dinner at the center; potatoes, carrots, cabbage, beans, rice and a piece of water melon for dessert. Before they left, everyone got soap. They were all very happy with the program, and asked if we please could do this again? We promised we would, so the next meeting will be in the beginning of next month.

BIRTHDAY/GOOD BYE PARTY

Monday 14th of March we had a big birthday celebration for the girls and staff that had, or will have, their birthday from December 2015 to March 2016.

We celebrated the way we know best, with a lot of songs, dances, good food and of course cake! Everyone who was there got a taste the cake, which Babu Jake gave out.



This was not only a birthday party, but also a good-bye party for our beloved Babu Jake. It was his 17th time here and this time he had been here since November. We never have to make a schedule for Babu Jake, because he knows exactly what he wants and can do. This time he also helped sponsoring Zainabu Philippo(Gloria), so that she could move from Ilula Secondary School(government school) to the Lord's Hill. H

We thank Jake for everything he has done for IOP, and for being the person he is to us! We are already looking forward seeing him again in December. In other words, we know that this is not a "good bye", but a "see you soon!" He has constructed a total of 8 underground tanks for IOP. This serves a lot of purposes. God bless him and his friends for the great support to IOP.

ARRIVAL OF EMILIE'S FAMILY/ SILLA RETURNS



On Friday the 18th of March we had another small celebration. Emilie, who was here for the first time in 2013 as a Communication for Change participant, is now back for the fourth time. This time she is staying until the end of June, and we were happy to know her family would come visit us here at IOP for Easter. As she says herself "Finally my family gets to meet my extra family".

The coming days they will get to know the center, the projects we have, and of course the girls and staff. They will also visit the Masai and have a day in an African family. We are looking forward to the coming days.



We didn't just welcome Emilie's family; we also welcomed back our beloved sister Silla. She finished her studies at the Montessori training college in November 2015, and got an opportunity from her sponsors, Jos and Irma Jansen, to go to Luxembourg to gain some more experiences. She arrived in Luxembourg on the 2nd of January 2016 and stayed until the 12th of March. She has completed 10 weeks work experiences at Sunflower Montessori in Luxembourg. We are happy to have you back, and we are looking forward hearing about your adventure. We are proud of you and the IOP team in Germany and Luxembourg for letting you experience different environment and experience in her life.

EasterMorning



In the morning, the women went to the grave with spices and oil to apply to the body of Jesus. On the way they came to think about how they should roll the big stone away, so they could get in.

Arriving, they were quite surprised to see that the stone was already rolled away and the grave was empty. A man in shiny white clothes welcomed them and asked: “Are you looking for Jesus of Nazareth? He is not here – he has risen as he said he would.”

This happened early in the morning, as the sun was rising.

On Easter morning 75 people gathered outside the IOP center at 06:30 am for an absolutely wonderful sunrise service. It started in the dusk with shiny lamps scattered around. Soon the sky, towards which we were facing turned pink and gold, some sharp, white rays shot up behind the mountain, and up rose the sun, shining on all the new girls’ dresses, the people from the staff and the village, and on God’s Word on the alter. It was wonderful.

Breakfast followed – a kind that the villagers never or rarely see: Bacon, sausage, bread white and dark, “maandasi”, butter, jam, peanut butter, oranges, bananas, juice, coffee, tea and milk. We really enjoyed it. A fun program followed, done by the girls and the church people, finishing up with a 1,5 hour film of The Life of Jesus.

WE HOPE YOU ALL HAD A HAPPY EASTER, ALL OF YOU!

INITIATIVES

1. **Do you have some OLD PIECES OF FABRIC that you do not know what to do with?** They would be very useful for our girls HERE at IOP CENTER! They could be used to create covers for our old chairs. Please send us your old pieces of fabric!
2. **IOP has some projects that need fundraising and financial support!**
 - Funds to complete the examination hall and the girl's dormitory at the Lord's Hill High School
 - Annual running expenses of \$25,000 for the IOP Center (Orphanage)
 - Annual running expenses of the IOP pre-school "Kids' Corner" \$10,500
 - We have over 50 students waiting for Sponsorship so they can go to school.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you would like more information about projects and/or sponsoring opportunities, please contact;

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