



UNDER THE
SAME SUN

TUNAWEZA

Sep -Dec 2013

Newsletter



UN Historic Resolution on PWA passed

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NOT FOR SALE

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TUNAWWEZA

Newsletter is compiled, edited and published by Under The Same Sun (UTSS).

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UN Historic Resolution on Rights of PWA passed

By UTSS Canada

On June 13, 2013 the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva adopted by consensus a resolution sponsored by The African Group of Nations which recognizes and addresses the attacks and discrimination people with albinism face in many countries. The historic resolution came about as a result of significant cooperation between Under The Same Sun, the Somali Ambassador, His Excellency Mr. Yusuf Mohamed Ismail, key member States led by The African Group, and The UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights. The strong leadership of the African Group of Ambassadors

was key in this process.

This resolution for the first time establishes at an international level that Persons with Albinism (sometimes called “albinos”) face significant human rights violations in many countries. UTSS has data identifying 207 witchcraft-related attacks and killings of PWA’s in 16 different African nations, with the majority of the victims being children. We believe severe discrimination, and at times fatal attacks; occur worldwide in a variety of situations. This historic resolution paves the way to further study and investigation by the UN and other bodies.

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council

The resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council will be contained in the report of the Council on its twenty-third session (A/HRC/23/2), chap. I.

23/13. Attacks and discrimination against persons with albinism

The Human Rights Council,
Guided by the purposes, principles and provisions of the Charter of the United Nations,
Reaffirming the Universal Declaration of

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Kabula - attacked April 26, 2010 in Tanzania.

Historic Resolution passed

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Human Rights, and recalling relevant international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,



UTSS CEO/Founder, Peter Ash and Executive Director, Vicky Ntetema with children at Buhangija Centre. Photo: UTSS Library

Reaffirming also that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person, and that no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment,

Recalling the fundamental principle of equality and non-discrimination that underlies the Charter and international human rights instruments,

Taking note of the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children,

Reaffirming the right to health and education as

enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and relevant international human rights treaties,

Expressing its concern at attacks against persons with albinism, including against women and children, which are often committed with impunity,

Expressing its concern also at the widespread discrimination, stigma and social exclusion suffered by persons with albinism,

Welcoming the steps taken and efforts made by the countries concerned, including the initiation of legal action against the perpetrators of attacks against persons with albinism, public condemnation of attacks against persons with albinism, the provision of temporary shelter to persons with albinism under threat of attack, and public awareness-raising campaigns,

1. Urges States to take all measures necessary to ensure the effective protection of persons with albinism, and their family members;

2. Calls upon States to ensure accountability through the conduct of impartial, speedy and effective investigations into attacks against persons with albinism falling within their jurisdiction, and to bring those responsible to justice, and to ensure that victims and family members have access to appropriate remedies;

3. Also calls upon States to take effective measures to eliminate any type of discrimination against persons with albinism, and to accelerate education and public awareness-raising activities;

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Historic Resolution

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4. Encourages States to share best practices in protecting and promoting the rights of persons with albinism;
5. Invites relevant special procedures of the Human Rights Council, as appropriate, in the framework of their mandate, to address the relevant aspects of the safety and non-discrimination of persons with albinism;
6. Invites States, in collaboration with relevant regional and international organizations, to promote bilateral, regional and international initiatives to support the protection of persons with albinism;
7. Requests the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights to submit a preliminary report on attacks and discrimination against persons with albinism to the Human Rights Council at its twenty-fourth session;
8. Decides to remain seized of the matter.

UTSS urges ACHPR, AU to take action

By Gamariel Mboya and Vicky Ntetema in
Gambia

Does the Africa Union (AU) really care for its sons and daughters with albinism who are being hunted down and butchered like wild animals and their organs used by witchdoctors in their magic potion for witchcraft purposes so that their clients can get wealthy and win elections? Has the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) stopped to think and consider that persons with albinism (PWA) are human beings and so their rights have to be protected and respected by this AU organ?

No condemnation!

The society has never stopped asking these questions from the time the media reported about the killing spree of persons with albinism in the last quarter of 2007. At the time Tanzanian and some international media reported that four persons with albinism had been slaughtered and two graves of PWA had been desecrated and body parts stolen. Six years on and more than 100 (Tanzania only) attacks on PWA Africa and Tanzania and Burundi in particular the continent has never heard any condemnation utterance against the atrocities from regional parliaments



African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in session.

such as the Pan-African Parliament (African Parliament) and the East African Parliament. There are no reports indicating that these two legislative bodies have even attempted to discuss the butchery of persons with albinism they claim to represent.

This inaction prompted Under The Same Sun to send its team to the Banjul NGO Conference preceding the 53rd Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) from in April 2013 in the Gambia. After all some of the main functions of the ACHPR include deciding whether alleged human rights abuses violate the African Charter on Human and People's (the Banjul Charter);

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UTSS calls for action

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making recommendations to AU governments to promote and protect human rights or address past violations; disseminating reports on various human rights issues, violations and/or recommendations and investigating human rights violations through fact-finding missions.

The conference brought together 632 delegates, including 132 representatives of twenty-eight State Parties, Six delegates from the African Union Organs, 32 officials from National Human Rights Institutions, nine participants from International and Inter-Governmental Organizations and 453 members representing African and International NGOs and observers.

The NGO Forum Resolution to be presented to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) included a paragraph about persons with albinism. "The persecution of persons with albinism has reared its ugly head in a number of African countries, particularly in Tanzania, even to the extent of killing them for body parts. The Forum calls on the African Commission to conduct an investigative mission to expose these violations and to develop mechanism to protect the rights of persons with albinism."

In his speech to the ACHPR, Tanzania's Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Mathias Chikawe admitted about the atrocities committed against PWA in Tanzania and informed the Forum that his government was doing its best to end the killings.

Stakeholders dismayed

Mr. Chikawe told the Commission that the government of Tanzania was very disturbed with the recent atrocities committed by some people including killing and maiming PWA for witchcraft purposes. He assured the NGO Forum that the government of Tanzania would continue to educate the public and called on all human rights stakeholders to help the government in raising awareness about albinism in order to end the problem that was tainting the country's image.

But to the dismay of many PWA, the ACHPR did not include albinism in their April resolutions.

A question still begging for answers is: For how long will the Tanzanian Parliament, East African Community AU, and other regional bodies continue to keep quiet on the atrocities against its own daughters and sons with albinism?

Summary of attacks against PWA in Africa:

1. Tanzania, 124 reports: 72 killings / 35 survivors / 17 grave violations
2. Burundi, 19 reports: 17 killings / 2 survivors
3. Kenya, 10 reports: 7 killings / 3 survivors
4. Swaziland, 4 reports: 2 killings / 2 survivors
5. Guinea, 5 reports: 2 killings / 1 survivor / 2 asylums
6. Nigeria, 5 reports: 3 killings / 1 missing / 1 asylum
7. South Africa, 3 reports: 1 killing / 1 missing / 1 grave robbery
8. Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), 7 reports: 5 killings / 2
9. Zambia, 1 report: 1 killing December 2011
10. Namibia, 2 reports: 1 survivor / 1 killing
11. Ivory Coast, 12 reports: 5 killings / 4 survivors / 2 missing / 1 asylum
12. Burkina Faso, 2 reports: 1 killing / 1 abduction
13. Mali, 2 reports: 1 killing - July 2007 / 1 asylum - December 29th, 2009
14. Zimbabwe, 2 reports: 1 killing 2011 / 1 asylum - November 29th, 2012
15. Senegal, 6 reports: 3 alleged killings / 3 survivors - 2013
16. Cameroon, 1 report: 1 asylum - April 2009

The Butchery Continues

“Shocked by mutilations”!

By Emmanuel Kwitema

Residents of Rukwa Region in south west Tanzania were in for a rude awakening in February 2013 when two persons with albinism escaped death after their left arms were chopped off within a span of four days. The two survivors Maria Chabanenge (39yrs) of Mkowe village in Miangalua and a Standard I (Grade1) pupil Mwigulu Gimbishi Matonange (10yrs) referred herein as Mwigulu M were attacked on 11th and 15th February respectively in Sumbawanga Rural District. The heinous crimes not only shocked the region but also reminded Tanzanians that the lives of persons with albinism are still at stake.

UTSS First Responder team initially went to the region to comfort Maria Chabanenge who was nursing her wounds in Rukwa Regional Hospital after her left arm was chopped off. The police informed the delegation about the attack on Mwigulu M.

Ten year old talks of his ordeal

Narrating the ordeal from his hospital bed in Mtowasi Health Centre while leaning against his father, Gimbishi Lugwisha Magesse Matonange the humble and brave boy said on February 15, this year he was abducted by two strangers who took him to a nearby hill where they hacked off his arm.

“I was laid down like a goat to be slaughtered. One of them covered my eyes with his hat. I then felt a very sharp pain in my arm as the machete cut through the flesh and bone.

“They severed my left arm. I saw them wrapping it in dirty clothes and disappeared in the bushes,” Mwigulu M told UTSS First Responder team on Sunday February 17th, 2013.

Staying alive

The assailants left the boy for dead. However, as soon as the men were out of sight, Mwigulu

M managed to walk and crawl down the hill in an attempt to reach home. He was unable to go very far because he was bleeding profusely.

“I felt very weak and decided to rest a bit,” he explained. “I wanted to stay alive and reach home! Suddenly, I heard voices of my relatives! They had passed me by heading for the hills where I was attacked. They were calling my name.” He used his remaining strength to shout, “I am here! I am here! Come and help me! They have cut off my arm!” Mwigulu M narrated in a voice that demonstrates all signs of brevity.

Asked what should be done to the criminals



Rukwa Regional
Commissioner,
Eng Stella
Manyanya.

if they were caught, the confident Mwigulu M said, “They should be beheaded because they had planned to kill me!”

Speaking to UTSS on the two events Rukwa Regional Commissioner, Engineer Stella Manyanya said she had confidence in the police force and that trusted that the office of the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) in the region would not be dilly-dallying in using the relevant evidence to ensure that justice is served for Maria and Mwigulu M.

Afraid to return home

Nine people are in remand cells awaiting trial charged with abduction of Mwigulu M and hacking off his left arm. The police announced

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...Mutilations

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that the men were caught when some of them were trying to sell the arm for TZS. 600m (appr. USD 365,000)

The father of Mwigulu M, Gimbishi Lugwisha Magesse Matonange told UTSS that he becomes confused when his son reminds him that he would never return to their home village in Msia for fear of being attacked once again. He asked UTSS to relocate the boy and enroll him in a boarding school where he will be safe as well as study. Mwigulu M has joined other grantees in the same predicament far away from Rukwa Region. And although he has been at the school for a few months, the boy has done very well in his examinations. He has proved to be very good in mathematics. He is leading the class of children without albinism in overall marks! Matonange visits his son at UTSS Halfway House during school holidays.

Husband's betrayal

Maria Chambanenge (39) with albinism told UTSS First Responder Team from her sick bed in Rukwa Regional Hospital that her husband Gabriel Yohana attacked her three times on her head with machete in her bedroom where she was sleeping with her five month old baby Emma and two-year old son Rahab. The attack took place between 01.00 and 02.00 a.m on February 11th, 2013 in Mkowe Village, Miangalua, Sumbawanga Rural District, Rukwa Region. Maria who has four children (Shukuru 8 (f), Edron 6 (m), Rahab 2 (m) and Emma 5 months (f) described how her baby was crying as she cried in pain and

asking for help. "I heard my husband saying, "Do not cry! Sorry!"

Father carried mother's arm

Maria's eldest child daughter Shukuru Gabriel (8) told UTSS that she was awoken by her mother's screams and her baby sister's wails. She was sleeping in a room adjacent to her mother's bedroom where she watched what was happening

from underneath her bed sheet. "I saw two men in long dark coats and masks over their faces attacking my mother with machetes. The short one put my mother's arm against the wall. Then I saw my father coming out of the bedroom carrying the arm of my mother. It was bleeding heavily," Shukuru told UTSS First Responder team. She narrated how a third man came inside and took Maria's clothes which he used to wrap the bleeding arm. She allegedly recognized two attackers.

"The other one looked like my uncle", the girl narrated. "I could tell from his physique, height and the way he walked."

I heard our neighbour, my aunt Egneta calling my name from next door. My mother was quiet. Baby Emma was still crying and blood from my mother's wound went into her mouth.

"Open the door from outside, Shukuru! My door is locked from outside!" Egneta kept on shouting. I went to open the door with the key that she put underneath the door.

Covered in mother's blood

"She called my mother and she did not respond. Then she ran to the other neighbours, my uncle and aunt, shouting for help. Aunt Egneta's husband, Frank Yohana who was sleeping at his first wife's house shouted from the inside that they have been locked in from outside. Aunt Egneta opened the door. People thought that my baby sister Emma and my kid brother Rahab were injured too because they were all covered in my mother's blood.

"Later on the Village Executive Officer Frank Chambika came to the house. And we children were taken to another house – where my two step mothers live. My father has three wives. The third one is my mother, Maria. They took my mother to hospital, " Shukuru became very emotional and cried uncontrollably.

Maria's husband Gabriel Yohana and his brother Bernard Yohana are in police custody awaiting trial.

Grandpa dies defending grandson

By Emmanuel Kwitema

Seven suspects are in remand prison charged with the murder of a child with albinism Lugolola Bunzari (7yrs) and his grandpa, Zengabuyanga Meli (95yrs) early this year. Those arrested include local residents from neighbouring villages and a witchdoctor. On January 31st, 2013, Zengabuyanga Meli, a resident of Kanoge Village in Tabora Region was murdered while defending his great grandson with albinism Lugolola Bunzari. The assailants mutilated and murdered the boy as well.

“Under attack”

Narrating the terrifying story, the grandmother of the late Lugolola, Gama Zengabuyanga, said her late father, Zengabuyanga was awoken by children’s screams.

She said that Zengabuyanga rushed next room to see what was happening to the children shouting: “Who is hurting my children?” Some men dragged him outside near the hut where his great-grandson Lugolola was sleeping with his mother and three sisters. He saw more armed men waiting outside the hut. The old man started running towards the boy’s hut screaming, “We have been attacked! Help the children! We are under attack!” The goons pounced on him with machetes and clubs causing deep lacerations on his head, face, ears, back, shoulders, arms and legs until he could not shout anymore. “That was the end of him!” Gama concluded.

Responding to the endless distress screams from the children, Gama came out of her hut asking who was attacking the children. She was met with machete on her legs, arms, hands and head. She fell on the ground but managed to crawl into the bushes where she lost consciousness. She woke up two days later to find herself in Kitete Regional Hospital 75km from Kanoge village.

Clubs, Guns and machetes!

Another victim of the same ugly incident was

Bunzari Shinga (35) late Lugolola’s father who upon hearing the children’s cries rushed outside his house where he was sleeping with his second wife Pili and their daughter. A gunman shot him four times. One bullet bruised his right leg and three bullets hit him and lodged in his groin. Four other bullets hit the wall of his hut. It looked as



Bunzari Shinga (35), late Lugolola’s father at Kitete Regional Hospital in Tabora. Photo: UTSS/ Emmanuel Kwitema

if the whole homestead was in the middle of a war zone. He dropped off the ground and crawled into the bushes behind the house.

When the killers disappeared in the dark with Lugolola’s arm Pili, crawled out of the hut carrying her baby in her arms. She found her husband in the bush and helped him to reach a neighbour’s house about a kilometer away and later was taken to a health center on a motorcycle.

When Kulwa, the mother of the little Lugolola and first wife of Bunzari Shinga heard the commotion and screams from the children in great-grandpa’s hut, she rushed outside only to find herself face to face with four armed men near her hut. She also saw three armed men with machete and clubs and guns by her in-law’s house and one man armed with a rifle or shotgun in front of her co-wife’s house. She went back into the house and collected Lugolola’s elder sister, Shija and her few weeks old baby and ran into the bushes. “I went back to the hut to get Lugolola’s three year old sister and rushed her to the bushes,” Kulwa told the UTSS First Responder team.

“While I was there, I heard Lugolola screaming and he was dead!”

Has justice been done?

By Vicky Ntetema

The Government of Tanzania has applauded the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva for adopting by consensus a resolution sponsored by The African Group of Nations, which for the first time at an official international level, recognizes and addresses the attacks and discrimination people with albinism (PWA) face in many countries.

Speaking to TUNAWEZA by telephone, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Mathias Chikawe congratulated the council saying the June 13 accord is a milestone as far as justice to persons with albinism in the country and the world at large is concerned.

Commenting on the recent PWA killings in Rukwa and Tabora regions in Tanzania, Chikawe says they might have been fueled by the Kenyan general elections. He said there are notions that PWA organs when mixed with some other concoctions could make someone rich and successful or win elections.

UTSS commended

He appealed to Tanzanians to change their mindset and stop believing and practicing witchcraft because it was against God's will and that those caught would be dealt with by government organs and punished according to the law of the land.

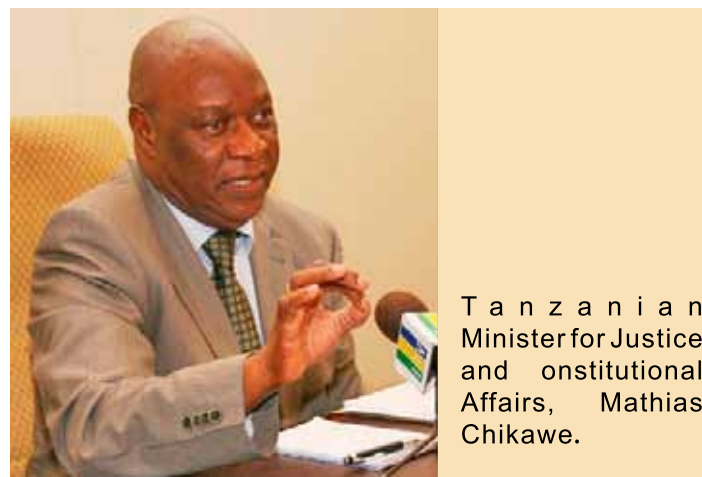
Chikawe also commended the work done by Under The Same Sun (UTSS) in fighting for the rights of persons with albinism in the country.

The DPP statistics from 2007 to February 2013 indicate the following:

43 officially reported cases of PWA
6 cases still under police investigations,
11 recent reported incidents of PWA discrimination
111 arrests in connection with the atrocities
13 cases in court with no prosecution

Since these figures do not tally with UTSS

records, the Office of the DDP has asked the organization to work with the law-enforcement body to ensure the two institutions have the correct data of the atrocities. UTSS has records of the atrocities that date as far back as 2000



Tanzanian Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Mathias Chikawe.

Task Forces' results pending

In October 2011 the Deputy Attorney General announced to the Public Accounts Parliamentary Committee that his office had launched a task force charged with investigating the murders of persons with albinism (PWA) in Tanzania. George Masaju explained that the measure has been taken following a rise in the atrocities.

This would be the second task force to be established for the same purpose. The first was formed in 2008 but four years on its findings have never been published.

Masaju was also quick to praise the joint efforts of the of the Attorney General's office and security organs who apprehend the killers of persons with albinism who were arraigned in court.

"Those who were apprehended were arraigned and sentenced. To some extent, we managed to reduce the problem," Masaju explained to the Accounts Parliamentary Committee.

The public is also still waiting for the results of the secret ballot launched on 05th March 2009 with the aim of exposing perpetrators of atrocities against PWA. One of the acquittals includes the case of Republic v. George S/O

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Judges' dilemma in PWA cases

By UTSS Reporter

In all the ten court cases whereby in some instances the end-users, dealers and buyers of the organs of PWA have been mentioned and their names are in police records, not a single one has so far been arraigned in court.

This was noted in the case of Republic v. Masumbuko s/o Matata @ Madata and two others where the presiding judge of the Court of Appeal of Tanzania (CAT) then Chief Justice Hon Judge Augustino Ramadhani when he delivered the verdict.

Wealthy people protected?

“We are of the well decided opinion that it is our bounded and most solemn duty to make these final remarks. This is the most atrocious, heinous and a dastardly act by three healthy young persons to take the life of an innocent child of a tender age of thirteen years in freezing cold blood because of some quick and possibly easy gain.”

He continues: “Some names have been mentioned in exhibit P. 4, the extra-judicial statement of Appellant 1, but we cannot broadcast



Justice delayed is justice denied.

them for all we know they might be innocent. But we are cork sure that there must be some wealthy people who hire stupid young fellows like these to perform these callous acts. We just hope that

the powers that are will follow up these clues which are in the hands of police and serve our Heaven of Peace from such extremely shameful and debasing incidents.”

Referring to the CAT's remarks at the UTSS-



Former Chief Justice
Hon Judge Augustino
Ramadhani.

organized seminar on Understanding Albinism in November 2011, JMAT President Hon Judge Utamwa said: “For this lamentation by the CAT we are tempted to believe that the efforts done against the calamity might have been not more than missing the target in the sense that, the actual cause of the trouble has remained intact.” Hon Judge Utamwa further notes, “Fighting the victimization against PWA is a serious war which cannot be worn without challenges!”

JMAT is also facing challenges in deciding cases in respect of victimisation against PWA. They include public pressure due to the peculiarity of the cases, difficult working conditions and lack of adequate funding for trials.

“The lamentation by the CAT in the case of Republic v. Masumbuko s/o Matata @ Madata and two others (cited above) showing that some wealthy people strategically participate in the illicit trade and are left undisturbed is also a challenge to members of JMAT in their performances because, court trials as one means of curbing victimization against PWA lack essence where only insignificant few culprits are dragged to court while core culprits are left behind,” concludes the JMAT President.

A Life Cut Short!

By Vicky Ntetema

Mariamamu Kija Mbogo Marachu, 7 months: 11th July 2008

Mariamamu Kija Mbogo Marachu (mother calls her Kija) - a seven-month-old baby was sleeping with her mother sharing the bed with three other children when four masked men armed with machete broke into the house. Kija's mother got up and asked who they were and what wanted from her. They told Kija's mother to keep quiet or else she would be murdered.

"The men speaking in lower but authoritative voices told me to hand over the baby I was holding and they will be gone without any hassle," she narrated, adding: "The men tried to grab my baby as I struggled not to let her go screaming with terror." Then came the worst moment when Kija's mother was asked to choose between seeing her three other children murdered one by one until she lets them take the baby with albinism or 'peacefully give us the baby and save the lives of others.' We promise we will not do any harm if you give us the zeruzeru,' One of them came and snatched my Kija from my arms. They took her to the veranda and chopped off her legs and arms. My Kija screamed only once when I heard the first strike. After that I could not hear her again!" Kija's mother told UTSS.

Vumilia Makoye, 17yrs: May 2008

Jeme, a forty plus tall woman sat on a low stool outside her small mud and stick house in Ilungu Village of Magu District when the UTSS team visited her. The pain of losing her daughter, 17 years old Vumilia Makoye to witchcraft murderers for her legs was written all over her face and could be traced in her voice.

"Vumilia was murdered between seven and eight in the evening in front of my eyes an hour or so after she returned from her day job of selling

peanuts. I had just served dinner when I heard a knock at the door. Someone said that they wanted to buy peanuts. I thought it was odd for someone to have wanted to buy the peanuts at the house. I hesitated and before I could anything, the door was kicked and two men armed with machete came in. One of them held me behind the door and another started chopping off the legs of my Vumilia above the knee and quickly vanished into the pitch black night," Jeme paused and cried bitterly as she relived the saddest and scary moment of her life.

Mawazo (5yrs) and Elisha Simon (3yrs)

In 2011 Angelina Bunzair (24) - the mother of two little boys with albinism, Mawazo Simon (5) and Elisha Simon (3) - took Mawazo to a boarding school supported by UTSS after there was an attempted murder on her sons.

The boy's father had been shaving Mawazo's hair since birth (2006) against his wife's will. Angelina decided to move out of the home at which point Simon started sending people (most of them work in the mines) to his wife's home to shave the hair of Mawazo. Many times she had to flee her home. When she complained to the authorities about her husband's behaviour and intentions, her family disowned her.



UTSS First Responder Team visiting Kulwa at Kahama District Hospital. **Photo: UTSS Library**

Vision to Learn, Vision to See for PWA: Tanzania on the right track



Low vision clinic. Photo: UTSS Library

By Dr. Rebecca Kammer

Tanzania is a little closer to attaining its overall objective of achieving the vision to learn and vision to see for persons with albinism in the country. However, giant strides can be made through partnership and collaboration, and not isolation. This is my general conclusion as I reflect on the two-week low vision clinic for PWA held in the country in July this year and in which I had the privilege to participate.

I must begin by remembering the initial passion I felt about partnering with the founder of Under The Same Sun, Mr. Peter Ash, over three years ago when I first heard about atrocities to persons with albinism in Tanzania. As a low vision optometrist and professor in the U.S., I felt an urgency to help in any way that I could clinical care of low vision as it supported the education goals of UTSS. As the sixth visit in 26 months, I had the privilege of leading a team of nine to various regions to provide low vision care to children with albinism. What an amazing team I had: Five optometry students from two American optometry schools, one optometrist and repeat team member, one PhD in education and long-time high school teacher, and one friend from church. We visited

three areas of Tanzania (Kilimanjaro, Mwanza, and Dar es Salaam) and completed brief low vision exams on just over 230 children and adults with albinism, provided an educational seminar at the college

of optometry, met with the Assistant Provost of Tumaini University, the Minister of Health, the director of a rehabilitation hospital, and the ophthalmology director of a large hospital.

Vision for all!

The overall goal of the low vision trip and the various meetings was to provide education, advocacy, and VISION for all persons with albinism in Tanzania, vision to learn and vision to see a future in which persons with albinism have the right – as leaders, as teachers, as equals. Where are we on the goal? A little closer, I must say.

Vision to Learn: Children and young adults with glasses and low vision devices that we have prescribed and provided over the last two years are doing very well and many still have and use their glasses and magnifiers. We have begun developing the infrastructure to assess outcomes and keep track of improvements in learning.

Other children have lost or broken their vision tools but we continue to learn about Tanzanian culture and how best to educate students, teachers,

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Vision to Learn, Vision to See

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family, government, and ourselves on the vision and health of persons with albinism.

Slowly we make progress. Several of our students/patients in the clinics were missing arms or other body parts from brutal attacks experienced within a few months to a few years ago (read more on www.underthesamesun.com) - this was a real awakening for my team members. One woman was missing both arms and had bled without medical assistance for seven hours - and she lived! She is the most positive and determined individual I know and she was an inspiration to the team as she shared what her life was like without arms raising a two year old. Another child was missing one arm and most of the other arm. I was considering whether to demonstrate how he might be able to use a monocular telescope to see the board in school but I was thinking “no, don’t give it to him, how could he use it?”, I decided to show him anyway and he immediately grabbed it with his shoulder stump, drew it quickly to his eye, and manipulated it better than most children with hands! Amazing! I learned a valuable lesson from that child about determination and the human spirit.

Vision to See the Future: In addition to clinical care, we also aim to educate health professionals about low vision, albinism, and other key issues such as skin cancer. We have a wonderful partnership with the optometrists of Tanzania as many have aligned with UTSS to learn more about albinism and to offer support and sustainable services when I am in the U.S. I am also a student on these trips as I continue to learn about the Tanzanian culture and how I can best support wonderful programs that already exist.

A future goal is to increase the number and

depth of partnerships with education leaders and health care providers in Tanzania. As each visit to Tanzania occurs, I am able to meet more leaders of organizations and government officials who are connected to persons with albinism through education or health care. Education and health care in Tanzania are very separate areas as is the case all over the world. Albinism lies at the intersection of education and healthcare and



Dr. Rebecca Kammer at a Low Vision Clinic.
Photo: UTSS Library

therefore no one group becomes accountable for the significant issues faced by persons of education. I am personally a hybrid of these two areas as I care for patients as a doctor of optometry and as I care about education as a teacher of optometrists and as a student completing a PhD in higher education. It is my passion and goal to support the collaboration of the two areas of health and education when focused on albinism in Tanzania. Perhaps the next step is promoting a conference where key leaders representing both areas learn about albinism and discuss how creative solutions can be found.

Isolation is never as powerful as collaboration. Together we can do so much more.

Summer Camp for SWA a success!

By Vicky Ntetema and Emmanuel Kwitema

Brad Sumner, Lead Pastor from Jericho Ridge Community Church In Langley, Canada, led 24 volunteers and experts from Canada and United States, three of which were minors while Peter Ash UTSS CEO and Founder led the UTSS team from Canada and Tanzania to hold the first ever Summer Camp with the aim of making more than 140 children with albinism in the Lake Zone feel respected, loved and valued. The theme and message for the Summer Camp 2013 was “God Values Me!”

Local volunteers from Tanzania Assemblies of God Beacon Mission Christian Center Mwanza (TAG BMCC Mwanza) and St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT) were led by Pastor Valentino Mbuke and team leader Ester Rwela. Summer Camp 2013 was held from 25th July to 03rd August on the grounds of Jelly’s English Medium School in the outskirts of the Rock City of Mwanza. Summer Camp beneficiaries are UTSS grantees who were transferred from various congested government-sponsored centers for displaced persons with albinism (PWA) to private boarding schools under the organization’s Education Scholarship Fund.

When Brad visited Tanzania a year ago for the first time he realized that the children would not return home during school holidays for fear of being mutilated for their body parts. Their parents and relatives never visit them in their respective schools because of stigma and discrimination associated with the genetic condition.

The choir from the church in Nyegezi Ward led the morning and evening worship and praise where children were introduced to the Bible teachings. Some of them were conversant with the Gospel and were given the opportunity to pray for the camp and sing songs of praise.

Apart from Chapel moments, the youngsters grouped according to their ages under Manyara, Serengeti, Ngorongoro, Ruaha and Mikumi



Hockey: Dominant and favourite sport of Summer Camp 2013. Photo: UTSS/ Emmanuel Kwitema

gained a lot of skills and experience in Arts and Crafts, Drama, English classes, Music and Sports and Games. Hockey introduced and taught by Brady Ash (14) assisted by Rick McArthur and Jared Sumner (9yrs) was the dominant and favourite sport of Summer Camp 2013. Players of the winning team were awarded with a UTSS Champion Cup trophy.

Children demonstrated their hidden talents in every subject. Very young grantees such as three year old Pendo with the help of one of the youngest volunteers, Sophie Sumner (7yrs) and five-year-old Rhoda produced very beautiful drawings. Summer Camp 2013 even produced young journalists such as Semeni Eliakim whose radio report of the camp’s activities was the highlight of the work of the young media group.

Children were so happy with the Summer Camp that they were not ready to return to their respective schools. In their speech they asked the organizers to make it an annual event.

Read more about Summer Camp 2013 in the next TUNAWEZA issue!

'The sky is the limit for PWA!

It has been four years since UTSS was registered in Tanzania. The focus has been on education – providing quality for persons with albinism via the organization's Education Scholarship Fund (ESF) Programme and educating the public about albinism under its Advocacy and Public Awareness (APA) programme. The two programmes have been bearing fruit since 2010. Now UTSS boasts more than 300 grantees placed in various education institutions from kindergarten to university levels. Some of the ESF students have been talking to staff reporter *Emmanuel Kwitema*.

Neema Mfingo, a first year student nursing at the Ipamba Nursing College in the southern region of Iringa was offered the UTSS scholarship after completing secondary school education



Neema Mfingo

in Mbeya Region. She recalls that it was her mother who took her to the UTSS offices in Dar es Salaam where she was offered the scholarships.

"I was very lucky in school because other students and teachers used to give me all the support I needed. They understood my vision problems. I was allowed to sit near the black board. Some of them prepared handouts for me," she says.

However, she criticizes those who continue to stigmatize and discriminate against persons with albinism.

"It's ridiculous to think that we are less human than those without the genetic condition. We only lack melanin in our skin, hair and eyes! Otherwise we are as normal as the next person and we can do anything we put our mind to," concludes Neema.

Hasma Lugoma is student specializing in Office Cleaning at Yombo Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA) in Dar es Salaam.

Hasma says that she is not different from



Hasma Lugoma

any other person and she can do any job. "Look here, it is only the colour of my skin and poor vision that makes me look different from you people, otherwise, I am as strong like any of you!" Some people believe that PWA are very delicate.

Hasma's ambition is to become a professional lawyer to deal with those who stigmatize, butcher or hurl insult at PWA. "I would like them to understand that we are normal human beings who can make a difference if given equal opportunity."

Reminiscing about her school days, Hasma reveals that had experienced some rough times in the classrooms. "I used to sit at the back of the class and the teachers did not care!" She recalls how some of the teachers were telling her to learn to see the writings on the blackboard from afar.

Hasma recalls how one day she narrowly escaped abduction and mutilation. She was returning home from school when she heard a group of young men refer to her as "a deal", or "money" meaning she was a commodity that can be purchased and sold. "The men started following me and later offered me a ride home which I turned down. I ran home and told my father who promised to protect me."

Martha Mwenda, a Diploma student at the College of Business Education (CBE) in Dar es Salaam majoring in Procurement and Supply Management, says the sky is the limit when it comes to education because she believes that she will



Martha Mwenda,

The sky is the limit

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one day attain a Master's Degree in International Business Relations.

"With that degree," she says, "I would be in a position to help PWA own businesses and become independent. I will work hard to build my own business in order to give employment opportunities to less privileged PWA in the country. Most PWA are neither employed nor self-employed."

Clara Peter pursuing BA Degree in Mass Communication at the Tumaini University commends UTSS for focusing on education for PWA. Clara's ambition is to become a human rights activist in order to fight and promote the rights of PWA who are being humiliated, discriminated against and butchered like animals.

She recalls the mistake she made in secondary

school education when she tried to hide her low vision problem by pretending to have normal eyesight. "I would sit far back in the classroom to and pretended to be taking notes," Clara recounts. "It cost me dearly," she admits. "My teachers did not know that albinism is also associated with low vision. I was supposed to educate them about the genetic condition."



Clara Peter

When she enrolled in another school for 'A' Level studies she told her teachers that she had low vision and that she needed handouts with large fonts and that she had to sit near the blackboard.

Letters to the Editor

A child's view of atrocities against PWA.

"All Alone" – by Jena Leighton

Don't know what to do.
Always on the outside
Excluded and booted.

My eyes, they deceive me
I don't always see clear.
My skin soooo white
People are in fear

A ghost an outcast
What am I to do?
I try to fit in but
No one has a clue.



IST pupils from left: Jena Leighton (10), Kcelan Coetsce (11), Ruben Schill (11) and Leno Telemans (10) at UTSS offices.

"Prey" – by Jena Leighton

They hunt, they stalk
They plot and plan.
I hide, I cover
I am just a man.

An arm, a leg
A witch doctor demands.
The price is high
For they want what I am.

Against all odds: A story of Ally Kondo

By UTSS Reporter

President Jakaya Kikwete proudly paraded Ally Kondo with albinism before African leaders and Members of the African Peer Review Meeting (APRM) held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia at the beginning of year 2013. He was eager to tell the world that atrocities against PWA in the country have been contained. “No more segregation against persons with albinism in Tanzania. We employ them in key ministries holding such key positions as this Communication Officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,” Kikwete told the delegates while holding him Ally’s hand in a friendly manner.

Ally Kondo, a holder of a university degree has been employed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation as Communication Officer. Such opportunities are rare for PWA in Tanzania and most African countries due to stigma and discrimination associated with albinism. So how did Ally managed to excel and get such a prestigious job?

Ally speaks of a lot of challenges he faced and nasty and threatening experience he went through in his life. “Had it been without the will of God coupled with encouragement from my parents, close relatives and friends, this journey would have ended at the lowest education level,” he bears witness to his life experience.

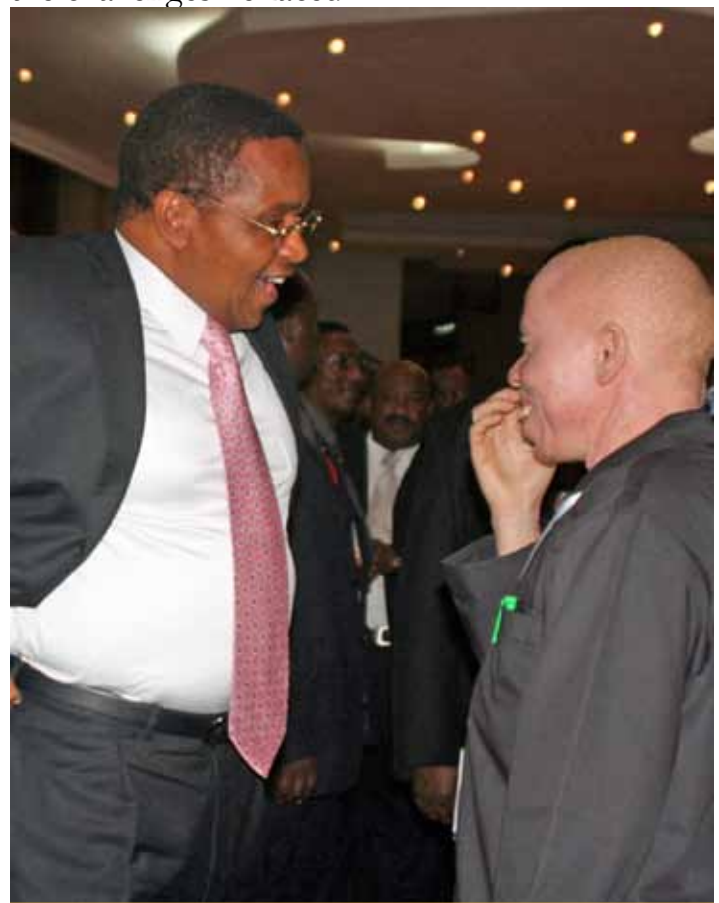
Kondo narrates that he received a very spiteful welcome on his first day at school. “Some students started staring at him as if I was a plastic doll and others called me bad names. A student I was supposed to share a desk with was very nervous and our teacher had to separate us.”

Teachers were totally ignorant about albinism and challenges faced by PWA. “I found myself as an alien in my own community. I was too young to tell my teachers the difficulties I was facing and the help I needed,” he recalls. “But I knew that God had not abandoned me and that was a very strong weapon I applied against all kinds discrimination and stigma students threw

at me.”

Soon other students realized that Ally was a talented student and fast learner. They started including him in their activities so that they could benefit from him.

Bright Ally was becoming a popular student. Teachers started getting interested in his progress. This change worked to his benefit. He started telling them about his vision limitations and why he cannot work and stay in the sun. The school administration took some measures to address the challenges he faced.



Ally Kondo (R), shares a light moment with the President of United Republic of Tanzania, Jakaya Kikwete.

“I was allowed to sit near the blackboard. I was excused from outside extracurricular activities in the sun. Name calling was forbidden,” he recounts.

Ally’s ambition was to become a scientist. However, the school environment was not conducive enough for him to realize his dream.

“Lack of awareness and knowledge of special education needs for PWA in the country and relevant government ministries made it impossible, for me to pursue science subjects,” he says. He still believes that if the government can create a PWA-friendly learning environment, even if they cannot become pilots because of poor vision PWA can work as engineers in various science and technology industries.

All is a holder of BA Degree in Mass Communication from the Muslim University of Morogoro and a Commerce Diploma in teaching. He received went to Kibasila and Tambaza

secondary schools for Ordinary and Advanced levels respectively. Ally works at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and was voted the Best Employee of the Year.

“I have been have been as Communication Officer for the Foreign Ministry for years now and I have never experienced any discriminatory tendencies against me from my colleague and our senior officials,” Ally speaks highly of the ministry that has some understanding about albinism.

Help PWA! Local authorities told

By Emmanuel Kwitema – UTSS

Tanzania’s Minister of State in the Prime Ministers Office (Local Governments and Regional Administration), Hawa Ghasia has recently directed Local Government Authorities to set budget to serve persons with a albinism (PWA) in the country specifically in health and education services.

The directive is aimed at supporting PWA suffering from skin cancer who have to travel hundreds of kilometers to Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre (KCMC) in Moshi and Ocean Road Cancer Institute (ORCI) in Dar es Salaam for treatment at referral hospitals.

The call was made in Singida on May 4th, 2013 when addressing the public at the climax of the 8th Tanzania Albinism Day celebrations in Namfua Stadium.

“I urge Local government authorities in your respective areas to set aside health and transport budgets to support PWA transport to referral hospitals because the majority cannot afford the relevant travel and meals costs,” she said.

She also directed regional, district and municipal executive directors to include in their official plans, programmes to support persons with disabilities with the aim of solving the challenges they are facing thus creating a healthy society. Speaking on

skin cancer, Ghasia said that the disease was a number one killer of PWA in Tanzania because of overexposure to the sunlight while working, walking and playing for long hours outdoors. ““Skin cancer claims PWA lives in younger ages hence hindering nation efforts of bringing about social and economic development, However, it is a curable disease if it can be detected and treated in its early stages,” Ghasia emphasized. Many PWA in tropical countries die of skin cancer before they reach 30 years of age.

The minister condemned the continuing atrocities against PWA for their organs. “It is a



Minister
Hawa Ghasia

shame to our nation. This is a demonstration of lack of religious faith in Christianity and Islam. There is no religion that preaches about murder and or mutilation of a fellow human being,” she stressed.

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Pamoko One Love! A success story

By Kondo Seif

Atrocities against persons with albinism in Africa are fuelled by witchcraft and superstitious beliefs and trust in and fear of witchdoctors. The majority of Tanzanians consult witchdoctors for various reasons including getting cure of ailments, acquiring wealth and becoming successful.

When in September 2010 the government of Tanzania lifted the ban on the licenses of witchdoctors and traditional healers it stated that the decision was made following findings that 60% of Tanzanians visits the witchdoctors. However in April 2010, the Pew Research Centre put the figure at 93% of Tanzanians who consult witchdoctors and believe in witchcraft.

With such hard facts, changing the mindsets of Tanzanians about witchcraft and albinism would be an uphill struggle! Despite all this challenge UTSS did see some positive outcome of its Lake Zone Advocacy and Public Awareness campaign codenamed Pamoko: One Love 2012 Tour.

The programme covered 20 villages in Kagera, Kigoma, Mara, Mwanza, Shinyanga and Tabora regions where the correct information on albinism reached Tanzanians via radio, film screening, live debates, interactive seminars on Understanding Albinism and special TV programmes. These were outdoor shows.

Pamoko One Love 2012 tour conducted similar programmes for indoor shows in higher education institutions, including medical schools and special needs education training centers in Mtwara and Lindi in south-eastern Tanzania and Dar es Salaam.

The tour found out that a huge percentage of persons with albinism in the Lake Zone lacked confidence and always lived in fear of being killed and mutilated. Witchcraft is still very much ingrained in the cultures and traditions of the Lake Zone population and witchdoctors are still trusted and consulted for almost everything be it economic prospects, social influence and political gains.

However the good news is that a lot of people are ready and willing to learn more about albinism and in turn educate the community surrounding them.

UTSS is determined to continue with the advocacy campaign until persons with albinism take their rightful place throughout every level of the society and days of atrocities, stigma and discrimination against PWA will be a faint memory.

'Pamoko One Love' pictorial (All photos by UTSS/Emmanuel Kwitema)



UTSS staff from left Gamariel Mboya, Vicky Ntetema and Kondo Seif at one of Lake Zone seminars.



Comedians King Majuto (R), Bi. Chau entertain during the Pamoko One Love Tour.



UTSS External Relations Coordinator, Josephat Igembe during at one of the seminars in Geita.



Coordinator of Pamoko One Love Tour, Rachel Moyo distributes publicity materials in Ukerewe District.



Thousands of Sengerema residents assemble for a concert during Pamoko One Love 2012 Tour in Sengerema District.



UTSS Advocacy Officer, Kondo Seif (L) addresses residents of Mwanza while Executive Director, Vicky Ntetema holds "Albinism Worldwide" map.



A Kiriba village child touches the skin of Gamariel Mboya, UTSS Operations Manager to prove that PWA are humans.

Has justice been done?

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Jostone aka George Bush, which was decided on November 16th, 2011 by the High Court. It related to an attempted murder against Mariamu Stanford of Ngara District whose both arms were amputated by a machete at night while she was sleeping. Mariam testified that she had recognized her attacker - George who was her neighbour of Burundian nationality.

Kibatari, Low vision and Acquittal

At the court the story of a small oil lamp known as kibatari in Kiswahili, where Mariamu says it was in the room and burning when the attacker severed both her arms. But the court cast some doubts over Mariamu's ability (who has low vision) to recognize and identify George as the attacker, and the case ended with an acquittal due to insufficient evidence.

In the course of the trials, other lessons learnt include:

- Lack of political will to set aside funds for the investigation and trials
- Lack of resources in the police force and expertise to properly, efficiently and diligently investigate the suspects
- The culture of secrecy in the society, which would punish the whistleblowers rather than

the culprits

- Beliefs in wrong traditions entertains stigma and discrimination against PWA and cultural rituals which demand organs of PWA
- Fear of witchcraft and witchdoctors who propel the killings (even the elite and law-makers and law-enforcers are afraid of witchdoctors who are regarded by some as gods
- Lack of spiritual faith in the community
- Corruption in the judiciary, police force and government departments

But the question which bothers many who are sympathetic towards the plight of persons with albinism is, "For how long will the victims' families and survivors wait for justice to be done?"

"If the pace of the trials is this slow the country will have to wait for at least 30 years for the current cases to be concluded in Tanzania's courts," says Abdallah Possi the first advocate with albinism and a lecturer of law at the University of Dodoma, the country's administrative capital in central Tanzania.

Help PWA! Local authorities told

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Ghasia reminded Tanzanians that denying PWA the right to education and discriminating against them was a violation of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, which stipulates that all human beings are equal, and have the right to be respected.

She also advised persons with distinct disabilities to organize themselves into small entrepreneurial groups. Experience shows that people with disabilities organized in such groups in other countries have enabled them to access

loans from financial institutions and fight against poverty, the minister pointed out.

Speaking at the same event, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Welfare, Dr. Seif Rashid recognized the challenges of segregation and discrimination facing PWA in the country. Consequently, he said, his ministry is implementing special programmes to include them into the health services mainstream.

FRIENDS OF UTSS



Express Lens Lab

For the generous supply of optical lenses to meet the low vision needs of PWA in Tanzania.



FacetAdvisors

Darren Millard and his company FacetAdvisors for sponsoring annual fund and awareness raising galas.



LUSH

Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics and Pearl Gottschalk for their Charitable Givings Ambassador.



Dr Rebecca Kammer

Dr Kammer (Becky) offers Low Vision Clinics to ESF grantees in Tanzania and provides them with low vision devices.



Jennifer Fisher

Ms. Jennifer Fisher and Home Economic class at Burnaby Mountain Secondary School, for make sun hats for children with albinism in Tanzania.



Scout Troop

1st Oliver Scout Troop for raising funds and then purchasing and packaging sunscreens destined to help PWA in Tanzania!!



Davis Vision

Davis Vision contributed 300 prescription glasses frames for UTSS vision correction project.



Coolibar

Coolibar donated hundreds of pieces of sun-protective clothing!!



Erin Shaw

Erin has been tirelessly canvassing her friends and family to help out however they can.



Lions Clubs

Lions Club District 105A in the UK for their generous donation of £5000.00.



Cliff Deardorf

Cliff Deardorf and family sponsor four children with albinism.



PRECISION AIR

Precision Air in Tanzania for sponsors 50% of the cost of flights required for the White and Black Screening and Distribution.



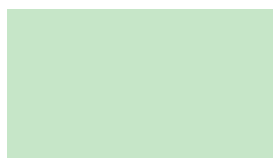
Digitall

Digitall printers supported UTSS with 50% cut on printing costs for the posters PAMOKO show.



MOIL

Thank you for supporting UTSS with 50% cut on fuel for vehicles participating on PAMOKO show.



Pound Ridge

Erin Shaw of Pound Ridge, New York has been tirelessly canvassing her friends and family to help out however they can.



Mr. REGINALD MENGI & IPP MEDIA

Thank you Reginald, for showing your love for PWA by airing our documentary and endless coverage on the plight of albinism through your media houses.

<http://www.ippmedia.com/>



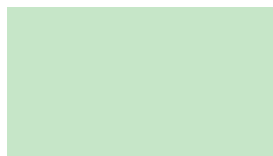
JASCO

Jassie & Company Ltd supplied gravel for the leveling of Jelly's Schools' pathways for Summer Camp 2013.



NYANZA ROAD WORKS LTD

Rehabilitated a stretch from the main road to Jelly's English Medium School in Mwanza for Summer Camp 2013.



Saddlelink and Ashley

Sponsors of five children with albinism.

What is Albinism?

Albinism is a rare, non-contagious, genetically inherited condition occurring in both genders regardless of ethnicity, in all countries of the world. BOTH the father and mother must carry the gene for it to be passed on even if they do not have albinism themselves. The condition results in a lack of pigmentation in the hair, skin and eyes, causing vulnerability to sun exposure and bright light. Almost all people with albinism are visually impaired, with the majority being classified as “legally blind”. While numbers vary, in North America and Europe it is estimated that 1 in every 20,000 people have some form of albinism. In Tanzania, and throughout East Africa, albinism is much more prevalent, with estimates of 1 in 2,000 people being affected. The term “person with albinism” (PWA) is preferred to the term “albino” as it puts the person before the condition.

Under The Same Sun

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