



## **NEW WHITE HOUSE ACADEMY**

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### **Report for the year 2013**

2013 was again a successful year for the "new White House Academy" in Voi, and thus also for the Association of Kenyan children help. Thanks to the tireless efforts of the members of our Committee in Switzerland and aid from Canada and the Udo Lindenberg Foundation, as well as by Gaby Bentlage from the travel agency Zenit in Hamburg, the representative of the association Watoto wa Kenya. With this entire people helping us, we had always had sufficient funds to pay all wages and to prepare daily 4 healthy meals. The extension of the bedrooms, the acquisition of additional beds, desks, mattresses and various renovations were possible. Unfortunately, life is very expensive since the introduction of the enormous tax increases and the introduction of taxes on goods such as milk or books, as well as many other things, needed every day, and which were exempt until now by the taxes.



We are happy about our teachers, for performing various programs, even on Saturdays and Sundays. It seems important to us that not only the syllabus, which unfortunately has been cut by the Government, conveyed to the children can be taught. Special skills that are useful for later in life are also important. We do our best to give them as many as possible. Our school's reputation has spread fast; we are one of the best of the 196 schools in the whole district.

All the time people come and want to bring us their kids, but also by official agencies, orphans are easily brought to us. The number of HIV positive people rises again sharply in

recent times, in our school, we bring the children affected to control monthly, some in the dedicated section in the District Hospital, and others led in an institution of Catholic sisters. It is important that the children are treated where the disease was diagnostician and their history was begun there. The infection is treated seriously and professionally, the children must take medication daily and sometimes get special food. It is whether to weight or remove controlled also. Also in the treatment of malaria cases children and employees are treated professionally and well. But it is very time consuming to go to a hospital, the queues are incredible. We spend a lot of time in the various wards. A physician or a physician assistant comes monthly to do a checkup and one each time when the kids come back to school from their holiday to deworm them. Very often they come back with ring worms, these are not worms but a fungal disease that is very contagious and should be treated internally as well as externally. Unfortunately, this fungal infection, because of the constant wind spreads very quickly. It usually starts on the scalp, you can see there right rings, thus the name.



In the school we buy drinking water, big trucks filled with clean water ferry water to us and the underground tanks will be filled several times weekly. Clean drinking water is very important and we attach great importance. Why not just a water pipe? How often have we thought now we would have made it to get water from the existing water line leading from the Mzima springs to Mombasa, to bring precious water through pipes to our place? In different places, we have dug and put pipes, carried out under the railway line, and then tried whether the pressure is sufficient to bring us to the water. But soon after the railway was no longer enough pressure, so we have saved the trouble making the lines even under the main road to the school. A generator could remedy with pumping station, this is expensive and not desired by the owners of the land. After all, it is a private park where the pipeline goes through, with many wild animals, as a generator would interfere. But we keep on trying, by bombing the Senator, the Governor, the members of parliament and the DC with countless letters and visits and reckon that they are doing anything any time soon so we get water. It isn't too much to ask them to do something for us, they send children to us, without somehow financially help us finally.

Our district education officer Mr. K. Machora is very fond of our school, with his help, the "New White House Academy" is now also definitely registered, not as a matter of course, I know other schools who are waiting, because again and again a document is missing or has been relocated for years on the registry. To get financial help from the government is very difficult. But we don't give up trying.

Of course we are not obliged to take these needy or orphaned children. But when we hear the tragic stories, for example of that children, which not went to school, they had to beg so they got some food for themselves and their heavy AIDS sick mother, until it finally died, then we cannot close our heart. It is so nice to see how newly arrived children who have experienced tragic, are introduced by our children into everyday life with us and how quickly they adopt to our life and are happy about their new home. Children are peacefully combined with us from all parts of the country, from different tribes and religions. Year end there were 180 children, 12 teachers and 19 other employees that were to our extended family.

A highlight for all it was when we started to bake your own bread in a wood-fired oven. This bread tastes great, as our various visitors they could determine and saturates the stomachs.

In turn, many visitors from different continents came and all find our school a wonderful project and the best of what they have found in Africa in terms of schools. 2 Canadians were so impressed that they have begun to give music lessons to our children. Equipped with recorders for children and musical instruments acquired in Mombasa, they have arrived and stayed with us for some time. Both are Opera singers and one is a music teacher of the well-known Music Academy VAM in Vancouver Canada. This Academy has also equipped us with T shirts for all children and employees and will organize the next year again a benefit concert for us. Chloé will also regularly come back to continue with the music lessons.



Then, we had a great teacher who had studied art and showed our kids how to draw and how to be creative.





And then we had our lovely Hanna Zbinden, the secretary of Kenyan Children Help, who had brought also her mother and some sponsors to our school. Hanna and her mother have taught the children knitting, that was great fun. Even one of our Massai was totally done by knitting; he took even wool and knitting needles to go home during the holidays. Sure, he will enter into the history as the first knitting Massai.



A visitor from Italy, a professional photographer wants to look that he gets enough cameras donated for our children, so that he come back next year and real photograph them can teach (I'm glad about it, photograph is not a strength of mine). And a few Englishwomen send us volunteers for all possible activities. Volunteers are always welcome, but they must be prepared for life in the Bush. I did the experience that they quickly once miss discos and the convenience of their home. Most of them cannot bear our life in the bush.

We always welcome visitors, so people can convince themselves how useful the donated money is used. Learning alongside the school material, is cooking with a group, for example, another rehearsed plays, it's great what actors we have, other various sports, or tree planting. And then we have our handball players, the champions of the district. They are so good, that the players even were able to go for the training at the national level in Bungoma. Stars have been trained here with much devotion. Their training is hard, so they sprint already 6 km in the morning early at dawn and train every afternoon between the break for dinner and make the tasks in the evening. But all love this workout and don't want to have it any other way.



Now, we are to clear a field for a football pitch, volleyball and basketballs were introduced recently.

This year we had many strikes by teachers in the public schools; it was often for weeks and meant that several schools of the children were set on fire. We live here as a kind of extended family, which seems to help, we have absolutely no problems with our teachers.

The topic of sex is taboo in the families, but enlightenment is important to prevent the spread of AIDS and prevent unwanted pregnancies. Fortunately, we have our aunt Vici, as it is called by the children. The organization is called family health network, which is funded by Bill Gates. She understands terrific how to talk to children plain text not only talking to it, regarding this topic, but also about all important issues in the course of life and of education. She comes every Saturday afternoon and is fully accepted and respected.

We also have many animals at our school, like chicken, ducks, goats, cats and dogs and a very stubborn donkey.



It helps a lot that we managed to get a good number of sponsors in the meantime. And we want to say many thanks to all of you, for helping us with sponsoring one or more children. And we hope to get even more sponsors, as the number of students increases. Many of the sponsors are in frequent contact with their children, exchanging letters, and some ask me what they can give the kids on birthday or at Christmas.



My answer is always: books. Also bath towels are very welcome, but clothing and toys are less useful. Here all children wear school uniforms or uniforms of leisure wear. Books are expensive here and a great help. So we have established a book fund and that costs for each child once approx. \$ 40. With this amount there will be paid all textbooks for the class in which the kids are in. This contribution is unique, since the books then stay in school and can be transmitted to the children who move up. If very few children have textbooks, it is difficult



to teach. And we lack the means to buy textbooks, exercise books, pencils, etc. for all children.



The contribution for the school trip of the child can be a nice gift too, it costs approx. \$ 30. Every year we go on a school trip, so we were in the East National Park in Tsavo this year and it was a great experience. In addition to the animals one usually encounters, we had also incredible luck to see beside elephants, giraffes, zebras, gazelles, antelopes, even cheetahs and Lions. The enthusiasm was tremendous.



And of course we had end of year again too few classrooms, because the children, who currently attend the 6th grade, got to 7th grade. In the kindergarten and preschool we will take up next year again new children in the existing classes of 1 to 7 only a few because the space is not enough. So we built 3 additional classrooms and can thus work to 2 of the existing, small classroom, in bedrooms. Desks, beds, mattresses, sheets, so many things have to be replaced or supplemented and since we very much hope that we can continue to count on your help.



Before the Christmas holidays, we still had a beautiful Christmas celebration with Christmas tree and Santa Claus, bringing candies, tangerines and nuts for the kids. It was impressive, we deleted all the lights in the dining room, only the Christmas tree was lit and then came 40 of our children in marching with a burning candle in their hands, singing "silent night, holy night" and then set to the waiting children. And after that came Santa Claus. Something like that, absolutely nobody had seen before, the Christmas story and was told and also our district education officer, Mr. Machora was fully enthusiastic. He would like to find out why I do all this for the needy kids and take time on me in this remote place. Most Africans cannot understand that someone does something to help others, most just remember how they can enrich themselves. This is another reason why we don't get financial support in Kenya and we appreciate a lot that the Western world shows great interest in what we are doing.

Even more beautiful that there are such wonderful people in Europe and Canada and those they give incredibly great support us. Like Nelson Mandela has correctly noted:

**Education is the most powerful weapon which can be used to change the world.**

Thank you very much to all who support us and please help us also in the future, so that we can continue with changing the life of the less fortunate. Nobody can choose where he is born.

Have a wonderful, happy and healthy 2014!!



Kind regards from Mama Annedore, the teachers, staff and all the children of the New White House Academy in Voi, Kenya