

## Report for Tumaini Canada – March 2025

This report comes with the grateful thanks of all in Tumaini Fund Support Organisation (TOSO) in Tanzania and our widows and orphans.

The Tumaini Fund began its existence in 2003 and sought then to support AIDS orphans in the Kagera Region of Tanzania – at that time we hoped to provide consistent support to 50 orphans. Fast forward to 2025, we are now supporting in excess of 200,000 orphans.

This was not my original plan, but as we have been calling on the name of the Lord Jesus from the very beginning, I am entirely hopeful that this has been His plan.

The whole work is rooted in the love of the Lord Jesus and the trust that He will provide.

In this work the friends in Tumaini Fund Canada have proved to be His faithful servants and we are all so grateful to Him and to you.

Kagera is a region just bigger than the size of Vancouver Island and the poorest region in Tanzania due to its remoteness from Dar es Salaam where the wealth of the country resides. – Tanzania is itself one of the 10 poorest in the world.

Our work in Kagera is delivered through 5 hubs of social-workers based in the towns of Muleba, Ngara, Chato, Karagwe and Biharamulo.

The day-to-day care of our orphans is provided by teams of Community-workers – usually an unrelated man and women team – usually an Evangelist and a Mother's Union member who are themselves subsistence farmers, but known for their care of their desperately poor neighbours. These 2 person teams usually cover the needs of orphans in 2-4 villages which they visit on foot or by bicycle once or twice weekly to see if they are doing well or need any help. The children can come to see them for help at any time 24/7.

These people are like angels – to me they are like the hands and feet of Jesus.

None of our orphans live in orphanages – they all live in their own villages, but with the help of our community-workers, heads of family are appointed to look after them.

The reason we have 200,000 orphans is that we never turn an orphan away. 80% of our orphans are Christian and 20% are Muslim. We can support them to the extent that we receive funds from our supporters, but we can always do something – even if it is just to provide them food when they are starving, or advocate for them with troublesome neighbours or their wider family or get them clothes and shoes.

In 2024 we supported 134,037 children in primary schools, 35,456 children in secondary schools (283 secondary schools served) 450 students in High School, 229 students in our own vocational training schools, 609 students in technical colleges and 444 students in university.

The remainder of our orphans will be under the age of 6/7 years or older children up to 18 years no longer in school.

We have many programmes in TOSO, which include

- the building of houses for homeless families or those living in desperate squalor
- Construction of fresh water wells for communities drinking infected surface water
- A milk programme providing milk to the babies of Mothers who die in childbirth or shortly after. We provide these infants with milk, increasingly through our dairy goat programme, until they are 2 years old.
- Malaria- prevention through providing mosquito nets
- Support for our children at all stages of education, including fees, uniforms, exercise books, pens, pencils, bicycles when they live far from school, solar lamps to enable homework to be done, hygiene kits to enable our female secondary-schoolers to attend school during their menstrual periods.

Because of the amazing support from Tumaini Fund Canada in 2024 for our vocational schools, I will devote a sizeable portion of this report to them:

We have 10 vocational training classes – 2 in each of our hubs. They provide a 2-year course in either tailoring or carpentry – one class of each type in each hub. In 2024 we catered for 229 students in total. Of special note is that in 2023, the College of the North Atlantic – part of the Colleges and Institutions of Canada – made a study of Alternative Education Pathways (for young people who had left mainstream education) in Tanzania and TOSO was given an award together with only 5 other charities nationwide for the effectiveness of the education provided. Our Director of Programmes, Isaac ThankyouGod Kabombo, was then invited, at the expense of the College of the North Atlantic, to attend a Leadership course in Canada in 2024.

Young people fall from conventional education in many ways – some children never had the chance of attending school, others dropped out of school because, for example, a girl might stay home to look after a dying parent or a student might come down with typhoid or malaria before or at the time of an exam and so fail that year. If a girl becomes pregnant, she is expelled from school and it is illegal for her to return to school.

Both tailoring and carpentry students are given a 2 year course by TOSO which includes teaching them their chosen skillset, English (the professional language), Maths (including book-keeping) and Entrepreneurship. They also have Christian worship daily.

Tailoring students are predominantly girls, but there are a number of male students as well – for instance some young men who have Sickle Cell Disease are too unwell to be able to withstand the physicality of the carpentry course. Last year we had our first ever female carpentry graduate – a Muslim girl who outshone her male peers!

When the tailoring students are proficient – they initially learn by sewing newspaper or brown paper – then they move on to sewing dresses, suits but also school uniforms. Primary school uniforms are the same throughout Tanzania – blue skirts for girls, long brown shorts for boys and white shirts for all. As our students produce vast quantities of school uniforms in all our hubs, we are able to provide beautifully made uniforms to all our elementary school children – uniforms they must have in order to attend school – for just the price of the blue, brown and white material. For the students, being able to produce beautiful uniforms will enable them to make a good living in their villages after they graduate. However, in order that their wonderful efforts to serve their fellow young brothers and sisters by providing them with school uniforms might not be found exploitative, we award each student with their own sewing-machine at the end of their course – so that they have the skills and education to set up their own tailoring business, plus the means – by owning a sewing-machine- of doing so. Of course, then we have to re-equip our classrooms with replacement sewing-machines.

Similarly, our carpentry students help us by making tables, chairs, cupboards, sofas which we sell for local income-generation and they make windows and doors for the houses we construct for our destitute families. At the end of their course, they are awarded a collection of tools – saw, hammer, plane etc to begin their own businesses.

Last year Tumaini Fund Canada provided generously for the sewing-machines our vocational schools needed.

The cost of each sewing-machine was 450,000 Tanzanian Shillings.

Today's exchange rate is 1838 TShs to 1 CanD so, although exchange rates vary a good deal, \$245 Canadian per machine. The cost has gone up considerably since Covid and keeps rising. They are imported from China and come in flat-pack form.

There are no administrative charges, but there is a transport cost and the cost of a sewing-machine engineer assembling each machine in each classroom.

The impact of what you did for our vocational-training students is beyond measure – your generosity has enabled us to give them the opportunity of further education, the opportunity of being part of a community, of learning a skill which will give them a good living for themselves and for their wider family once they complete their course. You have given them hope and a future. You have also enabled thousands of primary school orphans to have been given wonderfully made school uniforms.

Above all you have heeded Christ's words "whatever you did for the least of one of these brothers of mine, you did for me"

You have brought about what Isaiah wrote of the powerful love of Jesus in Isaiah 61: 1-3.

The first 2 chapters of James are worth a read too.

I can never thank you enough.

We are so grateful for what you have done .

I will send on a few photographs of our work – the work that you have partnered in with us.

May God bless you and keep you.

A thousand thanks,

Dr Susan Wilson, MBE,  
CEO of the Tumaïni Fund