December 15, 2012

President’s Report
2012

« We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men »

Herman Melville, American novelist

Dear Friends and Members of Rafiki Ya Maisha,

This has been another very fruitful year towards reaching our goal of creating a permanent building for the Sergoek Youth Polytechnic School in Chepkanga, Kenya.

Mission statement:

“To provide professional training to Kenya’s high school dropouts who lack useful academic or technical skills”

Build Skills with ‘lost’ Youth in Kenya

Themes: Education, Economic Development, Empowering Girls and Technology
Last December, the school had recently opened 3 new workshops, registered 22 students and welcomed 4 government instructors, including a manager. It operated on 2 sites: (1) in the buildings on loan by the founder, Mrs. Tunoi and (2) on the community land in a small 2-room brick schoolhouse and a 4-classroom iron sheet structure.

Now in December 2012, one year later, we have a fully operational school gathered in a single site, complete with electricity, basic equipment, a flag mast and a volleyball pitch. Students and faculty now have desks, a cupboard, a store, pots and pans of their own, dummy heads with hair and lumber in stock. Conditions have definitively improved.

We have accomplished all that we had set out to achieve for the year, and more!

Highlights of this year:

I. The School - Sergoek Youth Polytechnic

- **Student registration**: 104 students in January; 60 students preparing end of the year exams. There have been some dropouts due, namely, to early pregnancies.
- **Entrepreneurship modules**: 2 young teachers offered basic courses in Business and Marketing. Students now have the necessary tools to search the Internet for jobs and/or to set up a business after their training is over.
- **The Inter-Polytechnic soccer championship**: students won 1st place out of a pool of 8 area teams.
- **The Board of Governors (BOG) of the School** was officially named in June by the ministry of Youth Affairs. It is chaired by Mr. Edwin Tarno, Headmaster of the upper level Eldoret Polytechnic Institute (RVTTI).

II. The New Site

- The new 5-acre site was fenced & cleared in January; a border hedge composed of 2500 saplings was donated and planted around the site by the students of RVTTI in August.
- Two Kenyan architects from Nairobi working on the plans made a site visit; they are currently finalizing the Master Plan. The “greening” of the building is our main focus.
- A very successful **Groundbreaking Ceremony** for the planned new building was held on November 7, 2012. The guest of honor was the attaché from the French Embassy in Nairobi, a major donor to Rafiki Ya Maisha. More than 200 people representing all levels of society attended.
III. The Development Partners

- Two Field representatives of GlobalGiving came to Paris and met with President Claire Mathijsen to review our work in detail. We passed with flying colors: we remain in the top 10% of all their projects, have Leader status **** and are aiming for our 5th star!
- Tumndo Le Neel, the support group for young girls run Dr. Susan Chebet, will join Rafiki Ya Maisha. This Kenyan association mobilizes promotes a new coming of age concept for initiating girls without circumcision (FGM) while upholding community values and traditions.
- The Eldoret Catholic Diocese, with father Okoth in the Development Office, will work with our school for quality control by coaching the students and following them from registration until they land on their feet professionally.
- Presentations were given to: (1) the Association of American Wives of Europeans in Paris (AAWE) that renewed its support for the 6th year in a row, (2) the International Bilingual School of Paris (EABJM) and (3) the RAFIKI CLUB that now counts 13 motivated students busy fundraising, supporting this cause and learning about Kenya.
- A new website, Jump start brickmaking to build school in Kenya, one of 25 micro-projects selected for Give for Youth, a new GlobalGiving-Microsoft partnership (www.giveforyouth.org), earmarks our brick production for its’ own funding.

IV. Sponsorship

- The 1-Day Only GlobalGiving on line campaign of October 17, 2012 was conducted successfully: we raised $4015 and earned a match up Bonus of $905. With a grand total of $4920, we came in 12th position out of 272 organisations.
- Our on-site student volunteers to the school continues; new students are being trained by Rafiki Ya Maisha for internships in Chepkanga during in summer 2013.
- Grant requests were filled again this year, namely with Irish Aid, which we are hopeful will amount to something next year.
- A renewed RAFIKI Club at the international school (EABJM) is very active and promising.

V. News & Challenges

- A refreshed Website now greets our visitors with video selections and good pictures on www.rafikiyamaisha.com
- Mr. John Whitbeck, a retired senior lawyer and former Peace Corps volunteer in Africa, visited our school in Chepkanga last September and has agreed to take on the position of Development Adviser.
• Three trips altogether were taken to Kenya this year: President Claire Mathijsen visited in February and October and Secretary General, Christian Roth, also went in August to push the project forward.

• We are waiting for the Land Title to the new site to be confirmed before beginning the first wing of the permanent building. This is a lengthy process due to administrative delays and new legislation.

• The procurement process, via public bidding, will start as soon as the title is issued, allowing the BOG to select a contractor and start the construction.

FINANCIAL REPORT: period from November 1, 2011 to October 31, 2011

Note that we will propose to the General Assembly to be held in April 2013, to alter the dates of the financial year for Rafiki Ya Maisha, to run from July 1st to June 30th. If this is approved the next financial report will cover November 1-June 30, 2013

Donations:
- Institutional Donations: 25 000,00 €
- Individual Donations: 10 222,30 €
TOTAL DONATION…………………35 222,30 €

Interest accrued…………………………1 108,08 €

Expenses:
- 3 Missions to Kenya: 4 577,69 €
- Operating expenses: 3 203,75 €
TOTAL EXPENSES………………….7 781,44 €

Bank Balance:
- Checking Account: 1 561,31 €
- Savings Account: 96 972,95 €

PROJECTED BUDGET: November 1 to June 30, 2013

Next year’s projected expenses, based simply on expenditures for 2012 pro-rated for 8 months of operation, would amount to 5187,33 €.

However, if as we hope the land title is officially issued, public bidding for a contractor successfully undertaken and the construction of the building begins, expenses would expected increase significantly.

We’ve entered a new phase in which the school now has a solid institutional foundation with the right people in the right place. Rafiki Ya Maisha, bolstered by its’ strong partnership with the Kenyan government and various stakeholders, is now fully equipped to expand it’s role as a sponsor.

We will continue our sponsorship and have set the following goals for next year:

1. To continue our aim to raise 50% of the cost of the permanent building. If the total cost is approximately 410.00€ or $540.000, our share would be 105.000€ or $138.000.

2. To promote the following:
   • Implement green technologies in the construction
   • Schedule the rites of passage ceremonies for girls without FGM
   • Advocate skills training among the youth and their parents as a way out of rural poverty
   • Coopt local business partners for the project
The clear success of the groundbreaking ceremony has created a momentum.

Let’s listen to two students:

- Joyce K, 26 years, Hairdressing student:
  “My aunt decided to take me to Sergoek Youth Polytechnic in Chepkanga to enroll me ... I have decided to be working on somebody's farm during the weekends and the money will be for daily transportation... I hope to be independent in the future... Thanks to our Sponsors for the free machines they are providing us with, making our learning so easy. » March 2012

- Mathew K, 21 years, Electrical student:
  “I am a second year student in Electrical at the Sergoek Polytechnic in the village. I want you to know that I have volunteered to redo the lighting in the church”. Chepkanga Church, announcement made on Sunday Nov 3, 2012.

Your enormous support in times of economic downturn, your generosity however small, means a lot to us and more so to the youth of rural Kenya.

Kenya, unlike our Western world, is experiencing an impressive 7% annual growth (and Kenya is indeed at the forefront of IT development). This translates into needs and jobs for the young people that we are training.

- BUT… 65% of the population is under 45 years old and this group has the highest unemployment rate creating tensions.
- The median life expectancy recently jumped from 49 years to 53 years.
- BUT… its’ Human Development Index (HDI) ranks Kenya 154th out of 157 countries in the world.

* If a youth in Chepkanga can benefit from technical training, it’s wonderful.
* If a young person can demonstrate the purpose of this education, it’s a success.
* If he/she can give back to the community and become a role model, it’s a gift!

Thank you for connecting and contributing to the future success of these young people in sub-Saharan Africa with Rafiki Ya Maisha. I’ll leave the last words to our MP and friend, Prof. Margaret KAMAR, Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology:

“.... Nothing will stop us until we reach our destiny. Our youth trained, skilled and empowered to reach their potential! That will be so fulfilling, we shall understand why you chose the name 'Rafiki ya Maisha' for indeed it is”.

Claire Mathijsen Roth
President
Rafiki Ya Maisha