



Volunteer MANUAL

2025-2026

"In their eyes, we see the future. Through our actions, we shape it."



Bright English Medium School



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CONTACT US

Mr. Baraka

Founder and director of the school, husband of Juliana and main Workaway and WhatsApp contact.

Mr. Baraka's phone number: +255 62 404 1279

Mrs. Juliana

Founder and director of the school, wife of Mr. Baraka and head of business management of the school.

Juliana's phone number: +255 767 816 082





MEET THE FOUNDERS

Mr. Baraka and Juliana are dedicated parents to four children, with their youngest, Brittain, currently attending Bright English Medium School. While their other children are now older and off continuing their educational journey.

Juliana was born and raised in Sakara village, Loliondo, where she attended a local public school before advancing her studies in Arusha. There, she pursued Electrical Engineering at a Technical College and later embarked on a professional career that included significant roles in the region, such as working at Kilimanjaro Airport.



Ms Juliana (aka Mama Bright) & Mr Baraka

Mr. Baraka hails from Kigoma, Tanzania, and moved to Arusha in 1999 to work as a Radio FM programmer for a Swedish company. After five years in this role, he met Juliana, and the two began building a life together. Through Juliana, Mr. Baraka was introduced to the Loliondo region, a community rich in culture but facing significant challenges, particularly in access to quality education for vulnerable children.

Motivated by a shared vision of creating a better future for the community, Mr. Baraka and Juliana recognized the urgent need for an institution that could provide education and care for Maasai orphans and other underserved children in the region. This deeply personal mission, rooted in their desire to empower the next generation, led to the founding of Bright English Medium School in 2009.

Their school began as a humble initiative, inspired by their belief in education as a transformative tool for breaking cycles of poverty and creating opportunities for a brighter future. Today, Bright English Medium School stands as a testament to their dedication, offering a nurturing environment where children can learn, grow, and aspire to achieve their dreams.



PURPOSE

Education as a pathway to empowerment

Bright English Medium School was founded with a profound purpose: to provide Maasai children with access to quality education as a pathway to a brighter, more empowered future. Our overarching aim is to help these children build a better life through learning, independence, and self-confidence, while equipping them with the academic knowledge needed to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

The Maasai people have a rich cultural heritage, but many children face barriers to education. Traditional roles often require them to work, such as tending cattle, or push them into early marriages, limiting their opportunities for personal and academic growth. Additionally, harmful practices like female circumcision persist in some areas, despite being prohibited by Tanzanian law.



At Bright English Medium School, we stand firmly against such practices and actively work to protect our students from enduring these harmful traditions. We strive to create a safe and nurturing environment where all children, especially girls, can thrive without fear or limitations. Through education, we aim to empower them to embrace their potential, break cycles of poverty, and contribute positively to their communities.

Our vision is to forge strong, positive connections with every student, guiding them toward independence and instilling in them the confidence to shape their own futures. By addressing critical issues and promoting equality, we aim to be more than a school; we are a beacon of hope and a catalyst for change in the Loliondo region. This mission drives everything we do; Daily lessons to broader advocacy efforts, and we invite our volunteers to join us in making this vision a reality. Together, we can transform lives and foster a legacy of empowerment and opportunity for generations to come.

Additionally, public schools in the region often struggle with low educational standards and lack emphasis on English language instruction, which is essential for securing employment opportunities beyond rural areas.

Many Maasai families reside in remote locations, making it difficult for children to commute to school. As a result, a significant number of students live on campus as boarders. To accommodate their needs, dormitories and washroom facilities are integral components of the school infrastructure, and we are continually working to enhance and expand these essential facilities.





HISTORY OF BEMS

Year of Establishment

Bright English Medium School was founded by Mr. Baraka and Juliana in their home, initially serving 30 orphaned children. The house functioned as both a school and dormitory.

2010

Growth and International Volunteers

By 2012, the school had grown to about 100 students. Juliana's work with an NGO focused on HIV/AIDS education led to the arrival of the school's first international volunteer, bringing new ideas to the project.

2016

First Graduation

The first graduation of Class 7 students took place, marking a significant milestone in the school's development.

2009

Expansion Plans Begin

Mr. Baraka and Juliana purchased additional land for future school expansion.

2012

Classroom Buildings Completed

The construction of two main classroom buildings was completed—one with three classrooms and the other with two classrooms and a teacher's office. The school's official registration was also approved.

2017



HISTORY OF BEMS

2018

Campus Expansion

All students moved to the school campus. Temporary buildings were erected to accommodate the increasing number of students, as classrooms were being used as dormitories, with two classes sharing a room.

Kitchen House and Growing Enrollment

A kitchen house was built by four German volunteers. By this time, the school had approximately 200 students enrolled. The boys stayed on campus, while the girls slept in various buildings around Mr. Baraka and Juliana's home.

2019

Girls' Dormitory Completion

The girls' dormitory was completed, providing a dedicated space for the female students.

2020

Boys' Dormitory Built

The boys' dormitory was built, improving the boarding facilities for male students.

2023

Kindergarten Classrooms Under Construction

Construction began on new classrooms for the kindergarten program, marking an important step in the school's ongoing expansion and development.

2024



CURRENT CHALLENGES

In 2023, our primary focus was the construction of a dedicated boys' dormitory to address critical needs. Since the school's inception, the boys had been accommodated in repurposed classrooms, lacking adequate space and essential washroom facilities. The successful completion of this project has significantly improved their living conditions and overall well-being.

Building on this momentum, 2024 has seen our efforts concentrated on the development of new kindergarten classrooms, a vital step in enhancing the learning environment for our youngest students. While significant progress has been made, the project remains in need of additional funding to complete construction and equip the classrooms with essential furnishings, including desks, tables, windows, doors, roofing materials, and structural wooden supports.

As we approach the end of 2024, our immediate priority is to finalize the roofing for these classrooms, ensuring they are ready for use when students return from their holiday break in mid-January. Although we have already secured metal sheets for the roofing, we require an additional \$3,000 to purchase critical supplies such as nails and timber. To bridge this gap, we are intensifying our social media outreach to raise awareness and mobilize donations. By achieving this goal, we will provide a safe, functional, and inspiring learning space for our students, enabling them to thrive in the upcoming school year.





NEXT STEPS

Cleanliness is a cornerstone of our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment. Access to clean and safe water is fundamental to achieving this, as it directly impacts the health and well-being of our students and staff. At present, the school benefits from a tap water connection and has made significant strides by installing an underground water tank as well as an additional tank on the water tower. These efforts have greatly improved our capacity to store and manage water resources.

However, our current water supply remains insufficient to fully meet the school's growing needs, especially with the expanding facilities and student population. To address this, we plan to install a water pump and drill an additional water well. These enhancements are critical for ensuring a reliable and sustainable water supply, particularly for essential areas such as bathrooms, hygiene facilities, and daily operational requirements. Once completed, this initiative will significantly improve the quality of life at the school and align with our vision of fostering a clean and healthy environment conducive to education.

1. Completing the Kindergarten Classrooms

- Finalizing roofing installation with the secured metal sheets.
- Raising an additional \$3,000 for the procurement of nails, timber, and other essential construction materials.
- Furnishing the classrooms with desks, tables, doors, and windows to create a functional and welcoming space for our youngest learners.

2. Enhancing Water Access and Supply

- Installing a water pump to optimize the usage of our existing water tanks.
- Drilling a new water well to ensure sufficient water availability for bathrooms, hygiene facilities, and other school needs.
- Establishing a sustainable water management system to support the school's growing demands.

3. Community Engagement and Fundraising

- Intensifying social media campaigns to raise awareness about the school's needs and ongoing projects.
- Engaging donors and partners to secure funding for critical initiatives.
- Hosting community events and outreach programs to garner additional support and foster local involvement.





FINANCING BEMS

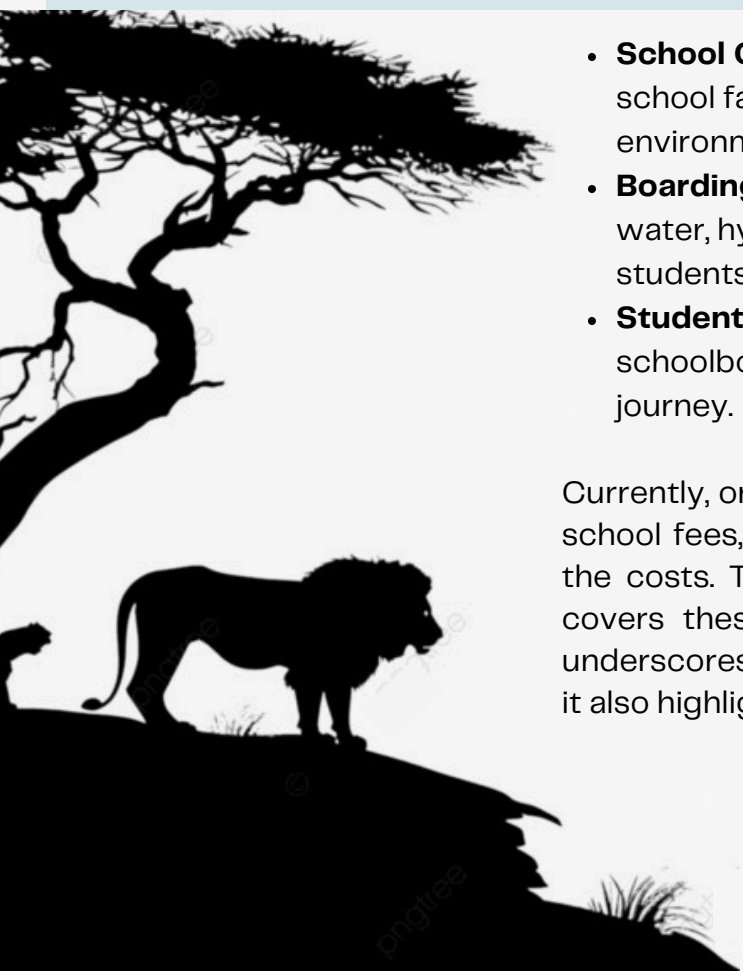
Our school operates with the mission of providing accessible and quality education, accommodation, and meals for our students, many of whom face significant financial challenges. Each student pays \$500 per year, which covers their education, living facilities, and meals. Of this amount, \$300 is allocated to teacher salaries, while the remaining \$200 supports accommodation and food expenses.

Donations are a vital lifeline for sustaining our operations and ensuring that all students, regardless of their financial circumstances, receive the support they need. Contributions are used for the following purposes:



- **School Operations:** Covering teacher salaries, purchasing school facility equipment, and maintaining a conducive learning environment.
- **Boarding School and Living Facilities:** Providing food, clean water, hygiene articles, beds, mattresses, and linens for students residing on campus.
- **Student Supplies:** Supplying essential items such as schoolbooks, pencils, and uniforms to support their academic journey.

Currently, only two-thirds of our students can pay the full or partial school fees, while one-third are unable to afford even a portion of the costs. To ensure that no child is left behind, our school fully covers these expenses for students in need. This commitment underscores our dedication to equal opportunity and inclusivity, but it also highlights the critical importance of donor support.





HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Volunteers play a vital role in supporting our school and contributing to its growth and success. Depending on your skills, interests, and expertise, we can identify the best ways for you to make an impact. Here are some key areas where volunteers can assist:

- **Fundraising Initiatives:** Assist in organizing online campaigns to generate crucial donations from friends, family, and supporters, ensuring the success and sustainability of essential projects and operations.
- **Teaching and Classroom Support:** Lead or assist in teaching classes by collaborating with teachers to arrange subjects, topics, and schedules.
- **Facility Improvement:** Help with beautification projects or assist in construction and maintenance work to enhance the school's environment.
- **Social Media and Digital Content:** Manage our online presence, create engaging digital content, and expand our reach.
- **Strategic Development:** Work on streamlining processes, improving fundraising platforms, and helping the school register with larger NGOs for increased visibility and support.
- **Recreational Activities:** Organize games, arts, and other after-school activities, bringing necessary materials to enrich the experience.





SCHOOL DAY OVERVIEW

Head Teacher: Allen Mushi

Teachers enrollment: 5 female and 8 male teachers

On campus staff: 12 aunties & 4 uncles

- In pre-school, there is one teacher per class, whereas in primary school there is one teacher per subject.

Classes: Kiswahili, English, Maths, Science, Social Studies, Civic's, V/Skills

Class Duration: 40 minutes

Afternoon activities: Cleaning, sports, games, drawing, dancing, etc....

School timetable:

07.30 - 07.45: First breakfast

07.45 - 08.00: Morning parade

08.00 - 10.00: Classes

10.00 - 10.40: Second breakfast (porridge)

10.40 - 12.40: Classes

12.40 - 01.40: Lunch time

13.40 - 15.00: Classes

15.00 - 16.30: Shower

*16.40 - 17.40: Free afternoon activities /
homework*

18.00 - 18.55: dinner

19.00 - 20.00: night activities

20.30: bed time





HOW TO GET TO US?

To visit, you will need to apply for a **tourist visa**, as the volunteer visa process is lengthy and more expensive. Visas can be obtained online or upon arrival at the airport. Please confirm specific requirements with your embassy based on your passport.

If you are traveling from Kenya or nearby countries, a **Yellow Fever vaccination may be required**.

The main airports are:

- Dar es Salaam International Airport
- Kilimanjaro International Airport
- Arusha Airport (local, smaller)

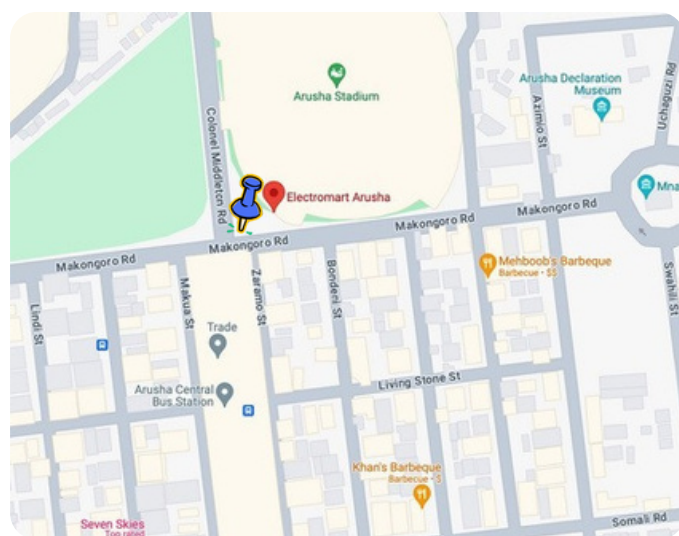
Transportation options:

- From Dar es Salaam to Arusha: A bus ride takes approximately 12–13 hours, however flights may be cheaper.
- From Kilimanjaro Airport to Arusha: No direct bus service is available; private transfers are recommended.

Getting from Arusha to the School

To reach the school, public transport offers one reliable option: the Loliondo Coach bus.

- **Bus Station**: Located in front of Electromart Shopping Mall in Arusha.
- **Bus Details**: The Loliondo Coach is easily recognizable by its blue color.
- **Departure Time**: 6:00 AM daily (arrive by 5:30 AM).
- **Ticket Price**: 23,000 TZS.



Location of bus stop in Arusha

Loliondo Coach Bus:

We will pre-purchase your bus ticket to ensure a good seat and send you a picture of it. On your travel day, simply show the picture to the bus driver, who is familiar with our volunteers. Upon arrival at the school, you will be asked to reimburse the cost of the ticket.

Travel Information

- **Journey Duration**: Approximately 8–12 hours, depending on road conditions. The route is mostly unpaved but offers stunning landscapes and wildlife views.
- **Ngorongoro Gate**: During the journey, the driver will stop at the Ngorongoro Gate, where you must pay a park fee of \$35 USD in cash. Keep the ticket with you, as you will need it for the return trip to avoid being charged again.

Upon Arrival in Wasso

Once you reach Wasso, please call Juliana or Mr. Baraka, who will coordinate with the bus driver to ensure you are dropped off directly at the school. A school representative will be there to meet and assist you upon arrival.

Transport within the area:

When volunteers go to town, most go to Wasso, not Loliondo, as Wasso is more advanced and holds the better hospital, more stores, a bank and is where the weekly Maasai market is. To get to Wasso from the school and vice versa, costs 2000 TZS per person, some may charge more, however hold your ground and don't pay more than this!



ASTRO SAFARI AND TOURS



Astro Safaris and Tours is a premier Tanzanian safari company offering personalized travel experiences, expertly guided by Baraka and Juliana—two of Tanzania's most knowledgeable and highly trained safari guides. Their deep expertise ensures an engaging and interpretive safari, enriching your understanding of Tanzania's remarkable wilderness.

Specializing in **customized safaris**, Astro Safaris and Tours crafts exceptional itineraries to showcase the natural beauty and wildlife of Tanzania. Conveniently located near world-renowned reserves such as the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater, we are well-positioned to arrange unforgettable safaris for our volunteers.

For those interested, we organize affordable trips to some of Tanzania's most iconic parks, including:

- Serengeti National Park
- Ngorongoro Crater
- Tarangire National Park
- Arusha National Park

We look forward to welcoming you and ensuring that your safari experience is as memorable as your time volunteering with us. Please let us know if you'd like to explore these incredible destinations!





VOLUNTEER ACCOMMODATION

Volunteer Accommodation and Facilities

Volunteers are housed in a dedicated section of the school campus, designed to provide comfort and convenience. The volunteer area includes:

- **Communal Area:** A shared space with a large dining table where all meals are served, fostering interaction and camaraderie among volunteers.
- **Dorm Rooms:** Multiple dormitory-style rooms equipped with bunk beds, each accommodating 8–10 volunteers, in the direct volunteer area. However some additional rooms are available near the boys dormitories.
- **Private Bathrooms:** Each dorm room has an attached bathroom with a shower, sink, and toilet. Hot water is available; however, in the event of water cuts, a bucket of water will be provided for washing, and hot water buckets can be arranged upon request.

For couples or volunteers requiring additional privacy, private rooms may be arranged when available.

Amenities Provided

- Bed linens and blankets
- Some mosquito nets

Meals

Volunteers are served three nutritious meals daily—breakfast, lunch, and dinner—prepared with fresh, locally sourced ingredients. Vegetarian and vegan options are available. Please inform us in advance of any dietary restrictions so we can accommodate your needs.

Water and Utilities

- **Water:** Running water is available but not drinkable. Volunteers typically share the cost of purchasing large 10-liter water jugs for drinking.
- **Electricity:** The school has electricity for charging electronic devices, but power outages are common. The plug type is Type G.

Washing Facilities

A washing machine is available for volunteers to use free of charge, ensuring that you can keep your clothes clean during your stay.

Cost

The cost of \$5 per day covers several essential aspects of your stay. This fee goes directly towards supporting our dedicated cleaning and cooking staff, ensuring that the accommodation and meals are of high quality. It also contributes to the cost of food, allowing us to provide fresh, nutritious meals daily. Your contribution helps sustain the smooth operation of the volunteer facilities and supports the local team that makes your experience enjoyable and comfortable.

Tips for Volunteers

To help you make the most of your time at the school, here are some useful tips:

- **Power Supply:** Due to occasional power cuts, it's a good idea to bring a (solar-powered) power bank. This ensures that you can keep your devices charged even when the electricity is out. **Extension**
- **Cord:** Each dorm room has only one electrical outlet, so consider bringing an extension cord to ensure you can charge multiple devices at once.





INTERNET, MONEY AND SAFETY

Internet and Connectivity

While we do not have Wi-Fi, we do have 4G coverage through Vodacom, which provides the best mobile service in the area. To stay connected, we recommend purchasing a Tanzanian SIM card, with Vodacom being the top choice. Airtel also works well, but Vodacom generally offers better service. For your security, we strongly advise purchasing SIM cards only from authorized mobile company stores to avoid any issues.



Safety

Loliondo is a safe and welcoming community, with locals showing great hospitality to foreigners. Volunteers are typically the only foreigners in the area, and the community is aware of their presence and role. However, it's important to remember that we are situated in a rural, impoverished part of Tanzania, and the Maasai tribe predominates in the region. As such, you may stand out, and it's possible that some individuals may ask for money. While the community is generally very friendly and respectful, it's always wise to remain mindful of your surroundings and approach these interactions with understanding.



Money

There is an ATM in Wasso, close to the school. While the ATM typically functions without issues, some volunteers have experienced difficulty withdrawing money. As a precaution, it may be advisable to withdraw cash in Arusha before heading to the school.





WHAT TO PACK?

Climate and Packing Recommendations

Loliondo is situated at an elevation of over 1,800 meters above sea level, resulting in a generally windy climate. We strongly recommend packing jackets and a raincoat, especially if you are visiting during the rainy season.

For footwear, we suggest bringing flip-flops for casual wear, along with hiking boots or other sturdy shoes that will allow for comfortable exploration of the surrounding mountains and outdoor activities.



Dress Code

Tanzania, particularly in rural areas like Loliondo, is a conservative country. We advise both men and women to dress modestly by covering their knees, shoulders, and stomachs when in public. Long skirts, long pants, and shirts with sleeves are recommended, and clothing should not be form-fitting. Additionally, a rain jacket may come in handy, specifically in winter.

Health and Safety

Access to certain medications can be limited in Tanzania, so it's important to bring any medications you may need during your stay. Additionally, we recommend packing sunscreen as the sun can be extremely harsh during the day, even during winter months!

While malaria is relatively rare in Loliondo, some volunteers choose to take malaria prophylaxis. We advise consulting with a healthcare professional before traveling to determine whether you should take any preventative measures.



WEEKEND ACTIVITIES

Weekend and Free-Time Activities During your stay, there are numerous opportunities to explore the local culture and surroundings. As a volunteer, you can engage in activities that offer a deeper connection to the community, such as: Visiting Maasai Villages: Experience the daily life of the Maasai community, including meeting the families of the children at the school.

- **Maasai Market:** Explore the weekly Maasai Market in Loliondo every Friday, where you can buy local crafts and produce. **Sunday Church Service:**
- Participate in a traditional church service, experiencing an important aspect of local culture. **Mountain Hikes:** Enjoy smaller hikes in the nearby
- mountains, offering stunning views and the opportunity to explore Tanzania's natural beauty.

Additionally, there may be the opportunity to be invited to **Maasai weddings** and **other cultural celebrations**, offering a fascinating and immersive experience of Maasai traditions and community life. Activities with Astro Safaris

On weekends or during your free time, you can also book a range of exciting activities to enhance your Tanzanian experience. When you book through Astro Safaris, a portion of the revenue goes back to supporting the school. (More information about this is available on the "Astro Safari" page)

Some of the top activities available are:

- **Serengeti and Ngorongoro National Parks:** Visit two of Tanzania's most famous wildlife reserves for a truly unforgettable safari experience. **Lake Natron:**
- Explore this stunning, alkaline lake, known for its vibrant colors and wildlife. **Engare Sero Waterfalls:**
- Discover the beautiful waterfalls of Engare Sero, located in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area. **Climbing Ol Doinyo Lengai:** Take on the challenge
- of climbing the "Mountain of God," an active volcano offering a unique and rewarding adventure.





USEFUL ITEMS TO BRING

As an NGO, our school works hard to provide for our students' basic needs, but due to limited funds, there are certain items we cannot afford. If you have extra space in your luggage and would like to help, here's a list of items that would greatly benefit the children.

For more details, a table is available to show what has already been generously donated, as well as a form where volunteers can indicate what they personally plan to bring or what is still needed.

- **Mobile Phones & Speakers:** These will help keep staff connected and make learning more engaging. Speakers are also used for fun activities like dance parties and movie nights.
- **English Books:** Our students love reading, but we lack enough English books to fuel their passion and support their education.
- **Clothes, Shoes & Hats for Children:** The school is in an area with both cold and hot weather, so providing appropriate clothing will keep the children comfortable and allow them to express their personal style.
- **Games for Children:** We need balls, board games, cards, and other outdoor games to encourage group play and interaction.
- **Laptops & Screen Projectors:** With only one computer at the school, which serves multiple purposes, we aim to provide computer classes for older students and need additional laptops. Screen projectors will also be great for movie nights and educational activities.
- **Colored Pencils/Pens:** Currently, the children only have basic blue pens. Providing colored pencils and pens will let them express their creativity through art and school projects.
- **Stationery:** Items like erasers, sharpeners, scissors, stamps, and stickers are necessary to fuel the children's creativity.
- **Toothbrushes & Toothpaste:** These are essential for good hygiene, especially for our younger students.
- **Plastic Plates & Cups:** The children currently share plates, which leads to hygiene concerns. Extra plates and cups will make mealtimes healthier and more hygienic.
- **Sanitary Pads:** These are crucial for the girls, ensuring they have access to proper hygiene products.



DONATIONS

Donations to support Bright English Medium School can be sent to the following address

Bright English Medium School:

P.O. Box 35
Loliondo, Arusha
Tanzania, 23701

Alternatively, you can make a direct bank transfer to the school's account:

Bank Name: National Microfinance Bank Limited

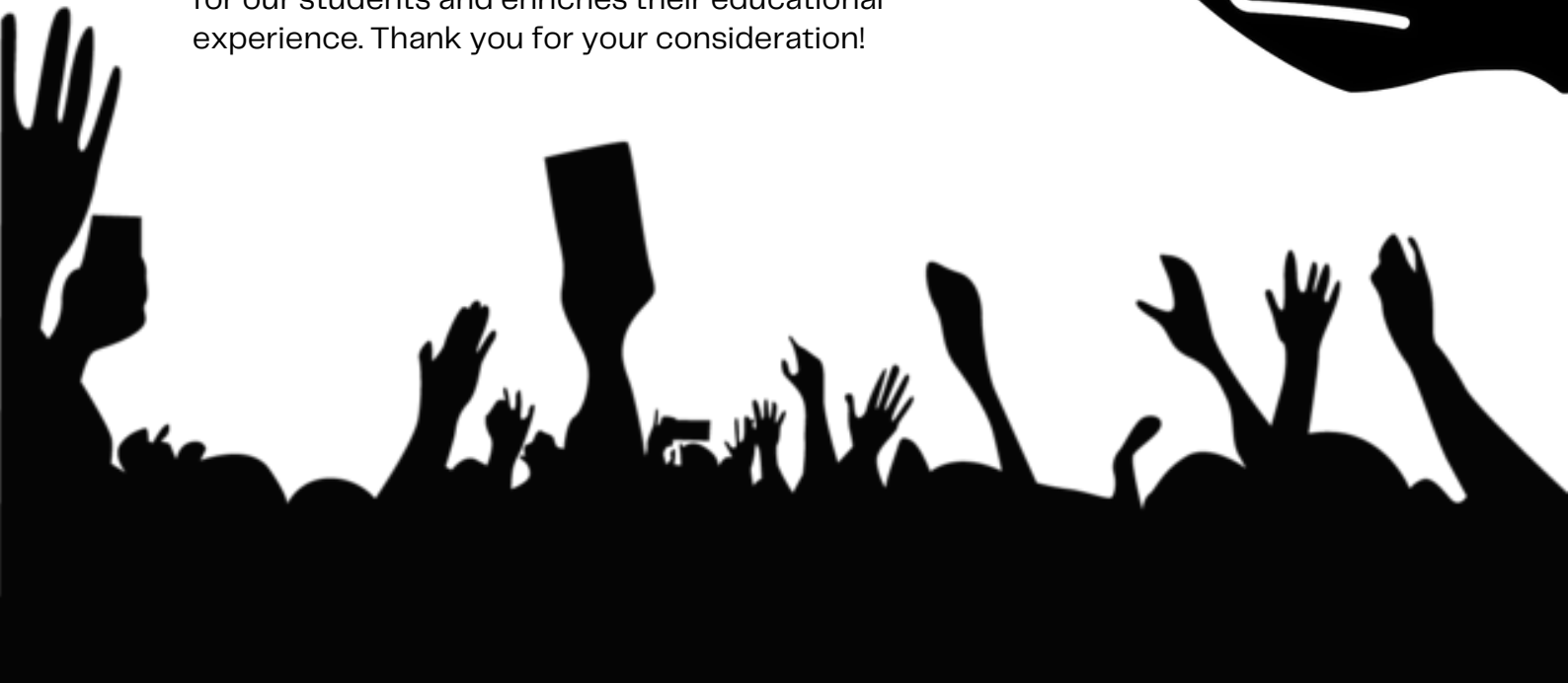
Branch: Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Account Number: 41110004125

BIC Bank Code / SWIFT Code: NMIBTZTZ

Additionally, our school runs a child sponsorship program to ensure that every child receives the necessary resources and support. If you are interested in sponsoring a child or would like to learn more about which students are in need, please contact Juliana or Mr. Baraka for further details.

Your generous support helps us provide a brighter future for our students and enriches their educational experience. Thank you for your consideration!





SWAHILI STARTER PACK

Key Phrases and Cultural Tips for a Seamless Experience

Cultural Norms

- **Greetings Matter:** Always greet others with a smile and "Shikamoo" (respectful hello).
- **Dress Modestly:** Cover shoulders and knees, especially in rural areas like Loliondo/Wasso.
- **Community Focus:** Tanzanians value togetherness; respect local customs and traditions.
- **Time Perception:** Things move at a relaxed pace; patience is key. We call it 'africa time.'
- **Respect:** Always ask permission before taking photos of people or their homes.

Greetings:

Hello: "Jambo" or "Habari"

Respectful hello: "Shikamoo" (response: "Marahaba")

How are you?: "Habari gani?" (response: "Nzuri" – I'm good)

Good morning: "Habari ya asubuhi"

Good night: "Usiku mwema"

Essential Phrases:

Thank you: "Asante"

Please: "Tafadhali"

Yes/No: "Ndiyo" / "Hapana"

Sorry/Excuse me: "Pole" / "Samahani"

Welcome: "Karibu"

Getting Around:

How much?: "Shilingi ngapi?"

Where is...?: "Wapi...?"

I need help: "Nahitaji msaada"

I'm lost: "Nimepotea"

Can you help me?: "Unaweza kunisaidia?"





IMPORTANT LINKS

- **[Instagram link](#)**
- **[WorkAway Profile](#)**
- **[Facebook link](#)**
- **Astro Safaris and Tours Ltd: [Safaris](#)**





KARIBU TO BRIGHT!



We sincerely thank you for your interest in joining us on this journey. Your willingness to contribute your time, skills, and resources means the world to us and, most importantly, to the children we serve. Together, we can create brighter futures and provide opportunities that will positively shape their lives.

To our generous donors and dedicated volunteers, your support is the foundation of our mission. Every contribution—whether big or small—helps us make a meaningful difference. Your kindness and compassion have already touched so many lives, and we are deeply grateful for your commitment to this cause.

As you prepare to join us, know that you are not just a volunteer or donor—you are part of a family that believes in empowering communities, fostering hope, and inspiring change.

Welcome to Bright English Medium School. Together, let's continue to brighten the lives of the children and build a better tomorrow.

