

Dear Kudimba friends,

We have finally managed to fully reopen our Kudimba daycare centre after the recent floods. All the children are now back for routine care and activities at our project. We are still experiencing some problems with our sanitation and septic tank - which we only discovered after the children had returned - but with the help of the construction company we hope to resolve these issues soon. Even the Malawi Armed Forces are assisting us so that we can get back to full speed as soon as possible. Fingers crossed.

Kudimba made it through the floods relatively unscathed, but our beautiful green garden suffered. Most of our plants, flowers, hedges and trees have died from too much water. Replanting will be a huge task over the next few weeks and months. Our lush, oasis-like garden is a point of pride for our project and a healing factor for everyone in and around Kudimba. We're determined to get it back to its original state soon.

It's great to be running our services again. The staff at Kudimba did their best to visit the children at home during the floods, but to be back in the same place together makes everyone really happy. This unwanted break has made us all realise even more than before how important our work is and how valuable the work of the Kudimba staff is to the development and well-being of these children.

Our kitchen team is back at work preparing three meals a day for all participants and staff. Our transport team are back on their bikes, cycling up and down Lifuwu to pick up and drop off all the children who would otherwise not be able to get here. Everyone seems even more motivated than before and the reopening of the education centre felt like the first day of the new school year. The children are all doing well, the little ones have grown, some have new teeth, and Jirani has even started walking independently during the time Kudimba has been closed.

Although we are back on track with our daycare activities, due to the uncertainty of the flood situation we have had to postpone our circus project for a year, which was a huge disappointment for all of us and a very difficult decision to make. The exciting plans were supposed to be happening right now. This collaboration with Circolito Circus Atelier from Mechelen will now take place next year instead and we will make sure that it will be even bigger and better than what we had planned for this year.

Despite the cancellation of the circus project, we had other Belgian visitors at Kudimba.

A group of 20 from the College of Veurne came to share life with us for a few days during their immersion trip to Malawi. The visitors were taken under the wing of Kudimba staff and participants. They were given an introduction to Malawi and Kudimba, Chichewa and sign language. They spent time in our day care centre playing games and doing arts and crafts. They visited Lifuwu village, including the maternity ward, where Rodney, our Kudimba health worker, was the knowledgeable guide.

Together we visited the new land where Kudimba's expansion will take place and discussed the exciting plans for Sandulika.

The group also visited some of our children at home. The housing and lifestyle of the people here was a real eye-opener. We saw the local fishermen at work and visited the local market. We all learned from each other and had a great time.

The very exciting news in this update is that the first step of our new development is now a fact. Sandulika has its very own proper borehole since a few days, and this week we can continue the works and build a small house for the solar-powered water pump, as well as a storeroom and a shelter for the guard, all under one roof.

As has become an annual tradition, the students of the International School of Brussels have made an incredible effort in support of Kudimba. After a wonderful and touching visit to their school in Watermaal-Bosvoorde, we received a large bag with a small handmade gift for each Kudimba participant, to be presented and unwrapped in August. We are very excited and grateful. A word of thanks to the students and teachers for the gifts and of course for the fundraising.

Finally, we want to update you on baby Talandira, who came to Kudimba with her grandparents for help about 4 months ago after her mother tragically died during childbirth. Talandira has grown a lot and is looking really good, happy and very bright. Another huge thank you to the people who have offered to help Talandira, your response has been heart-warming.

At Kudimba we sometimes get requests for personal sponsorship. We would love to respond to these requests, but in reality it is not always practical or possible for us as an organisation to support individual relationships. At least it's not possible for the time being, we don't have the manpower to facilitate these interactions. Other than that, we want to ensure that each and every child at Kudimba receives the care and attention they require and that all their basic needs are met. We hope that our Kudimba friends understand this and we welcome any donation, large or small, that will benefit all the children equally.

Occasionally we have received individual support from Kudimba friends who have helped a particular child with their education. This has been manageable as it usually involves costs which exceed our usual monthly budget, for a limited time, and it provides a unique opportunity for a young person to prepare for a more independent life later on.

We are a completely independent small organisation and rely on individual contributions to make our work possible. All donations go 100% towards the costs of the project: food and other essentials for the children and staff, their medical care and transport, the salaries of the local staff and a social welfare fund. If you would like more information about the finances of our project, or if you would like to make a monthly or one-off contribution, please do not hesitate to let us know. Your support is most welcome.

Thank you dear people and warm greetings from Lifuwu,

The Kudimba team