



Hamburg, December 2019

Dear Sponsors, Friends and Supporters,

We can be more than satisfied with the course of events in 2019. A lot has happened, mostly positive and the rest we can learn from.

The number of our society members has been reduced by 1 to 19, as Carolin Barth resigned from the board of chair-members at the beginning of the year. Carolin has been a chair-member since 2011 and we would like to thank her for her active and committed support.

Donations received by our society amounted to almost half a million Euros, significantly more than in the previous two years. This was due to the construction of the new Mekaela Weber School in Kombani and the expansion of the Mekaela Ratinga Primary School. Slightly less than half of the donations were for sponsorships, scholarships, the Mekaela mirco medical scheme (MMMS), similar expenses and the rest for the construction or expansion of schools.

Kenya is on the right track economically and politically. The country continues to show high growth, inflation is high compared to Europe, but under control, and debt is within reasonable limits. It is important to know that the country invests borrowed money into projects that improve infrastructure, such as railways, roads, ports and airports, as well as communications and of course, education (indeed, such governments still exist). Another interesting fact; according to the last census this year, population growth has declined dramatically, with an average Kenyan family having only 3.9 members instead of 5.1 as was the case 10 years ago. This means that explosive population growth is the main cause of people's economic misery. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, this is mainly an effect of significantly higher levels of education. Isn't it nice to know that we've all played a small part in this?

2019 was another very pleasing year for the Mekaela Academies.

Ratinga Primary School has been overwhelmed with registrations after its huge success in the 2018 final exams. The number is now so high that we prefer not to publish it here, because it will draw conclusions about class density. Luckily we have the families Hinssen and Jacobs and the Blumberg Foundation in Ratingen, Germany. Not only have they organised more than 100 sponsorships, but have also financed the expansion of Ratinga into a double-stream school. This means on from 2020 there will be two classes of Std. 1 through to Std. 8 (the kindergarten remains single-stream). The school will then have capacity for approximately 650 students and we will report on the class density next year.

Mekaela Likunda Primary School is also developing magnificently. At the beginning of the year, around 90 children of the Kidzangoni society in Augsburg, Germany came to Likunda and increased the capacity utilisation to well over 90%. At the end of the year Florence Munke, the head teacher of Likunda (by the way for almost 20 years now) succeeded in producing a tremendous feat. In the KCPE (Primary) exams this year, 10 children in her school achieved a grade of more than 400 points (that would be an A or a 1 in Europe). The best grade in the whole of Kenya was 440, therefore the performance of the Likunda graduates was fantastic.

The school organised a road-show in honour of Florence from Ukunda to Likoni and back, which was of course also excellent advertising. The moral or the end of this story is, that parents are now also overrunning the Likunda, everyone wishes to bring their child to Florence. We therefore already have plans to expand the Likunda by four classrooms.

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The three primary schools of the Mekaela Academies (excluding the Weber School) performed well in the KCPE exams in 2019, a total of 16 graduates achieved grades of 400 or more and we ranked 7th among the 1,700 schools in the Kwale District. The team accompanying Mr. Musili is doing a great job, we owe them a big thank you.

The aforementioned new Mekaela Weber School has developed well. The school has more than 100 pupils up to Std. 4. The success of the other primary schools is also making the Weber popular and we hope to have 150 pupils next year when we open and have Std 5.

Presently, more than 1,600 pupils attend Mekaela Academies. This number will rise to nearly 2,000 by the end of 2020, when the expansion of the Ratinga (and perhaps the Likunda) are ready.

Our two secondary schools "Lulu Girls High" and "Lulu Boys High" fade a bit in the limelight of our primary schools' successes. The results of the KCSE 2018 exams were decent, but far from excellent, but we also had - at both schools - some bad luck with the students. Disciplinary measures had to be implemented more often than usual, but rules are rules, and the victims of too much "understanding" are always the majority of other students who abide by the rules and just want to learn and achieve a good grade. This "lost generation" is now gone and Faith Mutua (Principal of the Lulu Girls) and Anderson Mwero (Principal of the Lulu Boys) are firmly convinced that they will be able to present the "golden generation" next year. We are eager to find out.

As in the previous year, Watoto sponsors support around 400 needy children within the Mekaela Academies and a further 160 pupils through the 999 programme. Approx. 300 children are supported by performance scholarships and other organisations (e.g. Kidzangoni in Augsburg and KiD in Bremen, Germany). More than half of the students of Mekaela Academies have a sponsorship, a scholarship or a similar form of support. Approx. 30 former students are also being financially supported by their sponsors during their college or university studies through Watoto.

Thanks to the MMMS medical scheme, more than 1,200 medical treatments have been carried out this year, almost 50% more than in the previous year. Basic medical care is part of the Watoto sponsorship programme, thanks to the support of the Rudolph Logistics Group in Baunatal, the dental practise Dr. Brauner & Dr. Rendchen as well as the support organisation Diakonie und Caritas e.V. in Ratingen, all children who do not have a sponsorship also receive this medical care.

It has little to do with the schools, but it still belongs here: at the moment we are building a shoe factory, that is, Josef Seibel Africa Ltd., less than 1 km away from Likunda Primary. This is important to us in that the Mekaela Academies team will be involved in the construction of the factory, the recruitment of personnel and, later, the operation of the factory. Parents will be given jobs, pupils will receive training apprenticeships and the first thing to do will be to produce school shoes, which will of course go to our pupils first. Later, the school shoes will be offered at cost to all schools in Kenya. The shoes will be sold under the "Romika" brand and production is scheduled to start in the second half of 2020. Five trainees, including two graduates of the Mekaela Academies, will receive a six-month training course in Germany on from January 2020. You can find out more about the project on <https://romika.co.ke>.

On our website www.watoto.de we publish balance sheets, annual reports and other information about our project, e.g. about sponsorships, donations and other ways to support children in Kenya.

Dear Sponsors, Friends and Supporters, it is nice to be able to draw a positive balance at the end of the year. The project's success is due to the hard work and dedication of our team in Kenya as well as the loyal and avid support of our kind supporters and well-wishers. Having you at our side gives us great motivation and enables us to work with such energy and enjoyment.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year in Ishiriniishirini (2020).

Kind regards,
Your team of

Watoto e.V.