

# Tanzania – Travel Report 2010

## Introduction

On August 15<sup>th</sup> we departed for our trip to Tanzania, exactly two years after our first visit in 2008. In this short period of time much good has been accomplished. We added four new extensions to our ministry in this area: a new building in Mushozi Village, a kitchen building, a new orphanage in Bukoba and a day care centre in a horrible settlement, called Malehe. The living conditions in the area are invariably bad, but we have the firm conviction having made a decisive turn around in the lives of whom we were able to reach. In previous reports we wrote having the impression that the government is doing her utmost to uplift people in the rural areas. This time we could reap the fruits from their policy ourselves! Please read more about it in this report.

## 1. Visit to 'Kaagya Orphan Care Centre (KOCC).\*

For the third time in exactly two years we visited Mushozi Village (not to confuse with Mushozi) to see how things have developed in Kaagya Orphan Care Centre (KOCC). In 2008 there was nothing of any importance within the village or wide surroundings aimed at lingering the needs of orphan children, living alongside the roads of this village and wide surroundings. According to official statistics in 2005 the village has 675 orphans out of a population of 4.200. For most of them there was at least some care: uncles or aunts, grandparents or neighbours took the responsibility for them, but there were children who were totally neglected, and for them there was no care at all, not even the least. Cleopa - he used to be a primary school teacher - and Jesca gave up their relatively prosperous existence to become poor with those who had nothing at all. There was no income anymore and they lived from one day into the other. In this way they welcomed and embraced 15 orphans, and gave them shelter in one of the two twig made and thatched huts they had. There was no inventory, not even one single chair or bed; hardly

any clothes to put on, and the children had to leave school after primary for there was no money available for onward education. That is how we found this "orphanage" in August, 2008. Now, two years later, the picture has changed completely. In 2009 TMF home was completed to give shelter to Cleopa, Jesca and their four children (out of eight), one handicapped woman and fifteen orphans. After our visit last year we have built a **kitchen building** (bricks glued with mud, and plastered with cement), which consists of a cooking section (two chimneys), a room with a large table and some benches fit for having meals, and two store rooms. Total expenses: \$ 2.500 (built in cement



only would cost double the amount). In a Tanzanian home there is always room for more people, and so it was in TMF home. Here they gave shelter to twelve extra orphan children whom we "found" in Malehe, a very poor fishing village, one of the breeding places of HIV / AIDS. Fishermen use to stay here for the night or live here temporarily, for their homes are often situ-

ated in inland villages. Widows who face starvation and have no other way to survive prostitute themselves in those villages. No wonder the infection rate is astronomical. Of course there are many more orphans in this village, but these twelve had no coverage at all, and lived outside under a tree or a shelter. No food, no care, nothing at all. Their ages varied between 7 - 9 years. Living with 34 people in TMF home - really acceptable according to local standards - was not possible on the long run, but we had no financial sources to be of help. It was really a blessing



that "Ya'zer" foundation in Apeldoorn, Netherlands (no website) was willing to take the responsibility for **building the home** and to cover the running expenses. While we visited the premises the home was officially delivered up, and we really admired all the work that has been done and the final results of it. The home has a big living (40m<sup>2</sup>) and seven large bedrooms. Annex to it is a guest house with two large bedrooms, and between these a kitchen with sink and stove and a bathroom with shower. This guest house is especially made for those who want to help or are interested to see the work, and are not afraid to descend the Western ladder of prosperity. By the way: this is

not just a step; it is quite a jump! Out of the seven rooms one is for the care taker couple Elisha (32, pastor, care taker of HIV / AIDS patients, warden, 2<sup>nd</sup> in command after Cleopa) and his wife Udina (29, ex nursery nurse in Dar es Salaam) and their one year old child. Furthermore, there are six rooms for the children. In one room there is space for 8 little children - two in a bed; in the remaining rooms there is room for 4 - 6 children each, which leaves a maximum capacity of 24 - 32 children. In the region we know only two people who speak English: Mrs. Consulata (chairwoman of Kaagya Orphan Care Centre), and Cleopa. His English is rather poor, which causes misunderstandings. We have decided - in cooperation with Cleopa and Yesca - he will go to an intensive language course in Dar es Salaam for two months. We also strongly recommended Elisha and Udina to study English; we will come up for the expenses.

More important developments around the project can be mentioned. TASAF (Tanzanian Social Action Fund; [www.tasaf.org](http://www.tasaf.org)) is an 'independent' corporation, funded by the Tanzanian government. They try to uplift the living conditions in the rural areas. TASAF invited 32 different organizations to apply for support for different projects, but only one project out of the total would be honoured. Cleopa asked for a small herd of cows. TASAF people came to have a look at the situation, and were really impressed about the work



there has been done so far, and still is in progress. Finally, it resulted in awarding the project of Cleopa - indeed, the only one of all applying for subsidy. Now there is a small cattle **farm with stable (African style) and 13 cows**, out of which 3 deliver milk already (four litres per day each). The price of a cow (Frisians) varies from \$ 250 - \$ 650.

Recently Cleopa was visited by a delegation of his church organization (Pentecostal Worshippers Church, PWC). They too were impressed by what has been established thus far, knowing the KOCC is the only orphanage in a radius of 25 miles. They know the local people are absolutely incapable to get money together to build a church, resulting in scraping together money abroad to support church building projects in this part of Tanzania. The building has a much wider importance than in the Western countries: it will be used as a community centre as well. People

from our group of HIV / AIDS people come here together on a regular basis. The PWC offered to pay for the construction, the wages, roofing and the like; the locals have to do the plastering and the flooring, so it easily can take a few years before the final stage has been reached. The building process took three months. The old building was made of twined twigs, manure and mud, covered with elephant grass.

Many Africans have big plans and are able to develop amazing visions, but the realization often hampers. Now decision makers see that in an area - plagued by devastating poverty and a huge population of orphans - something positive happens. For the first time an orphanage has been built where not other facility for orphans existed at all. This - and our HIV / AIDS support project - can be considered as a real turn around in this poverty stricken area, which uplifts the entire region.

Total running expenses TMF home per month: \$ 600.



## **2. Visit to Malehe Day Care Centre.**

Around 15 miles north of Mushozi Village is Kiamalange, a village with 900 inhabitants (or adults only; is not clear). Part of this village is Malehe, **a settlement of wooded shacks**, giving shelter to 277 adult people, among them around 100 women. The number of children is not exactly known, but we estimate around 150. The fishermen live mostly in villages off the coast and while fishing they have to land somewhere to dispose of the fish. One of the settlements where they can is Malehe, and often they stay there in a shed of their own for the night - or more permanent, for their rowing

boats are not fit to stay on the lake. There are numerous identical fishing villages or settlements like this one. From Bukoba up North till the Ugandan border (40 miles) there are eleven of them. HIV / AIDS is ravaging in this region, leaving behind many orphans, widows and widowers. Those who are HIV positive cannot work (lack of strength) or are not offered any work, leaving no other solution to the widows than being a prostitute in order to have something to eat.

(Almost) all women living here are prostitute, not by choice but by lack of any other way to survive. Many of the children are (half) orphan, and often they are being taken care of by other people. Last year we found 12 children perishing, for whom no one took any care. We collected them, and gave them shelter, care and education in our centre (see chapter before). However, the other children were in almost the same situation, except them having a place to sleep, but hardly having any food and in almost all cases not able to go to school. Therefore, we decided to build a **day care centre** for the most pressing cases, and opened the premises at the end of last year. Every day we welcome



16 children at 6:30am, and give them breakfast before sending them to the primary school. After return from school they get a warm meal, play and do some home cores (getting water,

work in the vegetable garden). Additionally we have built a community centre which is in use as a church as well. Last year there were 2 Christians in Malehe; now the number has risen to 16. The centre is run by Pastor Sospeter Mwijage and his wife Domina. They used to live two miles away in Kiamalange with their eight children. Now they moved to Malehe to live next to the centre with two of the youngest children. The others are left behind in Kiamalange under the patronage of a care taker. Sospeter asked to offer care to 10 more pressing needs, but we rejected; we have no funds for that. The expenses are \$ 15 per child / month.

We wrote about the very poor position of the women in the camp before, who have nothing to do and for whom no one has any interest. We discussed with Sospeter, Cleopa and Consulata to welcome all the women in the village once every two weeks in the community centre in order to educate them, and close the afternoon with a joint meal. This idea is very much welcome. We will try to find people who can tell something about hygiene, first aid, AIDS, small businesses, micro credits and the like. Expected amount per two weeks: \$ 125 (no money available yet).

Total running expenses for the Malehe project per month: \$ 400.

### **3. Visit to HIV / AIDS patients**

We pay attention to 20 HIV / AIDS patients – who are mostly widows and widowers - and their 69 children. The people have no physical strength to perform a job and suppose they could, they are not offered one. It is really amazing to see how many people are HIV positive. Medicines to keep them in a relatively good condition are necessary, but they only can get them for free if a specific blood count is passed. To check, patients have to visit the Bukoba hospital regularly for free treatment. A bus ticket however cost \$1, and they often cannot afford one. In those cases we pay for the ticket. The same goes for the children: if small but essential expenses cannot be met, we do. The budget for these emergency needs is small – too small – but very effective.

We visited some twelve families in their huts. All of them are very poor and mostly have bad living conditions. Many of the families we visited are fishermen's families or their descendants. Often the families are extended by children of deceased family members. We faced much gratitude for the help we give, for no one else is helping them. It is hardly useful to report all the



small visits we made; they were more or less similar. However, we report about three of them.

- We visited Dominico Alois, the 'chairman' of our group of patients. His wife died, leaving five children behind. He remarried, adding six more children to his household. Both he and his wife are HIV positive. They take care of a grand daughter with **a big navel rupture**. We offered to pay for the much necessary surgery. Expected amount: \$ 150 – 250.

- We visited the Revilian family. In this family of 8 children Edifina (18; second child) is the only one who finished some kind of a High School. She was invited to apply for a scholarship to become a school teacher. However, the government had insufficient funds to grant all

applicants, and Edifina was one of those who were rejected. It seems she is an outstanding student, and the only one to contribute to the family income in the near term. We gave her permission to join St. Francis Private College, a boarding school in Bukoba for two years. Total expenses: \$ 1.400.

- We visited the Kateme family. Father was married to two women, having ten children in total. He died, and shortly after one of the women died as well, leaving the remaining one with all the children. We met Nickson (23) who finished the Vocational Training Centre as a carpenter. He

could be the one who takes care of his family, but he has no tools! We thought about the story of the fish and the fishing rod, and bought a carpenter's kit for him. Expense: \$ 650.

#### **4. Bukoba Home\***

During our visit in 2009 we investigated the position of the street children in Bukoba, and gave 120 of them a warm meal. There are many street children as a result of the HIV/AIDS plague. They steal and beg to survive, and sometimes get the offal from the restaurants. It is not clear how many street children there are right now. The local Evangelical-Lutheran church (ELCT) has quite a large shelter, and gives home to several hundreds of them. They get food and can stay there for the night, but in day time they have to leave. For those who behave well and want to, they can go to school, or learn a job. A meeting of a number of NGO's working with children in Bukoba earlier this year revealed that - most probably - there are five homes that either give partial shelter, or are to be considered an orphanage. The best guess is that the number of street children declined to 300 for ELCT has increased its care capacity earlier this year. We started the orphanage in December 2009, and give **total care to three girls and six boys** in the age of 9 - 14 years. The maximum capacity is 15 - 20 children - not according to our standards, of course. Our home can be considered as a very basic one, with no luxury whatsoever.



There is no electricity, no running water, and the children sleep with six in a little room in bunk beds. The home is run by a peculiar couple, Joachim and Gelda Nikodem, which we met last year. He is a poor business man (renting out hand carts) and tried to help the street children before and faced good results, like supporting them to go to school, or to learn for a job. One of them is a taxi driver right now, and some more have other regular jobs or started a family. The couple gave up their home in Bukoba to move to this somewhat bigger house, together with their three daughters. He managed to bring order in the chaotic life of the 9 street children, and we were witness of them behaving very well. Joachim explained especially the starting period was very difficult, but now everyone is happy with the new situation and 8 of the children are doing very well at school. For those who have advanced ages and have not had any education before, there is a special teaching programme, called Memkwa. After one year Memkwa the child will be placed in a class that fits to his intellect and capacity. Neither Joachim nor Gelda speak English, but Cleopa is our coordinator and manager. The home is a rented one (\$ 50/month), but can be bought.

#### **5. Summary**

Thinking it over, we come to the conclusion that the projects we undertook develop very satisfactorily. The capital expenses – especially the homes – are rather high, but the running costs are low. This can be contributed to the good climate and the fruitful soil. Almost everyone is able to cultivate his own food: bananas, yam and cassava, which presses down the food expenses per child. Moreover, the low standard of living makes our investment in hard currencies very effective. Finally, it is of greatest importance we have dedicated and reliable workers at the

spot. We will do our utmost to continue our ministry; the only limitation – but an important one – is the availability of sufficient finances.

**6. Addresses of importance / other important notes:**

Auric Air / Precision Air, Location Airport Bukoba [www.precisionairtz.com](http://www.precisionairtz.com). Round trip Entebbe-Mwanza: US\$ 360 (once daily; around midday) Round trip Mwanza - Bukoba: US\$ 150. Travelling by bus is definitely cheaper: from Kampala it is around \$ 12 (7 hours drive). If you prefer, a car / minibus with driver will bring you from Entebbe airport all the way to Bukoba: \$ 100 / 180. An acceptable hotel near Entebbe Airport is Sunset Motel. Prices: around \$ 50-75. Best address to stay in Bukoba is Balamaga Guest House [www.balamagabb.com](http://www.balamagabb.com). Rooms US\$ 30-50. Maximum capacity: four doubles. There are several other hotels of mediocre quality. Room rates around US\$ 25 - 50.  
Internet: Bukoba Computer Services (BCS), Kashozi Road. ATM: CRDB Bank (opposite BCS). Other banks mostly accept local cards only.

\* The capital investment and running expenses for one of the two homes (Ya'zer home) in Mushozi Village are covered by Ya'zer foundation in Apeldoorn, The Netherlands. The same goes for all running expenses for Bukoba Home in Bukoba. The day to day management is executed by foundation "De Vaste Burcht" (The Mighty Fortress) in close cooperation with Ya'zer

+++++

**Colophon**

Stichting "De Vaste Burcht"  
A J Tijman  
Otterloseweg 251  
NL-7351 TB H O E N D E R L O O  
t: +31 55 378 1851  
f: +31 55 378 1854  
e: [info@devasteburcht.nl](mailto:info@devasteburcht.nl)  
w: [www.devasteburcht.com](http://www.devasteburcht.com)  
w: [www.devasteburcht.nl](http://www.devasteburcht.nl)