

Update about the Fire at the Huruma Centre

October 14, 2021

On Friday, October 8, there was a fire at the Huruma Centre. Fortunately, the fire began about 3:30 p.m. Iringa Time when neither the children nor the staff were occupying the building. As a result, no one was injured in the fire. The fire was caused by a fault in the electrical wiring of the building.

The Damage

The building that burned was one of the boys' dormitory buildings on the east side of the Huruma Centre compound (see the Google Earth image of the Centre on page two of this update). The other boys' dormitory building is separate from the building that burned and was not affected. However, within the building that burned were also living quarters for Matron Emmy and for Nurse Rahabu. The small dispensary at the Centre was also in the building, so all health care supplies burned as well.

Lost Property

Director of the Centre, Pastor Joyce Ngandango, has already sent us an estimate of the value of all property that was lost in the fire, apart from the loss of the building, Tzs 21,620,000 or about \$9,400 US. Friends of Huruma already authorized the transfer of \$5,000 US earlier this week to the Huruma Centre. Our partners in Berlin Germany have also pledged to send 2,300 Euros (about \$2,700 US). Friends of Huruma would like to send the remaining funds in the next month to replace the destroyed property - \$1,700 US. We have received word from a number of donors already about gifts they intend to make to provide these funds.

The Building

The building that burned was one of the larger buildings in the Huruma Centre compound. You can see from the Google Earth image that it is about the same length as the recently built kitchen building and dining hall building combined. You can see from the photos on page two of this update that the roof of the building collapsed from the fire and the property within the structure was destroyed. The question is, are the walls, floor and foundation of the building still useable for renovation and rebuilding.

Initial Rough Estimate and Challenges

A friend of our partners in Berlin, Germany, who now lives in Iringa, is a retired architect. He visited the Centre on Saturday, October 9, and did a cursory review of the damage to the building. He is not certain that the walls are salvageable and there are other structural concerns. With that in mind, he provided only a very rough estimate of 20,000 to 30,000 Euros (\$24,000 to \$36,000 US) to renovate and rebuild the structure.

Moving Forward: Coordinating Efforts

The challenge of assessing the damage, estimating the cost of the project accurately, and engaging contractors is considerable. This coming week, we are planning to hold a Zoom conference with Pastor Joyce Ngandango and other leaders from the Iringa Diocese, our BKB coordinators in Iringa, and our partners in Berlin to begin to develop a plan to support the Huruma Centre and coordinate our efforts to rebuild the boys' dormitory and other facilities in the building that burned. As plans become more solidified and the cost of the project is identified, we will keep you posted and seek your support. In the meantime, please keep the Huruma Centre and our partners in Iringa in your prayers.

With Gratitude,
Pastor Chris Smith



View of the Huruma Centre Compound. The boys' dormitory that burned is marked in red.



Thanks go to the Iringa Fire Department

