**23rd NOVEMBER 2020**

**GENERAL REPORT FROM MISS JESCA JAMES PAULO**

**GENERAL FACTS**

Currently Bethany children’s home is supporting 154 children and young people in total. We have 140 children onsite either at Primary or Secondary school, 93 being girls and 47 boys. However, we have 9 young people either at college or high school still under the support of Bethany, 2 being girls and 7 boys and finally 5 boys who are waiting to join VETA in January.

***Please see spreadsheet of Names and DOBs data attached. These names and***

Happiness is doing an update on the list of children’s names and their Dates of Births ready for the birth certificates registrations. When this is ready, then I will be able to send a spreadsheet that will have names and dates of births as per the children’s birth certificates.

**NEW CHILDREN FOR THE YEAR 2020**

We have had fifteen new children since January 2020 up to now, 10 being girls and 5 boys. I think this will be it for this year unless we have a very desperate situation that calls for special consideration. I have included the background stories of the thirteen children and the other three children I believe I have already sent the histories to Karen (Please see stories and pictures attached). Happiness is doing an update on the list of children’s names and their Dates of Births ready for the birth certificates registrations. When this is ready, then I will be able to send it to you then you can see each child in their respective classes.

***Please see some pictures and stories of each child attached***

**GENERAL CHILDREN’S HEALTH**

The children are all generally keeping well both physically and mentally and they are happy to be here at Bethany. We haven’t had any major health issues to deal with lately. They are sleeping under their mosquito nets and eating well so we thank God that everyone is well except for common colds and pains which is normal to all of us according to the changes we experience in our daily environments.

**PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILDREN**

Of the 149 children onsite, 25 of these are at Secondary school and the rest at our Bethany Pre and Primary school. The children both at primary and secondary school are doing well in their education, each according to their level and abilities. I am sure you will have received Emma’s report on the primary school children and how well they are doing in learning different things both academic and our Christian values as these are the foundation of what Bethany strives for.

The Primary school children as compared to Secondary school children are doing really well at learning and speaking the English language. The older children at Secondary school can sometimes be cheeky and try to get away with speaking Kiswahili but we keep a tight rein on them and we do our best both teachers and care-workers to encourage the English speaking onsite and I must say, it is improving day by day.

In terms of academic achievement, young people at Secondary school are more at disadvantage as Sogesca Secondary school is still not doing very well. They are short of teachers especially those for subjects like Maths and Science subjects. Therefore, they would usually come home complaining that they have done only one or two sessions in a day and not very efficiently. However, we encourage them to use the resources available at Bethany to improve in their studies and ask help from our teachers at the primary school who have in many occasions been very kind in helping them.

The form two pupils did their National exams this November and are awaiting results. We hope that they will do well to move on to Form three. Therefore, the form two children alongside the standard seven leavers are currently at home helping with various tasks including cultivating crops, cooking, helping in the dormitories, developing a garden for fruit trees, helping Happyness in the office with some paper work, working with the site workers to strengthen our fence etc *-* ***please see some pictures attached***. John Waith, our volunteer has also been good, taking the standard seven leavers to teach them some extra Maths lessons as they prepare for Secondary school in the new year.

**BAPTISM OF 24 OF OUR CHILDREN (ALL GIRLS)**

On Saturday the 14th November 2020, we had 24 children (all girls) from Bethany who got baptised at our Lake Victoria after going through some baptism sessions with Yonah’s wife (who is a pastor leading an AICT church in Magu).

The children made this decision out of their own free will and wanted to make the commitment to follow Christ in everything that they do and say. On Sunday the 15th November 2020, all the children went to Yonah’s church under the guidance of Happyness Jackson and our Teacher Lilian Mayombo and they were able to take part in a communion service, some of them for the first time since becoming born again Christians.

Sadly, I missed the baptism service, because on the day, I was busy with some other tasks in the office. However, Anna Peter managed to take some photographs of the children being baptised, though not one of the whole group. Therefore, I will take one group picture of all the children who have been baptised and send it to you in due course but for now ***I have attached photos of individual children being baptised*** which Anna has kindly sent to me. I believe John Waith might have some pictures of the baptism as well though I am not sure.

**CHILDREN’S BEHAVIOUR**

Generally speaking, all the children have been behaving well with no major issues and we thank God for that and a credit to all the staff, both at school and home. However, we recently had one girl (Vivian Obure) one of our form three students, has in multiple occasions being badly behaved by not doing what she is supposed to, such as leaving the site without permission and not being honest about where she has been. Some care-workers have seen her in Masanza corner and other places at times when she should not be there. Even when she has come back home and she is asked where she has been, she has shown no remorse and has been very arrogant towards the care-works. Mwita and Jesca have talked and warned her many times and even had to suspend her from Bethany for a week last year for the same bad behaviour, but it has not worked. Therefore, as a team we have decided to reintegrate Vivian back with her relatives (mother) and they are in the process of transferring her from Sogesca Secondary school.

Furthermore, we have had three lads, Alex Mathias, Frank Deus and Vicent Michael who are in form two displaying disappointing behaviour towards the care-workers and their fellow children. However, these children have been reminded of the Bethany’s rules and guidelines and we are happy that they are now back in line and are working very hard and behaving well. Since they have been at home after their exams, we haven’t heard any complaints about them from any of the staff.

**STAFF AT THE CHILDREN’S HOME**

We currently have 22 staff employed and the rest 2 care-worker helpers or volunteers on a small allowance of 30,000Tsh/= per month. The staff are all working hard and each doing their best to fulfil

their responsibilities as per their contracts and instructions from the management team here at Bethany. None have asked for any extra pay yet, but there are those who will test the water even though they very well know the situation about Bethany and the vision that we serve here.

Elizabeth Joseph and Ruth Juma, two of our ex Bethany girls who just finished form six this year and have not been able to achieve a good grade to be considered for a university loan from the government are both helping here at home. Ruth is helping at the school with Emmakulatha and I am not aware of her long term plans but I am happy to see that she is working hard being an assistant teacher. Elizabeth on the other hand is helping at the home side with the care-workers and she is doing an excellent job, in fact more than even what the paid care-workers would do, so I am very proud of her. She has told me that, she is looking of alternatives and asked if it was okay to keep helping here at home whilst doing so. I hope she will soon come up with something to do and will soon leave us.

I have been however disappointed with one of our recent recruit, Nyangeta Hussein, who is also our ex Bethany girl. After finishing form four she was a given a year to think about where she will go alongside her fellows Esther Mahunda and Tausi Onesmo, however, because of her condition (amputee) Bethany considered her for a care-worker’s job here at Bethany. She started off very well and worked very hard but she soon became very arrogant and difficult. She would not listen even to the care-worker supervisors and would often shout at the children and seemed to have lost the passion for caring for the children. Winifrida, Yonah, Mwita and myself have talked to her on multiple occasions and I have even given her several verbal warnings but she doesn’t seem to want to change or have the patience needed for a care-worker especially looking after young children. Individuals have even tried to remind Nyangeta of her time at Bethany and how she was sometimes difficult and care-workers were patient with her to this date and she should show the same patience to her fellow kids

Therefore, I have given Nyangeta a month’s notice during which she can be looking for an alternative and find a place where she can work and enjoy the freedom she desires. Her fellows, Esther Mahunda and Tausi Onesmo left after a year at Bethany as per the agreement and even though they struggled at the beginning, but from what I know, they have both found jobs and settled. Esther got a job at a school in Mwanza where Stella and Elizabeth previously worked, I suspect as an assistant teacher but I am not very sure and she seems to be doing well with that. I hope this will also push Nyangeta to realise that, it is about time she became independent because being at Bethany she still feels like one of the children and sometimes expects to be treated as such. I expected that she would have come to even talk to me after our meeting but since then she has not made any efforts to make amends or apologies for her misconduct, so to me that says that she is happy with the decision.

**MATTERS ON PROGRESS**

1. **VAT EXEMPTION ON THE NEW VEHICLE**

* This is still on progress but Duttu and I have been inquiring about another option. Duttu had an appointment with a lawyer friend of his who works in Dar and knows people at the TRA headquarters. Therefore, this lawyer gave them a call because he couldn’t visit the office personally and this is what the exemption department at TRA headquarters told him. I have given John all the details and will probably be able to share with you in person with some other proposals, however, the following procedure is what the lawyer basically told.
* First and foremost, we need to get and introductory letter from our District Commissioner to acknowledge that we exist, are registered as an NGO that workers purely charity, looking after orphaned, abandoned or abused children and we are not in any way making money through doing this. Therefore, the DC will write the letter in such a way as if she was asking for the exemption on our behalf. I know our DC has always been quite positive with the work of Bethany in the past and I am sure she won’t have a problem doing this for us now, however, I will need to make an appointment to visit her and explain everything before she writes the letter and we may even need to write a letter to her making a formal request of the introduction. The other condition is that, the vehicle we want to purchase must be within ten years from its manufacturing to the purchase date, beyond that, then this sort of exemption won’t be possible.
* Once we have those two requirements above sorted, we can go ahead and purchase the vehicle and on clearance day, have the letter from the DC, registration certificates of Bethany etc and the purchase documents. Therefore, the exemption will only happen then. I hope John is able to explain to you better than I have done in here and if there are any questions or thoughts please do share. If all this goes well then we can be hopeful that we will purchase the new vehicle very soon without the 18% VAT.

1. **TITLE DEED FOR THE BETHANY LAND** – This is also in progress but will soon be complete. However, we need to get a special seal that does not use ink to stamp on the documents as these are supposedly very important and official documents. The only issue is that, I have never known where they make these sort of seals, I have tried to speak to different people including Duttu and they suppose, you could send for this to be made in Dar. He says he knows one person who has this official seal and will ask them and get back to me in due course.
2. **KITONGO LAND –** We had a person who showed interest and wanted to strike a deal at 7 million but sadly we haven’t heard from him since end of October so, the land is back on the market and this time I will start at 10million.
3. **AUDITED ACCOUNTS –** The auditor did agree to audit our annual accounts at **600,000Tsh/=,** however, when they found out that they need to do the school’s accounts as well, they said the price has to change slightly. So, I am waiting to hear from Duttu about what he negotiates with them and will let you know. However, Happiness with the help of Esther Cosmas have started getting documents and receipts ready for auditing. I have spoken to Emma as well about the school’s accounts and she will do the same.
4. **WATER SYSTEM:** Our meeting we had with the water board people was not really productive. Yes, they were able to remove the VAT, however, labour and supervision costs still made a very high total. However, like you, we also began doubting these people’s competence and intention and so we wanted to consult other people on the same department and line of work for their thoughts. Duttu has been good at this as he knows people who work in the same field. So he sent BOQ and from what other individuals said, the job should be complete at no more than 95 million or less regardless of the excuses that materials have gone up in price because of the Corona outbreak. So we are yet to discuss with them this fact and see if they are willing to bring the cost down but honestly, I don’t think we should rush into this as we don’t want to make a mess of such a big project, so I think we should take our time to get the right value for the funds provided.
5. **LOANS UPDATES –** I have attached an updated version of the loans from our young people as of November 2020.