In the months of June and early July, the children were lucky enough to have a school break from studies as their academic reports were collected from the Mamas. In June, they were visited by help2kids Vice President Christian Maeder, his wife Linda Maeder, and two of the help2kids Board Members Kurt and Marianne Widmer. The children had a large party celebrating their arrival and were thrilled to see and play once again with their distant family members. Kurt and Marianne brought much needed donations with them, supplying the children with new school supplies and school bags.

The children were further spoiled with a much anticipated trip to Mbudya Island in late June! Offered collectively through several donors, the children enjoyed a full day with the Mamas and Uncle Masia in the crystal clear blue waters of Mbudya Island, enjoying chips, soda, and sausage for lunch.

Although the ten minute boat ride to the island was a scary adventure for some of the children, they figured out that braving the journey earned them a huge reward as they splashed all day within the waters.

Finally, the caretakers were excited to collect the children’s grades to see the process of the students. This semester saw huge improvements in Star, Zainabu, and Tausi’s grades and ranking within their classes. Star was fifth chair, while Tausi’s Mathematics saw huge improvements! Augusti, always studious, placed 8th in class, earning him much praise from the staff. For the new semester, the Children’s Home Manager and Coordinator have implemented a stricter and more concentrated Study Hall schedule to ensure that grades increase for the December academic reports.

Tanzania Field Manager’s Report

Hello from Tanzania!

This summer has seen some interesting changes inside of our projects. The children recently finished their holiday in June, enjoying a summer break to Mbudya Island courtesy of several donors. The children had a blast in the clear waters while the ESP students took extra courses to meet their government standards.

At Bajeviro, the teachers have begun one on one computer tutoring. Always eager to learn, the response has been positive and teachers have already begun using the donated laptops within their classrooms. MOCK exams, took place this August as well, where students took national exams for two days straight, testing their knowledge. Martin and the team then allowed the students a break with a full day of fun and games!

Kunduchi continues to gain its footing, as the student rollcall has increased and the English Corner has gained several new locals participating within the project. Volunteers have had a profound influence on the curriculum and growth of the project, giving helping hands wherever needed much to the staff’s delight.

We welcomed two new members to the team and I am always surprised by the enthusiasm of our team. Overall, the summer was a success, always increasing efficiency and discovering new ideas through teamwork!

Justine LeDonne
Field Manager Tanzania
During the last few months teachers have been focused on preparing all the students for internal testing which happened at the end of May. Many hours were spent preparing for and then correcting the tests, and was only possible due to our staff’s great attitudes and commitment to excellence.

When results were published, we were delighted to see that grades increased in almost all subjects and standards. However we all know that there is still a lot of work to be done as we want to continue improving to make sure that our kids are getting the best possible education.

During June we had the first term break, but even during this time students of Standard 4 and Standard 7 attended daily morning classes in order to prepare them for end of the year exams which are extremely important as they will determine which secondary school students are allowed to go to after their primary education. Besides that our teachers also held a special tutoring class in which students from Standard 1 up to Standard 3 learnt how to read and write properly.

After the break all the students were happy to be back in school and go back to their daily learning routine, supported by an amazing group of volunteers who were invaluable in implemented the teacher computer class. July flew by with a successful first MOCK exam from Standard 7 students and an amazing “Fun Day” in which our volunteers collaborated with one teacher each and prepared an activity for all students.

We were especially proud of the fair and respectful behavior all players showed, before, during and after the game.

Twice a week our strong Rainbows meet for progressively professional training, in which coaches Uncle Masia and Mama Lucy form the help2kids Children’s Home teach them the fundamentals of the game and the importance of practice. During these lessons our kids developed an amazing team spirit which has proven itself when former Rainbow students (who are currently in Secondary School) challenged them for a friendly game. Of course they said yes! Although the older kids were bigger and stronger the current Rainbows made excellent use of their training, using technique and teamwork to overcome their opponents by 3-1!

We were especially proud of the fair and respectful behavior all players showed, before, during and after the game.
A break for some, meant studies for others.

**help2kids Education Sponsorship Program**

Although school was out for most of the children at Bajeviro and the Children’s Home, the current ESP students were busy taking extra courses in Mathematics and Science, catching up on their grades and provided extra help through tutoring. The Education Sponsorship Manager, Francisco, led the summer course program with a large amount help from local volunteers. The class ran the entire break between June and early July, allowing students who were falling behind in understanding their school coursework a chance to catch up.

Additionally, the Educational Sponsor Program is now searching for sponsors for the top ten current Bajeviro Standard 7 class that will graduate this December. Already **help2kids** has been lucky enough to find four sponsors!

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**THE HEALTH PROJECT**

**We can rebuild it better faster stronger**

This summer saw the Health Project embark on a major effort: improvement of the extent and efficiency of medical treatment services for all our partners. For this, the team has been working together with local hospitals to provide alternative, budget-friendly options for emergency situations and weekends. This will ensure that if a child needs medical help, it will always be around the corner!

**More training= fewer infections**

It was also a busy time for expansion of our First Aid Program, as we introduced new items in all our cabinets to meet the immediate health needs of our children and, subsequently, organized a basic First Aid Training workshop for our mamas at Children’s Home, focusing on wound dressing. We believe that such workshops will equip the caretakers with essential skills to detect, treat and manage common wounds and injuries.

**A clear vision for the future**

The Health Project has exciting plans for the near future, such as providing free eye check up for our child beneficiaries and free glasses, in collaboration with local and international organizations. We are also organizing HIV Screening at all of our partners. We believe that all children have the right to accessible and quality healthcare and, with your support we will continue to strive towards making this a reality!
KUNDUCHI

Big improvements for a new project!

We are now on the 6th month of the new Kunduchi Daycare Center (KDC) and it has been an extraordinary journey so far: eventful, challenging, but mostly rewarding for both help2kids staff and the children of Kunduchi village.

Throughout these months we have built a new toilet (we now have two!), a fence to protect our kids during playtime, and we integrated the KDC into our Health Project program by providing a first aid kit and assurance on site to the children of KDC. For many children, KDC is the only place where they can get health care.

In the afternoons, KDC becomes an English Corner, where English language is taught to about 15 young adults that are looking for new employment opportunities in their lives. None of this would have been possible without the help of the almost 20 volunteers that collaborated with h2k in Kunduchi. For the h2k staff it is very rewarding to see how passionate and dedicated our volunteers are about Kunduchi. Thank you all!

However we have a lot of challenges ahead of us. KDC is becoming well-known among the local populations who bring more and more children to our care. The number of children increased from 10 in March to over 90 in the beginning of August. Though our workload has increased we jump into each day with renewed passion and push to provide the very best education and care that we can.

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help2kids VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

That moment when you forget you are volunteering to help change lives, because it’s changing yours. When you decide to join a volunteer program abroad, you are not only deciding to offer your time and your efforts to the most vulnerable people, but you are deciding to immerse yourself in a new and absolutely different environment and culture. The volunteer work does not only mean teaching something in a school for a month, but it means learning something in that school about life. help2kids offers the incredible opportunity to explore and immerse yourself in two completely different countries, and cultures, and our volunteers have the chance to experience so much during their stay that they usually define it as a real life-changing experience. Jessica Vogt’s words, one of our current volunteers, who has been a great addition to our staff, can better explain why choosing to volunteer with help2kids both in Malawi and Tanzania has changed her life and her point of view of the world:

“I chose help2kids because it offers the opportunity to volunteer and explore two different countries within several different projects. For me to work as a volunteer means to help someone with the knowledge I have and to expect nothing in return, but just some little experience for my life. Since I have been in East Africa, I have learnt a lot about myself. The people here have so little, but they are still smiling. In Switzerland we have everything, and we are complaining about everything. During my experience, I have learnt from the people and the kids that you do not need much to be happy, and that you just have to be happy with what you have.”
Malawi Field Manager’s Report

Greetings from Malawi!

The last few months have been an exciting time at help2kids Malawi, as we bid farewell to our long time Field Manager Nicole Barren and offer a warm welcome to Matthias Boyen who will be filling her position.

Although we are sad to see Nicole leave we wish her the best in all future endeavors and know that Matthias will bring the same level of commitment and passion to the project.

With all of the staff transitions recently Malawi has a whole new look and the future looks bright as they all find their footing and continue the good work that has been started. New faces and new ideas will no doubt help our Malawi project a continued success.

Stay tuned for updates on all the exciting changes that will be happening here in Malawi!

Food for Body and Soul at Lifuwu Health Center

Our garden and feeding program have completely revolutionized maternity care at Lifuwu Health Center by making a safe birth supervised by a trained midwife more accessible, even for women who live long distances from Lifuwu. The program has been recognized and lauded by Malawian government officials, and was even mentioned during a broadcasted session of Malawian Parliament. Since the program’s implementation in November 2015, clinic staff have noticed an increase in the number of women choosing to deliver their babies at the health center, and a decrease in the number of complications those women experience. One would expect a higher number of deliveries to result in more complications rather than fewer, however the women are better fed and arrive at the health center earlier than before the program’s implementation. The result is that on average, women are stronger prior to delivery and have already addressed any health concerns before that could impact the delivery.

In light of the success of the program and in response to the community’s requests to accommodate more women, we have expanded the garden to provide a larger, more constant supply of vegetables. The garden was recently almost doubled in size and we have plans to increase the diversity of foods grown there.

Along with the garden expansion, help2kids volunteers have begun visiting the expecting mothers, who stay at the health center for periods ranging from two to eight weeks depending on how far they traveled and their general health. Living at a health center for that long is understandably dull, and the women can become quite bored and homesick. Our volunteers visit twice a week with puzzles, games, and crafts to break up the monotony. The women greatly value the time they spend and the connections they make with the volunteers. When interpreters are available, volunteers and patients trade stories about their homes, and even if translation is not available the camaraderie transcends the language barrier. Sometimes the greatest impact our volunteers make in Malawi isn’t through teaching, building, or giving, but through the universal compassion of forging that special personal connection.
Golden Children of Chisomo Graduate from New Building

In the spring newsletter, we celebrated the revitalization of Chisomo Nursery School. We reveled in the school’s transformation from a shabby former pump house into a tidy, secure building and looked forward to its bright new future.

Chisomo has now had its first complete term in the renovated structure and on July 13th, proudly celebrated the end of the school year outside of their pristine new building. The school’s top learners were assessed on the usual criteria which encompass the alphabet, colors, basic numeracy, self-introductions, and songs. The staff continue to implement the child centered, “active” learning techniques they learned during last fall’s teacher trainings led by help2kids volunteers Heidi and John, and the results evident in the children’s excellent performance.

Lucy, one of the teachers at Chisomo made special paper and feather “crowns” for the top students who will begin primary school in September. They happily sported their new headgear while completing exercises and reciting poems in front of the considerable crowd which included student’s parents, teachers from Lifuwu Basic Primary School, and members of various school and village committees. After successfully completing their portion of the assessment, the parent of each child swooped in, dancing and cheering, to hoist their child into the air, hug them and shower them with small gifts and praise for honoring their family with a fantastic performance.

In many ways, we feel the same emotions about Chisomo. The school has worked hard to excel, despite its very humble roots, graduating some of the best prepared children into primary school. In light of this, we want to raise our voices high, dance in the silky-fine dust which blankets Lifuwu, and show the world how truly remarkable Chisomo is.

Good Fences Make Good Neighbors

After years of rumors, hoping, praying, and sluggish construction, a proper tarred road was finally built to Lifuwu. Trucks, cars, and swarms of angry sounding motorcycles are now able to gleefully zoom straight into our village, past Tiyanjane Nursery School and its hundreds of young learners. In addition to our concerns about the faster moving traffic, Tiyanjane also suffered problems such as children wandering away during breaks and older children disrupting classes or stealing porridge from the feeding program.

On July 21st, help2kids began constructing a brick fence which encompasses the entire Tiyanjane campus complete with a sturdy and beautiful metal gate emblazoned with our organization’s name. The new fence was sponsored by former volunteers Anja and Lena with a generous donation from their ambitious fundraising efforts. We are extremely grateful for their efforts and for everyone who contributed to their campaigns!

The main structure of the fence has been constructed and finishing touches will be completed by the end of August, 2016. Current help2kids volunteers will help see the project to its end by lending their hands to apply a coat of paint to the plastered surfaces. With the new fence, everyone involved with Tiyanjane can breathe a sigh of relief that the children will be kept safe from both traffic and harassment as they develop their young minds.
This quarter we would like to send a special thanks to one of our finest and most committed volunteers Monika Stertenbrink! Monika has visited help2kids multiple times and always gives 110% when she is here. She can often be found staying up late at the Gecko to prepare additional activities for the children or at the Children’s Home to lend a helping hand with homework. Her tireless dedication is truly an inspiration for other volunteers as well as staff. She truly loves the children and they are always happy when Auntie Monika returns. The only thing she loves more than the kids is Makande :). From all of the help2kids staff we would like to thank you Monika for showing us what it means to be a volunteer!
help2kids STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

help2kid wants to thank all of our outgoing staff for their great work and welcomes the new staff.

Nicole Barren was the Field Manager for help2kids Malawi. While she was a member of our team she successfully oversaw a litany of projects and worked hard to further develop our relationship with the local people of Malawi. We thank her for her dedication to help2kids and will miss her greatly.

Chris Audette has been the Manager of the Friendly Gecko. He has also done all of the Marketing work for the Malawi site and has been indispensable in providing advice and technical support to the Tanzanian staff during this last quarter. His good nature and eagerness to help will be missed but we wish him well in all new endeavors.

Fabrizio Amador Caddeo was the Manager for the Friendly Gecko as well as Volunteer Coordinator for Tanzania. Hard working and at the same time fun he did a fantastic job of taking care of the volunteers needs both in and outside of the projects while simultaneously providing a fun relaxed atmosphere for them to live.

Gabriella Tagliani is taking the place of Fabrizio as Manager of the Friendly Gecko and Volunteer Coordinator in Tanzania. She possesses a degree in Linguistic and Cultural Mediation and speaks 4 languages. She is passionate about her work and always strives to help new volunteers as they adjust to a new life here in Tanzania.

Chris Boecheer is the Project Coordinator for help2kids Tanzania and is responsible for Marketing and Online Content as well. Prior to coming to help2kids he worked for several companies at the Management level. He has studied World History and has spent time abroad in several countries. He is excited to experience new cultures and meet new people.

Matthias Boyen is our new Field Manager in Malawi. He will take over where Nicole has left off and will continue to foster strong ties within the community as well as work to push the Malawi project to reach its fullest potential.

Benjamin Cramer is the Guest House Manager of the Friendly Gecko in Malawi and Marketing Manager in Malawi for help2kids. Benjamin holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Globalization from the University at Albany. This is Benjamin’s second time living in Malawi, as he was a Peace Corps Health Trainee during the early parts of 2016.
help2kids thanks all of our former, current and future volunteers for your hard work on our projects in Tanzania and Malawi! Your dedication changes our children’s lives for the better. We are thrilled to be able to bring you this newsletter with updates from all of our projects. For more regular news, please check our Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages and our website!

help2kids runs projects in Malawi and Tanzania that serve hundreds of children and their families. We can use all the help we can get! Please click on the button below to go to our donation page. Every little bit helps! Donations are tax deductible in the US, Switzerland and Germany.

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