

# I CARE POST



**Spring 2016**

## Making Education Accessible: Basic Education Now Free in Tanzania

In February 2015, former Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete launched a new education policy which brought about significant change to the school system across Tanzania. Aside from re-organizing some of the grades, known as forms or standards in Tanzania, the new policy requires that a single text book be used for each subject across the country and, most importantly, basic secondary school education is now free. Previous to this, students had to pay a fee to attend some of the higher grades, making higher education a luxury many could not afford. Although school fees have been eliminated, additional costs remain for families including having to pay for uniforms, notebooks and other supplies. Fortunately for children in I CARE, they receive funds each month which help to cover off some of these extra fees.

As a result of the elimination of fees, Tanzania expects to see a significant rise in enrolment at the secondary level. According to UNICEF, Tanzania's move in 2002 to

abolish fees in primary schools led to increase in primary enrolment from 59% of children aged seven to 13 in 2000 to 94% in 2011.



As part of this latest change, the government has warned that it will punish parents who fail to ensure their children attend school. While school attendance has always been compulsory, until now parents have not been penalized for failing to ensure their children attend.

One complicating factor for Tanzania is that agriculture employs more than 80% of the workforce and many

Tanzanian children are depended upon by their families to stay at home to work in the fields or to the sell fruit and vegetables in the cities and towns.

With this latest policy developments, Tanzania continues on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goal on education which include enrolling more than 90% of children in primary schools, abolishing fees and building schools in every village.

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## Letter from the Director's Desk

I CARE is fortunate to have several different types of supporters who sponsor a child through our program, among them families, couples and individuals. Over the years, sponsorship has also come from local businesses and social groups, such as the group of five caring women who met weekly at a local Stouffville coffee shop and decided to put change aside each visit which would go towards supporting a child in need.

Perhaps our youngest supporters are a group of Sunday school children at EastRidge Church here in Stouffville. Each member of the class brings in money to put towards the yearly sponsorship fee. The love and support they show for their ICARE child, Pendo John, goes beyond just financial support though. During the holiday season, the class regularly sends cards and letters, stickers and other small gifts to Pendo.

During my two visits to Igoma, I had the pleasure of meeting Pendo and her family. She was always very excited to hear news from her friends in Stouffville and was eager for me to share her thanks with them. It is truly inspiring to see the

class come together to care for a young girl, only a couple years older than they are, half a world away.

In preparation for this newsletter, I asked Pendo to send a message to her supporters here in Stouffville.



*Above: Pendo John and her mother*

*Hello friends,*

*How are you all doing? I'm so glad to write to you this letter. To the teachers how is work and to the Sunday school children how is school? I am doing well myself. My family is good too. I talked to my friends about you some time back and they were very excited. I will send a photo of us all one day. My family says to pass my regards to you all. Everything is really okay here right now. I appreciate the excellent work you are doing for us all. Thank you.*

*With love, Pendo*

Thank you to all our supporters for making the decision to change a child's life.

Marcus

## 2015 Elections in Tanzania



*Above: Former President Kikwete*

Similar to here in Canada, Tanzanians went to the polls in the Fall of 2015 to elect a new leader. Following the completion of a second five-year term in office, President Jakaya Kikwete could not stand for re-election and therefore a new President would be elected.

Ever since Tanganyika merged with Zanzibar in 1964 to form Tanzania, the country has existed almost exclusively as a one-party state, only holding multiparty election beginning in 1995. Since that time, political races have grown more and more competitive.

Although there were several candidates running for president this past October, two in particular stood out from the crowded field: John Magufuli and Edward Lowassa. Magufuli, a long-serving Minister within Kikwete's government, stood as the presidential candidate for the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM – Party of the Revolution),

which has been in power since independence. Lowassa, a former member of the ruling party, ran as a member of Chadema, the main opposition after he was not chosen as the candidate for the ruling CCM. Most recently, the 62-year-old Lowassa served as prime minister of Tanzania until 2008, when he was forced to resign amid fraud allegations.

Several key issues arose during the election campaign including the need to fight government corruption and enhancing government support for small farms and the agriculture sector. The Tanzanian economy is highly dependent on agriculture as the sector employs 80% of the countries workforce, accounts for one-quarter of GDP and 85% of exports.

Led by Magufuli, the ruling CCM remained in power by defeating the Chedma party with approximately 58% of the vote.

Election observers from the European Union have described the elections as being highly competitive and generally well-organized.

*Below: New Tanzania President John Magufuli at a campaign rally*



# VOLUNTEER



Have you have ever considered volunteering with the Stouffville Igoma Partnership? If so, there are presently a number of exciting opportunities available including:

- Assisting at upcoming events including the Annual Dinner Banquet and Canada Day Strawberry Festival
- Media relations lead
- Website Coordinator
- Assist with the operation of the I CARE Program

If you are interested in learning more, we encourage you to join us at a monthly board meeting. Please contact us if you have any questions.

## Upcoming Events

The annual Euchre Tournament in support of SIP will be held Friday May 27<sup>th</sup> at the Stouffville Legion at 6:30pm. If you would like to participate in this friendly yet competitive tournament, donate a door prize or volunteer your time during the evening, please contact Susan Kerswill at 905-640-3513.

SIP will once again be participating the Stouffville Strawberry Festival on Wednesday, July 1<sup>st</sup>. Keep your eyes open for our bright yellow tent!

Be sure to stop by our website for other events and SIP news [www.sipartnership.org](http://www.sipartnership.org)

**BENEFIT CONCERT** Thursday June 9<sup>th</sup>  
7:30 – 11:00 pm

*Featuring*  
**Marion Drexler Trio**  
**LovelsFree**  
**Laurelle Augustyn**  
**Justin Kerswill & Friends**  
**Derek Christie**



 STOUFFVILLE  
IGOMA PARTNERSHIP

The Lion of Stouffville  
5917 Main Street (patio)  
Cover: \$20, raffle, 50/50 draw!  
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