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Quarterly Newsletter: January 2016

Results pending from National Exams

Secondary school children in Tanzania sit national exams at the end of Form II and Form IV. These papers are marked in Dar with results arriving back in February. The results dictate whether the child can progress to their next year of education, or whether they must resit the year. At the end of 2015, three BTP children sat their national exams. Esther Joseph (right) and Yuseph Bartholomayo sat their Form IV exams while Juma Wilson (below) sat his Form II exams. All felt that they had done themselves justice, but it remains a nervous time for them. In addition to these NECTA exams, Brail, Shija, Severino, Kulwa and Godfrey have sat their final VETA exams, with results due soon. In the meantime they have

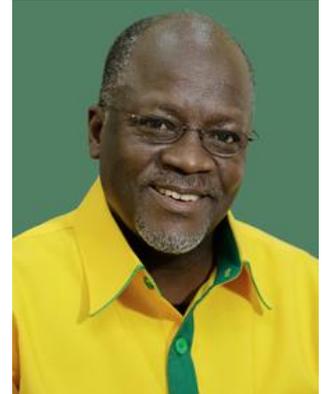


started work experience placements which should hopefully see them fully employed later this year. Edward has completed his additional mechanics course in Shinyanga and once he has his results he will be able to apply for employment, possibly with a mining or construction company.

Magufuli promises to overhaul education

The recent presidential election was won by a candidate who has promised to overhaul education in Tanzania. President John Magufuli has pledged to cap the amount that independent schools can charge in fees, while banning government schools from seeking contributions. Free government primary education was introduced in 2002 and from January 2016, the annual fees of £12 will be abolished in government secondary schools. This £12 charge hides the extra expenses of children providing

their own desk, chair and other basic resources. President Magufuli has recognised that resources in government schools are stretched and that the curriculum needs reviewing, especially Maths. It is the fundamental lack of resources and poor exam results in government schools that explains The Banana Tree Project's policy of sponsoring children through independent schools when possible, where the children achieve real exam success.



A Letter from Shija

Shija completed Form IV at secondary school and then a VETA mechanics course, all sponsored by The Banana Tree Project. He has now started his apprenticeship at a garage in Mwanza. He wrote to say thank you:

Today was my first day at the garage. I really enjoyed the work done today and was happy to meet with Yakobo who told me a lot about his life in there. It was an awesome day. I was not educated, but now I am. And this come true because of the Banana Tree Project. There were a lot of problems but you were there by my side. Nothing good goes without a word thanks. I thank you for the good things you did for me. Now I am out of your hands to start my journey to build up a better future. Even in this start you were there to make sure I get a very fantastic life. I say thanks for the support you gave me.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who has raised funds and made donations to The Banana Tree Project over the last few months. In particular, many thanks to Ian Watson for his fantastic fun run and Patrick Watters for his contribution. Thank you also to Ethical Giving and Affirmation for their continued support. The Year 7 students in Plymouth have been busy selling cakes, making calendars and completing sponsored events to raise funds. Every donation helps to support the children in Mwanza through their studies and helps them become self-sufficient in the future. Witness, Maduhu and Eliya all started their professional careers in 2016 as a result of these donations.

Ed Beavington