

Perspective December 2023

Bridge of Hope Foundation

Perspektive Hoffnungsbrücke



Dear Friends, Sponsors and Supporters,

„If I knew that the world would end tomorrow, I would plant an apple tree today.“

This famous quote from Martin Luther describes a hope that goes far beyond this world. A hope that many people in Tanzania keep in their hearts and that sustains them - despite the crises and adversities of their lives in rural Tanzania.



In 2018, we were also invited to plant a small tree at the start of our project at Karama School (Rukoma) (picture on the right). It was not an apple tree, but a jackfruit plant. Five years later, it has already grown into a really sturdy tree that towers over the classrooms (picture left).



We hope that our projects will grow just as well as this tree. Soon it will bear really big fruit. And we hope the same for the children in Rukoma: that they grow a confidence that gives them roots and a firm footing. You cannot "make" growth - neither in nature nor in projects with children. Growth is a gift from God.

We can therefore look back with great gratitude on the five years of our projects in Tanzania. So much has been created and grown that we can only marvel at. And say thank you - Asante sana Yesu!

Many thanks also to you, who have continually supported this work!

Karama Primary School in Rukoma



When we visited the Karama School in Rukoma (Kagera region in the northwest of Tanzania) for the first time in 2018, there was neither electricity nor fresh, running water. There were five classrooms for 550 children. As part of our project, four new classrooms were built in 2019. Cables and switches for lights and sockets have already been laid during the interior work, although the electricity grid has not yet been extended to this region. This year, we were able to install a solar system on the roof (photo left). This means that the rooms can now even be used by pupils and the community in the evening. The operation of the digital learning system has also been simplified.

The children are grateful that they now have electricity and drinking water in their school. This is anything but a matter of course in this region. Many thanks to all the donors who have contributed!



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Fresh water for Karama Church in Rukoma



New water distribution point at Karama Church

Next to the Karama School there is a small rural church, the Karama Church. From the very beginning, it was important for us to maintain contact with this local church and to support its activities time and again. These small rural churches play a central role in the lives of the local population.

In 2021, we were able to complete the well project at Karama School. As the Karama Church had no access to fresh water, we decided to build them a connection to the water reservoir. We were able to inspect this water point for the first time during the project trip in October.

Digital learning for 11 new schools in Rukoma

Karama School is a pilot project for digital learning in a public school in rural Tanzania. We started this project in 2021. Based on the positive experience, we have decided together with World Vision Tanzania to focus on digital learning in Rukoma / Kagera in the upcoming 3-year project. Eleven additional schools are to be equipped with servers, tablets and solar charging cases next year.

The introductory training for World Vision employees and representatives of the local school authorities took place at the end of October.



Train-the-Trainer seminar with Victor Malombe of wiLearn Kenya

We obtain servers and solar charging cases from our partner wiLearn (www.wilearn.org). Roland Diethelm, the director of wiLearn in Switzerland, discovered the potential of digital learning over a decade ago - during a visit to World Vision projects in Kagera / Tanzania. Roland has since launched many e-learning projects in Kenya, South Sudan and Zimbabwe. With our project in Kagera, we are now realizing his original dream. Sometimes things come together like a puzzle. Thank God!

wiLearn has provided a professional trainer from Kenya, Victor Malombe, for the Train-the-Trainer (TOT) seminar.





A study about digital learning in rural Tanzania



From February to May this year, we conducted an empirical study to investigate the impact of digital learning on the development of children in rural Tanzania. In 12 teacher interviews and during focus group discussions with 40 children from Rukoma and Dongobesh, the research participants were asked about their experiences with the e-learning system.

Encouraged by the positive feedback from the pilot projects, we had expected digital learning to have a positive impact. But what we learned from the study far exceeded our wildest expectations.

In this newsletter we can only provide a very brief excerpt of 8 statements from the study. Anyone interested in the complete study is welcome to contact us for further details. The master's thesis will be published in early 2024.

Director Primary School: „Performance is regularly measured through internal school performance assessments. In the past, it was hard to achieve 67%. Since the introduction of e-learning results have continuously improved, reaching 88% last year“.

Director Secondary School: „I assign them the task, then they go to the computer lab, where there is server and tablets. They write the notes of that particular concept and summarize it. [...] It was a great success, because the content which I was supposed to teach for more than three weeks, they learn it within two days“.

Student A: „I did not know how to solve Mathematics questions but now I can solve the question even when I am alone“.

Teacher A: „Before, the ability of pupils to stand in front of a mass of people to express themselves was difficult. What I can say now, this e-learning system helped them to change. So they can stand in front of people and express themselves“.

Teacher B: „I became amazed with how pupils were able to interact among themselves and to use the devices“.

Teacher C: „Through e-learning, the friendship and the interaction between pupils have raised a lot“.

Teacher D: „ Through e-learning, they learned to cooperate between themselves. And also with the teacher“.

Teacher E: „Despite of the small number of staff available at the school the e-learning system can, and has been used to simplify our work“.



Graduates of Dongobesh Secondary School present the digital learning system at their graduation ceremony

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Project trip to Dongobesh

In October, we had support for our project trip to Dongobesh. Six of us came from Darmstadt and the surrounding area. These visits mean a lot to our Tanzanian friends. Hospitality is very important to them. Receiving visitors from Germany is seen as an honor. Claudia Lange, the mayor of Erzhausen, was there together with us. As guest of honor, she addressed her appreciation to the community of Dongobesh at the graduation ceremony of Dongobesh Secondary School and presented the flag of Erzhausen as a sign of our solidarity. It's great to see how the project is spreading.

We want to offer another project trip next year. Anyone interested in joining us in fall 2024 and experiencing Tanzania up close is welcome to contact us.



Mayor Claudia Lange handing over the flag of Erzhausen as a sign of our solidarity

Discovering the world through playing - this is or rather should always be an essential part of learning. Traditional teaching methods in Tanzania do not provide for this. Games and toys are very rare in Tanzania. Some well-known games such as Kalaha, Ubongo or Jenga may have African names, but their origins lie in Europe.

Children in Tanzania hardly have time to play at all. Life is hard and children have to help out from early age, whether in the fields or fetching water.



Simone and Gabi Metzler enjoy time with children of LEA Primary School



It was exciting to see how much the children at LEA Primary School enjoyed this afternoon of games. Jumping rope, giant Mikado, Viking chess and rubber twist - it was great fun, and not just for the children. The teachers were also very enthusiastic.

We very much hope that this afternoon of games will not remain an exception, but that the children in Dongobesh will be able to enjoy many more hours of fun and games.

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Our current projects



Due to the extremely encouraging results of the study, digital learning will remain a focus of our activities in 2024. There is an ongoing need for more tablet PCs. We can procure these locally in Tanzania for \$130 per tablet. This will enable more schools to benefit from e-learning.



Building work of the new dormitory in Dongobesh is complete. Now it's time for the interior work and furnishings. We are financing one hundred new bunk beds. The cost per bunk bed with mattresses is around €120.

We are also arranging further child sponsorships for children from poor families. The costs, including meals, are €40 per month.



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Simone & Arnd Weil

Kiefernweg 14
64390 Erzhausen

Mobile: +49-172-6765525

Email: Info@Perspektive-Hoffnungsbruecke.de
www.perspektive-hoffnungsbruecke.de
www.bridge-of-hope.org

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Bank details:

Account holder: *Perspektive Hoffnungsbrücke e.V.*
IBAN: DE40 5085 0150 0000 7970 57
Sparkasse Darmstadt

