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Ilula Orphan Program (IOP)

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We are excited to share IOP events and projects worked on during the month of November. Enjoy reading dear friends

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WELCOME PARTY CELEBRATION

Wednesday the 6th of November was the official welcome ceremony for four people from Italy, one person from Norway, two from the Netherlands and one from Argentina. Elisa, Massimo, Deborah and Cinzia had arrived the Sunday the 04th, in advance, while Elsbeth, Annalise, Pauline and Guillermina arrived just hours before the celebration.

The event was opened by the girls; who sang and danced in front of the crowd. It is always fun to see them perform, especially for arriving guests. The eight volunteers had to introduce themselves, some of them for the first time, while others were well-known to the girls and the IOP staff. The charismatic Justine Mhanga said some welcoming words to the guests, and told them to feel at home. Some of the guests already felt like the IOP center were their second home, while others got that feeling during their stay.

There was a time for more dancing after Justine's speech. Parts of the staff went up to dance, and it did not take much time before most people had joined in. People danced and danced, but decided to stop when the food was ready. The food was good, people got sodas and the people were radiating good vibes.



IOP 20 YEARS CELEBRATION

For the last year, IOP staff have been eagerly planning and preparing for a full week-long celebration of 20 years of service to the Ilula community. A long-anticipated 7 day celebration, filled to the brim with programs, fundraising efforts, sports, and community involvement and participation, was the highlight of November's events. Many invited guests were present to share this milestone event in IOP's history. It was truly a magnificent commemoration of the immeasurable impact IOP has had on the Ilula community.



Opening Celebration

On Monday, November 12th, the inaugural gathering took place next to the football field, near the new stage. IOP staff, invited guests, volunteers, and IOP students from all IOP schools were present. Festive music greeted guests as they arrived. Invited guests were welcomed to the head table and introduced. The Chairperson of Masukanzi attended.

All guests sang the Tanzanian National Anthem. Pastor Upendo was present to help all attendees focus on gratitude for what God has done at IOP. The students from Kids Corner School presented a dance and a drama about the plight of many local families—children who wish to go to school, and parents and/or grandparents who are unable to afford education. The drama concluded by sharing IOP's solution to this problem, the Sponsorship Program. The young children did a wonderful job and all attendees were delighted to see them participate in such a meaningful (and adorable) way.



Fundraising for IOP

The week's festivities provided many opportunities for community involvement, and goods were offered for purchase at the various events. This provided a built-in way to fundraise for IOP.

A **market** for the community was held in the IOP courtyard 5 out of 7 days. All items were donated and profits were direct fundraising for IOP. Community members, and IOP staff, had the opportunity to shop for men and women's clothing, clothing for children, shoes, items for babies, as well as various household items. On Saturday, a special market was additionally held for the elderly and they received free items. The 5 markets raised at total of 2, 737,500 Tsh. **Tombola** was another way used to fundraise in the celebration week, it was conducted 6 out of 7 days by Annelies de Groot Pauline Dorothea Bode w/v Mul children in the community. For a very small



pocket money price of 100 shillings, youth were able to purchase a ticket to win a small prize. Everyone who purchased a ticket received a prize. There were a variety of types of rewards, ranging from small to large items. There were pieces of corresponding colors to prizes (yellow and green for small prizes, red pieces for medium prizes, and blue and black pieces for large prizes) put in a machine that shuffled the pieces that children drew from to determine their prize. Small prizes included pencils, sweets, and sharpeners, medium prizes included notebooks, stuffed animals, and jewelry, and there were 10 large prizes per day which included badminton sets, school supply sets, and big toys. The Tombola raised at total of 134,000 Tsh! **Raffle** was also conducted daily at the end of football games. Raffle tickets were sold for 500Tsh and prizes included items such as t-shirts, flash lights, towels and school supplies like exercise books, school bags and many more. The Raffle raised at total of 218,500 Tsh!

Department Exhibitions

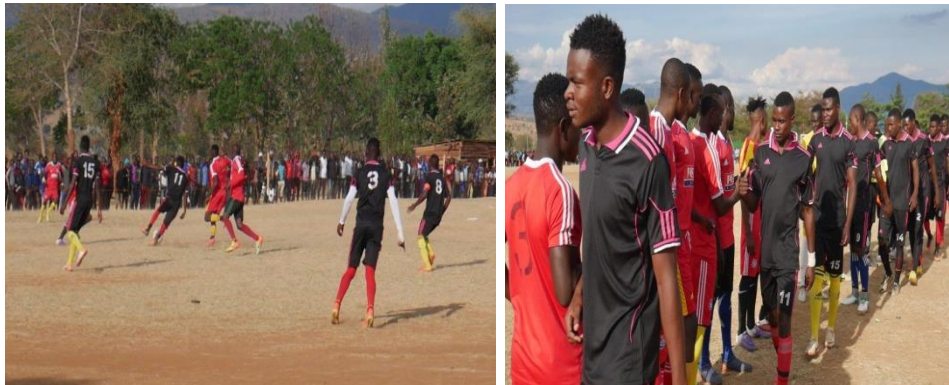
Many of IOP's departments set up booths near the stage during the week to showcase their work. Among the booths was an exhibit by the YWCA Young Mother's Program. This provided a chance for IOP to sell beautiful items made by the young mothers, vicoba groups and more staff produced by IOP staff as another way to fundraise for IOP. Aprons, oven mitts, bags, cabinets from IOP carpentry workshop, eggs and other items were on display to entice buyers. For consecutive seven days the afternoon football games were attended daily by many members of the community. Excitement was in the air as attendees cheered for their favorite team. During all of the sporting events, participants were able to purchase water, sodas, and snacks and many other others in the department exhibitions.



Football

The daily football game was a predictable attraction for many community members. Various village teams competed with one another. Large groups of people, including children, teens, and adults, could be seen around the boundaries of the fields, cheering on their favorite team. Attendees also were able to view the exhibit booths, enjoy loud music with traditional and modern Tanzanian beats near the stage, and to purchase a drink or snack. The first game of the week was heated and exciting, and ended in a draw between the Young Boys Team and the Isele Stars. During the second match of the day, the Sunshine team beat Ghuba FC. Tuesday November 13th drew another large crowd to the IOP field for football. The Ghuba Team beat the Kipaducka Team and the Young Boys beat the Makungu team.

Community involvement continued on Wednesday, with huge crowds of spectators arriving to enjoy the festivities and the game. The Sunshine team was on a roll and won their second match against the Kipaduka team and the Isele Stars were triumphant in their match against the Makungu team. The final game won by the Sunshine team from Sokoni village.



Sunshine team and Isele Stars in the final match

Choirs

Performances were provided throughout the week, and on Sunday—the day of the anniversary celebration—by performers of all ages. The children from Kids' Corner Preschool sang, danced, and even performed a drama about the obstacles to education for the local community. IOP girls also sang some songs, and there was a choir that attended the celebration as well.



THE 20 YEARS CELEBRATION DAY

The week of celebrations and activities culminated on Sunday November 18th with a full day long celebration, which was sponsored primarily by the Farm for the Future. The day had a rousing start with a parade of IOP students, staff, IOP Center girls, Scouts, and volunteers from Mtua all the way to the Center. The parade was joined by a marching band and a team of motorcyclists.





The Ambassador of Norway was the honored guest of the event. A representative of the Kilolo District was also present, to show partnership between the governments of Norway and Tanzania. Many representatives from various international IOP committees were also invited guests, including IOP Italy, IOP Norway, IOP Netherlands, IOP USA, and IOP Luxembourg. Additionally, the

Country Director for Norwegian Church Aid was present. Invited guests and volunteers were given a tour of the new Farm for the Future, met the Farm for the Future Team, and participated in a small reception to celebrate. Back at the IOP ground, all guests were greeted and many speeches were given, in both English and Swahili. A history of IOP was given to show how far IOP has come since its inception. Challenges which still face the community and IOP's development were explored. The event was packed with many people from the community, including additional government representatives, IOP students and families, local children and families, and IOP staff. There were songs and dances by children and choirs. Berit Skaare, Founder of IOP was honored with an award for all she has done for the Ilula community. All attendees were provided a lunch of rice and beans and water in the middle of the several hour ceremony. After the ceremony, all attendees were invited to the Center for a delicious meal.



Managing Director's Message on IOP 20th Anniversary Celebrations, 18th November 2018

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the entire Ilula Orphan Program's community, I would like to sincerely thank everyone who attended and supported our organization's 20th Anniversary Celebration. On November 18, 2016, IOP hosted an exciting 20th Anniversary. The event witnessed the presence of IOP Committee Leaders from USA, Norway, Netherlands, Italy and Luxembourg. Nearly 1000 guests joined us to recognize special honorees and guests who were of great influence to the development of IOP

I was so pleased to see that children and adults came together and celebrated this important milestone to the organization. They came together to pay special tribute to our mission and the amazing community who came to witness different beneficiaries who came to show their personal journeys and their incredible stories of success.

Few would have believed 20 years ago that the IOP would have risen to the height it is today in providing education and care to Orphans and Vulnerable Children This is because IOP's birth was a very informal and trial arrangement involving just its few founding members. Thanks to Berit and the team who worked hard to make IOP the way it is today!

To our friends, institutions, and colleagues who joined us, supported us, assisted us and celebrated with us in person and in spirit, we thank you for making this the most wonderful birthday party ever and the beginning of our exciting journey to the next 20 years!! We can't mention them all by names but it is wealth mentioning that their contributions encouraged the commitment to the work we are doing.

God bless you

Edson Msigwa

REPRESENTATION MATTERS

Ryan and Nikki Hastings, frequent volunteers from the USA, have taken on a project to ensure that the girls at the IOP Center, and community members, have access to media and books which accurately represent them, and empower them to grow and dream. IOP has been magnificently supported by many donors over the years. The downside to building resources through donations is that the movies and books at the library that the girls and the community have access to are filled with characters who are White, and the stories about their lives are frequently irrelevant to the lives of

those who live in rural, Sub-Saharan Africa. Consequently, they have begun building a collection of books in the children's room of the library that are filled with characters that look like them, face problems which are relevant to the community, and many of the books are in both English and Swahili. The Hastings decided to take another step and provide movies to the IOP Center which are about characters from the African diaspora.



Black Panther

Black Panther was released in February 2018 in the USA. It differs greatly from other movies with Black casts, which typically show characters fighting poverty or racism, because it celebrates traditional African lifestyles and African Americans' role in society, all within the context of a Superhero story. Black Panther was the first Black superhero created. Additionally, it had a budget in line with other Hollywood blockbusters with White casts (200 million USD) and was fully produced and financed by Marvel studios, with a Black Director and Black costume designers. This was a long anticipated movie that was monumental for African Americans and Africans alike, throughout the world. The releases around the world of the movie were very celebratory, with attendees dressing up in costume and traditional dress from their cultural heritage. It is also a movie which is very empowering for girls and women. It was very important to the Hastings that both the girls and staff had an opportunity to view Black Panther, and see characters that they can relate to doing amazing things, on a big screen. The girls viewed the movie, were provided a special dinner, and received a goody bag with Black Panther merchandise. Staff also received a private viewing with a special dinner.

Happy guests from Luxemburg stay at Eigersund Cabin during IOP 20 year's celebration!



In November Sam O'dea, Helen Clarke, Ellen Okkerman, Tom O'dea, Jane Madden and John Madden from Sunflower, Luxembourg were invited by Osmund to be the first guests to stay at the Eigersund cabin. Sunflower recently became a Diamond shareholder in Farm for the Future (FFF). So Sam, Helen, Ellen and Tom were the first shareholder guests at the cabin. Osmund was keen to see how the cabin would serve as a high-quality accommodation for shareholders and other guests avoiding the need for guests to stay in a hotel in Iringa.



Eigersund Cabin was given to IOP by Team Ueland Eigersund, as part of the IOP Strategy to build accommodation for volunteers to stay just outside the Center. The work to build the cabin was completed in 4 months. It was done by the same contractor who built the new kitchen and laid the paving inside the gate of the Center.



This cabin has 3 double bedrooms each with a separate shower and toilet en-suite. In addition there is a guest bathroom, small kitchen corner, and a good living and dining room with a television and a fridge.

Eigersund cabin is part of an overall plan for cabins in the IOP site. It foresees also rectangular cabins having 3 bedrooms, each with 4 beds and sharing toilets and showers (similar to current IOP Center arrangement). Of course shared living and dining areas will also be included. In the end the cabin complex will have a mix of accommodation meeting the needs of student/volunteers, shareholders, invited guests etc.

"We were thrilled to be the invited guests of Osmund at the Eigersund cabin" stated Tom O'Dea from the Sunflower team. "The cabin was a delight. We were so impressed with the quality of the accommodation. It allowed each guest his personal space but the beautiful living area and the outside terrace is a relaxing place to enjoy the sunset. Eigersund cabin combines top-class accommodation with African traditional design. We would not hesitate to recommend other people to grasp the opportunity to stay at the cabin. Finally, Osmund was an excellent and charming host."



Osmund says: "I am so happy to see by myself that this type of cabin will be good for IOP and FFF, and I hope that this first cabin will show the way to another 5 cabins in the coming years. I look forward to see the day when IOP can accommodate another 40 orphan girls at the Center, and at the same time increase the standard of living also for volunteers and guests".

The rectangular cabins with space for 12 people can be built for a similar price to the Eigersund cabin - 44.000 EURO.

It must be said that now there is no need for Government officials, ambassadors and the like to go to town for overnighting!

SPREADING JOY IN THE CHURCH

On Sunday the 25th of November the girls at the IOP center woke up early to prepare for departure to the local church TAG (Tanzanian Assembly of God), also known as Samaritan. They had prepared and practiced for several days, which had been well received by staff and volunteers at the centre. Wearing their finest dresses, the girls entered the IOP bus at 8:00 am for a 30 minute bus ride to the church. Once arrived, the girls received a warm welcome from the pastor, whereupon they joined the weekly Sunday school. After this session, the service started with praise and worship songs. A parade of colourful clothes marked the girls' entrance to the stage, where they sang three praising



songs. Audience members could be seen singing and smiling while the girls spread their message of joy and happiness through song and dance. After the service, their performance was accredited by several church and audience members. The community surrounding IOP has a strong idea of responsibility for the girls at the centre, and the church tries to contribute to their care and well-being. This was visible through the gift, consisting of 2 bars of soap, which each girl received in the end of the service. All in all, the girls had a joyful morning, returning with big smiles on their faces.

Contact information

If you would like more information about projects and/or sponsoring opportunities, please contact:

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