



zoeempowers

2026 TANZANIA VISION TRIP

June 19th - 25th

Team Members: Susan Luttrell, Andrew Hudson, Michael Proctor, Jake Atkinson, Chris Raines, Noah Raines, Amy Milligan, Tammy Milligan, Sherrill Johnston, David Johnston

Friday, June 19th



► ARRIVAL AND COUNTRY INFO

Our team flew into the Kilimanjaro Airport and stayed in the city of Arusha, the third largest city in Tanzania with a population of more than 600,000 people. Currently, all of the ZOE groups located in the country of Tanzania are in or around the Arusha region. First Methodist Church of Mansfield currently sponsors 6 groups in the region, while two of our sister churches, First Methodist Church of Midlothian and First Methodist Church of Weatherford, also sponsor groups in this area.

The city of Arusha is known as the "Geneva of African" because it is home to the African Court, East African Council and the UN African headquarters. It is also a big tourist hub because of its

proximity to the Serengeti National Park, the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Lake Manyara National Park, Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Meru.

► GRADUATE BUSINESS VISITS

To begin our time with ZOE, our team visited a number of businesses of young people who have already graduated from the ZOE program. All of the young people we visited graduated in either the summer of 2024 or 2025.



► HERIKANA - 21 YEARS OLD

Herikana joined ZOE in the summer of 2022 and graduated from the program in July 2025. Herikana looks after two younger siblings, aged 13 and 7, after their parents both passed away when Herikana was 16 years old. After going through the different ZOE trainings, like entrepreneurship and food insecurity, he started a business of selling livestock. He started with goats, and eventually was able to buy a cow. With the profits from selling livestock, he opened a shop and rented a plot of land to grow beans and corn.

After visiting Herikana, we visited three young ladies who all graduated in 2024: Susan, Hanipha and Salma.

SUSAN: Joined ZOE in 2021. After completing all the training sessions, Susan chose to focus her business on agriculture. She currently rents land to grow okra. With her agricultural profits, she has now opened a small shop.

HANIPHA: We had the privilege of visiting Hanipha during our last trip to Tanzania in August of 2024. She supports 2 younger siblings, aged 12 and 14, whom she pays to keep in school. She still owns a stationery shop and has now started renting a house to live with her siblings.

SALMA- Another ZOE graduate we are revisiting two years later. She still runs a tailoring business, but with more machines to increase output. As a way to give back to her community, she has trained 6 other girls from her town to become tailors as well.



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► TUMAINI (HOPE)

Before ZOE, Tumaini was living in a vulnerable state. His mother passed away when he was young, and his dad was living an "unstable life." In 2021, Tumaini heard a presentation about ZOE at his village's community

center and decided to join in order to make a better life for himself. He joined ZOE and began to go through all the different trainings. He started his first business of selling livestock, beginning with goats, then adding sheep and eventually cows. While traveling into town to sell and process his livestock, he realized there was no butcher in his village, so he learned the necessary skills and started a successful business as the only butcher in the area. Since graduating from ZOE in 2024, Tumaini has expanded this business by setting up multiple food stands throughout his village where he sells freshly cooked meats and french fries. He has hired two boys from the village to help run his food stands. With the profits from his multiple businesses, he has been able to buy a piece of land and build a 3-bedroom house for him and his younger sibling.



► ALPHAN

Alphan joined ZOE at the beginning of 2022 and graduated at the end of 2024. Before ZOE, he was working as a day laborer on different farms, but was struggling to find consistent work. He stayed in different people's homes for shelter. After going through the initial ZOE training, he knew he wanted to be a barber. He started to make money through buying and selling livestock, and used the profits to open his own barbershop. ZOE helped with the purchase of the initial barbershop equipment. He is now able to make enough money to rent a house to live out of and keep his two siblings in school.

► KAFUS

Like Alphan, Kafus joined the ZOE program at the beginning of 2022 and graduated at the end of 2024. After going through the ZOE training, he started his first business by opening a retail shop in his local village. A big part of his initial business was selling snacks and other food items out of his retail shop. With the profits from his retail shop, he started a second business selling wholesale drinks to restaurants in the city. With the success of this new business, he has been able to keep his younger siblings, ages 8 & 5, in school, and he is in the process of building a home so he and his siblings have somewhere safe to live.

SUSAN



HANIPHA



SALMA



Saturday, June 20th

ORIENTATION WITH ZOE STAFF

Our first full day in Tanzania started with an orientation with the entire Tanzanian ZOE staff. Country Director Mama Trice opened with a devotional on the work of the Holy Spirit. When we invite the Holy Spirit into our hearts, the outcome is the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Mama Trice talked about being vigilant in prayer to ensure we do not love the blessings more than the One who gives them.



Mama Trice then told her story of her visit to America in 1996 and her feeling a calling from God to care for young people and her prayer that God would use her to spread the love of Jesus in ways she did not yet understand. 30 years later, it is clear that ZOE was the answer to those prayers. At the conclusion of her devotional, Mama Trice had everyone on the ZOE staff introduce themselves.



► ZOE TANZANIA TEAM

- **Mama Trice**- Country Director
- **Claudine**- Sr. Program Facilitator
 - Oversees communications and reporting
- **Jeremiah**- Program Facilitator
- **Jackie**- Program Facilitator
- **Isaac**- Program Facilitator
 - Oversees housing for ZOE kids
- **Epafra**- Program Facilitator
 - Specializes in teaching finance and banking
- **Felista**- Program Facilitator
- **Rachel**- Program Facilitator
- **Irene**- Finance

One amazing fact about this team is that there has been no turnover since we were last there 2 years ago. In fact, the team has grown with the addition of Epafra. This is a sign of great leadership on the part of Mama Trice and Claudine.



Claudine then went over a brief history of ZOE in Tanzania. ZOE began its journey in Tanzania in 2019 with 10 groups, all in the Arusha area. To date, there have been 119 groups in Tanzania; 61 are currently active, and 58 have graduated.

Next, the staff talked about the program itself and the different trainings each ZOE participant goes through:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| • Spiritual Formation | • Entrepreneurship |
| • Food Security | • Child Rights |
| • Secure Housing | • Community |
| • Health and Hygiene | • Education |





► GROUP MEETING

After the orientation, we drove out to the village of Ngaramtoni to meet with 3 FMCM-sponsored groups that are beginning their final year of the ZOE program: Hope, Pinwheel and Nazareth. The FMCM team from August 2024 met with this team one month into their journey with ZOE.

The meeting started with an opening prayer from one of the group pastors. All the groups then got together to sing a song of praise to welcome us all.

One of the group pastors then gave a short message based around a verse from the book of

Joshua, chapter 1, verse 9. "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go"

After the message, we went around the room and let everyone introduce themselves. They each shared their name, age, and a little bit about their business. With this being in an urban area, the businesses differ from those found in the rural villages we visited the day before. The most common businesses are salons/hairdressers, dress and fabric makers, restaurant owners, and cooking oil sellers/producers.

We were then introduced to each of the groups' chosen mentors and the group's facilitator, Mary Rachel.



► GROUP REPORTS

Nazareth Group:

Started in July 2024 with 24 heads of household and 61 people total, including siblings. The breakdown of businesses is as follows:

- 3 Hair Salons
- 3 Second Hand Clothing Shops
- 2 Welders
- 1 Tea Spice Salesman
- 2 Motorbike Taxis
- 2 Bakers
- 1 PlayStation business
- 1 Shoe Salesman
- 1 Vegetable Salesman
- 3 Tailors
- 2 Mechanics
- 1 Carpenter
- 2 Livestock Salesmen



Group Projects: VICOBA (Village Community Banking) Savings Team and making baked snacks called "bites." They chose baked snacks because they saw few others in the village selling them. With the profits from their businesses, 2 members bought their own motorbikes, all 24 renewed their medical insurance, 3 put their siblings through secondary school, 2 have running water in their homes, and 5 have electricity in their homes. They also used group profits to support a local family in need by buying them furniture and vegetable seeds to start their own garden. Their future plans as a group are to open more bakeries around the village to sell more "bites."

Hope Group:

Started in July 2024 with 25 heads of household and 71 people total, including siblings. The breakdown of businesses is as follows:

- 3 Sell Firewood
- 7 Hair Salons
- 2 Studios
- 3 Tailors
- 1 Fabric Salesman
- 1 Sells Petrol
- 1 Mechanic
- 1 Restaurant Owner
- 1 Flower/Plant Salesman
- 2 Livestock Salesmen
- 2 Going back to School

Group Projects: Along with the VICOBA Savings Team, the Hope group has partnered with the Pinwheel group to make and sell flower pots. They also make soap and petroleum jelly. Each head of household in the group has completed all their ZOE trainings and is working to grow their businesses. The group plans to register with the government to become eligible for financial grants and to train more local youth.



Pinwheel Group:

Started in July 2024 with 25 heads of household and 80 people total, including siblings. They specifically mentioned that all heads of household had dropped out of school before joining ZOE. The breakdown of businesses is as follows:

- 2 Tailors
- 2 Charcoal Salesman
- 1 Bakery
- 4 Hair Dressers
- 3 Cooking Oil Salesman
- 1 Stationary Shop
- 2 Potato Salesmen
- 1 Restaurant Owner
- 1 Sell Second-hand Clothes
- 2 Vegetable Salesmen
- 1 Sell Roasted Corn

Group Projects: Along with the VICOBA Savings Team, the Pinwheel group has multiple group projects. They sell flower pots in partnership with the Hope group. They also make and sell liquid soap, petroleum jelly, and lotion, as well as tea spices. With the interest gained through VICOBA, they were able to help a group member build a house and provide a mattress. Their future plans are to continue to grow their businesses.

► DANCE PARTY AND GIFT PRESENTATIONS

To conclude our time together at the group meeting, the ZOE kids put on some music and we all danced together, followed by the group mentors presenting us all with gifts. They also presented special gifts for Pastor David and Stephanie Alexander: a staff and a necklace. We then addressed the group, shared our names, and told them how honored we were to meet them and how proud we are of them.



BUSINESS VISITS

After the meeting, we went around and visited many of the businesses of kids from the Hope, Nazareth and Pinwheel groups.

► RUTH

Ruth is 20 years old and a part of the Hope group. She has 3 younger siblings, ages 15, 10 and 7. She currently runs a business selling fabrics, curtains, and dresses. She rents out a shop space with another ZOE kid. Before joining the ZOE program, Ruth's father passed away, and her mother was left to raise 4 kids on her own. One day, Ruth's mother dropped her and her siblings off with their grandmother and disappeared. Ruth has not seen her mother since. Ruth's grandmother developed health problems and could not work, so Ruth had to drop out of school in order to make money to pay for food for the family. With the success of her fabric shop, she is able to provide 3 meals a day for her family and keep all of her younger siblings in school.



► MONIQUE

Monique is a member of the Pinwheel group and just finished her 2nd year in the ZOE program. She currently rents a space to run her salon business, where she mainly focuses on braiding and makeup. In the future, she hopes to expand her business by providing manicures and pedicures as well.



► JOVIN

Jovin is a part of the Pinwheel group and runs a stationery shop where he sells office supplies. In order to expand his business, he received a loan through the group VICOBA program, and used that loan to buy a printer and desktop computer so he could print out office documents for people from the village. He is currently in college and his dream is to graduate and go to law school. When he is at school, his younger siblings help run the stationery shop.

► GROUP MEETING REFLECTION

Seeing all three of these groups again two years after meeting them for the first time was an incredibly powerful experience. As mentioned before, when our 2024 team first met them in the upper room of a building, they had only just begun their ZOE journey. The feeling of despair and hopelessness could be felt by everyone in the room, so to see them again with smiles on their faces, dancing in victory, is the clearest example of the powerful work God is doing through the ministry of ZOE Empowers.

Sunday, June 21st

WORSHIP AT ZION CITY CHURCH AND GROUP MEETING

On Sunday morning, we joined Mama Trice and her team at the church in Arusha that she pastors, called Zion City Church. Together with her congregation, we shared in praise and worship, including a message from our own Sherrill Johnston. A translator was present throughout the worship service, and the words to the songs were displayed on screens throughout the worship space in both Swahili and English. Many of the ZOE staff are also on staff at Zion City Church. On this morning, they had guests from a sister church leading the music, as well as pastors from the local seminary and sister churches in neighboring countries, to visit and worship.



► GROUP MEETING AND TESTIMONIALS

After worship, we met with two groups: Esuvat "Life", and Eng'lda "Smile". The Life group is currently in its second year of the ZOE program and is sponsored by our sister church, First Methodist Church of Weatherford. The Smile group was just completing its first year in the ZOE program and is sponsored by another one of our sister churches, First Methodist Church of Midlothian. First, each participant from Life group introduced themselves to us by sharing their name, age, number of siblings, and what kind of business they have. Next, the Smile group introduced themselves by sharing their name, age, number of siblings, and what ZOE training they had received so far. Once everyone had introduced themselves, a handful of the participants shared parts of their story.

► GLODINE JONAS

Glodine serves as the group pastor for the Life group, she has 4 younger siblings. Before ZOE, she and her siblings were all forced to drop out of school because they could not afford proper uniforms. They did not have parents to support them, so they were forced to live on the streets and could not afford medical care if any of them got sick. She joined ZOE with a dream to open her own hair salon. With ZOE's help, she received a startup kit and opened her dream salon. She can now feed all her siblings and send them back to school.



► ABRAM DANIEL

Abram is also a part of the Life group. He takes care of this 3 younger siblings. They did not have parental support, so Abram was forced to drop out of school and tried to find work as a day laborer. The jobs were physically demanding and, often, he didn't get paid at the end of the day, so he would collapse from hunger. He then tried to work on local farms so he could get paid in food to give to his siblings. After he joined ZOE and completed his training, he began selling livestock and growing his own vegetables. He worked his way up from selling goats to now owning a cow. He has earned enough money to build a single-room house for him and his siblings.

► DEBORAH

Deborah is a part of the Life group, and she is 19 years old. Before ZOE, Deborah lived a very difficult and traumatic life. Both of her parents died when she was young, and her late father's family claimed ownership of the house she was living in and chased her and her siblings away. Deborah was forced to live on the street and began to beg. She even stole from local markets to feed her siblings. Eventually, a local woman allowed Deborah and her siblings to stay in their animal food storage room. Deborah looked for day-laborer jobs and started washing people's clothes for money. One man asked her to clean his clothes, and one day, while she was in the house, the man raped her, which led to her becoming pregnant. The man then chased her away and threatened to kill her if she stayed. Deborah resorted to eating people's leftovers at hotels and restaurants. Once ZOE learned her story, they helped care for her baby and provided her with training and a startup kit to open a hair salon. She can now feed herself, her baby, and her younger siblings. She has also been able to rent a room to live in and has purchased a mattress to sleep on.



To close the meeting, the group mentors addressed us, and one of the things that was said during one of their comments really stuck with us as a group.

"The government officials have noticed the change in these young people. Kids they knew as criminals and prostitutes are now known as business owners."

Monday, June 22nd

GROUP MEETINGS

► IMPACT AND VISION GROUPS

We began our last full day of group visits by meeting with two groups sponsored by our church that our team from 2024 met two years ago. Both of these groups are entering their 3rd year in the ZOE program. We started with the kids singing 2 worship songs in Swahili, followed by a short message from one of the group pastors. Her message was about allowing the Holy Spirit within us so that we may be filled with the love of God. We should use that love to guide us throughout our lives. With the love of God guiding us, we will do so many great things and be a blessing to everyone we come in contact with. After the message, each member of the two groups introduced themselves by sharing their name, age, number of siblings, and their business. Following the introductions, the secretary from each group gave a group report.



► IMPACT GROUP REPORT

Started in July 2024 with 23 heads of household and 48 people total, including siblings. The breakdown of businesses is as follows:

- 2 Hair Salons
- 2 Drivers
- 4 Charcoal Salesmen
- 3 Seamstresses
- 1 Shoe Salesman
- 2 Mechanics
- 5 Music Studios
- 2 Restaurant Owners

With the profits from their businesses, 11 of the members have been able to rent out rooms to live, 17 have bought phones to further their businesses, 6 have bought beds, 1 member has bought land, 15 have acquired their national ID cards, 14 have running water in their homes, and 14 of them have started attending religious services on a weekly basis. Every group member has also been able to obtain and renew medical insurance.

Their group projects include starting a VICOBA, and producing and selling liquid soap. With the group profits, they have been able to provide food for a local orphanage.

► VISION GROUP REPORT

Started in July 2024 with 26 heads of household and 48 people total, including siblings. The breakdown of businesses is as follows:

- 6 Welders
- 1 Electrician
- 2 Aluminum Salesmen
- 5 Hair Salons
- 5 Tailors
- 3 Clothing Sales
- 2 Soap Salesmen
- 2 Shoe Sales

The secretary also shared information about the training and startup kits that they all received from ZOE. Included in the startup kits were seeds to grow their own vegetables, water tanks to obtain clean water from local wells, and medical insurance cards to get assistance when they or one of their family members were sick. With the profits from their businesses, 3 members could afford to build latrines at their homes, 1 built a 2-bedroom house, 20 were able to put their younger siblings back in school, 19 were able to obtain national ID cards, 2 were able to buy mattresses, 3 bought full beds, 1 bought a motorbike, and all of them were able to renew their medical insurance cards and have 3 meals a day for their families.



TESTIMONIALS

► DELKIS FREDERICK

Delkis is a member of the Vision group. Prior to ZOE, her father passed away, and years later her mother became very sick and was not able to work. Delkis had to drop out of school and start working to support her family. She cleaned people's homes, but she couldn't make enough money to feed her family consistently or keep her younger siblings in school. She then heard about ZOE and joined with the hope that she could one day open her own salon. She went through the trainings and received a startup kit from ZOE to start her business. She is now able to make enough money to put her siblings back in school and buy furniture for her home. With her medical insurance card they she recieved from ZOE, her mother is able to get the medical attention she needs.



► FAZILA PATRICK

Fazila is a part of the Impact group, he is 21 years old and has 3 younger siblings. Similar to Delkis, Fazila's father passed away when he was young, and eventually his mother became very ill and could not financially support the family. Fazila dropped out of secondary school to start working. One day, the mother took all the kids to their grandmother's house and never returned to get them. Fazila worked as a day laborer to try to make money, but often didn't get paid. He heard about ZOE from the Impact group mentor and decided to join. He received training and starting capital to sell plastic shoes. Unfortunately, the business was not successful, and he lost all his money. The ZOE staff encouraged him to try again, so he did; through the lessons he learned the first time, his 2nd attempt has been much more successful, and he can provide three meals a day for himself and his family.



We closed the group meeting with words from Mama Trice and the group mentors. The mentors thanked us for empowering their groups and giving them a chance to be successful members of their communities.

Everyone from our group then introduced themselves and shared words of encouragement. We also told them how proud we are of them, and that our congregation back home has been praying for them for two years and will continue to pray for them moving forward. We presented each group leader with a card signed by our team, with pictures of our church, so they can be reminded of who has supported them throughout their journey with ZOE.

► MUSICAL CHAIRS AND SOCCER

As a way to bond with our groups and celebrated all they have done, we shared in a few fun activities, including a game of musical chairs as well as heading to a local soccer field and kicking a ball around.



BUSINESS VISITS



► MADELINE, REHEMA AND ANGEL

All three of these girls are part of the Vision group. They all received training from ZOE to become dressmakers. They all partnered together with one other girl from the community to rent out a shop space and start a business called "4 Girls Fashion." After their training, ZOE provided them with their initial sewing machines. Each has specific types of dresses and clothing they like to make and sell. Rehema is deaf, so one reason they partnered was so the other girls could look after her and make sure she isn't being taken advantage of. One cool story from this group is that their Group Facilitator, Jeremiah, learned sign language to better communicate with Rehema and another deaf group member.

► ABEL AND JOHN

Abel and John are both part of the Vision group. They received training from ZOE to become welders. After receiving the training and their start-up kits, they partnered to open a welding shop. Their business mainly focuses on building windows, doors, and large gates. They both say their favorite thing to build is large gates because they make the most money from them. John hopes to one day go back to school and become an engineer.

► KENNED MCMILLAN

Kenned is a part of the Impact group. After going through the ZOE training, his first business was selling clothes. He realized how much he enjoyed farming, so he used the profits from selling clothes to purchase some land and start growing potatoes, onions, and corn. His future goals are to sell enough food that he no longer needs to sell clothes and can purchase more land and expand his farming business.



NEW GROUP MEETING

For our final group meeting of the trip, we met with a group still forming. They had not yet completed any training or established a way to make money. The energy surrounding this group was very different than any of the other groups we had met so far. While the other groups greeted us with smiles, dancing, and joy, this group's energy felt closer to despair and hopelessness. Throughout much of the meeting, most group members never looked up at us. They mostly stared at the ground and didn't say anything. There were no introductions during this meeting, but 2 brave young people decided to share their testimony with us.

► ALFRED

Alfred is 19 years old and has one younger sibling. Alfred lost both of his parents to HIV, and because of this disease, Alfred's family was segregated from the rest of the community. He now lives with a friend because he could no longer afford the rent in the room he shared with his parents. He and his sibling were forced to drop out of school, and Alfred did his best to find day-laborer jobs. Because many in the community knew about his parents' HIV diagnosis, many people would not hire him for work. Alfred dreams of becoming a mechanic, and while he says it's hard to feel optimistic right now, he has faith that God and ZOE will rescue him.





► LOUISE

Louise is 16 years old and has one younger sibling. Louise's father abandoned her family years ago and left the kids to be raised by their mother. At the time, her mother did not have a job, so she tried washing people's clothes to make enough money. When that did not produce enough money to feed the family, she started to prostitute herself. This put a lot of emotional stress on Louise and her siblings. Her prayer is that God will use ZOE to change her life and bring her hope.

To close the meeting, our team circled up around the group to speak words of blessing over them. We prayed that they would remain hopeful, knowing God is with them and has amazing plans for all of them. We shared that we have seen the work God has done in so many lives around them through the work of ZOE, and we are confident the same will be done in their lives.

THURSDAY, JUNE 25TH

CLOSING DINNER WITH ZOE STAFF

On our final night in Tanzania, our team met with the entire ZOE staff at the Mount Meru Hotel for a final dinner and to say our goodbyes. We shared a delicious meal, and each team member shared about their experience on the trip. We then heard from everyone on the ZOE staff about their passion for the kids and how thankful they were for our support and for visiting with them. Two members of our team had birthdays during our time in Tanzania, so the ZOE staff arranged for birthday cakes to be delivered to the table, and we all sang happy birthday. Finally, Mama Trice addressed the group one last time and thanked us again for coming. She prayed over us, our upcoming travel, and invited us to come see them again in the future. As the night was coming to a close, the ZOE staff turned on some music, and we spent the next 30 minutes dancing and laughing with one another. It was a great way to end our time in this beautiful country and with the incredible staff of ZOE Empowers.

