

I CARE Post



Spring 2012

Message from the Director's Desk

- 125 children sponsored
- Over 300 I CARE supported visits by children and their guardians to the Urafiki Health Clinic
- Over 200 new mosquito nets distributed
- 53 new school uniforms purchased for students
- Three new tailors trained and working in the community

The above numbers highlight some of the many ways your I CARE sponsorship supported the lives of needy children and their families in Igoma, Tanzania during the 2011 calendar year. From socks and sandals to cooking oil and rice, your sponsorship ensured these children had the basic items they needed each and every month. Without a doubt, your support not only provided assistance for the present but also raised hope for a brighter future. Thank you for helping make this all possible. I can't wait to see what we will achieve in 2012.

Asante sana (thank you in Swahili)



Above: I CARE children sending a "thumbs up" to their sponsors in Canada. This photo was taken during the I CARE end of year gathering. Please see page 2 for details.

Marcus Gordon

I CARE End-of-Year Celebration 2011

On Sunday, November 26th, 2011, local I CARE staff along with the 125 children in our program and their families gathered to celebrate the conclusion of another year. Attendees enjoyed a warm meal, cool drinks and the opportunity to visit with other families in the I CARE program. Each child also received a new I CARE t-shirt for the occasion.

As part of the day's celebration, a group of I CARE children put together a skit to illustrate some of the ways the program helps the needy. We were also fortunate to have an I CARE sponsor from Stouffville in attendance for the event. Upon his return to Canada, he provided the following thoughts on the day.



Above: I CARE staff waiting to serve food to guests.



Above: I CARE children lining up to enter the event.

"It was good to be in Igoma for the I CARE celebration. How impressive it was to see all of those kids looking healthy and clean and well looked after. The staff did a great job and put together an entire play of how the I CARE support helps families overcome the struggles of living in a state of poverty and need."

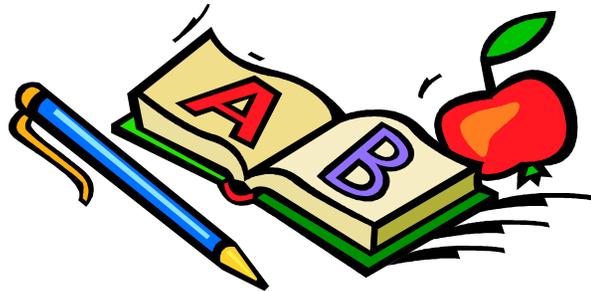
To see more photos from the event, please visit the photo section of the all new I CARE website. Go to www.sipartnership.org and click on the I CARE link in the top right hand corner.

An Introduction to School in Tanzania

As part of the child information card sponsors receive each year, reference is made to how your child is doing in school. To provide you with a better understanding of how the school system works in Tanzania, our Family Services Director, Marcelina, a full-time teacher, has provided the following description.

“The school system is made up of three basic levels: primary, secondary and high school. Primary school runs from grade one through seven while secondary school includes form 1 through 4. Children are usually 14-15 when beginning secondary school. High school is form five and six.

National examinations occur at the grade 4 and 7 level as well as form 2, 4 and 6. Students need to obtain a certain score on these exams in order to graduate to the next level in school. If a student fails the grade 7 national exam, they usually attempt to enter a trade school, known in Tanzania as VETA (Vocational Education and Training Authority). Courses offered at these institutions include driving, masonry, carpentry, electrical work, welding, art, secretarial training etc.



Students who are not successful in passing the form four exam generally venture into the fields of teaching and nursing. For those students who make it all the way to form 6, many go on to university.

Although education is not free in Tanzania, the fees to attend a public school are very reasonable. For example,

a child could expect to pay 100,000 Tanzanian Schillings (approximately \$65 Canadian) a year at a public high school. Fees gradually increase the higher a student goes in the system.”

Many of the children in the I CARE program are strong students and achieve results in the top 10-20% of their classes. Thanks to your support, all the school aged children in our program receive the supplies they need such as uniforms, text books and desks.

When discussing education, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the severe lack of teachers at several schools throughout Igoma. During my trip in February 2011, I visited several schools with student bodies from 800-1200 students which had only 6-7 teachers. In these situations, students were left alone to complete their work for hours at a time while the teachers rotated through the various other classrooms. The problem is so severe that at one school the headmaster made the following plea: “Don't keep sending us students. Send us teachers instead”.

Upcoming Visits to Igoma



Although details are still to be ironed out, we are tentatively planning visits to Igoma for late September 2012 and late January 2013. Each trip would likely be two weeks in length. If you have ever considered visiting Igoma and would like to hear more about a future trip, please contact me via email at icaretanzania@yahoo.ca and I will make sure you are informed as more details become available.

Post Profile

The third in our series of staff profiles features Violet Masha, I CARE's lead Field Work in Igoma. Several times a month Violet or one of the other four field workers visit the children and their families in our program. These workers serve as I CARE's eyes and ears on the ground, making sure that each child's needs are being met. These individuals also help to distribute supplies and materials to I CARE families as needed. As the lead Field Worker, Violet plays an important role in training new field workers. I hope you enjoy getting to know her.



"My full names are Violet Gabriel Masha. Gabriel is the name of my late husband who passed away in 1997. I was born on 3rd of March 1972, a widow presently with three kids; David who is in university studying accounting, Goodluck who has now completed form six and Anna who is in form three.

I am a businesswoman selling electronic goods in a small shop at the Igoma shopping centre. I also carry out poultry farming.

I started serving in I CARE as a field worker in the year 2007. I have seen I CARE help families that were and some still are needy with food, clothing, education, medication and other basic needs. I CARE has built homes for several families and bought bicycles for kids who study in far away schools.

I myself love the work I do for I CARE because it is a chance of serving the needy in the community. Serving the I CARE families has taught me to love and care for others and carry other's burdens too. The support I earn from I CARE helps me to pay school fees for my children and sometimes to supplement other needs. May God bless I CARE to last long. "

Violet

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