

Dear Kudimba Friends,

Christmas has arrived at Kudimba and with it a rare and peaceful silence has descended over the project site. Our daycare centre has just closed for a well-deserved two-week holiday break, but not before we celebrated the end of the year in true Kudimba style.

Before closing, we hosted a joyful Christmas party for the children and staff. Our good friend and DJ Patrick -*Patje* for the friends- returned once again and made sure the music and atmosphere were electric. There was plenty of dancing and singing and everyone received a brand-new outfit, children as well as staff members. Huge plates of delicious food were served for lunch and everyone was spoiled with juice, popcorn and snacks. Everyone went home with full bellies and big smiles as they headed into the Christmas holidays.

After the children's party, we shared a small but meaningful staff celebration. It was really deserved: it is no exaggeration to say that Kudimba has the best staff team imaginable. Each member brings their own strength, talent and dedication to caring for the children and the project. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our entire team for the incredible work they have done throughout the past year.

The rainy season has now begun and our garden looks more beautiful than ever: lush, green and full of life. At the same time, the rainy season always brings a sense of nervous anticipation. We hope that this year the waters of Lake Malawi will not flood our compound again. While we cannot predict what will happen, we are reassured that we now have a strong backup plan in place should flooding occur. We are very proud to share that the Sandulika education centre is ready and that the sanitation block there is fully operational. This means that if Kudimba experiences flooding or problems with high groundwater and sanitation, we can safely continue our activities at Sandulika after the Christmas holidays. The Kudimba daycare centre will reopen on 5 January and if necessary, our youngest participants will move their activities to the Sandulika site. We are also considering a more permanent shift for some programs, so that future flooding will no longer disrupt our work.

Over the past weeks, we have welcomed both expected and unexpected visitors at Kudimba and we were delighted to share our wonderful Christmas celebration together. Overall, our project is doing really well and we are happy to see both Kudimba and Sandulika continuing to grow and make progress.

At Sandulika, we have now begun digging the foundations for the first residential building. This will provide accommodation for participants in our project: six small housing units where young people with special needs can live independently with minimal support. This is an important and exciting step forward for our long-term vision.

We are grateful for a donation which we received toward furniture for the project. Our oldest participants have already tested and enjoyed their new locally made benches and tables, while our youngest participants are happily making full use of their perfectly sized furniture.

Our young friend Peter and his family are settling in well to their new home, which was made possible thanks to the generous support of our Kudimba friends. In the coming weeks, we hope to provide the family with goats so that Peter's mother can generate income through goat keeping, supporting the household toward greater independence. At the moment, we are also building a small bamboo fence to clearly separate their piece of land from the nearby Sandulika construction site.

Looking ahead to the new year, we are excited to welcome back four Belgian engineering students from Humasol, who will help us develop our new project site further. We are also eagerly awaiting the continuation of the Kuwala Circus Project, which this time will include six new young people coming to share their skills and learn from the experience here at Kudimba.

As many of you know, funding for development projects worldwide has decreased significantly over the past year. Most aid has been withdrawn by the United States and several other organisations and even the Flemish government has completely ended its support for aid to Malawi and other developing countries. This trend has serious consequences for the country and means, among other things, that essential needs such as medical care and medication are becoming increasingly difficult to cover for our project. As a result, we will rely more on support.

For our organisation, monthly donations, no matter how small, are especially valuable. Regular contributions help us keep Kudimba running and ensure continuity for the children and families we support.

In return, we are happy to offer supporters the opportunity to visit and stay at Kudimba's guesthouse. Visitors who are not sponsors are also very welcome to stay with us for a small, democratic price.

Would you like to explore Malawi in a different way? You are warmly invited to visit. Our small hospitality team will be delighted to host you and offer you an unforgettable experience, one that combines meaningful travel with direct support for our project.

Belgian supporters can still donate to Kudimba and receive a fiscal attestation. Although recent government decisions have reduced the tax benefit by 15%, we sincerely hope this will not discourage our friends from continuing their invaluable support.

As this year comes to a close, we would like to say a huge thank you to all of you for standing with us. Your support has helped Kudimba thrive and make significant strides forward.

We wish you a joyful Christmas and a New Year full of good health and happiness.

With heartfelt gratitude and warm wishes from the entire Kudimba Team