

Short report on Karimu's volunteer trip

Dear donors and volunteers,

We just came back from Tanzania after 2.5 weeks of hard work at Ayalagaya ward. It was surely the most productive Karimu volunteer trip I have been part of. Even though Brazil did not do as well as hoped in the World Cup, we surely had a great time cheering together with the community. :-)



As always, the community received us with open arms, several choirs with incredible voices and lots of dancing. It is hard not to be touched by their warm welcome every time we arrive there.

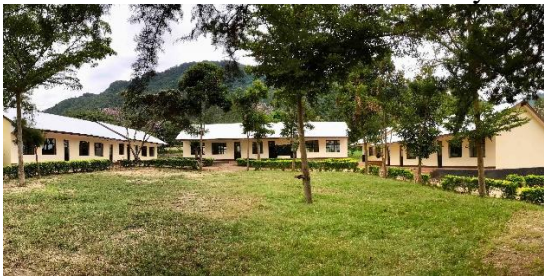


This year we started our trip with a brief visit to the poorest areas of Ayalagaya and then to all Karimu past and current projects, including the water tanks of the water project you've been supporting us to build. Our 24 volunteers could clearly see the difference Karimu is making by simply comparing the areas we have been working for a few years versus the areas into which we expanded just recently.

Everyone was quite impressed by the wonderful job done to reconstruct Bacho Primary School. Not only the 3 buildings with 8 classrooms and 3 offices, but also the bathrooms for students and staff look awesome! It is quite a feeling to look at a project started from scratch in early 2017 and see it all done and operational! The "cherry on top" of this project was a landscaping project created by my wife, Claudia, in which all volunteers have gladly worked together with the community and the school children: All paths have been cleared and paved, so kids and teachers don't walk on muddy terrain, and the whole school surrounding area received beautiful plants and flowers.



The government representatives and the community members who took part in the official inauguration of Bacho Primary School at the end of the trip were absolutely amazed! And we were very proud to hear from the government officials that Bacho is the most beautiful school in the Manyara region (a state in Tanzania). :-)



Our volunteers have also worked hard side by side with local workers at the construction of Ayalagaya Secondary School bathrooms for girls and boys. We have cleared part of the terrain and helped the locals to build up the walls. As you can see in the picture below, the girl's bathroom with private area for washing clothes and an incinerator to dispose of menstrual pads is quite advanced.



Karimu continues to expand its activities beyond education, slowly addressing all three challenges keeping people in poverty. In this trip, we made a lot of progress in all three areas: health and sanitation, means to increase income, and access to financial services.

Volunteers with medical background were engaged in several activities focused on health and sanitation:

- Midwives training (including midwives of Arri Ward, which is the future area of interest of Karimu after finishing all projects in Ayalagaya Ward)
- 1st aid training for teachers of all schools (including Arri and Secheda wards) and donation of 1st aid kits



- Visit to dispensaries (no overnight, no surgeries), health centers (minor operations and specialized doctors and exams) and hospitals (full range of services provided by doctors with higher qualifications) to better understand the medical facilities structure and needs
- Interview with doctor and nurses of Dareda Kati Clinic built by Karimu in 2016 to help them improve their medical procedures and to learn more about most urgent needs
- Donation of a series of medical supplies and equipment

Regarding access to financial services, volunteers and I have attended meetings of over a dozen saving groups to understand how they are currently operating and how we could help them further improve. Several of them are quite well structured, and most saving group members request basic business training and seed money to fund new enterprises.

We have also met and exchanged experiences and ideas for new projects in the area of income with other NGOs and the Agricultural Institute in Ayalagaya, which would be glad to provide training to members of the community on irrigation and crop production improvements.

There was a lot more. Our 24 Karimu volunteers managed to drive several other activities, such as:

- Art classes at all Ayalagaya Ward primary schools



- Music/poetry class at Ayagalaya Secondary School (translated texts, creation of lyric and music)
- Sport competition with the children of all schools and donation of sport material (soccer and volleyball)
- Detailed mapping of all Karimu projects and important places in Ayalagaya for Google maps, collecting coordinates and pictures
- Pilot survey was run in a few households and the 5 members of the community who will run it were extensively trained on the tool and the survey questions
- Learning Center for technology: meetings to discuss needs of teachers, in order to increase computer proficiency at all schools
- Visit to the closest junior high school and meetings with the government to better understand the requirements to open a junior high school at Ayalagaya ward
- Plaques have been added to Karimu projects, including the plaques of the donors who fully sponsored a water point



- Interview with important members of the community
- Donation of clothes and shoes to most needy children

We all have also participated in and been invited to several community activities, such as church ceremonies, meeting with Maasai members, visit to local market and lunch at home of members of the community. Those encounters are a source of rich cultural exchanges and great enjoyment. They are also essential to strengthen our relationship to the local community.

Finally, Karimu board members and I held several meetings with representatives and leaders of the community. We discussed the newly defined Karimu school program with heads of school, teachers and members of school committees, so each group has a clear

understanding of its role in getting educational excellence for all Ayalagaya Ward children. We collected the remaining feedback and insights needed to finalize our five-year strategic plan. And we managed to reach an agreement on the relative priorities of all future projects as well as to get the community's buy-in for our next projects, so we can better plan our next fundraising activities. First, we need to complete our 2018 projects:

- Water project so the whole Ayalagaya ward has enough clean water and no children from any household needs to walk more than 500m to collect water for the family needs
- Students' and staff bathrooms and sink with several faucets for hand-washing at Gajal Primary School
- Staff bathroom and sink with several faucets for hand-washing at Haysam Primary School (the students' bathrooms were completed in February of this year)
- Installation of gutters and water tank to collect rainwater at the above new buildings at Haysam and Gajal Primary Schools (where availability of water is a challenge)

Following that, the key priorities are:

- Retroactively add important facilities to keep girls at school to all girls' school bathrooms (washing area, incinerator, etc.)
- Construction of outpatient toilets and medical equipment for Dareda Clinic
- Reconstruction of Gajal Primary School
- Reconstruction of Haysam Primary School
- Books and school material for all 6 Ayalagaya schools
- Business training and seed funding for savings groups

It was a gratifying trip where you could clearly see the difference Karimu is making. I felt confident that, if we manage to raise enough funds as we luckily did this past year, we should be able to dramatically reduce poverty of - if not eliminate it completely from) -Ayalagaya Ward in the next 2 years. We will then be able to proudly move forward alleviating poverty at our next region: Arri Ward.

I have no words to thank you for your contributions to Karimu, for your vote of confidence with your money, and for all your support.

With appreciation,
Nelson
Karimu Chief Operating Officer