

P.O. Box 2696 Dodoma

All children have an equal right to good education.

Dear people,

Almost at the end of an eventful year and it is almost impossible to write anything without reflecting on the many things that have happened worldwide this year.

Although our deaf children in Tanzania are supposedly far removed from all problems, they are the ones who are most affected by it. It is safe to say that not one deaf child in our school has any idea of how the world works, but in the meantime they are dealing with the consequences of what is happening elsewhere. Among other things, we have a serious lack of water at school, prices of food and transport and other items have risen enormously, so we can no longer carry out many educational activities. Finding volunteer specialists has become virtually impossible these days. And financial support has declined sharply. Thanks to our volunteers and tight budget, the EOTAS Foundation has been able to set aside some money in recent years for this difficult period, so that we can continue to cover our running costs in the coming period, because no matter how things continue in the world. Ultimately, all children should have a fair chance at a good education, which is of great importance for their own lives and humanity as a whole. (Robin van Donkersgoed)



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Hearing tests for the children at our school.

The EOTAS Foundation has been able to set up a good audiometry room with the help of sponsors. This allows us to test all children for their hearing and determine whether children are still eligible for a hearing aid. In addition, the school also helps people in the area with a hearing test and possibly a hearing aid for a donation, so that some money comes in to help us with running costs. Bilali is one of the deaf employees at EOTAS who conducts the hearing tests. We are the only institute in Dodoma Region that can perform reliable tests and provide people with a modern digital hearing aid. This allows us to convert donated devices into money for the care of the deaf children at our school. In addition, Bilali also provides training to one of our employees to conduct a basic hearing test in the children. Despite the fact that the test is not entirely administered according to Dutch methods, it appears to be effective for the children. Pictured is Godfrey Gryson Matete (7y, group 2) being tested by Bilali (right) and Rehema (left).



For a change a gift from the Tanzanian tax authorities

At the beginning of November we received a visit from the Tanzanian tax authorities. As probably is the case with most people, one immediately get stressed out about it. Now it turned out that they came to visit our school to give a present instead of demanding payments. Something nice for a change from this authority. It turned out that the tax authorities are conducting a campaign to appear friendlier and more involved in society. They do this by visiting a number of important institutions and finding out what they really need and how they can help.



In mid-November they returned to our school with a large group including the director with a package of necessary items for the school. This package included sheets, mosquito nets, hygiene products, exercise books, pencils and pens. They were impressed by the way our students receive the same curriculum as hearing children in regular primary schools and that especially the older children understood what was happening.

Dear reader,

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter.

On behalf of the board of EOTAS, I would like to take you on a virtual journey to Dodoma Tanzania. Last October 2022, finally after more than 2 years, it was high time for me to travel to Tanzania again. This visit was very important and special for several reasons. First of all for my own motivation. Here in the Netherlands we are all dealing with our own troubles in these times. Energy prices, gasoline costs, and so on. As a result, the children in Tanzania shift somewhat into the background. No matter how much I try to avoid that, it is inadvertently so.

How good it is to arrive in Tanzania and see what you are doing it for. The Dodoma Deaf school in Tanzania is finished. The classrooms are full. Food is cooked. It goes. The school is running. Everyone does their job. How wonderful to be able to contribute to this. ... And yes, the motivation is completely back!

This visit was also important because I now had a considerable collection of hearing aids in the attic that had to be taken to Tanzania. There are of course many deaf children and adults who still have enough hearing to benefit from a hearing aid. Thanks to donations of good quality hearing aids and equipment in the Netherlands, we can meet that demand.

Finally, this visit was very special because I travelled with my 4-year-old daughter. To see this experience through the eyes of a 4-year-old child puts a lot into perspective. Beforehand I got a lot of questions: among others "how will she communicate with the children there?"

I posted the following on Facebook the day after our return to the Netherlands:

2 girls, girlfriends. Both cheerful, enthusiastic, eager to learn, love to dance and play.

One was born with 2 perhaps a little too good ears, in one of the richest countries in the world. The world is at her feet.

The other deaf. Born in one of the poorest countries in the world. Her chances are very much more limited. Fortunately, she ended up at the Deaf School of EOTAS Foundation and she can do crafts and play at WanaZiwi.

These girls have such a good time together. Without understanding each other's language and without knowing anything about the background of the other. They laugh together. They play together. They learn together. And put a smile on the faces of many others.

Do you want to help us to increase the chances of deaf children in Tanzania? Then go to www.eotasfoundation.org and press the donate button. On behalf of these girls and everyone else; thanks!



What I personally remember most about this trip is the following. In general, we have it very good in the Netherlands, but we don't always see it that way. The people, and especially the deaf children in Tanzania, have real problems. Financial, economic, education, health. And yet all people are happy, they are content with what they have, they laugh, are relaxed, feel good about themselves and are there for each other. They're doing well. That touched me. I have been going to Tanzania for years with the idea that I can teach them something. But in this they give me a huge wise lesson that I try to take back home and propagate in my environment.

On behalf of the EOTAS board: Nienke Munting, Secretary EOTAS Foundation

Our maintenance team



All furniture and buildings are made and repaired by our own team of deaf and hearing professionals. In the photo on the left, the carpenter Maiko is preparing a table top for painting. On the right, Mustafa spray-paints the base of the table. Together they make a new table tennis table that the children can use to play at school.



Meet our deaf mechanic, Johari. Like our other technical people, Johari can perform many different tasks. In addition to repairing cars, Johari can also weld, work with wood and lay bricks. Thanks to good training with us, his deafness is no obstacle to carrying out jobs. When we don't have work for him at school, he can also do paid jobs outside the school.



School milk for the children

In October, our school was selected for a national initiative to promote drinking milk at school. This program is sponsored by FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization). The school was



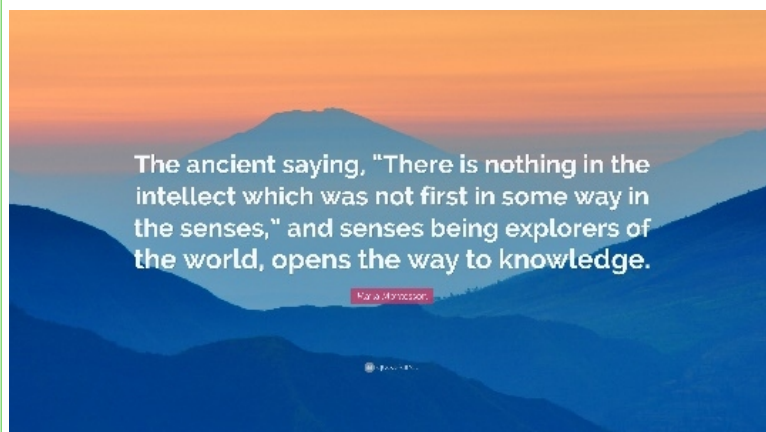
offered free milk for the children for a number of months. In addition, everyone received an extensive lunch on this day. During this day the children were allowed to perform a number of performances with dances and plays. With advice from the school board, the best performing students also received an extra gift. A summary of the day appeared on the national news in the evening. It is clear that the Dodoma Deaf School is slowly but surely gaining respect on a national level and is getting more and more recognition from the government.

News from the Montessori preschool.

Just like Nienke, I was able to visit Tanzania again this year. I was there during the summer holidays and just got to see the children before the school started its extended summer holiday because of the census. At school I always look mainly at preschool, because that's where my knowledge and experience lie. The preschool is based on the Montessori method, because this method works well for deaf children and because



Montessori training is also available in Tanzania. The method is based on the principle that children learn by using all the senses: "There is nothing in the mind that wasn't first in the senses" (Maria Montessori, 1949). The material for young children is 'sensory material' with which they can experience mainly by seeing, feeling and trying out.



In this way, young deaf children who do not yet have spoken and/or sign language can quickly learn a lot from the first day they enter. The children are also taught sign language. As soon as they can link the gestures to the material and everyday things in their environment, they progress in leaps and bounds. The kindergarten teacher, Mwanaishi Shomari, has been trained in the Montessori method in Mwanza. This summer, the Montessori Community of Tanzania (MTAT) celebrated their 25th anniversary in Dodoma with Montessori teachers from all over the country. She was there, along with the principal of the school, Maingu Kennedy, and Felista Urassa, the Montessori kindergarten teacher of the Kilakala Unit for the Deaf in Morogoro. Together they made the importance of the Montessori method for deaf children very clear to all participants, who without exception all came from regular



schools. Even for the International Montessori Association (AMI) who was also present, it was not known that the Montessori approach works so well for deaf children. It was such an eye-opener that the AMI has now decided to devote a podcast to the topic "Montessori for deaf children in Tanzania". You can listen to this soon via <https://montessori-ami.org/about-ami/ami-talks>.

On behalf of the EOTAS board: Monique Bekker, board member.

Dear family and friends,

As you may have read, EOTAS continues to invest in the future of many deaf children. It is not the intention to provide endless aid, but rather to provide a path to economic and social independence for deaf people in Tanzania. Of course this starts with good care and good education for deaf children who did not choose to be born deaf in Tanzania. Together with your financial support, we can continue to invest in a better future for these children on our planet.

I would like to invite you to visit our website, where you will also find a donation button, if you want to support.

<https://eotasfoundation.org/donate/>

I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous 2023.

Robin van Donkersgoed (robindonkersgoed @ yahoo.co.uk)

Info:

For more information about sponsoring deaf children, please contact::

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www.eotasfoundation.org

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