

Jan 2021

FISCH

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



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Welcome to the Winter edition of the 2021 FISCH Food!



Happy New Year! Well, what a year it has been! Not only have the Team at FISCH Tanzania risen to the challenges presented by the Street Child ministry in Iringa, but also the challenge of COVID-19 that the whole world has had to face. It's been a tough year in many respects, but we have to say as always God has been faithful to His Project and we have been able to support the Street Children of Iringa through it all. From food packages to educational support, counselling and family re-unions, vocational training and the football team, there's a lot still going on at the Drop-in-Centre. What challenges will 2021 bring us? We shall have to find out. In the meantime, please enjoy these news updates, and feel free to share this newsletter with friends and family. **Thank you for your continuing friendship and support of FISCH!**



COVID Relief Food Parcels



We are pleased to share that **nobody at FISCH nor any of the Children** were ill with the coronavirus. We were able to **put measures into place** to keep people as safe as possible – such as **new handwashing stations, extra soap and a clean water-storage sim tank**. We also provided **'take away' breakfasts** for the Breakfast Club and meals after FISCH Church to help maintain social distancing, In response to the extra hardship that the coronavirus put upon the FISCH Kids and their families, FISCH provided **50 Relief Food Parcels** each month for those families who desperately needed them. Each parcel contained **25kg of maize and 5kg of beans**. We are grateful that as the coronavirus doesn't seem to have taken a hold in Tanzania, these Relief Food Parcels are no longer needed. **Thank you** to those of you readers and friends of FISCH who contributed to providing these essentials support packages.





Christmas & New Year Celebrations



Each year **Christmas** is celebrated at the Drop-in-Centre. It's not only a FISCH event – often locals visit FISCH Church to join in the Christmas Celebrations! This year there were over 200 people at the Christmas celebrations – mostly FISCH Kids and their families, caretakers and foster families, but members of the public as well. Songs were sang until midnight on Christmas Eve, before coming together on Christmas Day for joyous worship and prayer, and to share a delicious meal at the DiC, consisting of spiced pilau rice, beef stew, fried chicken, vegetables and fruits. This year there were also **12 baptisms!!** On New Year's Day Communion was shared as well.



Food Parcel Sponsorship

Food Parcels continue to be provided to FISCH Kids. By providing **regular meals for a FISCH Kid**, they are able to stay with their family and then concentrate on getting an education and providing for themselves in future. Many Children take to the Streets because there is **not enough food at home**. We have found that the Food Parcels not only make a massive difference to the individual Children but **also their immediate family**. We currently have 37 Kids and therefore families sponsored – our aim is **100!** We do have Children on the waiting list so if you would like to sponsor a Food Parcel, please contact **Sarah Maguire** at sarahmaguire@onething.org.uk . The cost is **£19.50** a month and this provides **25kg of maize flour** (for making nutritious and filling *ugali*), **5kg of beans, 2kg of sugar and 2lt of oil**.





Uniform & Stationary Provision



In the last few weeks we have been making and providing over **items of school uniform and stationary** for over 200 Kids. Whilst government primary and secondary school are free to enter in Tanzania, the children must **provide their own correct uniform and equipment** such as pencils, exercise books and paper. This can be a **barrier to the free education**. If a Child does not have the right equipment or uniform they may be turned away from school. To equip a primary school Child with the required provisions, it costs approximately £30 a year, and £50 a year for a secondary school Student.

Thanks to a number of dedicated individuals who give monthly to the cause, we had almost half of the funds in place by November, for the school year to start in January, but we were still over 50% short of the required funds to equip *all* the FISCH Kids who would otherwise be turned away. **This is where Natalya's Fund stepped in.**



You may recall Natalya's fund from previous FISCH Foods – over the last few years they have provided Bibles and a sound system for FISCH Church, roof repair of the toilet at the DiC, sewing machines for the Sewing Club, and much more. Natalya's Fund are committed to **raising awareness and fundraising** (For more information on the Fund, check out <https://natalyafund.wixsite.com>) and we are delighted that they **again have supported FISCH and they raised the funds** to enable the remaining FISCH Kids to attend school with all the required supplies and uniform!

Johari, one of the Sewing Club graduates, has been assisted by **Eva**, one of the first Sewing Club graduates, in **making much of the Uniform**. Johari once benefited from one of the sewing machines Natalya's Fund provided, and now runs her own business. By employing her services, not only does FISCH save money on the school uniforms but Johari makes a living for herself too. She has been assisted by several **upcoming apprentices** who are a part of the Sewing Club. This demonstrates how a little can go a long way – “give a man a fish, and he'll eat for a day, but give him a fishing rod and teach him how to fish, and he won't go hungry again.” **The same applies to sewing machines!**



We'd like to take this opportunity to **thank Natalya's Fund once again** for their support and for making such a difference to the Street Children of Iringa. **Thank you!**



Looking ahead, the need for uniforms and school equipment is an annual requirement. As mentioned earlier, we have a few individuals who give monthly towards this cause. We'd love for more people to join in and commit to giving a small amount monthly. **Would you or your school be interested?** If so, please contact Rich at rich@gofisch.org. Thanks!





Short Term Accommodation Update

There are many reasons a Child may leave their home and family and **turn to the Streets** in Iringa; for instance, there is **not enough food** to go around the family and so a Child decides to try their luck begging on the streets; or perhaps a parent remarries and there are **relational issues** with a step-parent. Where possible FISCH tries to **reunite a Child with their family** and to meet the deficit – be it a Food Parcel to help support the family, or counselling, to rebuild relationships. Until the issue can start to be resolved the Children need **somewhere to stay and be cared for**. Sometimes an adjustment period is required for a Child who has been living on the Streets of Iringa for some time. This is where the **Short-Term Accommodation (STA)** is important. It is simple lodgings at the Drop-in-Centre (DiC) where Children are provided with a safe place to stay and sleep with regular meals and contact with the Team to facilitate their move back into family life. We currently have ten Kids staying at the STA, with three having been **re-united with their families** recently.

Awareness and support of the STA outside of Tanzania is headed up by long-term member of the UK FISCH Team **Roy Maguire**, who visited the Project for the first time in 2012. At the tail end of 2020 Roy's home church **Crossnet Bristol** made a contribution towards the STA which was gratefully received. FISCH would like to take this opportunity to **thank Crossnet Bristol for their recent contribution** to this incredibly important part of FISCH's ministry to the Street Children of Iringa.



Joas' Story

Joas is 21 years old, and comes from the Mufindi district of the Iringa region. 7 years ago Joas came to stay at the FISCH **Short-Term Accommodation (STA)** for a few years as life was particularly tough for Joas after the death of his mother. Staying at the STA gave him enough **security and support to finish his secondary education**. After schooling, he joined a football team in Arusha (a city in northern Tanzania) and played for a year.

In 2017 he returned to Iringa and to the FISCH STA and joined a **motor driving school**, staying another two years until he was able to begin **his own fruit-selling business** at the Mashine Tatu market in Iringa. He sells mangoes, tomatoes, oranges and vegetables. He is still involved at FISCH by playing for FISCH Utd, but is now **independent** and has a **stable life of his own**.

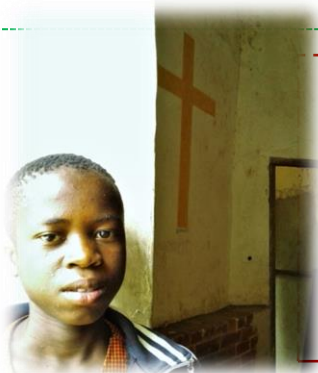


Joas is grateful for all the love and care he received from his time living in the Short-Term Accommodation. He plans to grow his business and buy a 'bajaj' tricycle for transport, have a family of his own, and also help other Kids from the Streets of Iringa.

Carol Service Fundraiser



St Saviour's Church in Guildford fundraised at their **Christmas Carol Service** and raised several hundred pounds, to be split between another charity and FISCH.
Thank you St Saviours!





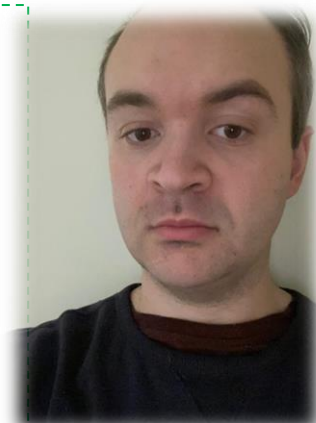
University Challenge



FISCH are thrilled to share that our **first ever University Student Tibilius graduated with a 1st in Clinical Medicine** last year! He is currently in **employment** teaching in the medical school. Many more Students have followed him, and now there are **13 FISCH Students at University or Higher Education institutions!** We are so proud of them all. So far, we have 7 Students sponsored (**Promina, Aloyce, Happy, Maria, Apollo, Neema and Vivian**), and we are so **grateful** for this. If you are one of their sponsors and are reading this, **thank you!** Our aim this year is to increase the number of sponsors to support **Best, Grace, Stoney, Gloria, Alia and Alice** in their studies – please give this some thought!

An Oddest New Year Resolution ...

Simon Pratt, FISCH's UK Prayer Warrior, has **shaved his beard for the last time... for a whole year!** He shaved his beard off on New Year's Day and **he will not shave again until the end of 2021.** Would you like to sponsor him? **His target is to raise £500** over the course of the year. We are not sure if this is a heroic endeavour... or a mad one! If you would like to support the soon-to-be bearded wonder please check out his updates and videos at **www.facebook.com/spforfisch/**.



The Saturday Feeding Project



The Saturday Feeding Project is **where it all began** for FISCH back in 2007, and it's **still going strong today!** Of course, we would prefer it if the Project wasn't necessary. The truth is that the number of Children coming from the Streets to the Project to register with FISCH and receive a meal (possibly their only good meal for the week) has been **increasing** over the last couple of years. This is partly due to the growth of the city of Iringa, which has been boosted in recent years by the presence of three Universities and the passing trade that these incoming students bring, as well as growing tourism as a result of Iringa's proximity to Ruaha National Park.

As a result more and more people are moving into Iringa from the surrounding suburbs. This **increases the appeal** to those unfortunate children who are going hungry and are resorting to begging on the Streets. FISCH is continuing to **provide a wholesome meal**, usually consisting of **ugali** (a stodgy meal made of maize flour), **meat, beans, vegetables and fruit**, at the Drop-in-Centre each Saturday, whilst also offering a chance **to talk to our Team** about their challenges and problems, and to **receive the love of Jesus in a practical and meaningful way.**





Prayer Requests for 2021



FISCH always has been and always will be **God's Project**. We trust in His provision to sustain the Project and we seek to honour Him in all we do. He is our first port of call, so when FISCH has a need, **prayer is the starting place!**

If you would like to pray for FISCH and the Kids and Teams, then here are a few things you could pray about.

- **Protection** for the Team and Kids in Tanzania – from COVID, Malaria and HIV
- That the Kids would **witness the love of Christ** and come to **know God as their Father**
- An increase in **regular giving** in addition to the one-off and/or last-minute donations
- **Sponsorship** for the university Students who do not yet have a sponsor
- That Children staying in the Short-Term Accommodation would be able to be **re-united** with their families



Want to know more or to get involved?

FISCH exists by **prayer** and was started in **response to God calling people to make a difference** to the lives of the Kids of Iringa who live on the streets, in the name of **Christ Jesus**.

If you would like to know more about FISCH, get involved or support us financially, please check out gofisch.org or email rich@gofisch.org. **We'd love to hear from you!**

...the King will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these, my brothers, you did it to me." – Matthew 25:40



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