



TO WITNESS THE LOVE OF
JESUS CHRIST TO THE
STREET CHILDREN
OF IRINGA BY STRIVING TO
MEET THEIR NEEDS
THAT THEY MAY EXPERIENCE
LIFE IN ALL ITS
GOODNESS


gofisch.org
office@gofisch.org
facebook.com/futureforiringastreetchildren

Welcome to the Spring edition of FISCH Food!

We have so much great news to share with you from Iringa that we felt a newsletter was in order. At FISCH we rely on prayer, word of mouth and personal donations to keep the Project going. We therefore feel it is incredibly important to keep our Friends of FISCH updated with what is happening with FISCH, both in the UK and in Tanzania, as much as we can.

We hope you enjoy what we have to share with you, and we would love you to feel free to share this newsletter to any friends who are interested in what God is doing at FISCH. Thank you again for your support!



Christmas & New Year Celebrations

Each year FISCH Ministries hosts a time of celebration and worship at Christmas with the Children and guests at FISCH Church. This year Stephan shared the Word of God with the message "Born with Jesus Christ," from Luke 2:7. A time of praise and worship was given, and everyone enjoyed a meal of spice rice, chicken, beans, vegetables, fruits and juices.

At New Year, Miraji led another praise and worship service, and Stephen shared another Word, "Starting the year with God, let Him be the leader of your activities," Proverbs 3:5-6. A meal was shared, and the Team took the Kids to tour Zoom Grazing, a small animal centre in Iringa where the Kids were able to see the animals kept there, including leopards, crocodiles, zebras, snakes and monkeys. The Kids spent a lot of time there enjoying the animals and also playing lots of games.

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FISCH Sewing Club Update – New Ventures



Do you recall Neema and Eva from the November 2016 edition of the FISCH Bites? These two FISCH Kids had been progressing very well at the FISCH Sewing Club, to the point where they were ready to 'graduate'. We shared with you our plans to support Neema and Eva further by purchasing two sewing machines which we would loan out to them. We would also find a small office in town to rent, in which Neema and Eva can start their small sewing business. As their business progresses, it would be expected that they would gradually pay FISCH back for their sewing machines and they would own them outright, and eventually they would manage their rent too.

Well, thanks to specific donations we have been able to achieve this for Neema and Eva! FISCH have purchased the two sewing machines and we have also found a rental location in town which the Team and Neema and Eva are in the process of decorating to make it ready for business. As you can see from their photos, they are very proud of their new machines, and the Team are hard at work setting up their new working space.

We'd like to take this opportunity to say a massive *THANK YOU* to the sponsors for providing the dedicated funds enabling Neema and Eva to achieve this. We will keep you all posted on how their enterprise develops.



Food Parcel Focus – Amina

Amina is a girl whom FISCH have supported for over 7 years. We remember her well as a young girl of only 7 when we first met her. She is the youngest of six children. She started out on the streets following her brother Adam, who would look for money, do odd jobs or simply beg, as their single mother couldn't earn enough money to sustain the family.

Over the years FISCH has **supported Amina and her brother** in a number of ways, including **food, support and education**. However more recently the team let us know that the family was in great need of regular food support.

We are delighted to share with you that, as a result of our **recently launched food parcel support programme**, Amina and her family will be receiving **monthly food parcels**. We hope to be able help many more children in this way.

With a monthly donation of just **£13.50**, we are able to provide a food package comprising of **10kg maize flour, 5kg beans and 1litre of oil**. Our aim is to match donors to an individual child and for the donor to receive bi-annual updates and feedback on how that child is doing.

We would also like to introduce you to **Roy and Sarah Maguire** who have recently joined our FISCH UK team, taking on the role of **food parcel coordinators**. They visited FISCH in 2012 and have seen for themselves the huge difference that regular meals can make to the life of a child.

If you are interested in sponsoring a child with a food parcel, please contact Sarah directly at: sarah@onething.org.uk.

Above: New sewing venture

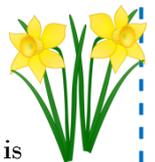
Below: Amina





Count Your Blessings

This year we have been blessed to be supported by another charity in the UK over the period of lent. **Natalya's Fund** is a UK Charity supporting underprivileged children and young people overseas. It provides tangible items and supports building projects as requested by those in the field. The fund was set up in 1992 after the stillbirth of Natalya, daughter of the trustees Andrew and Chris. In lieu of flowers, donations were invited at the funeral which were intended to buy equipment for the maternity unit at the Royal Gwent Hospital in S Wales. However the hospital was well equipped with the essentials, and after some networking a Lithuanian hospital was found to be in need. After providing equipment to the hospital in Lithuania, the fund was intended to be closed down. However the fund was kept open and it began to take on a life of its own. Over the years Natalya's Fund has provided pulse oximeters, a baby incubator and infusion pumps for hospitals across the world, supported the Convoy of Hope in the Ural Mountains, provided clothes for Russian orphans, assisted with tuition fees for a child in Uganda, plus much more, and now they are setting their sights on FISCH!



Natalya's Fund has decided to fundraise for three specific needs at FISCH. These are;

- **FISCH Sewing Club:** we have had two girls 'graduate' from the Sewing Club recently and FISCH is supporting them by purchasing each girl with a new sewing machine and rent for a small room in town where they can work from (please see the section on this for more information!)
- **Bibles and Musical instruments:** the FISCH Church is lacking in Bibles and instruments with which to worship
- **Laundry soap:** the FISCH Utd Team are doing very well and enjoying a sense of camaraderie. They are in need of laundry soap to clean their kit and keep it in good shape

To do this they are running a "Count Your Blessings" calendar over Lent. Every day there is something for you to be thankful for, and most days a blessing for you to count. The calendar then tells you how much to put in your jar.

Examples include; Many people in Africa have to walk everywhere – 1p for each bicycle wheel and 2p for each car or motorbike wheel

- Tanzania produces tea... 1p for every cup of tea drunk today
- Many Africans rely on generated for electricity – 1p for every socket in your home



This is a fun way to think about African lifestyle and how it compares with your British lifestyle, raise money and appreciate your blessings in life!

We would like to thank the trustees at Natalya's Fund for blessing the FISCH Kids with their support. If you would like to read more about Natalya's Fund, please check out natalyafund.wixsite.com/main.



Tanzanian Education Update

It's a New Year, and that means new education contributions to finance. Unlike in the UK, the school year in Tanzania starts in January. If a child is able to gain access to a government school then education is free for primary and secondary school children. If a child cannot gain access then their only options are to either not attend, or to pay for their education. Sadly many families can't afford private school fees – not only do they have to cover the costs of their education but there are always hidden extras which must be covered – for instance, did you know that it costs approximately 4,500TSH (£1.62) for a school book, 15,000TSH (£6.11) for school uniform and 17,000TSH (£5.39) for school shoes? A child must go to school with the required attire and equipment, or risk being sent home. It doesn't sound too expensive to us, but for some families these items are unaffordable, let alone the actual school fees.

At FISCH we aim to try and support a child's right to education by providing financial support to enable a Child to get back into and continue with their education, and to help provide them with the equipment and uniform they need to attend school. We also run the Homework Help Club, and one of the Team in Iringa, Miraji, is a teacher who helps to run this. We've been so pleased to hear of our Kids success stories at school, and we even have our first FISCH Kid who is going to university – please check out his story in this edition of the FISCH Bites.

Each January and June FISCH contributes to education fees. If you would like to be involved in supporting this, donations specific for education are welcomed. Please email rich@gofisch.org for more information.

Erasto with the FISCH Kids



Erasto handing over to Charles



Charles in the office



Farewell Erasto, Welcome Charles

We'd like to take this opportunity to say **Farewell and Thank you to a member of our Tanzanian FISCH Team, Erasto**, who has been involved with FISCH for several years now. Erasto used to be a student at St Michael's School in Kilolo Village, near Iringa, when Richard (FISCH Co-Founder) was living and teaching there in 2007.

A few years after FISCH was founded Erasto came and worked for the Team, doing many things, including football team coaching, serving the FISCH Children at the Saturday Feeding Project and FISCH Church, counselling the Children, and serving as FISCH's accountant in Tanzania. During his time with FISCH he has been a role model for the Kids; an example of what can be achieved if you work at your education and study hard. Erasto has been able to study at university part time whilst working for FISCH, thanks to his sponsorship and salary whilst working for FISCH. He held his graduation party and celebration with the FISCH Kids.

He is now moving on to accomplish further training with business entrepreneurs locally, helping people to start their own business. **We wish him all the best in his endeavours and thank him for all the service he has given FISCH over the years.** He is an inspiration to the Children, and FISCH are pleased to know that not only can we bless the Children but also our Team Members as well.

We have been blessed with a new addition to the FISCH Team following Erasto's resignation. His name is **Charles** and he is our new Financial Administrator in Iringa. Watch this space for a profile on Charles soon.



Fundraiser for the New Drop-In-Centre, by TSS Awareness Team

You may recall in the Spring 2016 edition of the FISCH Bites we revealed to you plans to purchase a plot of land to **build our own Drop-in-Centre (DiC)**, instead of renting a building. FISCH prayerfully partnered up with **TSS Aware**, a charity in the UK dedicated to raising awareness of the potentially fatal disease **Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS)**. This charity was founded by the family of Natasha, who sadly passed away on February 14th 2013, after using a tampon for the first time. TSS Aware partnered with FISCH because they wanted to build a positive legacy for Natasha, and Natasha had visited East Africa and loved hanging out with the children in need there. Since then, **TSS Aware have been fundraising and the plot of land has been bought**. Now we are in the process of designing and preparing for the actual building of the DiC, and Team TSS Aware have been hard at work too!

This year on **National TSS Awareness Day** (26th of Feb, what would have been Natasha's 19th birthday), 24 of her friends and family travelled to **Zip World in Snowdonia** to take on a sponsored zip wire challenge. The team took on the Zip World Caverns, a series of zip wires and rope bridges through caverns underground, eventually culminating in the steepest zip wire in Britain! Over **£3,500** was raised, a fantastic amount, which will contribute toward the first phase of the building.

TSS can be triggered by many things, but can also be mistakenly misdiagnosed as something else, as in the case of Natasha. **Symptoms include vomiting, diarrhoea, headaches, fevers, a sunburn-like rash, muscle aches, dizziness and confusion.**

There are plenty more courageous fundraising events on the calendar for the TSS Awareness Team, so watch this space! If you would like to find out more, please visit tssaware.org. We would like to **thank all at the TSS Awareness Team**, and all who have supported them, for the massive role they are playing in FISCH's future!

FISCH Kid Update - Apolo

Apolo is one of our FISCH Kids. We keep in contact with the families of our FISCH Kids regularly, and we are pleased to update that Apolo is doing well academically and in life in general. He is currently in Form 3 and has received first place in his class. Well done Apolo!



A Letter From Hussein

We are really proud to share with our Friends of FISCH that we are celebrating our first FISCH Kid going to university! Hussein has been with us from primary school through to university and we'd like to share his story in his own word, below...

Dear Sir

Thank you for your generous contribution to support my study life and life in general. Through your generosity, through the years, I have nearly accomplished my dreams which were expected to perish. God bless you as well as other people who contribute to FISCH in helping children from poor families to meet their dreams of future life.

I am firstborn of five children in our family. I was born twenty years ago in Mbweldi village, Iringa Region. I started my primary education as Mbwelele Primary School which is near our village. Because of poor financial support from my family I was late to attend school and start Form One studies, but after getting financial support (FISCH) I was able to attempt my studies at Nyerere High School, Migoli, where FISCH provide their support in school fees and other contribution such as hostel fees. I studied hard. After four years (2010-2013) I succeeded in passing four examinations in division two and to be selected to Form Five and Form Six study at J J Mungai Secondary School, Mafinga, Iringa Region.

Although I faced some challenges I was studying hard and passed my Form Six examination to be selected to join Mzumbe University in Morogoro. My studies at University are in a Bachelor of Science of Economics (Population and Development) where my dream to a be a great economist working on future economic problems, and also to help myself run my future business. Now I am a First Year Student but I have a long journey to accomplish my goals, so I appreciate your donation and for your good soul.

Lastly I am heartily thankful for your compassion and donation to meet my dreams. I wish you all the best and all support to FISCH for their generosity to FISCH Children. Your support has played the greater role in my success.

Hussein

“Education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom.”

– George Washington Carver

Right: Hussein at home

Lower Left: completing primary school

Middle: completing Form 4 at high school

Lower Right: completing Form 6 secondary school





FISCH Tea Party Fundraiser and Ten Year Anniversary



Did you know FISCH is ten years old this year!?



Future for Iringa Street Children was founded in 2007 by Rich and Lissie Gercke and Rev Mote Magumba and his wife Atu to meet the need of the town's Street Children, and to give them a hope and a future. It started with nothing more than a desire to make a change, combined with the offer of 6 months of financial support from friends who believed in this vision. This was followed by an offer of a large hall to use once a week, and so the first FISCH Saturday Feeding Project happened on the 1st of September 2007 with 20 Children. Since then, **God has grown this project beyond anything we could have imagined.**

In these ten years we have moved through two Drop-in-Centres, started FISCH Church, founded FISCH Utd footie team, run Homework Help Clubs, Youth Clubs, Holiday Clubs, a FISCH Olympics, started the Sewing Club with our first two graduates, offered microfinance, provided short-term accommodation, witnessed our first FISCH Kid to be accepted into University and of course given hundreds of Children a hope and a future by helping them move off the streets, into family life and back into education. This has been achieved through your support, and through God's awesome provision, and **with His grace we will continue to do this.**

We would therefore like to invite all of you lovely Friends of FISCH to a fundraising birthday FISCH Tea Party in Guildford on Sunday 14th of May, 3:30pm to 5:30pm. The FISCH Team would love you to be there, but we recognise that Surrey is quite a long way for many of you. However the offer is open and so if you would like to join us, please contact Richard directly at rich@gofisch.org. Tickets are £7.50, but if you can't make it and would like to make a donation, please do so through the donation link on our website www.gofisch.org, or contact Rich if you'd like the details to set up a standing order.



We wonder where the next ten years will take us...

"Now to Him who is able to immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."

– Ephesians 3:20-21

