



Simba Club – Secondary School Students

Frequently Asked Questions

How does Village Africa select the children for child sponsorship?

Village Africa is currently working with Mibukwe Secondary School in Milingano and several other schools in the West Usambara mountains of Tanzania. Village Africa selects the students for sponsorship by using a poverty criterion, choosing former pupils of Yamba, Milingano and Kwembalazi primary schools. Orphans and single parent children are prioritised. The children in the area in which Village Africa is working, live in dire poverty. They have little food, do not have access to clean water, have very few clothes or possessions and may have to walk several hours to get to school.

How much does it cost?

It only costs £20 a month per child. Village Africa bases this figure on the fact that you will be committing for at least a year.

What does my money buy?

£15 of your donation will go towards sponsoring an individual child to include:

- School uniform
- School stationery
- Books
- Rent.

This amount is based on the local secondary school (Mibukwe). For a secondary school such as this, the amount should be sufficient to cover all the items on the joining instructions. The amount covers accommodation but not food.

Money will be given to the student to purchase, with the help of the extended family, a uniform and other items on the joining instructions. They can shop in Milingano and Mashewa markets for a desk (for those starting at the school), books, clothes, shoes, toiletries, bucket, mosquito net, torch, hoe, bush knife, broom etc. Any remaining money will be given to the student on a monthly basis. This system will ensure that the student has the essentials for school life.

£5 of your £20 donation will go towards Village Africa Community Fund that will benefit all the children in the local community. Unless the wish to sponsor more than one child is specified, surplus funds will be put into the Village Africa Community Fund.

The reason that Village Africa has a Community Fund is that we have recognised that, to bring long lasting improvements to children's lives, we need to address the needs of the wider community. Before we begin a project, we talk to community leaders and parents and listen to the needs. Then together we plan what would most benefit all the children in that community. There is currently a great need for classrooms and school toilets.

Transport costs (eg collecting money from the bank and visiting the students to make payments) are very high due to the remote setting. 10% is therefore set aside for transport and administration in Tanzania. To even out exchange rate fluctuations and provide a consistent level of support we use a rate based on a long-term average.

What do I receive?

After signing up you will receive a photo and description of the child you are sponsoring and a letter from him/her. Please bear in mind this information will be sent to you from Tanzania so it may take a month or more to reach you.

Mid-year you will receive a letter from your child.

At the end of the year you will receive a progress report, an up-to-date photo and a letter from your child.

May I write to the child I sponsor?

Yes of course. We ask that letters are written in very simple English and are no longer than 100-200 words.

Letters should be addressed to:

[Name of child]
c/o Caroline Johnston
Child Sponsorship
Village Africa
PO Box 5356
Tanga
Tanzania.

Please remember that even if you write regularly, the children will only be able to reply to you twice yearly, as they would not otherwise be able to afford the postage.

Can I send presents to the child I sponsor?

This is not encouraged as the post office charges to receive parcels.

How old are the students and how many years do they study at secondary school?

Secondary school students are normally 14-17 years old. They study from Form 1 to Form 4. They sit a national examination in Form 2 which they need to pass to continue at secondary school. In Form 4 they sit national GCSE 'O' level examinations. If they pass Form 4 with high grades, they will be allocated a place at another school to take 'A' levels (Form 5 and Form 6).

How long will my sponsorship last?

Village Africa would like you to commit to sponsoring your child for as long as possible. Of course the best scenario would be to sponsor them until they leave secondary

school. When they do leave, there is no reason why you cannot sponsor a new child. Although you are not obligated to do so, Village Africa asks that you commit for at least a year so that the child can fully benefit from your sponsorship money.

What if my circumstances change and I no longer wish to be a sponsor?

If your circumstances change and you wish to withdraw your sponsorship, please email villageafricasimbaclub@outlook.com to inform us that you are no longer able to sponsor your child. This is necessary so that we can work on finding another sponsor for the child as soon as possible. Your monthly standing order will need to be cancelled by yourself at your own bank. We will confirm receipt of your email.

What happens if the child I sponsor drops out?

Occasionally children leave school before they finish their education. When this happens we contact the sponsor and, if he or she wishes to continue, we find another child for him or her to support.

What happens when the child I sponsor finishes secondary school?

After secondary school, many sponsored students go on to either vocational training (in such skills as driving, building or masonry), to college (for courses in nursing, business studies or accounting) or to university. For vocational training and most college courses, we ask sponsors to continue supporting their student at the same level (ie £20 a month). University degrees are much more expensive and the students need up to £100 a month sponsorship. A few very generous sponsors agree to increase their donation to meet the full cost of this. However, in most cases we appeal for new donors and put together a group of sponsors to support the student.