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A friendly JAMBO, everyone!

When you last heard from us, it was 2009; now it's already March of 2010! So we are very pleased to find you all still there, ready to go forward with us into another year of progress and joyful experiences for the children at KiD! Likewise, we wish you the same kind of year!

Allow us to „take you away“, once again, to Kenya. As cold as it was here this February, it was exactly the opposite when we landed in Mombasa - extremely hot - with little respite in the 37°C shade! But with so many administrative details to attend to in only 2½ weeks, we knew it would not only be the heat that would cause us to break a sweat; we had become accustomed to „sprinting“ toward our goals from our countless previous visits!

We picked up where we left off in November, 2009, with the need to find a suitable plot on which we could grow our own fruits and vegetables, etc. Its suitability would, of course, depend upon the land's location, price and arability. And since - as, of course, you know - Kenya is not just around the corner, finding the plot was only our first objective during the trip. We also hoped to clinch the deal for its purchase while we were there, and, if possible, to break ground. Our other objectives included resolving employee issues, renewing our insurance, bookkeeping and other administrative affairs. And, of course: we wanted to see the children!

Especially in the heat, it sometimes seemed like a dizzying, hopelessly long list of goals, but we are pleased to report: we achieved every single one of them! Thanks to your donations and the excellent preparatory work of our members both in Kenya and in Europe, as well as to the goodwill and help of many local people who were „at the right place, at the right time“ - and despite delays that sometimes lasted for hours - it all got done. Best of all, **KiD now has a plot for raising vegetables - and it's only 350 metres away from the kindergarten itself!**

Truly, this was worth all the real and metaphorical sweat of everyone who made it possible!

But all this was yet to be, for our tale truly begins in Mombasa, far from the kindergarten. Many of the authorities we needed to consult have offices in Mombasa, so we stayed there after landing so we



could get right to work. To remind you, Mombasa is only accessible by ferry. That is, when the ferries are working. When we arrived, two of them were out of commission, and the wait for cars to board the working ferries was as long as six hours. Once ashore, the drive to Diani takes one hour. It was difficult to coordinate such a travel schedule with the officials' particular office hours and still be back by nightfall.

Despite our desire to accomplish as much as possible while we were still in Mombasa, on many days during our stay, we had to manage such a schedule nevertheless. We owe our success to the efforts of our many helpers, as well as to Edward and Joshua who often worked overtime and beyond the normal scope of their job descriptions during our visit. Without their help, it would have been impossible to settle all these matters.

Recently, too, Edward and Joshua had restored the kindergarten to its original beige and white, without the „designs“ imprinted by many small hands. However, the lawn remained brown - the heat having turned it mostly to dust.

But the children continue to bloom - even the little newcomers who joined us in January, 2010, are already able to count up to 10 - in English! They remain busy learning at school - even in the extreme heat (unlike in Germany, where younger students are allowed to go home early on excessively hot days). Anyway, for some of the older children, a day off would feel more like a punishment than a privilege; because of the love they receive every day from Agnes and our „pearl“, Miriam, the children delight in learning!

We would especially like to thank Hamisi for his enormous help overseeing the processing details at the Kenyan land registry, for registering the property and for obtaining the original title deed. Without him, we would have been lost! Last, but not least, he - with his natural diplomacy and people skills - opened doors for us when we would still have been looking for the appropriate „keys“.

With his help, and the help of people we never even met, we managed to gather all the official papers only a few hours before we had to leave, so we were able to take them home to Germany. And, as if Hamisi had not been enough help as an agent, he was so enthusiastic about the kindergarten, and about our plan to raise our own vegetables, that he went even further. Hamisi, who owns a large well and is a major supplier of fresh water to households and hotels in the area, also promised to supply the kindergarten with fresh water - **for free!**

And even as we write (and you read!), a new wall is being built on our new plot in Kenya. A cistern for the fresh water supply is being installed (in a hole dug many metres deep by muscle power alone). And innumerable truckloads of topsoil are yet to be brought. Everyone is looking forward to the end of April, when the rainy season begins, for then - maybe - our garden will be ready for its first seeds!



The day the purchase contract was signed. L to R: Edward, Hamisi and the lawyer.

Of course, we would have loved to spend more time with the kids during this visit, but the best we could do was to gather them all on the garden plot. And by „all“, we mean even the school children, whom we fetched by bus during their lunch break. When the bus arrived, and the children stepped out, we got goosebumps! We were deeply moved by their jubilant greeting! We looked into their eyes and thought, Wow - where has the time gone? It was only recently, it seems, that they were still quite young. Now the oldest of our graduates, Nicolas, is in the 6th form, and will finish school in only two years. All in all, „Project KiD“ includes 79 Kenyan boys and girls.

It's hard to describe what goes on in one's head at such a moment. There you are, with the children, the kindergarten, the new plot, the staff and the many helpers - and far away, there are all of our donors, without whom this moment would not be possible. And, for that short moment, you try to have all of these people and places together in your heart. You hope that everyone feels how important and valuable he or she is, and how unendingly wonderful life can be if we move together and share!

Have a look at the map to see where „your“ new plot is situated. Imagine the swaying cornstalks and bright red tomatoes, and the happy children with mango juice dripping from their lips. These are gifts from you - so we and the children can only say: thank you!

Who knows what stories our next letter will tell? We continue to encounter new tasks to be done and new regulations of which we weren't previously aware - and hence, new authorities to enforce them! And you can be sure that we will perform those tasks and meet those regulations, because we, along with our Kenyan friends, intend to help our KiD kids go „forward ever, backward never“.



Finally: all of our children on one photo: our kindergarteners in red uniforms, and our school children in blue. Adults pictured, L to R: Heinz, Edward, Agnes, Mariam the cook (center), Mariam the teacher, Heike and Joshua.

It is our hope that you will continue to go forward with us! As we have seen over the previous years, we achieve so much more together than we can do alone!

And now we will hope for rain for our new little garden plot. May it help all our little „sprouts“ to grow and blossom!

With warmest spring regards, from the whole KiD team

Heidi Linde

Hein Sedel

Jose Ullrich

Jarco Lindner

Stephan Lorenz

Anke Windeler

Manfred Linde

Heike Staff