

ZOE Empowers Tanzania 2024

Summary Report

August 16th - 22nd

Team Members: Susan Luttrell, Andrew Hudson, David Alexander, Michael Proctor, Joseph Nader, Brady Johnston, Priscilla Sanchez



We stayed in the town of Arusha (New Safari Hotel), and traveled to different areas around the city to visit ZOE groups, ZOE businesses, and other cultural landmarks unique to Tanzania. The ZOE groups we visited varied from graduates to groups in their first month of being together.

Day 1: August 16th

We began our first day in Tanzania with an orientation at our hotel to meet the entire ZOE Tanzania staff. We started with a word from the Country Director, Trice Shumbusho. She referenced Jeremiah 1:1-10, and talked about how each one of us, both those on staff and those of us on the vision trip team, has been called to do this work of empowering orphan and vulnerable children. It is up to us to answer God's call despite any feeling of inadequacy.

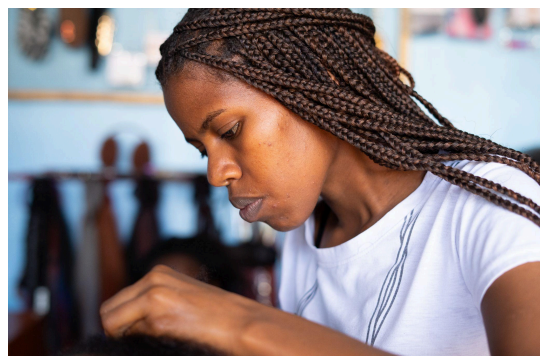
Trice then gave a brief background and summary of ZOE Tanzania as well as her personal background and she became a part of the ZOE team.

- Trice moved to Tanzania from her native Rwanda to do missionary work. In 2018, after Trice's husband passed away, she prayed for 6 months for God to reveal the next step for her. She was approached by ZOE Program Director, Reegan Kaberia, with the desire to expand the ZOE program to Tanzania and wanted her to be the one to lead the team. Just a few weeks later Trice received final approval to begin the program and assemble the leadership team.
- The pillars of the ZOE program that are presented to the kids through the initial 6 months of training are the following:
 - Education
 - Health and Hygiene
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Money Management
 - Food Security & Agriculture

- Child Rights
 - Support Community
- The groups within the Tanzanian program include both urban and rural. When the program first began in 2019, there was not a strong sense of community within the groups. Because of this, the Tanzanian staff decided to push group projects earlier in the process that originally planned in order to strengthen the unity aspect of the program. This was a different approach than we would see in other country's programs. One aspect that is the same is that they choose their leadership and develop their dream charts near the very beginning. The four leadership roles they establish are Chairman, Pastor, Secretary, and Treasurer. The ZOE team identifies the dream chart as a vital tool in order to really get to know each and every child and understand their background and what they need in order to be successful. At the beginning of year 2 they are given a chance to update their charts.
- While the traditional Table Banking program is used in other ZOE programs, the Tanzanian staff realized quickly that model would not work there. They developed a slightly modified version and called it ViCoBa (Village Community Banks). In this model, each member pays what they can, in other words they buy shares, and as they need to borrow money, they each pay interest on the loan. The interest rate is typically 10%, but can adjust based on the need of the loanee. The money gained through the interest payments is what fund the group projects.
- Finally, Trice introduced the other members of the ZOE Tanzania team:
 - Claudine- Facilitator and Travel Team Coordinator
 - Jeremiah- Facilitator and Videographer
 - Isaac- Facilitator
 - Irene- Accountant
 - Falisa- Facilitator
 - Mary Rachel- Facilitator
 - Jackie- Facilitator

The second part of our day consisted of visiting businesses of ZOE graduates. We were able to visit with four different graduates: Falister, Emmanuel, Jones (pronounced Jo-Nus), and Elisha (he went by Lishy).

Falister- Started in the ZOE program in 2019 and graduated in 2022. After finishing her initial training, she decided that she wanted to learn to do hair. She finished her hair salon training in 2020 and in the same year started her salon business. ZOE provided a start-up kit consisting of 1 hair dryer, 1 hair washing station and the needed brushes and accessories. After 3 years of having her salon, she has expanded her business. She now also sells shoes and handbags, and also does nails and hair extensions. As a way to give back, she also trains two other girls in the community free of charge. Her



business has allowed her to pay for one of her siblings to remain in school and also provide the start-up cost for her other sibling to start their own business. She said, “I am now living my dream.”

Emmanuel- Started in the ZOE program in 2020 and graduated in 2023. The group facilitator, Jeremiah, said Emmanuel came from a gang background and it took a long time for him to buy into the ZOE program. At first, all he wanted to do was steal and sell what he stole to make fast money. After getting to know him, the mentor for Emmanuel's group suggested he go into welding. After finishing training, ZOE provided him with his first welding machine to start his business. His business has allowed him to put his three siblings through school and pay for their uniforms. He said, “I can eat whatever I want, now.”



Jones- (pronounced Jo-Nus) Started the ZOE program in 2019 and graduated at the end of 2021. His first business was selling fruits and vegetables. After making a little money, he then opened a studio next door. (A studio is a place where they can burn movies or music to a flash drive and sell them.) He then opened a second studio in another part of the town and gave the fruit and vegetables shop to his mom for her to run. He also bought his mom a sewing machine so she could do what she loved. Jones admits

that he would not have found success in business without first being able to forgive his dad for abusing him and his siblings and then leaving them. Though it took awhile, he was finally able to move on and ended up buying his dad some goats as a sign of forgiveness. His plans in the future are to sell cell phones and phone accessories out of his studios, as well as doing cell phone repairs.

Lishy- Started the ZOE program in 2019 and graduated at the end of 2021. He stated that he always had a passion for painting, but never thought he would be able to afford the start-up costs to start a business. After completing his training, ZOE provided him with a start-up kit of paint, brushes and canvas. He has partnered up with other local artists to open up their own art studio in a public garden. They are in the process of building an environmentally-friendly studio building that utilizes plastic bottles as bricks and will be run by 100% solar power. Lishy's art business has allowed him to put his 2 siblings through school.



On the way back to the hotel, the ZOE staff taught us some useful Swahili words and phrases:

- *Asante*- Thank you
- *Karibu*- You're Welcome
- *Jambo*- Hello
- *Habari*- How are you?
- *Zuri*- Good
- *Jena Longu Ni...*- My name is...
- *Mungu akubariki*- God bless you

Day 2: August 17th

Respect-Peace Empowerment Group Meeting Sponsored by a couple, Bill and Natalie

We began our day by visiting with the Respect-Peace Empowerment Group. This group was in their third year of the ZOE program and scheduled to graduate in December of 2024. The group meeting started with the group Pastor giving a short lesson on living by the will of God in order for us to fully experience the grace of God. Proverbs 3:1. Next, the secretary gave a group report. Some highlights of the report were:

- 26 members
 - 7 salon businesses
 - 4 garage businesses
 - 4 carpentry businesses
 - 1 tailoring business
 - 2 motorbike taxi drivers
 - 1 stationary business
- One of their group projects include making “bites” or what we might call donuts. Each group member takes a turn in making them. 10 kilos of “bites” are made everyday. They currently sell their “bites” to 15 different shops around their community. The money made from selling these treats go into the groups ViCoBa to invest in and expand their different businesses. These business expansions include the tailor being able to sell spare sewing machine parts, salon shops now doing hair extensions, and garage businesses now able to build and repair houses. Finally, through the money they have earned, as a group they were able to buy school uniforms for every group member's siblings.



Testimonies:



Frank- 20 years old. Lives with mom and 2 siblings. Before ZOE, he did many day laborer jobs and many times did not get paid, or if he did it was very little. He would often go many days without food. After going through ZOE training, he started with a few goats and sold them in order to rent a piece of farmland to grow and sell vegetables, specifically butternut squash. His profits allowed him to repair the small rental house his family was living in. He then expanded his farm by renting more land and

added tomatoes and eggplant to his inventory. His growing business has allowed him to keep his siblings in school and he started buying bricks and sheet metal to build his own house for him and his family. He loves that he is now able to buy nice clothes and “look handsome.” His future goals are to own his own land and support local orphanages.

Salma- 20 years old. Has 2 younger siblings. Before ZOE, she was going around the community cleaning people's houses. Oftentimes, the families would not pay her, some families would accuse her of stealing so they could pay her less or not pay her at all. One lady accused Salma of having an affair with her husband and threatened her life. She always dreamed of being a tailor, and after completing her training, ZOE provided her with her first sewing machine. Over time, Salma has expanded her business to also sell higher end fabrics. She is currently training two other girls in her community free of charge. The money she makes from her business has allowed her to support her mom and siblings and provide 3 meals per day for all of them. She also provides food for other needy kids in the community.



Anita- 20 years old. Has 2 younger siblings. Her mother left her when she was very young and her father was an alcoholic, so she was forced to work as a kid to provide for the family. Sometimes her father would leave and not come home for days at a time. She heard about ZOE through an elder in the community, but did not believe it was real. After going through the different training sessions, she decided she wanted to be a hairdresser. After having her business for a while, she has now expanded to be able to do hair extensions. She is currently training another girl in the community free of charge. She is able to provide 3 meals a day for

her and her siblings. Her future goals are to help support those in her community who have had similar family struggles as her and be a well known hairdresser in her region.

Hanipha- 21 years old. Lives with mom and 2 younger siblings. Before ZOE she would wash other people's clothes, many times not getting paid or told she would only get paid if she slept with the men of the house. Her mom was sick and could not work. She ended up running away from her community to get away from the abuse. After going through training, she opened her own stationery business. This business consisted of selling school and business supplies, taking pictures and providing prints for passports or other identification documents, and laminating important documents. She has expanded her business to be able to write and print formal letters for people. The profits of her business has allowed her to move her sick mom to a healthier living situation and provide school uniforms for her siblings.



Jema- 20 years old. Has 1 younger sibling. Father died when she was 6 years old. She and her mother were rejected by her late father's family. Mom did her best to provide for the family. After receiving training through ZOE, she opened her own restaurant and provided a job for her mom. The profits of the restaurant allowed her to also open a separate stationary business. The success of her two businesses allowed her to build a two-room house for her and her family. However, her late father's family has claimed the house and kicked Jema and her mom out. The ZOE staff is working with a lawyer in order to build a case and get Jema's house back.



Erican- 20 years old. Has 2 younger siblings. Erican is the Pastor for the group, which means he leads the group in a biblical lesson at every group meeting. His first business was raising and selling livestock. He started with a few goats and worked his way up to having a large amount of goats. With the profits from selling goats, he opened a secondary business of selling fruits and vegetables. His future goals are to save up enough money to buy the materials needed to build his own house.

At the end of the group meeting, the groups presented us with gifts. Tanzania baseball caps for the men and scarfs for the ladies. They then provided all of us with a bag of their homemade "bites". The meeting was closed with a word of prayer from the local pastor of the church where the ZOE groups meet each week.

Day 3: August 18th

Sunday Worship and African Cultural Day

We started our Sunday morning by taking a tour of the church where Trice is the lead pastor, Zion City Church of Arusha. We first looked at the new radio studio where they broadcast their services as well as many other Christian content all throughout Tanzania. Brady and Susan were able to join a live session of the radio broadcast to talk about why we were in Tanzania and talk about all the great work that ZOE Empowers is doing in and around Arusha. We then attended a worship service, in which Joseph gave the message which was translated by one of the pastors into Swahili. Our pastors also had the chance to pray over anyone in the congregation who needed prayer. Many of the ZOE staff are also on staff or volunteer at Zion City Church.

We then traveled to the African Heritage Centre to see the largest collection of African art on the continent.

Our final stop was outside of Arusha at a snake farm and Massai museum. We were introduced to some of the most dangerous breeds of snakes in all of Africa, as well as tortoises, crocodiles, lizards and more. The Massai museum exposed us to the history and traditions of the Massai people, the oldest tribe of Tanzania.

Day 4: August 19th

Dawn Empowerment Group Meeting

Sponsored by Lynn Douglas and Jeff Schmolz

Dawn Empowerment group is in their second year in the ZOE program and is scheduled to graduate in 2025. We were greeted at the group meeting with lots of dancing and singing, as well as a prayer and bible lesson from the group pastor. Everyone in the group then took turns introducing themselves by saying their name, age, number of siblings and what kind of business they have. Next, the group secretary gave the group report.



- 25 members, 11 males and 14 females
- 2 tailors, 3 garage, 9 salon, 1 general store, 2 second-hand clothes shops, 1 chip (fries) selling, 3 drivers, 1 barbershop, 2 selling vegetables
- Group projects: making liquid soap, shampoo, handbags and jewelry. They sell their items to local salons and sell a lot of their liquid soap to big businesses because it makes their offices smell good.
- They have also competed in sports competitions as a group and have won awards in football (soccer) and netball.

Testimonies:

Ericson- Has 1 younger sibling. Is the pastor for the group. Before ZOE, Ericson lost both of his parents at a young age. He struggled to have food for him and his sibling. Decided to join a gang to have some kind of community. Would do day laborer jobs, including working in a garage, but most of the time he would not get paid. Would often wait outside of restaurants in order to eat some of the thrown out, leftover food. One day, the ZOE group mentor found Ericson and told him about the program. He thought it was a joke at first, until ZOE started putting him through job training for free. After training, he was provided with a start-up kit to open his own barbershop. He is now able to provide three meals a day for him and his sibling.



Aliza- Chairman of the Dawn Empowerment Group. Lives with mom and 3 younger siblings. When he was young his mom got very sick and was not able to work and provide for family. Would do day laborer jobs, but got paid very little or not at all. He turned to selling drugs in order to make some money to afford a good meal. He was caught by the police and was physically beaten. Through other kids in the community, he heard about ZOE and heard that he could get free training in something he really

enjoyed, carpentry. After receiving his training, he opened his own furniture building business. Most of his work is building furniture pieces from recycled wood. When we were visiting with him, he was finishing up a furniture piece that was going to be displayed in a local furniture showcase. Aliza is now a well respected member and businessman in the community. Through his profits, he was able to get a water system installed in his house. He can now wear nice clothes and “look fresh”, while also being able to eat whatever he wants.

Eunice- Life before ZOE, was not able to stay in school because of family hardships. Would do day laborer jobs like washing dishes and cleaning houses. Would be solicited by men to sleep

with them to make money instead of working hard cleaning houses and getting paid very little. She joined ZOE, went through 6 months of training to be a hairdresser. Her business is going well and she is able to provide food and clothing for her and her family.

Rachel- Group Secretary

Before she joined ZOE, her father left the family. She tried to stay in school, but mom wasn't able to provide for family, so she dropped out in order to make some money and help feed family. She started by collecting bottles and exchanging them for money. She moved in with a friend, but they were not very supportive and Rachel ended up getting beat by that family. She heard about ZOE through other kids in the community, joined and received training to run her own salon. A positive change is happening and she is already able to provide multiple meals a day for her and her family.

Iddy- Living with mother, father left the family when he was young. He dropped out of school, lived on the streets and started stealing food to eat, and the police ended up arresting his mom as they looked for him. Mom eventually convinced him to stop stealing and start doing day laborer jobs in construction, but would often not get paid. Joined ZOE and got training and a start-up kit to open a studio. Through the profits earned, he opened a barbershop as a second business.



Kelvin Joseph- Before ZOE, he lived on the streets, was very disrespectful and ended up joining a gang. Met with the ZOE group mentor and she convinced him to join and get training to open a second hand clothes shop.

Ferguson- Lived with mom and 3 younger siblings. Ended up living on the streets after mom got sick and couldn't provide for family. He started to steal to eat, but was caught multiple times and beaten. Heard about ZOE through the group mentor and was convinced to join to pursue his passion of being a mechanic.



Aisha Ally- Life before ZOE was hard, she was born with disabilities that made talking and walking difficult. Lived with her grandmother for awhile, but grandmother ended up getting sick and passed away. She dropped out of school and was often picked on and beat up because of her physical disabilities. The ZOE group mentor lived nearby and convinced her to join. At the beginning, she was unable to open up about hardships. She wanted to do make-up, so she went through ZOE training and got a start-up kit. While in the ZOE program, she found out she has cancer. ZOE paid for an insurance card that covers the cost of her cancer treatments.

We then played a game of musical chairs with the group. Priscilla played in the first round and, of course, she won. David, Brady and Andrew played in the second round. We then played a game similar to “Simon Says” which tested our ability to learn and memorize the names of different body parts in Swahili.



The group then gave a demonstration of how they make the liquid soap they sell as a part of their group project. Each batch makes 15 bottles worth of soap. They rotate responsibility for making the soap, but don't make a new batch until the previous batch has sold out. They sell each bottle of liquid soap for 2000 shillings a piece, while the total cost is 1000 per bottle.

Near the end of the group meeting by introducing ourselves and providing words of encouragement. The group then presented us with gifts. Traditional Massai cover ups for the boys and traditional african hand bags for the girls.

Vision Empowerment Group Meeting

Now sponsored by FMC Mansfield

This is a newly formed group that began their ZOE journey in July 2024. Group chairperson, Kellen, opened the meeting by introducing himself, the group and welcoming the guests. The group pastor then led the group in a Bible lesson referencing John 3:16 and 1 Corinthians 13.



Testimonies:

Hilda Felix- Lives with mom and 3 younger siblings. One of her siblings also has a physical handicap. The father left the family after the mother gave birth to the child with the handicap. The mom would wash people's clothes in order to get some money to buy food. They ended up selling everything inside their home, including their beds so they had to sleep on the ground. She says she believes in God, and believes that ZOE will positively affect her life.

Gift Joy- Lives with her mom and 2 younger siblings. She has never met her father. Their current home has just plastic tarps and wood planks for the roof. Gift Joy was born with some health challenges that she wasn't aware of until she began to develop boils on her skin. Her neighbors would take her to the hospital to get treatment, but she continued getting sick and started fainting a lot. Now mom is sick with a kind of brain fungus, and needs blood transfusions and now Gift Joy has lost a lot of hope. She has seen how ZOE has changed other kids' lives and hopes she can experience the same kind of transformation.



Samwell- 17 years old with 1 younger sibling. Both parents died when he was young. Would do day laborer jobs in order to try and feed his younger brother. He would often go days without eating because he wanted to make sure his younger brother got food. He hopes his life will improve being a part of ZOE.

Ashura Duma- Lived with mom and 1 younger sibling. Father got sick and died when she was young, then mom got sick and died a few years later. To make some money, she would offer to fetch water for people. At one point she got sick with pneumonia. Even in the short time she has been in ZOE, she has loved it, and with the new support she knows she will be ok.

Trice addressed the group, as well as a few people from our group, to offer words of love and encouragement. At this point, Trice and David notified the group that we would be the church that would be supporting them throughout their ZOE journey.

David ended the meeting by saying, *"I will be back in 2 years...When I get off that bus, you will be dancing, and I will be dancing with you."*

Day 5- August 20th

Fighter Empowerment Group Meeting
Sponsored by Smith Osbun



This group was formed in January of 2024. We began the group meeting by playing a game with sticks. All the men in our group joined in the game as well as one of the facilitators, Isaac. The group pastor then spoke a prayer over the group and then led them in a Bible lesson using Galatians 6:9-10 as an illustration to talk about the importance of giving.

The group secretary then gave a group report. The group has 25 members. Some of the main obstacles this group faced were heavy smoking and sexual harassment. Six months into the program, the group has already received training in entrepreneurship, child rights, economy, health and hygiene, and food security. One of the first initiatives of the group was to make sure all members of the group obtained a birth certificate.

The new businesses that have been setup by the group members include:

- 5 salons, 6 tailors, 2 garages, 2 poultry farmers, 1 livestock farmer, 2 studios, 1 cooking oil/soap shop, 2 fruit and veggie stands and 2 beans and maize stands.
- For their group project, they make liquid soap, body lotion and petroleum jelly. They also make a homemade tea spice to use as an alternative to the traditional tea leaves. The tea leaves that the Massai tribe was using were causing fertility problems in the women, so the group created this natural tea spice alternative.



The group's goals moving forward are to increase their ViCoBa shares and visit and support the women of the tribe who are in the hospital.

Testimonies:

Rosie- Lived with mom, but mom would leave the house and not come back for days. Rosie was born with some medical issues that required her to go to the hospital when she got older. Her neighbors were the ones to take care of her when she got sick and were the ones to take her to the hospital. She ended up having a stomach operation, and many people told her that she was probably going to die. She was raped by her step-father and contracted AIDS as a

result of the assault. Through everything, she says she feels strong enough to go through the training and is confident she will get through it and escape poverty.

Delata- She is 19 years old and has 3 younger siblings. She lives with her mom, but mom was not able to make a lot of money and couldn't afford to pay rent so they were kicked out of their home. She would go days at a time without eating. She just finished a session of training to be a tailor and she is working hard to be able to grow her business and provide for her family.

Esuvat- Before ZOE she was consistently beaten by her mother. The mom would send her out to run and errand and would lock her out of the house and not feed her. After a while, the grandmother came and took Esuvat home with her to care for her. The grandmother does day laborer jobs to provide as much as she can for Esuvat. She hopes to grow her new business and be able to provide for herself and grandmother.

After testimonies, the group gave us a more in depth description of their group project, allowing us to test and smell the lotion, soap and tea packets. The group then provided our team with drinks, homemade pastries and one of the items from their group project. The group meeting ended with Trice, and members of our team addressing the group. We all spoke words of encouragement over the group and told them to not give up. The group pastor then closed the meeting with a prayer.



Group Meeting with 3 Different Empowerment Groups Hope, Nazareth and Pinwheel All 3 Groups Sponsored by FMC Mansfield

The group meeting opened with the pastor of the pinwheel group leading everyone in prayer. All the members of the 3 groups introduced themselves and shared their name, age, the number of siblings and their dream job.

Testimonies:

Some of the group members who shared were unable to finish their stories, so I was only able to record a few of the testimonies.

Angela- Father left the family when she was young. She lived in a rented house with her mom, but they were unable to pay the rent so they were kicked out and she was forced to sleep outside on the ground. She often goes a few days at a time without eating.



Inda- 18 years and has a little baby. Dad left the family and mom was sick so she could not work. They lost their home, but were taken in by neighbors who did their best to care for Inda and her family. One day she left to go get some medicine and while out she was raped. The baby was a result of the rape. When the baby was born, they found that the baby had some chest problems.

Daracia- She has never met her dad, only lives with mom. She was unable to stay in school because mom couldn't work. Mom was raped. Daracia met a young man and they agreed to marry, she got pregnant and when she gave birth to a girl, the man ended up running away.

Kel Eliza- Has 3 younger siblings, lost father when he was 9. Mom does not work because she developed depression after the father's death. Kel was forced to drop out of school in order to work and make some money. Does a lot of hard labor, day-laborer jobs. He thanks God for just being alive.

Atugoze- She is 19 years old. Her father died in a car accident when she was young. She does some day laborer jobs to make little money. She prays that she will get the support she needs to leave this life of poverty.

A common thread throughout many of the testimonies was this hope that they will receive the support they need to improve their lives and take care of their family.

Trice and David addressed the group. David made a promise on behalf of First Methodist Mansfield that each person in that room would get the support they need. He encouraged them to support one another throughout this journey because they need each other. He promised them that God will bless them and he promised to come back and dance with them in 2 years.

Pastor David closed the meeting by praying for everyone in those groups. He prayed that they would remain hopeful and encouraged them to never give up, because God is with them.

