

Yr 13 students return from 'life changing' experience in Tanzania

Five students, **Jess Veacock, Becky Atkins, Gemma Edwards, Reanne Letts and Vicky Black** and two members of staff, myself, **Mark Horsfield and Nicola Davidson**, returned to Plymouth in the early hours of Saturday 14th August having been picked up from Heathrow by **Mr Browne** the night before.

We had spent nineteen fantastic days in **Tanzania** and were still **buzzing with excitement** as we had had such a fruitful and rewarding trip. Our students were **amazing ambassadors for the college**, taking on every **challenge with real enthusiasm**, they were **real stars**. The purpose of the visit was to go to **Tabora Girls' Secondary School**, the college's link school since 2001, to make the link stronger by getting to know staff and students better, as well as to gather information for the **joint project** our two schools are involved in. The aim of the project is to learn about **each other's culture** by comparing differences and similarities between our countries, and looking at the different ways our **teenagers deals with life's issues and challenges**.



The Group outside the visitor's house at Tabora Girl's School

The girls from Tor Bridge High were paired up with girls from Tabora. They slept in the dormitories, went to some of their lessons and played sport together, including netball and football. Tabora students were also **introduced to Rugby** by one of our students, **Jess Veacock**, who has represented the Southwest in the lady's rugby team.



Students with their friends from Tabora Girls'

During our stay in Tabora, the girls learned a lot about the daily routine at the school. The students **shared a lot of information** on what they like doing, what they want to do when they leave school and how **they are effected by cultural expectations and life's pressures**.



Jess teaches rugby to some of the Tabora Students

While in Tanzania, our students became **totally immersed in the culture**, experiencing amongst many other things, speaking **Swahili**, carrying **water on their heads**, washing in well water (there were no baths or showers), having their hair braided, wearing African clothes, shopping in markets, eating lots of different types of African food, travelling on very bumpy dusty roads and making building bricks out of mud. **Observing life in Tanzania was going on all the time and we made copious records using diaries, photos and video.**



Hair braids - a taste of Tanzanian culture

us feel so welcome and **going out of their way to** We found the **people of Tanzania to be extremely friendly** make us **happy**. We made lots of friends and feel **much closer to the people and the school**. Our link is much **stronger** now and we **understand so much more about Tanzanians and their culture**.

The group visited the Igombe Dam which provides some of the water used in the Tabora area, also several secondary schools, special schools and an orphanage.



Jess and Gemma making bricks



Lunch with Tabora girls

Two Government officials who we met on several occasions, one of them an old friend of Estover, **Mama Ruoja**, the other, Mr Frank Charles, will be visiting the UK in October, they are really looking forward to **visiting the new Tor Bridge High**.

The **long term aim** for the project is to integrate some elements of the project **into lessons and tutorial programme**. We would like **more teachers and students** to become **involved** in visits and it would be **amazing** if one day some of **Tabora Girls' students could visit Plymouth** to experience our culture first hand.

The Teachers and students involved in the trip would like to thank all the people over to past year who have helped with or contributed to the fund raising that made this trip possible. Thanks also go out to the other members of the group who accompanied us, Suzanne Horsfield, Iain Chorlton and Jess Hill and Fiona for their help support and advise during the trip. I would also like to thank Miss Davidson for her support and commitment to the trip and the project, Mr Browne for taking and picking us up from London and of course a big thank you to all our friends in Tabora for giving us such an amazing time. **Mark Horsfield Expedition Leader**