



Isaya Oleporuo and Nguvu Lukumay, Maasai brothers in Eluai, Tanzania, began rescuing girls from childhood marriage over 10 years ago and began helping them to attend school. When their older sister was forced into marriage, she asked them to not let this happen to their younger sisters so they could have a future. Several years later while Isaya and Nguvu were away taking care of cows, their father sold their younger sister, Katayai, into marriage. She was 80 miles from home, pregnant and being mistreated by her husband. Isaya and Nguvu decided that they needed to act, taking their sister away to the city where she could be safe and attend school. She completed college, now has her own business and is married to a man she chose with 2 children. She is happy and able to make decisions for herself.

With the help of private donors and sponsors from all around the world, Isaya and Nguvu have helped more than 200 girls escape forced marriage and attend secondary school and beyond. With continuing support from Ohio families and local church congregations, the Osotuwa Foundation was created to add structure and focus to the life changing work of these Maasai brothers. The Osotuwa Foundation is both a US 501c3 non-profit and a Tanzanian NGO and provides the conduit for donations and support for the education of Tanzania's young girls. Osotuwa means kindness and sharing in the Maasai language.

Of the more than 200 girls who have entered the program, 15 have completed it, being able to work in order to support themselves and their families. Parents are increasingly bringing their daughters to participate in this program. Since February 2023 when the Osotuwa Foundation was founded, the number of girls seeking help rose to 119 for 2024 and is over 150 for 2025. The Osotuwa Foundation successfully raised almost \$60,000 in 2023, but continuing support is fiercely needed.

Each of the girls have grown up to be confident advocates for themselves and other young girls facing forced marriage. Nekoko, a 22 year-old graduate of the program, recently received a diploma in Clinical Medicine and would like to go on to be a Medical Doctor with a dream of opening a health center in Eluai to help her people. In her story, she describes the situation of young girls being promised to a man in exchange for cows, sometimes even before they are born and becoming pregnant at very early ages causing them to drop out of primary school and being forced into marriage. Also, the older girls, such as Nemuta, are helping tutor and mentor the younger girls when they are not attending school.

The vision of the Osotuwa Foundation is to bring gender equality to the Tanzanian Maasai people. This is being implemented through the provision of funding for secondary and higher education for the girls. This is promoting a transition away from the practice of forced childhood marriage and is leading to sustainable employment for the girls. As the parents, village leaders and government officials are seeing the success of Osotuwa Foundation in Eluai and neighboring villages, there is a rapidly increasing demand for this educational opportunity for their daughters.

As the number of parents and girls that want to stop the practice of forced childhood marriage and seek education grows, there is an accelerated need for increased annual funding to support more young girls. Sponsorship of a girl at \$600 per year provides living expenses, uniforms, school supplies and fees. Funding is required for girls to attend secondary school since they leave their parent's home and live at the school during that time of the year. Additionally, there has been increased administrative costs for the program as the number of girls served has accelerated rapidly. Grants are being pursued and requests for donations and sponsors continue in order to meet the growing desire for educational opportunities among Maasai girls and their parents supporting this learning choice. The fast-growing number of requests from Maasai parents is both a challenging and rewarding time to be serving the needs of these precious young ladies. Please join us during this enthusiastic time with your financial and prayerful support and share with others the urgency of the educational needs of these cherished girls.