

THE WILLIAM STEWART FOUNDATION

SPECIAL NEW YEAR NEWSLETTER

First of all, a very happy New Year from us all at the Foundation.

For our friends not on facebook, we thought you would like to see our Christmas 'Advent Calendar'. Levison asked 24 of the children to write a little something about what the Foundation meant to them. We put their comments into a speech bubble and posted daily with the photo of each child in a Christmas bauble. We also asked for comments back to the children, and there were some lovely ones in return. I will be putting them into a Nasenje's Newsletter so that the children can see how their messages touched people's hearts.

For Christmas Eve, I included Deborah, the five-year-old daughter of Jane and Levison as she shares her Dad with so many other kids. This was the Foundation's Christmas greeting, with all the children on the tree.



Let there be light

And there was! Not quite in time for Christmas Day but on 28th, which will now be remembered as an historic day, when the Foundation was connected and the first lights ever in Ibuluma were switched on just before nightfall. This was the first photo.



People came flocking to the Centre. One older lady said to Levison: ‘No-one can tell what a child will bring in the future.’ She was talking about him, and she was right. And with the added empowerment which electricity will bring, nobody can tell what any of the Foundation children will bring in the future. Electrification has brought a tremendous boost to everyone.

Levison can now work in his office and doesn’t now have to trek somewhere every time he needs to charge the laptop. He and the team can work in the Centre into the evening and are not restricted any longer by the 6 pm pitch black natural curfew. They can tend to the goats and chickens without having to go in with the pale light of torches.

It opens up the Centre for the children’s use, to be able to study in the evenings.

There’s a whole new world still waiting to be discovered. One day this year we hope to bring photos of the children watching TV. However, there are still many priorities before that can occur, but it’s on our list!

The children have been hugely excited by the Big Switch On and it’s let them see that what we say we’ll do will be done.

I thought you’d like to see one of the photos on New Year’s Day when, although it wasn’t a day for the kids to gather, 50 of them did, nevertheless. Levison didn’t get his one day of rest but he didn’t mind that because the

children were so excited. They watched video clips on his laptop, they played, and Matilda and Nakapenda who had arrived to mop the Skills Shed floor prepared food for the children. We were asked on facebook whether the children were fed if they just turned up. Levison's answer was that no child will go home hungry from the Centre.

The happiness, confidence, and increase in the children's self-esteem, compared to the early days of the Foundation is, I think, so noticeable in the photo below.

As soon as possible, this month, Graham our web designer and I will revamp the website and this year Sarah and her team in the UK charity, and I will be working hard to apply for funding. In the meantime, we are relying solely on donations and we are very grateful for the generosity of Foundation friends to support our work.

Kind regards

Mary

www.williamstewartfoundation.org

The Foundation fb page

<https://www.facebook.com/ibuluma.malawi/>

Friends of the William Stewart Centre – UK charity

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