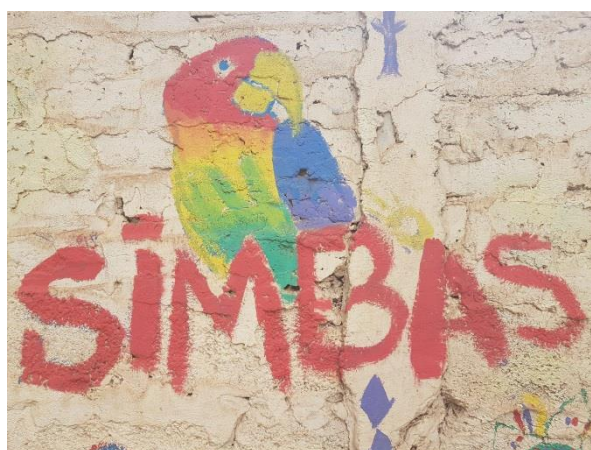


Report from Tanzania – short term trainee program in collaboration between FO-Hordaland and TASWO-K

20.11-24.11 2017 at Simbas Footprint Foundation



Hosting organization: Tanzania Association of Social Workers, TASWO – Kilimanjaro Branch

Sponsor: FO, Hordaland Branch

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Our experience:

For some years now FO Hordaland branch has given members of the branch the opportunity to apply for a scholarship so they can participate when members of the boarder of FO Hordaland visit their sister-organization TASWO in Moshi. Two members were selected to participate. We felt privileged to be the two members going with FO Hordaland Branch in 2017 to visit TASWO in Moshi, and at the same time have five days of internship at an local NGO. From 20.- 24. November we were hosted as trainees at Simbas Community Centre, situated in the outskirts of Moshi, Tanzania.



Simbas Footprints Foundation was founded in 2011 by Sybille Good from Switzerland and Frida Marealle from Sweden. Simbas Footprints Foundation is a Non-Governmental Organization working in Moshi, Kilimanjaro region in Tanzania. The organization is committed to empowering women, youth and families by giving them access to education and personal development programs to create self-sustainable leaders and members of the community.

The organization was first established as a children’s home, with a focus on family development, and over time it has evolved into the Simbas Community Senter. Simbas Footprints Foundation aims to give families the opportunity to stay together or reunite children with their family while providing support for both the child and their family. The Simbas Community Center enables youth from underserved communities in Moshi, to develop academically, socially and emotionally, primarily through different programs offered at the center.

Simbas **vision** is that by providing free educational support and guidance they hope to *educate* the community. By accessing ways of personal development they hope to *develop* the community, and by empower and create successful leaders they hope to *strengthening* the community.

At the center there were 2 local social workers and some volunteers and students from abroad. There were also 2 teachers from Tanzania working there. We started on Monday the 20 of November and we got introduced at the staff meeting that is held every Monday. There were discussions what the week would bring according to activities and program for the coming week. One of the social workers, Belinda, was our daily contact and advisor the days we joined Simbas. She picked us up at the hotel and brought us til Simbas every day.

The first day at Simbas we participated in their weekly Monday-meeting with all the staff. It was one of the founders, the social workers (one of them were the daily manager at Simbas Community Centre), the teachers, and four students from 3 different countries. They discussed Simbas main program at the time, which was after school program, English classes, playing, networking for the girls, football team and home visits. They also had program for young mothers. They do visits at the homes of children that lived at Simbas at an earlier stage, when Simbas was a children’s home. Simbas cooperate with local governments to ensure that they are meeting with the needs of the community they are operating within.

One of the teachers had a small group of young mothers where they could learn English and just be together to socialize. The same teacher also had a group of boys playing football. They had training sessions 2 or 3 times per week near the center. We also had the opportunity to see them playing a match the last day we stayed there.



One of the other teachers had a group of smaller children in an English-class. They were learning by singing and playing and it looked like the children enjoyed to participate in the education. The teacher had a very good educational program, it is not easy to keep the attention to a large group of children from 1 – 10 years old, in a little room.

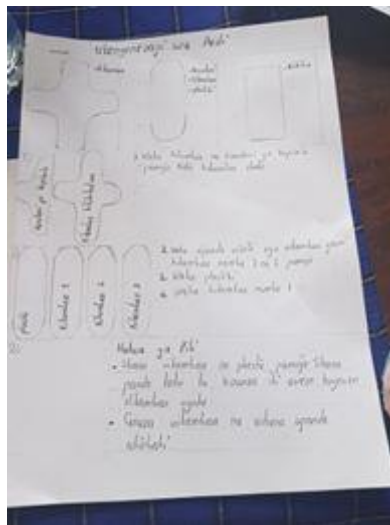


English education, the youngest children

Simbas Community Center had a workshop where they sewed sanitary towels to women. Since it is so expensive to buy, a midwife from Switzerland that visited Simbas took an initiative to do this. Girls are often kept away from school when they menstruate, because they don't have sanitary towels. They are losing a lot of their education due to this issue.



Sanitary towel



Instructions on how to sew sanitary towel

As we were at Simbas, the international HIV-Aids day were coming closer. The staff discussed how they would mark this day and how to get the needed funding's for this. Luca, one of the social workers at Simbas had a meeting with TASWO and some other NGOs and they made plans together about how to mark the day. They had a lot of ideas, and they had experience from earlier years on how to do it. They wanted to have a running competition/marathon, a candle light demo, a march in the streets and a place to take free HIV-tests. Unfortunately they had no funds, but still there where optimism in the group. We helped them with candles for the demo and we got some nice pictures after we left, showing how they celebrated the day. In the pictures we could see that they also had managed to do several of the other things they had planned to do, not only the candle light demo.



We also had the opportunity to visit some school projects which Simbas footprints were supporting outside Moshi, at the countryside. They were in need of lots of basic things like furniture's, fresh water and so on. Some of the classrooms had no floor or roof. When they build the school they did not have enough funds to finish it, but they could provide children with education there anyway, when it is not raining.





When we were going outside the city of Moshi we also visited Faraja Home. This was a place for children with disabilities. Many of these children were hidden in their family houses, not coming out, because of stigma and prejudices. This woman gave them education. She wanted to enable them to give some contributions to the households of the families. She teaches them how to housekeeping, how to take care of the animals, gardening and so on. We were very impressed by the way this place was organized. The woman running this place showed a deep respect for the children, and she looked for personal skills in every one of them.





Belinda og Luca at Simbas.

We want to thank Simba Footprints for giving us this wonderful experience to make some “footsteps” inside their organization. A special thanks to Belinda and Luca, the two social workers at Simbas, who took extra care of us and showed us how Simbas was organized. We are grateful for the learning-experience this internship gave us.

The social workers, the teachers and the volunteers at Simbas are doing an amazing job for so many children, women and families. They don't have much to give away in material things but lots of love, care and knowledge to share. This gives them the opportunities to be empowered, both as individuals and families and also as a community. We are also thankful to TASWO who coordinated our trainee program and to FO Hordaland for giving us the opportunity to do this short internship.