

Operation Bootstrap Africa

Dignity

Fall 2014

Responding to the Need . . .

The Children of Olarash Village

At first glance the poverty is jarring. Food is scarce, the cattle are thin, and many children do not attend school. Although only an hour's drive from the modern city of Arusha, Olarash village has no paved roads, no electricity, and limited water. The Maasai people of this mountainside area live traditionally as herders of cows and goats. Their village consists of a church, a primary school, and a medical dispensary. There are no shops so the people of this area walk four miles or more to the town of Monduli for the weekly outdoor market.

Olarash Primary School was built in 2000 and has an enrollment of about 550 children, ages 4 to 14. Children walk to school from a distance of up to 3 miles. Many of the boys in the area remain at home to care for cows and goats. Girls are married at a young age and they, too, often miss school to care for younger children or to search for firewood.

Now, with help from OBA donors, new projects are improving life for the children of Olarash Primary School. The village of Olarash shares a mountain water source with the MaaSAE Girls Lutheran Secondary School, located below them on the mountain. A new water storage tank located high on the mountain now makes water available to both Olarash Primary School and MaaSAE Girls School during the dry season. Last year two new, much-needed classrooms were completed at the school.



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Children of Olarash cont.

Children at the school are now receiving nutritious porridge thanks to a generous OBA donor who has funded this breakfast project for the next five years. As a result, the school is already noticing improved attendance.



During a recent OBA visit, the village chairman and the lead teacher expressed their gratitude to OBA supporters and asked that the school not be forgotten. They said many children were not attending school simply due to the lack of uniforms and food for lunch. They requested further assistance to rebuild two classrooms that have been damaged by earthquake tremors and excessive rains.



This year's annual Lakes Area Walk, sponsored by Alexandria, Minnesota churches, raised funds to construct a new teachers' duplex at Olarash. Another OBA donor, who had recently visited the school, made an additional generous gift towards the construction. Currently, teachers at Olarash Primary School must walk four miles each way from Monduli town because teacher housing is not available in Olarash. Construction will begin soon on the duplex.



*Can you help the children of
Olarash Primary School?*

\$25 provides a school uniform

\$50 provides a 3-student desk

\$100 provides composition books

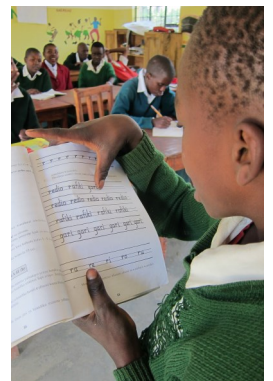


Update — Ilboru Primary School Special Needs Unit Girls Dormitory Completed!



The Ilboru Primary Special Needs Unit serves nearly 100 mentally and physically handicapped students. It is one of the few schools of its kind in Arusha, Tanzania.

Primary funding for the dormitory and two classrooms at the school has been provided by the Alexandria, MN Lakes Area Walk. Individuals and churches have provided additional support for furnishings, classroom materials, and other needed items. Donna Chalmers, of Cottonwood, Arizona, who was one of the first donors to the school, continues her advocacy and fundraising efforts for these children.



Blessed to be a Blessing! OBA to Celebrate 50 Years of Service in Africa!

Dear OBA Family,

In 1965, OBA founder, the Reverend J. David Simonson, was serving as a Lutheran missionary in Tanzania, a newly independent East African country. The first President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, had made literacy a priority in his new country and mandated universal primary education. Simonson, having already served more than a decade in northern Tanzania, knew that classrooms were scarce in rural areas.



On a home visit to Minnesota in 1965, Simonson contacted several close friends and urged them to join with him in supporting classroom construction. Simonson wanted the local Tanzanian communities to be responsible for most of the construction by making bricks and providing the required labor. The Minnesota friends were requested to raise funds for nails, metal roofing, and cement to complete the classrooms. This new organization was called “Operation Bootstrap Arusha”, a self-help organization with the goal of building hundreds of primary school classrooms in the Arusha, Tanzania area.

With the support of Simonson’s friends, Operation Bootstrap Arusha was incorporated in the State of Minnesota on August 30, 1965. The first board of trustees included: Richard Hefte, Fergus Falls, MN, Richard Kvamme, Moorhead, MN, Edgar F. Johnson, Waseca, MN, Dickran Sarkisian, New York, NY, Paul Kovacs, New York, NY, Ann Wright, Washington, D.C., and Gilmore Schjeldahl, Northfield, MN.

Later the name Operation Bootstrap Arusha would change to Operation Bootstrap Tanzania. In 1982 the name was changed to its current name, Operation Bootstrap Africa.

Throughout 2015, OBA will be celebrating 50 years of service in Tanzania and we will be sharing more stories from our past with you. Our first event of the year will take place in Tanzania on January 24, 2015. We will celebrate with our Tanzanian partners at the MaaSAE Girls Lutheran Secondary School, where old and new friends will come together to celebrate OBA’s achievements over the past fifty years. The event will also mark the 20th anniversary of OBA’s largest project, the MaaSAE Girls Lutheran Secondary School, and the celebration will include the first all-class reunion of its graduates.

OBA has indeed been blessed. . . from the foresight of the founders to the Tanzanian educators carrying out the mission today. We have been truly blessed by generous donors who understand the priceless gift of education.

Thank you on behalf of the children and youth we serve!

Diane Jacoby, Director

Operation Bootstrap Africa Board of Directors:

Hazel Reinhardt, President, Ward Larson, Vice President, Carrie Hefte, Secretary, Steve Studt, Treasurer, Juliet Cutler, Mark Cutler, Gary Floss, Jean Geurink, June Msechu, Carol Stark, Isaac van Bruggen, Jean Wahlstrom



MAKING AN IMPACT . . .

50 YEARS OF PROVIDING ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR AFRICAN CHILDREN!

School Construction

Tens of thousands of children have had an opportunity to attend school in one of the more than 3,200 Tanzanian primary school classrooms funded by OBA donors since



1965. Classrooms and other school buildings have been built based on local needs and priorities.

MaaSAE Girls Lutheran Secondary School (MGLSS)

Since 1999, more than 650 girls from the pastoralists and hunter-gatherer tribes of Tanzania have graduated from Form 4 (equivalent to U.S. 11th grade). These girls traditionally had not attended secondary school for cultural and economic reasons. Most of these students come from rural areas where primary schools lack well-trained teachers and have few teaching materials. The school's 75% completion rate compares to an estimated 24% completion rate of Form 4 nationwide.

Of these Form 4 graduates, nearly 200 students have graduated from Form 6 (equivalent to our first year of college). Of MGLSS students, approximately 23% complete Form 6, a much higher percentage than most schools in Tanzania. The majority of these Form 6 graduates attend a 3-year university program.

The **OBA post-secondary program** was established to further prepare graduates for meaningful employment. More than 325 MGLSS graduates from Form 4 and Form 6

have attended vocational schools, teacher colleges, nursing schools, and universities with OBA scholarships. Today these graduates are working in all sectors of the Tanzanian economy and contributing to their local communities.

As the majority of graduates are the first in their families to attend secondary school, they are important role models for the next generation. Graduates are especially making an impact in education and healthcare. More than 150 MGLSS graduates are teachers and dozens more are working in hospitals and clinics, including the first female Maasai medical doctor.

ALMC School of Nursing

The new Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre School of Nursing opened in 2014. This school will have an impact on healthcare as it is the first nursing school in the city of Arusha, home to more than 1 million people. OBA donors have supported startup costs and are providing annual \$1,000 scholarships to all students to defray the high costs of a nursing education.

Ilboru Primary School Special Needs Unit

Few disabled children attend school in Tanzania due to lack of trained teachers and facilities. OBA donors have provided for the education of deaf and mentally disabled children at the Ilboru Primary School in Arusha, Tanzania, since 2006. They have supported the construction of two classrooms and a girls' dormitory, and are providing food for the children. Today, nearly 100 disabled students attend the school.

Additional School Projects

There are also many small school projects supported by individuals and groups who have travelled to Tanzania and have seen the need first-hand. These projects have include support for scholarships, books, uniforms, electricity, and wells at more than 10 schools.

Other Countries

In addition to Tanzania, projects have been completed in Zimbabwe and The Gambia. OBA donors have also continued the support of schools in southern Madagascar for more than 30 years.



MaaSAE Girls Lutheran Secondary School (MGLSS)



The sixteenth class of Form 4 students graduated on October 25, 2014. Several hundred friends and relatives of the 50 graduates attended the commencement. The students have completed their Form 4 exam and will now wait until February to receive their results which will determine their educational futures.

New Pre-form One Students



An enthusiastic new class of 70 students has entered MGLSS! There are 50 students to be sponsored by OBA and 20 students who will be paying tuition. All of the new OBA students need sponsors. If you would like to sponsor a deserving student, or share a co-sponsorship

with a friend, please contact the OBA office.

MaaSAE Girls School Sponsorships to increase in cost for the 2015 school year

An OBA sponsorship has increased for the first time in four years, from \$900 to \$1,000, due to rising costs at the school. Teacher salaries have increased 54% in just the past two years. The inflation rate in Tanzania is nearly 20% annually. This has dramatically impacted costs for food, books, uniforms, electricity, examination fees, and student medical care.

The \$1,000 sponsorship (Forms 1-4) covers student expenses, including tuition, uniforms, bedding, books, exam fees, and room and board. Co-sponsorships are available at \$500. Sponsorships gifts may be made in one or more payments, or made monthly (\$85) by credit card.

We need your help in providing post-secondary scholarships!

In the 2014-2015 academic year there are eighty-six MaaSAE Girls School graduates of Form 4 and Form 6 receiving post-secondary scholarships. Of this number:

- 12 students are enrolled in a vocational school
- 21 students are enrolled at 3 teacher colleges
- 16 students are enrolled at 3 nursing colleges
- 3 students are enrolled in medical officer programs
- 1 student is enrolled in medical school
- 33 students are enrolled at 15 universities

⇒ Support the scholarship fund with a gift of any amount

⇒ Support an individual student annually

Donations may be made online or by check payable to OBA, with Post-Secondary Fund on the memo line. If you would like to be assigned a student to support, call the OBA office at 612-871-4980.

ALMC School of Nursing

MGLSS graduates who are members of the first class at the ALMC School of Nursing received good marks on their first nursing exams. The students, pictured below, spend time both at the hospital and in the classroom during the day and return to their dormitory in the evening. The nursing school is located in Ngaramtoni, which is located just outside of the city of Arusha.



OBA is pleased to announce it is the recipient of a Lutheran Deaconess Grant that will provide funding over the next two years to help equip the new nursing school.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

“Praise God from whom all blessings flow” was the response to the estimated \$92,000 raised at the Cross of Christ Lutheran Church auction. The auction was held on September 20th in Bellevue, WA and raised funds to support three areas of the church’s Tanzania Mission, which includes support for the MaaSAE Girls School. Volunteers, including eighteen mission team members who will travel to Tanzania in 2015, worked on auction arrangements under the co-chair leadership of Andrea Pohle and Barbara Snyder.



Retired ELCA missionary and current OBA board member, Jean Wahlstrom, was a spotlight speaker at the auction, relaying the critical need for new science textbooks and salary support for a strong math teacher at MGLSS. One auction goal was \$25,000 to fund a math teacher for 5 years.

Wahlstrom stressed that math is a “gatekeeping” subject in Tanzania. Without a good grade in math on their national exam, students are not able to enroll in post-secondary science courses, which are required for training in the desperately needed healthcare professions. Wahlstrom was moved to tears as \$37,000 was raised within minutes of her presentation.



OBA’s partnership was wonderful! This partnership enabled us to raise an additional \$12,750 from corporations who match donations made to registered 501(c)3 organizations such as OBA.



An amount of \$2,400 was also raised by collecting \$20 donations in order to buy new milk cows for MGLSS. The Maasai diet centers around milk, which is also important for the nutrition of the girls.

Lutheran mission work has been holistic in Tanzania—working with education, health care, and the church. In addition to the support for the MaaSAE Girls School, the auction money will support Cross of Christ’s long-term partnerships with several Tanzanian churches and healthcare projects. All projects are under local and indigenous leadership.

Submitted by Beth Elness-Hanson
Mission Team Facilitator

MaaSAE Girls School harvests large crops of corn and coffee!

Students assisted with picking coffee over a 3-month period. The coffee will be sold to a local coffee cooperative. The harvested corn will be used to make ugali and uji, corn-based Tanzanian meal staples, for student consumption at MGLSS.

*Right:
coffee beans
drying at
MGLSS
before being
sold*



Thank you for supporting the work of OBA!

Thank you to the more than 1,600 contributors to Operation Bootstrap Africa this past year! Your gifts matter! Our projects would not be possible without your generous support. Please continue to spread the word about the work of OBA.

One of our OBA donors recently sent this email to her friends who also support students at the MaaSAE Girls School . . .

“As I reflect on these girls and what a difference we are making in their lives by our sponsorship, I just want to encourage you to continue doing that. I'm pretty sure you each received a letter from OBA in the last day or two (or it's still coming), asking for our donations before the end of the year. If you can, please do that! And, if, by the grace of God you can include more than in the past, please do that, too. I can tell you from first-hand experience that our money is more than being well-spent.

We are not supporting some fancy charity; rather, we are helping impoverished Maasai improve their lives thru education and health care. . . . I know that each of us have many charities that request our money. I've never seen a 'charity' like OBA, and have basically decided that it's my 'main' donation location.”



Charity Navigator, the leading charity evaluator in America, has again awarded Operation Bootstrap Africa a 4-star rating for sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency. OBA is among only 18% of all charities rated by Charity Navigator to receive at least two consecutive 4-star evaluations. This designation demonstrates to the public it is a charity worthy of their trust.

GIVING GENEROUSLY

Your gifts to OBA can be made with a variety of assets in a variety of ways

GIVE NOW: Benefit to OBA immediately

Assets to give: cash, publicly traded stocks, bonds or mutual funds, real estate, closely held stock
Maximize donations with matching gifts through employers, Thrivent Choice dollars

GIVE LATER: Benefit to OBA upon death

Assets to give: life insurance, publicly traded stocks, bonds or mutual funds, real estate, closely held stock, retirement assets (IRAs, TSAs, 401(k) or 403(b)s, savings bonds, and annuities

Bequests made from your will or trust. Beneficiary proceeds from your retirement accounts, annuities or life insurance. Gifting property while retaining use and enjoyment as long as you live

GIVE & RECEIVE: Receive income payments now, but benefit future support to OBA upon death

Gifts made using charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder annuity trusts, charitable remainder unitrusts, and testamentary trusts

For more information, please contact us at Operation Bootstrap Africa, — 612-871-4980



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Dignity is a publication for friends of Operation Bootstrap Africa, a Minnesota-based non-profit dedicated to providing access to education for children and youth in Tanzania and Madagascar.

In partnership with African communities and organizations, Bootstrap provides support and assistance to projects and programs based on locally-established priorities.

Gifts to OBA are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. OBA may assess up to 10% for administering these gifts.

Website: www.bootstrapafrica.org
Email: info@bootstrapafrica.org
Phone: 1-888-755-1318 / 612-871-4980

An orange ribbon banner with a central rectangular box containing the text 'Give Hope Through Education!'. The banner has pointed ends on the left and right sides.

Give Hope Through Education!

Any amount Designate to **“Where Needed Most”** to meet urgent needs

\$25 Provides a Tanzanian primary school uniform (shorts or skirt, shirt, and sweater)

\$25 Provides a high school math or science textbook

\$50 Provides a 3-student primary school desk

\$350 Provides a solar panel for a classroom or dormitory

\$1,000 Provides an annual scholarship for a student at the MaaSAE Girls School

\$100-\$1,000 Provides scholarship support for a student at the ALMC School of Nursing

Give to the project of your choice by mail or online at www.bootstrapafrica.org