



Capturing Hearts & Minds



UNDER THE SAME SUN JUNE 2012 NEWSLETTER

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A significant portion of our most recent trip to Tanzania was spent near the beautiful shores of Lake Victoria. This is a place where beauty and anguish live in tension since it is also the area where most of the attacks & killings occur.



While in the Lake Zone we were able to spend a good deal of time meeting the kids in some of our Education Scholarship Fund (ESF) schools.

We also visited Buhangija, an overcrowded government residential school for children with disabilities. Too many of the kids there were underage and should still be in the arms of their parents.



Growing Rewards

With each trip we make to Tanzania there are growing rewards. In the city of Mwanza, all of the children with albinism (CWA) from 3 of our ESF schools were brought together for an academic awards ceremony. These are all integrated, high quality, mainstream residential schools. Amongst their pigmented peers, a good number of the CWA are now among the top 10 for academic excellence. Gold medals were given to first place, silver for second, bronze for third, and all of the top 10 were given a Certificate of Merit. This is likely the first time that these children have been celebrated for anything.



Screening for Hearts & Minds in the Kill Zone

After a year of screening our documentary *White & Black: Crimes of Colour* at all the major film festivals in sub-Saharan Africa, we now set our sights on blitzing the country of Tanzania. The director of the film, JF (Jean-François Méan), along with his team, will spend 8 months screening both indoor and outdoor events. They are targeting urban and rural settings with a primary focus on the remote areas where discrimination is worst and most of the attacks and killings occur. After each screening of the film, the local residents are engaged in a lively discussion exploring the beliefs about albinism in their village or town. UTSS



staff, along with local PWA, lead the discussion and keep the conversation focused on UNDERSTANDING ALBINISM. Popular Tanzanian musicians and other artists are always part of the after-screening as well. These events are well received by the average Tanzanian. Our Canadian team participated in 2 outdoor screenings, 1 urban and 1 rural, on our most recent trip. The rural screening took place in the village of Magu, only 7 kilometers from the compound of





the witchdoctor who was interviewed in our documentary. There are approximately 1000 witchdoctors in the surrounding area. Safety for our staff and screening crew is a significant concern as we continue to educate and advocate in these areas.

NOTE: *White & Black: Crimes of Colour* was one of 6 nominees out of 57 entries in its category at the Africa Movie Academy Awards in Nigeria. This is the largest award of its kind on the continent. IK Ero, a PWA from Nigeria and also one of our Canadian UTSS team, represented us on the red carpet at the awards ceremony in her home land.

Local Sunscreen Production is Now a Reality in Tanzania

At the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro is a vast university hospital called Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre (KCMC). One of its hospitals is very relevant to PWA. The Regional Dermatology Training Centre (RDTC) has developed an Albinism Care Unit with a primary focus on dermatology and skin cancer care. As part of their service, it has initiated a Local Sunscreen Production Unit



(LSPU) which consists of a lab for sunscreen production and a tailoring factory that manufactures wide-brimmed hats. The LSPU has evolved to the place where it requires its own building, and operations budget. UTSS and Camana Fund, both Canadian NGO's, have partnered with RDTC to ensure the sunscreen production unit gets a successful start. All 3 stakeholders signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at a press conference on May 19, 2012.

A contract was also signed with Mafalda Soto, a pharmacist from Spain who has played a fundamental role in the initial development of the LSPU. As Project Manager she will offer ongoing stability in the new expansion, providing oversight for the building project, operations and funds.



A High Vision for Low Vision Continues



While the MoU was being signed, Dr. Rebecca Kammer offered a Low Vision seminar to medical students in another part of the KCMC campus. Her focus was to help future Tanzanian medical service providers to understand albinism and some of its unique low vision considerations. There was a lot of interest on the part of the students. UTSS is placing great hope in the next generation of Tanzanians to provide equal and informed services to their fellow citizens with albinism.

Dr. Kammer also offered Low Vision Clinics (LVC) in many of the locations we visited during our last trip. For example, while the award ceremony was going on with our ESF students in Mwanza, Dr. Kammer was running a LVC in the neighboring classroom. She examined the eyes of new students and did follow up exams with previous students. She did the same at our UTSS office for all staff with albinism.



Our Brilliant Tanzanian Team

As UTSS sphere of influence grows in Tanzania, so does our need for new staff. As a leader, Peter Ash knows that the first item of business is to capture the hearts and minds of the people. We were able to spend some quality time getting to know new staff and growing relationships with our veteran team. While casting his vision and dream for UTSS, Peter was painting a picture that we all want to be in. **WHAT AN AMAZING TEAM** we have in our Tanzania office!!



We Wish We Could Say It's Over

There seems to be a growing intensity among some very influential Tanzanians to quit focusing on the atrocities and start focusing on some of the more urgent needs like skin cancer. For UTSS it's not an either or since both are still urgent needs.



On May 26, 2012 the unidentified body of a 25 – 30 year old man with albinism was found murdered and severely mutilated in a forest near Namabala Village in the Region of Arusha. The man's face, ears, throat, arms and genitals were missing. It is estimated that he was killed on May 22. The decomposing body was found 4 days later by strangers who brought him to Mount Meru Hospital Morgue where he remains unidentified and unclaimed by loved ones.

On May 12, 2012 at 3:00 AM, vicious intruders mistakenly took Leti, a 3 year old boy without albinism as he slept in a darkened room next to Agneta, a 21 month old baby girl with albinism. The murderers took Leti to a nearby bush, severed his arm, chopped off his nose and lips and ditched the body in a shallow pit. Agneta's father fears that the killers have recognized their mistake and will be back for his daughter. This tragedy occurred in the Kagera Region of north-western Tanzania.



You Can Change a Child's Life

**DONATE
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\$29.00 per month provides one of our students with albinism much needed medicine, personal items and clothing.

\$125.00 per month funds the tuition, boarding fees, textbooks and all personal costs for one of our students.

A one time gift of \$50.00 – or any amount - will be used where the need is greatest in our education programs. Please get involved and change a child's life!

As you can see, the need is still great.
We at Under The Same Sun cherish your partnership.

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