



1404 East 2700 North  
North Logan, UT 84341  
<https://www.TlomaGiving.org>  
TlomaGivingInfo@gmail.com

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**From Pre-School to University, Our Tloma Students Shine!**



*Teacher Bertin Sulle and Five Student Teacher Assistants*

Tloma Giving started six unofficial years ago with four people - most have still not met. Each had become so enamoured with the Tloma students that they just wanted to help in whatever way possible. Some of the first efforts were toward food and uniforms for the primary school and securing sponsorships for some good students to continue past Grade 7.



Some of those early sponsored students, and some that weren't sponsored by us, are now college age and are setting great examples for the younger students by volunteering at the school during their break time. They are filling in the gaps for over-tasked teachers with 60 or more students: explaining problems, teaching concepts, grading papers and many other needs, both in and out of the classroom, like teaching how to play basketball.

The kids love having these older students teach them and the teachers will sorely miss them when they return to their own studies. Some of these volunteers want to be teachers; others just like helping their 'younger brothers and sisters', related or not.

They understand how studying hard can lead to valuable and often rare opportunities, and they are passing that on to these young Tloma students. We are so proud of their successes and the awesome young adults they have come to be.



**New Temporary Kitchen and New Water Line  
Facilitate use of on-campus  
Tieberink Community Center.**

The Karatu School District recently accepted ownership of the Irene and Marjan Community Center, allowing students to use the dining hall for lunch. This provided a welcomed reprieve from the recent extreme rainstorms that flooded and destroyed many homes in the Katatu area. However, it also created a new challenge.

Marjan Tieberink, who funded and directed the construction of the center, understood long-term cooking with wood and wood charcoal was not only unhealthy, but was unsustainable with the tightening government restrictions of their use due to deforestation and environmental impacts (see related article below). The Center's kitchen was instead designed for clean fuels such as gas, electricity or solar, all of which are presently difficult options for the school. But we are working on a solution.



In the meantime, students had to carry plates of hot food, or Cook Agustine had to transport large pots of hot food from the existing kitchen to the dining hall which is located on the opposite side of the relatively large campus. This was neither safe nor efficient.

**Thanks to the generosity of donors** who designated their funds be used for food related needs, we were able to fund the construction of a new Temporary Kitchen located adjacent to the dining hall. After a new fuel source is found, the Temp Kitchen will provide an accessory kitchen for large Center activities such as weddings and funerals.

But - the Temp Kitchen needed clean water to prepare the food and for children to have clean drinking water while they ate. As you can see, it was a long way for Cook Agustine to haul water from the nearest clean water faucet. **Thanks once again to donors** who had designated funds to support water needs, we were able to run a line from the TGT clean water tank to the kitchen.



We still need funding to capture the massive amounts of water that come off of the dining roof - calculated to be in excess of 80,000 liters during one typical large storm - to fill the gap for cleaning the dining hall and other water needs, and to eliminate significant erosion issues.

If you want to make it happen <mailto:TlomaGivingInfo@gmail.com> or make a donation at <https://www.TlomaGiving.org>.



### **Speaking of School Lunches....**

### **Look What the School Garden Produces!!**

Bertin Sulle, our Tanzania board member, Tloma teacher, and Miracle Worker Extraordinaire, has implemented an Environment Club where students learn how to plant and grow a variety of vegetables and other produce. Some have planted and care for banana trees, or avocado trees, or other fruit trees. Ornamental gardens are the focus for others. And some work in the vegetable garden.

In our last newsletter we shared how Jenny Watson went to Tloma to help install the drip irrigation equipment she brought with her. The results were so impressive that the Grand Circle Foundation, associated with Overseas Adventure Travels, provided support to double the size of the school garden. The produce is used to provide much more nutritional school lunches, to provide sufficient food source to make up the deficit for those who cannot afford school lunches, and to sell some produce to fund other school programs.

And, students take seedlings home to show their families how to start their own vegetable gardens. If this doesn't put a smile on your face, I don't know what could!

## Now for the Not-So-Positive News

### New Law Threatens School Lunch

Dr. Seleman Jafo, Minister of State in the Vice President's Office (Union and Environment) has ordered all institutions that serve not less than 100 people to stop using firewood and charcoal by January 31, 2024, while those institutions serving from 200 people will stop using the energy source on January 31, 2025.

We are so grateful that donors provided the funds we needed for the Temp Kitchen and to extend the clean-water line. This will be a big step forward. But, we have recently learned of a new law that could change things.

As mentioned before, massive deforestation (1.6 million acres per year since 2010) has led to increasingly restrictive laws. Here is one that we just learned about that could have significant consequences for the school lunch program. This law prohibits any private or public institution that prepares more than 300 meals per day from using wood or charcoal, and it goes into effect on January 31, 2025.

### The school cooks almost exclusively with wood. How will Tloma Primary prepare lunch for almost 700 students???

Here is a possible - and possibly fortuitous - idea.

Tloma Giving's sister organization, Tloma Giving Tanzania (TGT), was established to purchase the property for the well. TG was not a TZ organization and could not own property. As the owner, TGT has the responsibility of providing an income to operate and maintain that well. Growing produce was the immediate choice. However, two successive crops have been destroyed by the same numerous rains that have flooded and destroyed many homes within a short distance of Tloma Village.



Last fall, TGT became a distributor for BURN stoves, a low CO2, very efficient appliance designed to reduce the cost and environmental concerns of burning charcoal made from harvested trees. Stove sales were impacted by the cost of the charcoal fuel as a scarcity of trees has increased the value of the (often illegally acquired) charcoal. TGT learned groups in other countries made bio-charcoal briquettes from recycled waste plant and paper products and not harvested trees. When made properly, virtually no CO2 is produced when burned and they are much cheaper to make than regular charcoal.



TGT located a local craftsman who had experience with making paper-based charcoal. A class was offered to a few individuals who wanted to learn that process. They have been working on developing a good product and now want to produce and sell their own product - Tloma-Kol. No one knew of the upcoming government restrictions then, but TGT believes those classes have provided a timely solution for providing a clean fuel source for school lunches.

### But - there is a major barrier: They need a place.

From TGT's inception, the goal has been to build the Tloma Economic Development Center (TEDC) on the well property. It would include a classroom, a production area, a storage area, and reception/shop area where products of various types, soap, baskets, tie-dyed fabrics, and more, could be taught, made, and sold to local and tourist patrons. We have learned from our own Tloma experiences that not having a place to store supplies, to gather to produce the product, and to store inventory presents great challenges for budding entrepreneurs. But, it requires a financial investment that TGT does not have.

They are currently looking for a temporary location to house the operation so that sufficient charcoal can be produced before the ban goes into effect for Tloma Primary and for other nearby schools. Until they become profitable, they will only charge our school the cost of production; later they plan to provide it for free. A small place will work for now, but a larger space will be needed to expand enough to also generate income to support the well. TGT has the land; they need funding for the building. The projected costs to construct the complete Center (Office, classroom, large production room, storage areas, toilet, security system and initial production supplies) is just under \$22,000.

Tloma Giving's focus has been on the students and the school and not on assisting with the TEDC. However this law could have major negative consequence for our school and others. All of you who are reading this newsletter have already been extremely generous, but if you, or someone you know, would like to help in this effort by TGT, we would be very grateful. Donate online at <https://www.TlomaGiving.org> or <mailto:TlomaGivingInfo@gmail.com>