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Biannual Newsletter: July 2019

Twelve years on, the BTP is coming to an end. The aim was to support the children and orphanages I knew when I lived in Mwanza. With the final cohort completing their studies in 2019, that aim has been achieved.



Over £200 000 has been donated to the Banana Tree Project since 2007. This has seen over 100 children gain the uniforms, shoes, stationery and books they needed to access their primary education. Many children have been supported through their secondary education in Mwanza, working towards their Form Two, Four and Six national qualifications. Beyond school, the BTP has supported students with vocational, college & university courses.

The intention has always been to give young people access to the education and training that would help them overcome a troubled start to life and become self-sufficient. The result has been children moving from the streets and orphanages of Mwanza to become mechanics, wildlife rangers, nursery, primary & secondary school teachers, accountants, hotel managers and a doctor.



There have been many cases of children working extremely hard to seize the opportunity they have been given to become independent. Long journeys to school, limited meals, difficult access to study facilities, struggles with extra tuition and health problems have simply been extra challenges that many of the children have overcome to complete their courses and achieve their goals.

Messages from sponsored children have included their achievements and their struggles, but also gratitude for the help they have received and an enthusiasm for thanking those who have provided that support.

Many donors have given regularly over the years which has ensured stability of income, in particular Paul, John, Sarah, Jo and Jamie. Some schools have been prolific with their fundraising, not least St Albans School, Redbourn Infants School, Beaudesert School and Plymouth College. Kathryn & Cam in Australia have been extremely generous. Brian & friends in the US have taken on the full sponsorship of several students which has allowed those young people to complete their studies. I am indebted to Charlie for creating and managing the website with online fundraising while Leah's enthusiasm and support kept things going. The BTP could not have continued for so long without the efforts of Barry, Ruth, Paschal and Fay in Mwanza who have managed and administered operations fluently. Enormous thanks also to the charity's Trustees who have taken on responsibility for the charity's work and overseen the finances.



The aim was to ensure that every donation went to the children with no funds being redirected for salaries, costs, transport and administration, With the voluntary efforts of all those involved in running the BTP this has been achieved.



A good number of the sponsored young people have volunteered a commitment to "pass on" the support by helping under-privileged children in their communities, and so the aims of the BTP continue beyond its end.

Ed Beavington

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