



Galun, 27th December 2023

Dear Sponsors, Friends, Family and Supporters,

On the 8th January 2024, the long holidays, having lasted two full months this year, will come to an end. The new school year brings some changes, and today we would like to share some information about them and the events of this year.

Watoto now has 22 members, and the three new members are Leandra Blasi, Elke Hirschfeld, and Viktor Roth. The board consists of Tom Jacob (Chairman), Laura Homann, and Ilka Christensen.

In 2023, we transferred approximately EUR 350 Thousand to Kenya. The funds supported:

- School fees for sponsored children at the Mekaela Academies
- University and college sponsorship for Mekaela Academies graduates
- The 999 programme
- Basic medical health care (Mekaela Micro Medical Scheme)
- Renovation of Ratinga School
- Construction of the new Mekaela Junior School in Kombani
- Various equipment for primary schools
- Villa Emma (orphanage for girls)
- IT equipment, communication, online learning

At the beginning of the year, we experienced a considerable decline in the number of students due to significant increases in school fees. The number of students has since recovered, with 2,000 students currently attending our schools. Through sponsorships and other support programmes, as well as through the societies Kindergarten in Diani in Bremen and Kidzangoni in Augsburg, about half of the students are supported. Thirty former pupils are currently being supported with their studies.

The MMMS programme, which provides our children with free medical basic care, has been in existence for 11 years. Sponsors contribute a monthly fee of two Euros for this service. For students without sponsorship, the programme is funded by the Rudolph Logistics Group from Gudensberg and the practice of Dr. Brauner & Dr. Rendchen in Ratingen-Lintorf.

Last year, we reported on changes in the Kenyan education system. This year, there were some changes and reversals of some changes, which was a bit confusing. Additionally, we renamed some of our schools, so it's not surprising if sponsors lose track. We hope to clarify the situation with the following information:

Initially, the Ministry of Education (MoE) decided to run the new CBC system alongside the 8-4-4 system. This meant a six-year shortened primary section and two three-year secondary sections. The first section, "Junior Secondary," was supposed to be part of existing secondary schools. However, it turned out that there are far fewer secondary schools in Kenya than primary schools, but an equal number of junior secondary schools were needed, as the junior secondary section includes classes 7

# WATOTO



---

Watoto e.V. · Ursula-de-Boor-Str. 30 · D-22419 Hamburg  
Vorstand: Tom Jacob (Vorsitzender) · Laura Homann · Ilka Christensen  
Telefon 040-22852950 · Fax 040-35676776 · E-Mail [info@watoto.de](mailto:info@watoto.de) · Internet [www.watoto.de](http://www.watoto.de)  
Spendenkonto 2193892 · Kasseler Sparkasse · IBAN DE59520503530002193892 · BIC HELADEF1KAS  
Steuernummer 17/452/13282 · Finanzamt Hamburg-Nord · Vereinsregister Nr. 23703

and 8 of the primary section. It quickly became apparent that there wouldn't be enough space and classrooms in such a short time, so it was decided that a junior secondary school could be located on the grounds of a primary school. Additionally, it was mandated that it should no longer be called "secondary" but only "junior" and "senior." As mentioned, this was all a bit confusing.

The Mekaela Academies now comprise of eight schools. The new addition is the Mekaela Junior School Kombani, which is being built or rather is still under construction on the grounds of Mekaela Weber. The new school is financed by the Reiner Meutsch Foundation FLY & HELP. The project is divided into three parts, two of which are already financed, and the first part is completed.

Also new is the Ratinga Junior School on the grounds of Ratinga Primary School. It was not newly built, but classrooms were renovated and expanded. Starting in 2024, Ratinga will be a "Comprehensive School," meaning primary and junior school are under one roof.

The academic development of the Mekaela Academies has improved after setbacks in the years of the pandemic. Our schools still rank among the best in Kwale County, with Ratinga and Weber, our budget schools, achieving the best results among the Mekaela Academies this year. The best student this year was Patience from Ratinga Primary School with 407 points in the primary graduation exam. Patience is sponsored, and her sponsors were delighted with the excellent result. The results of the secondary exams are not available yet.

Watoto has moved within Hamburg this year. Also, our long-standing treasurer, Doris, has moved, and she has transferred her responsibilities to Micki, who is now in charge of donation receipts, direct debits, etc. - as if that wasn't enough. Micki also has the not always easy task of explaining to our sponsors why Watoto had to increase some sponsorship amounts this year. If not already done, she will contact each sponsor individually to explain how cost increases in Kenya affect the sponsorship amounts. Thanks to the significantly increased exchange rate of the Euro, we were able to limit the increases.

Since the beginning of the year, Micki has been training the former student Diana Ekuwam in Kenya. It is planned that Diana will take over Micki's tasks of the donor relations and sponsorship scheme. Diana is studying teaching in Nairobi until 2026, and she comes to Ukunda during her semester breaks. Once Diana's German is good enough, we will let her loose on the sponsors. Diana is a charming young lady and will be an enrichment to Watoto.

Our new member, Leandra Blasi, is working on a new design and new features of our website [www.watoto.de](http://www.watoto.de). There, we publish balance sheets, annual reports, and much more information regarding our project, such as sponsorship options, donations, and other ways to support children in Kenya.

Since 2009 Watoto has held the DZI donation seal of approval.

What does the future hold for us? Predictions are always tricky when it comes to the future. Kenya is facing challenging economic times, but the country and its' people will manage. In other countries, there is war, terrorism, and ideological nonsense. We can be grateful that Kenya is a relatively stable country, and therefore, we look optimistically to the future. Together with you, our dear Friends, Supporters and Sponsors, we will overcome all hurdles. Thank you for your long-standing loyalty and for continually motivating us through your reliable support.

Wishing you all the best for 2024 and New Year Greetings from all of us,  
**Watoto e.V.**

