



Stichting Twiga
www.stichting-twiga.nl
P.O. Box 142
Mto wa Mbu
Arusha Region
Tanzania
KvK-nr.: 08117163

TWIGA Foundation has a children's education and support project in Mto wa Mbu, Tanzania. The project supports 14 nursery school children, 20 primary school students, 16 secondary school students, 1 vocational training student and 1 university student with basic life necessities (nutritious food, medical care, school necessities) and provides quality education for these students.



Twiga Foundation – Annual Report 2012

TWIGA Foundation

Annual Report

2012

“Changes and dreams coming true”

Mto wa Mbu, Tanzania

January 2013

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Introduction

The year of 2012 was a special year for the Twiga Foundation. First of all, it was the first year that founder Machteld Speets moved back to The Netherlands permanently and a new project coordinator, Mariët Veen, replaced her as coordinator. Mariët created her own position quickly in both the project as well as the village society and did a successful and valuable job in coordinating the project. Please read the results in this annual report!

In 2012 some dreams came true. Two fantastic examples: our own library and computer class room were opened in 2012. Furthermore, the new program of the nursery, which only started in March 2011, developed to a higher quality level throughout 2012.

We also celebrated the first lustrum anniversary of the Sarakasi ya Vijana project! If we overlook the development of the project over the last five years, we can be very proud. In November 2007 the project started with supporting 9 primary school children to go (back) to school. Five years later, the project supports over the 50 children in quality education in three different educational programs (nursery, primary and secondary education). Furthermore, thanks to our sponsors, we managed to improve the quality level of the education greatly.

On behalf of the Twiga board,

Machteld Elize Speets

*Founder and project coordinator
Twiga Foundation*

Anne Marie van Lanen

*Chairwoman
Twiga Foundation*

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TWIGA Foundation

Mission

The Twiga Foundation works on creating a positive change in the lives of children and their families who live in Mto wa Mbu (Tanzania) under difficult and dangerous circumstances. With our work we can establish a significant breakthrough in the vicious circle of poverty and/or violence. We help as many children as possible to finish an education career at their own level and provide guidance in their personal development. Like this, we support the children and their families in establishing a situation of social and financial independence for themselves, so they can help others to achieve the same.

General Goal

Giving love and attention and service of basic necessities and quality education in the widest meaning of the word until the children have successfully finalized an educational career of their passion.

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Specific Goals 2012

- New situation: new permanent coordinator;
- All the primary school children of Sarakasi ya Vijana to private primary schools;
- Obtaining the birth certificates of all the children of Sarakasi ya Vijana;
- Finish the construction of and open the library;
- Finish and open the computer class room;
- Finish the construction of and open the office;
- Finish the playground;
- Further development of the nursery program;

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Realizations 2012

We will remember 2012 as the year of many significant realizations. Enjoy reading about it in the following overview!

- **Hand over coordination**

In December 2011 founder Machteld Speets had to move back to The Netherlands for the education of her 4-year old son. Therefore, Mariët Veen took over the job of project coordinator. It was a big challenge for Mariët to replace the founder of the project and at the same time create her own way of working. She was ever so successful. Under her management she developed the project many steps further, both in terms of quantity as well as quality.

- **2nd project coordinator**

To be able to exercise the project coordination completely and with a certain quality level, at least two coordinators are required. So, in March 2012 a second project coordinator, Sander, was added to the project coordination. Because of insurmountable points of view between Sander and the board of the Twiga Foundation this situation of two coordinators unfortunately lasted for only 6 months. After his departure the foundation opened the application of project coordinator again, which was filled in 2013.



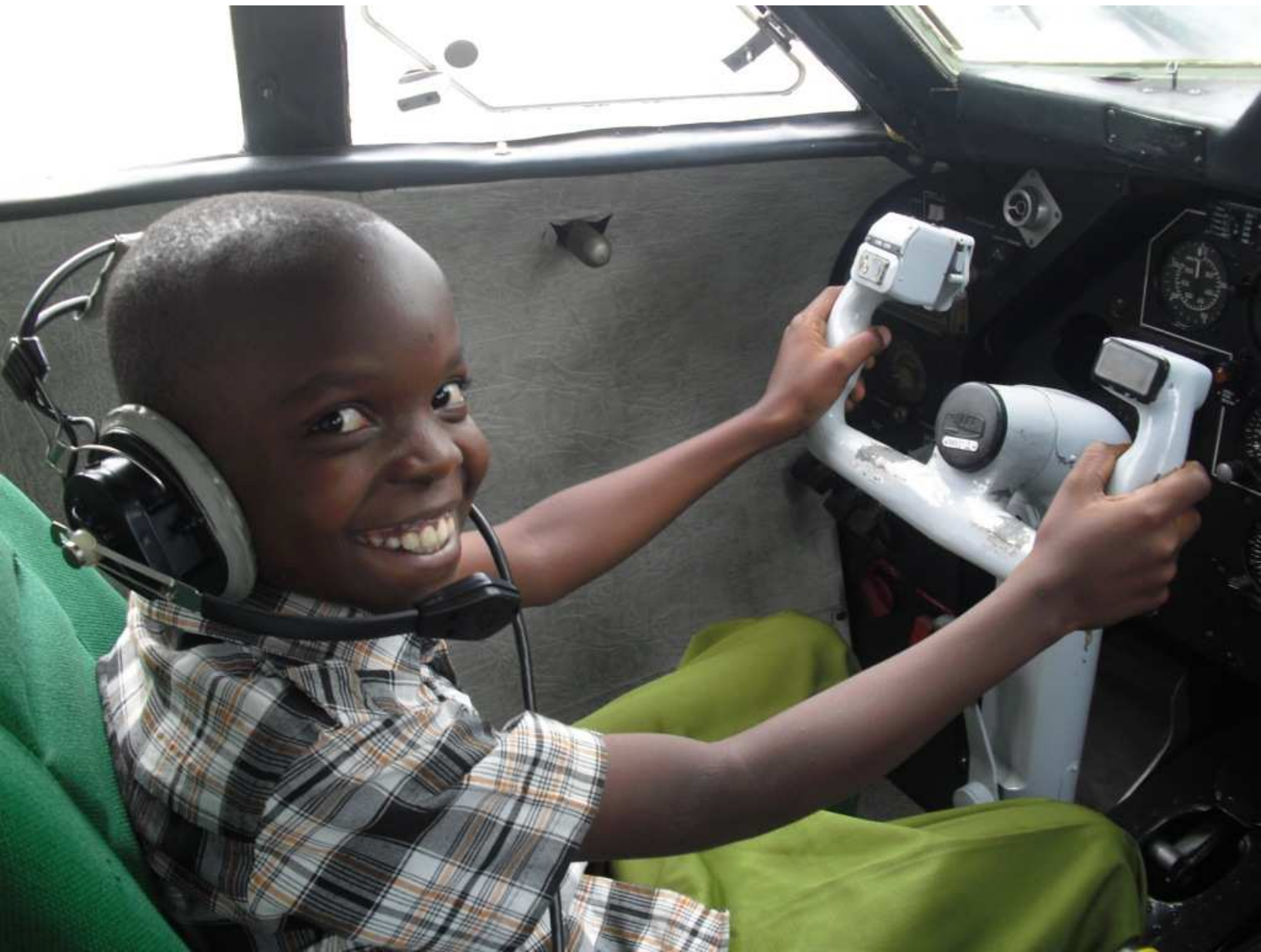
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- **All kids to quality education**

Thanks to the very successful sponsor campaign of second project coordinator Sander we were able to send seven more primary students to private primary school. Except for Wittness and Esther (who have one or more disabilities), all the primary students are going daily to the private school of Mwalimu Anna. This was a huge step in terms of increasing the level of quality education.

- **1st student to vocational training**

We believe that every child needs his/her own educational path. Most of our children go to secondary school after primary school, but this choice is not an automatic one. We intent to discuss for and with every child, which would be a suitable step in his/her educational path. This year we started to support a student in vocational training for the first time. Student Yona started a vocational training to become a car mechanic.



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- **Development Nursery**

In March 2011 we started the Nursery Program. In 2011 and 2012 we developed step by step a high quality program for children in the age of three up to six. Two certified teachers, Agnes and Mariamu, educated the youngest children of our project in classic subjects like writing and Mathematics, but also in increasing their imagination and creativity by Arts classes and educational playing activities.

- **New Saturday Program**

In April we started a new Saturday Program for the primary school students. After years of acrobatic lessons on Saturday, the children suggested to look for a new program on the Saturdays to learn new skills. Since the computer classroom was almost finished we decided to hire a computer teacher and started official computer lessons. For the afternoons we found an Art teacher to organize creative lessons. This turned out to be a success. During an evaluation after seven months the children were still very enthusiastic about both classes.



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School trips

Besides realizing quality education in the classical school subject we also value education in general social development and life skills, preferably in an active way like excursions. This year we organized two school trips.

In January the primary and secondary students went all together to Arusha Airport to learn about airplanes and the work of a pilot and other staff at an airport. It was a memorable day. Our kids were even allowed to sit in the cockpit of a real airplane!

In December the nursery kids went to Lake Manyara National Park for the first time in their lives. An exciting and fun outing amongst lots of animals!

- **Birth certificates**

Most Tanzanian people do not have a birth certificate, as their birth was never reported to the government in the first place. And most Tanzanian people will never need a birth certificate. However, over the last two years a birth certificate is more requested by authorities, for example while applying for schools. Therefore, having a birth certificate is important for the Twiga children. In February 2012 we managed to receive these certificates for all children, except for the few children from Mbulu and the Serengeti, areas far away from Mto wa Mbu, as we could only request the certificates there. We are working on obtaining these birth certificates as well.

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▪ **Construction projects**

Several construction projects, which already started in 2011, finalized in 2012:

- *Playground*

Thanks to a secondary school in Goes, The Netherlands, a playground for the children was realized at the project site. The school organized a contest for its students with the assignment “Create a playground for the Twiga project”. The winning playground was to be built at the project site in Mto wa Mbu. Volunteer Miranda Janssens (student construction engineering) managed this construction project during the last months of 2011 and the first month of 2012. In Januari 2012 the children could start enjoying the playground; they had never seen or experienced something like this before!

- *The Office*

From February 2012 onwards the project coordinators finally had their own, separate office. This created for them more organizational space and better separation between live and work environment.

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- *Library*

In April 2012 we were extremely proud to open our own library! A dream we created in 2010 was realized in less than two years' time. With this library the children have better access to all kinds of books and a permanent place to study. Besides the children the staff can also use the library. For example, every afternoon the guards are taught Kiswahili in the library by one of the housemothers, who is a former teacher.

- *Computer class*

In 2011 we already started giving computer lessons to the children in an open area at the first floor of the main project building. However, in April 2011, with the huge help of volunteers, we created a real computer classroom and started official computer lessons for the children given by a teacher on the Saturdays. With this experience, the children are better prepared for the digital world which is rapidly being implemented in Tanzania.



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- **5th Anniversary**

- **In Tanzania**

On the 1st of November 2012 the children's project of Sarakasi ya Vijana existed 5 years! On the 21st of December Sarakasi ya Vijana celebrated this 5th anniversary with a well-deserved party. Almost 250 guests (e.g. parents, stake holders and neighbors) celebrated this event with us with singing, dancing, theatre, catching up memories and talking about the future of the project!

- **In The Netherlands**

On the 8th of September 2012 the Twiga Foundation celebrated the 5th anniversary of the Sarakasi ya Vijana project in the Netherlands with a real Twiga festival! Volunteers created an inspiring, celebration location. More than hundred people, all involved with Twiga, were gathered to celebrate this milestone! Besides all the joy of the celebration we also raised new project funds by selling food and drinks.



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- **Water shortage**

This year we experienced a long period of water shortage in our area. It was dry, very dry. The regular water supply as well as the water reservation tower could not supply any water for months. The guards needed to travel every morning to a main water supply point to collect buckets of water. This was a problem which took a lot of time and energy to cope with in a project like ours where many people eat, drink, clean and use sanitary facilities.

- **Volunteer program: 30 volunteers**

During the year we welcomed 30 volunteers who all helped to develop the children's project to a higher level. Everyone in their own way using their own talent. Some of the volunteers stayed for the second or even third time at the project and two volunteers even came to Mto wa Mbu twice in 2012. The children's project can function perfectly on its own, but volunteers bring the extra quality to the project, for which we are very thankful!

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- **Board of the Twiga Foundation**

In October 2012 the board of the Twiga Foundation extended. Emiel Smit was asked to become a board member responsible for the communication. Emiel was already a very active volunteer for the foundation by, among other contributions, being the dedicated web master of the website.

Subprojects

- *Sophia*

During a medical checkup two volunteering German doctors discovered a serious heart failure in the body of Sophia, one of the primary children. Without treatment Sophia would only have had about five more years to live. Treatment of this rare heart failure appeared not to be possible in East-Africa. Volunteer Johannes Achtzehn went back to Germany to find a clinic which could offer treatment for free and he succeeded! He discovered a German organization called “Kinderherzen retten e.V.” that was willing to cover the necessary costs for treatment and accommodation for Sophia. Various German and a Dutch sponsor paid for the transport from Tanzania to Germany and back. The project coordinators of Sarakasi ya Vijana arranged the practical preparation for this medical trip. The operation was successful and Sophia arrived in good health – safe and sound - back in Tanzania.

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- *Introduction holiday kids*

This year we welcomed 16 extra children to join the holiday tuition program. These kids did not participate in the project normally. The extra costs for this group were minimal because they profit from the facilities which are already arranged for the project children. However, the value of the holiday program for these children was immense. This way, we were able to offer and stimulate quality education to a larger group of children in Mto wa Mbu and to improve our social position in the neighborhood.

The Future

We continue to carry out our vision, which is (in short) that the TWIGA children have access to good education and quality facilities to develop themselves within their own capacity and interests. With this development they can, as capable, responsible and caring human beings, work on a more fair and inspiring environment to live in and to conserve it. *(To read our complete vision, please visit our website www.stichting-twiga.nl.)*

