



REPORT:

Self-defence course for Albino Children in Tanzania

On November 2017, the two-week long self-defence course for Lamadi Albino Children Care Center led by Sensei Jerome George Mhagama and Sensei Mikidadi 'Ganchan' Kilindo took place in Lamadi, Tanzania. The course was an integral part of the "Salama Zaidi Lamadi" (Safer in Lamadi) development project financed by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foundation Kiabakari with cooperation with Kiabakari Parish (originator of the project is Fr. Wojciech Adam Kościelniak). The full project is under the development scheme of Polish Aid 2017 and involves the construction of fence for the center, a dormitory for children and the implementation of several courses aiming to create the safe environment for children with albinism as well as secure and self-confident life. The self – defence course was authorized by Japan Karate Association/ World Federation – Tanzania.



Lamadi Albino Children Care Center



Photo Wojciech Adam Kościelniak

On 12 December 2017 took place the ceremony of the opening of the project. The event was presided by the official representative of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tanzania, along with the District Commissioner of Busega District of Simiyu Region. During the ceremony, the participants of the course had the opportunity to showcase the skills acquired during the classes.



Photo: Wojciech Adam Kościelniak



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Why self – defence course?

Albinism is a genetically inherited disorder from both the mother and the father. People with albinism have little or no pigmentation in the skin, hair and eyes. There are people with albinism all over the world. However, according to some estimates, Tanzania has the highest (170 thousands) population of people with Albinism. Albinos in Tanzania are brutally slaughtered and killed, because of a myth that there is some magic in Albino and Albino's bones can make someone rich, can cure diseases or bring wealth of luck. Thus, there is a sinister trade of their body parts for use also in witchcraft rituals. The fears and superstitions surrounding albinism run very deep in Tanzanian society.

In Tanzania, most endangered are children with albinism. There even is a price on the head of children with albinism since killing a person with albinism is considered to bring good luck. Because of killings like this, many children with albinism now live in camps. Rejected by and cut-off from their families, they live separate from society in order to keep them safe.



Photo: Wojciech Adam Kościelniak

Outlook for the future

Abandoned by family and society, living in a constant sense of threat without a prospect for a better future, children from the albino center in Lamadi became very interested in karate classes and showed incredible skills. The course ended successfully. However, Sensei Jerome Mhagama seeing the positive effects of karate, is planning to continue the program and introduce permanently karate classes for albino kids. The aim is not only to teach children self-defense, but also to increase their sense of security and self-confidence. In the future, it is planned to open a karate club and invite karate groups from outside Tanzania to conduct karate activities. With the help of karate friends from all over the world Sensei Jerome plans to extend the karate training for other albino camps in Tanzania. What is more, Sensei Jerome Mhagama, along with Japan Karate Association WF/Tanzania invites all albino children as well as albino adults to participate in the Karate classes that take place at Russian Cultural Centre, Dar es Salaam on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The classes for albino students will be provided for free (the only condition is to register as a JKA member to be able to take exams and grades with original JKA Certificates. The registration will also be processed for free).



Photo: Wojciech Adam Kościelniak



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Photo: Wojciech Adam Kościelniak



Photo: Sensei Jerome George Mhagama



The center is also a shelter for disabled children also rejected by and cut-off from their families.

Photo: Sensei Jerome George Mhagama



Photo: Wojciech Adam Kościelniak

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