

New year's greetings and Busega Scotland Review of 2021

Dear Friends,

We hope that everyone is well and keeping safe in these difficult times.

2021 has been another challenging but productive year for Busega Scotland. The good news is that we are in fine shape for 2022 and have some highlights to share with you from the last twelve months. A few additional comments have been added to set the information in context.

- None of our colleagues in Tanzania, or the children and young people we are responsible for, have been sick with Covid since the start of the pandemic. We regularly review our Covid Action Plan to help keep everyone safe and to reflect behavioural norms in the country. Sadly, President Magafuli died in March and was replaced by the Republic's first female president, Samia Hassan. She is taking Covid a lot more seriously and our staff are beginning to access vaccines.
- We continue to manage the work in Tanzania through weekly WhatsApp team meetings, supported by action minutes to track progress in an accountable manner. We have all adapted well to this new way of working and it sits comfortably alongside our financial management system that has held us in good stead since 2015.
- The two women's groups we were supporting at the start of this year have become successfully independent and are now registered with the government as Community-Based Organisations. Two other groups started in 2021 and we are still monitoring their (positive) progress. They were funded through our Sharing Christmas appeal a year ago. Busega Scotland provides capital (about £800) for each group's 'bank'. Within a year of operation the women double their money through savings and paying interest on loans they take out. We have now facilitated eight groups, with over 250 women and families involved, and have funding in place for four new groups next year.
- 2021 saw Mayega Children's Centre connected to the mains electricity supply through the government's rural electrification programme. We are now well set to maintain utilities at all times with solar power back-up and large water storage tanks in case the mains water supply fails. We have continued the triannual bulk food and supplies shop to ensure adequate reserves of essential items (fresh food is bought weekly). It is a sobering thought that the showers and flush toilets the children now enjoy are the first times in their lives that they have experienced such facilities. Similarly, the arrival of the bulk shopping provides an important reassurance that the children won't go hungry. Hunger still stalks the land in Tanzania.
- Hope for the future is now abundant at the Centre as the children make consistently good progress at school. It is not unusual for one of the children to score top marks in a subject or even be the top student in the year. The supplementary teaching by two qualified teachers on our staff is paying dividends. The teachers also work part-time at the primary school, spreading the benefits into the village. Our S7 pupil comfortably passed the secondary school entrance examination and we await results to see if our Form 4 will progress to A-levels. Our two college boys have completed their final examinations to become a welder and an electrician.
- We have been working with Busega District Council to have the Centre formally registered with the Tanzanian government. We should complete this process in 2022, as the criteria in the national regulations can be adequately met. What we are working on at the moment is the relationship between the Centre and the Council. This detailed work is designed to secure the Centre's future in the long term.
- Domestically, we have had another superb year capped off by the amazing Kusafiri Nyanza. It is inspirational to have the support of so many people and we are acutely aware of the responsibilities this places on us all both here and in Tanzania. We are working hard with our Tanzanian colleagues to 'build one house' (tuna jenga nyumba moja) by developing a mutual understanding of our roles in the two countries and as a single unified organisation. This has been a fascinating journey of cultural awareness.

Our Annual Report and (Scottish) Accounts should be uploaded onto the website shortly, once they have been scrutinised by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). Our Tanzanian accounts will be audited by local Certified Public Accountants.

We hope you enjoyed this review of 2021 and should you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us on busegascotland@gmail.com

Keep safe and thank you for your interest and support,

John and Christine Carney, trustees, staff and beneficiaries of Busega Scotland.