



Matt & Becki Dillingham in Tanzania

Help for the Maasai

Help for the Maasai (HFTM) is a charity that was set up in 1996 to protect girls' human rights through education. They run a primary school, secondary school, medical centre and orphanage in Malambo, northern Tanzania. The founder, Angelika Wohlenberg-Kinsey saw first hand the effects of forced early marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and the lack of opportunity for girls, while practising as a nurse in the region in the mid-1980s. She explained, "When I first came here, I found it so hard. Sometimes I would sit in my tent and cry, asking God, 'if you don't change this culture, I won't be able to stay here';" After 7 years there was evidence that people were starting to listen and cases of FGM began to fall.

Although FGM was made illegal in 1996, it is still widely practiced and girls are seen as the property of their father, who sells them from the age of 13, to much older men, in exchange for cattle. Education was seen as unnecessary for a life of domestic servitude and child-rearing so girls did not go to school. Naserian Primary school was started in 2005 followed by Naserian secondary school in 2018 and then a vocational college in 2022. All these schools are anti-FGM and all the girls are checked by a midwife during the admission process. If found to be subjected to FGM, the parents are reported to authorities.

In addition to teaching about FGM, these schools teach girls about their human rights and empower them to take control of their own bodies and lives. Thanks to HFTM, around 950 children in this remote region, are in education, 66% of them girls.

MAF have been flying Angelika and the HFTM team to Malambo for the last 30 years. Malambo is a 40 minute flight from Arusha and the school is just a 5 minute walk from the airstrip. Taking the journey by road would take between 8 and 12 hours depending on the season. MAF is an important lifeline for staff and students in case of a medical emergency as the nearest hospital is a 4 hour drive over rough terrain and it doesn't have facilities to carry out surgical procedures.

Help for the Maasai and MAF have also recently set up health clinics in isolated villages in the area. Last month, MAF flew into Lemurgur for the first time with a team organised by HFTM. Angelika explains the power of arriving by plane: "When villagers hear the plane approaching, its a mark of something significant so up to 80 people can turn up to listen, including the men" . The nurses warn against the dangers of FGM and forced early marriages and talk about human rights and the importance of girls' education.

MAF is playing an important role in enabling these rural communities to hear this important message.

MAF have recently launched a campaign to promote their work with Help for the Maasai and to raise money to give children school supplies and medical checks. To find out more about this campaign and to read more on the work of Help for the Maasai, read the article on the MAF UK website.



(Top left): Students at Naserian secondary school. (Top right) "Mama Maasai" Angelika Wohlenberg-Kinsey, who has worked with Maasai people for 40 years.

(Bottom): A recent clinic at Lemurgur where villagers are being taught by local nurses, co-ordinated by HFTM and flown by MAF

Home Assignment 2025

We were blessed by the hospitality and conversations that we had with people while we back in the summer. It was a pleasure to return to most of our supporting churches and to share stories of our first year in Tanzania and MAF's impact here. We are grateful to the many people who generously gave up their time in organising after-service lunches, invited us over for a meal, leant us a vehicle, treated the children and travelled especially to come and see us. Thank you for your continued support, whether financial, in prayer or in practical ways.

There were many highlights from our time in the UK this year. We were glad to return to Bristol Road Baptist Church in Weston-super-mare, 11 years after we first visited while support raising when we first joined MAF. We had a fun week of holiday in

Northumberland with our friend, Ruth. And our week staying in Milton Combe staying next to a number of families that we knew from church, while also having the opportunity to climb tors on Dartmoor, was very special.



Praise

We asked for prayer for new ministry opportunities to open up, which allow us to make use of the Caravan that joined the MAF Tanzania fleet this year. Last month, pilot Peter Griffin, flew Dr Erick Msigomba to run a week-long eye clinic in the village of Kaliua. This was the first time we have partnered with Dr Msigomba but we plan to continue to fly him and his equipment into remote areas 4 times per year.

We had a good time on home assignment this summer. We were able to visit all (apart from 1) of our supporting churches this year and had really enjoyable times with people in between. We had a lovely week of holiday in Northumberland and saw friends from Chad while they were back in the UK.

Bethan and Luke are enjoying being back at school.

Prayer

Help for the Maasai and MAF will be able to share about the importance of education for girls and empowering girls to stand up against cultural pressures placed upon them.

We are thankful to those who support us financially. The costs associated with a family serving overseas has risen over the last 10 years but the amount that we are required to raise (annually) has remained unchanged. We ask for prayer that God will provide additional funds to cover this shortfall, through new or existing supporters. For more details, please contact our colleague Adam Pope - adam.pope@maf-uk.org

The school that Matt is helping with is in need of a new classroom building before the start of the school year in January. For weekly updates on this school and the education system in Tanzania, a Facebook page has been set up called 'Friends of Education Tanzania'.



Bethan's Blog

During after school drama club I am doing a play called 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. In February we will tour around East Africa like last year. Recently I have been riding a pony called Nice Biscuit as the pony that I normally ride has been lame. I am schooling Nice Biscuit in dressage and jumping. Our dogs, Cookie and Crumble are very big now and sometimes I jump them too - they love it. I'm looking forward to Christmas as our friends are coming to stay. I'm sure it will be lots of fun.



A Letter from Luke

Next week I am going camping with my class at a place called Mukuru. We will go on nature walks and climb a mountain. I am really looking forward to it and it will be a fun experience for me. Recently it was my birthday and we went for a walk around a lake and on the way back we bought fish for my tank. Before I only had guppies but now I have gouramis, angel fish and tetras too. I wanted to buy a catfish but it cost £100 so we decided not to.