

Tloma Giving
1404 East 2700 North
North Logan, UT 84341
Tlomagiving.org
TlomaGivingInfo@Gmail.com

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A successful start to School year 2022



Lives are being changed!

Thanks to you, our amazing sponsors, Tloma Giving is supporting a total of 109 youth in secondary school: 34 students in boarding schools, and 75 students at the local secondary day school. This is an incredible number of students who are attending school who would not be able to continue their education without your generosity! Beyond what you might expect is needed for boarding school, such as uniforms, and school fees, the students must also bring with them bags of corn and beans, their own mattress, and even brooms and hoes to do chores, all among the long list of 50 items required for each student. The incredible job of purchasing, organizing and distributing all these supplies fell primarily to Teachers Sulle and Rodrick. Thanks to them as well as to our sponsors for a successful start to the 2022 school year!





The Good, the Bad, the Hopeful, and another Fresh Start.

Below is a report on Winona's visit to Tloma starting mid-December of last year:

THE GOOD.

As you know, a great deal of time, energy, and funds were dedicated to searching for a good spot for a well. Those efforts were rewarded with a borehole that not only had a good supply, but also had very clean water. We have been anxious to proceed to the next step of establishing a vending station to sell the water, the proceeds from which would be used in support of the school and the village, with a special focus on increasing economic development and creating jobs for villagers. In mid-December, I flew to Tanzania to finalize the registration and construction of a vending station to start that next phase. Within two weeks the village had dedicated a parcel of land for the station, the engineer had drawn up a plan, and we proceeded with applying to the local water authority for the license.

That's when disaster struck.

THE BAD.

We learned that a new Tanzanian Water Act prevents us from selling water.

I spent the next 6 weeks in Tloma trying to find ways to work around the restriction and, as an alternative, looking for other ways we might use the water to raise funds. It is now two months since I returned home, and the answer remains the same: we cannot sell the water.

We asked about supplying water to the school without cost and, thus far, the answer has been that we cannot give the water to any one entity without being obligated to give it to everyone who asks for it, which isn't a financially sustainable option.

We can give the water to the community but, at this point in time, they do not have any infrastructure for distributing it. Also, their present process continues the existing process of selling it to people who can afford to pay, which leaves many still without water. If the community manages the well, most of their profits would go toward increasing the infrastructure, and there is no good plan in place for providing water to those who cannot afford it. Furthermore, this option would not directly change the economic status of the community as we had planned.

THE HOPEFUL.

We learned we can use the water for any number of income-producing purposes: agriculture, bottled water, bottled drinks, brickmaking, lotions, etc. We began to explore the possibilities of those and other options for generating funds to support projects at the school and in the village.

While we could sell liter bottles of drinking water at a much higher rate, there would be a significant investment in production equipment and, quite frankly, none of us support polluting the country with more plastic bottles.

One option that is being considered is an irrigated, cash crop farm. We could start in a small way by growing one or two specialty crops on our present property. We have been in discussion with the agriculture department there to get their advice, and income projections are currently underway. Once our farming team was property skilled, we could look at renting other nearby land to expand our irrigated farming operation.

A local maker of fired-clay bricks has asked us to consider joining forces in the production of environmentally-friendly hydraform bricks. Wood-fired bricks take a large amount of water; hydraform bricks take very little water but need a consistent supply for about 10 days for each production cycle. Our contribution would be the water, and we would get a percentage from each brick sold. He has taken a government-sponsored course on this method and participated in a large construction project using them. He now wants to expand his brick operation to include them. Since the government is encouraging the reduction of wood burning, whether for bricks, or cooking, or other uses, we are reaching out to government entities to see how acceptable hydraform bricks are for government-sponsored contracts. We are also contacting private companies. We have retained an attorney who can provide us an agreement so that our new Tanzanian NGO can still maintain its non-profit status if this option proves viable.

Once established, each of the above options could potentially generate a significant amount of income as well as employment opportunities. There are other ideas on the table, but those two are the present top contenders.

Obviously, this is not the news we had hoped to be sharing at this time. But we have had other setbacks that led to even better solutions, and we are confident new doors will open to us. In the meantime, we are reaching out to various authorities to see if we can work out some agreement to provide water to the school and the adjacent medical clinic at least until the local water company secures greater supplies of water.

ANOTHER FRESH START.

Angela Kimanya is the new headmistress at Tloma Primary School and is excited to work with us to improve the education opportunities at the school. We have already made some headway.

<u>The Library.</u> Last year we subsidized two volunteer, university-educated teachers to provide Saturday classes in all subjects for the local secondary students who received financial assistance from Tloma Giving. While I was there, we agreed to shift those subsidies for those teachers to provide the school with a full-time librarian. Now the library is open during the day and students select books to read during lunch period or other free time. The library is too small to accommodate the number of readers, so they take the books outside to read and return them before their next class. They can also check books out to read at home. Teachers are also beginning to look to the library for resources for their classes.

Better Math and English. The two subjects students indicated are most difficult for them are Math and English. The two subsidized teachers are now focusing their efforts on those two subjects. Saturday classes are offered to Tloma's class 6 and 7 students as well as to secondary students who are struggling or who just want to get better in those areas. Others come in at lunch, or teachers are sending them to the library during class time for assistance. The teachers give simple tests to identify specific weaknesses and then help students at their level. The intent is to help fill the gaps for students who have missed out on the basics so that they can perform more proficiently at their present – or future - grade level.

Online Instruction. The headmistress has dedicated a laptop and a projector to the library. We will provide a DVD player so that the two teachers can provide online listening and instruction opportunities in English and Math, the two most critical subjects for student success. It is anticipated that listening to native English speakers will not only improve student language skills, but it will also help teachers speak better and improve their ability to teach English. They plan to use online instruction for other subjects as well.

<u>Water Catchment.</u> In regard to water, another challenge is capturing the immense amount of rainwater that runs off of the large roof of the dining hall. You may remember that a dining hall was funded and built by a generous donor not associated with Tloma Giving. However, miscommunication between the donor and the construction company resulted in a design that does not presently take advantage of the water that drains through pipes and onto the surrounding sidewalk. We are in discussion with Angela and the local authorities to determine a long-term solution for that issue.

Environmental Club. Teacher Sulle, our Tanzanian board member and superhero of all things Tloma, has established an Environmental Club. Small groups of students have selected team names (see photo) and have adopted various areas of the campus to maintain. This includes the planning, planting, watering, and weeding of their particular spots. Sulle is teaching them the importance of plant selection in regard to potential benefit and water conservation. There is a strong focus on plants that can supply food, such as fruit trees and vegetables, but may also include shade, shrub and ornamental varieties. As compensation, participating students will be given produce that they can take home to their families in addition to being added to school meals.

CONCLUSION.

While the discovery that we could not sell water was truly heartbreaking and gut wrenching, we are happy with the great new positive things that have occurred and that are still possible. There are additional accomplishments that I have not shared, but please know we have been making great progress at involving new Tanzanian

volunteers who are dedicated to helping us help their people, whether students, families, or the community at large. And, as always, if you have ANY questions, please do not hesitate to ask us.

And – please also remember – none of what has been accomplished could have been done without YOU. Your support, both financially and emotionally, are what really keep all of us going. We – our team and the families in Tloma – thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

| Tloma Giving 1404 East 2700 North | North Logan, UT 8434 |
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