



Annual Report 2019

Memories...

It was exactly 12 years ago last November when I visited the Kibera slum for the very first time. Back then, I accompanied a committed Kenyan group who taught the slum dwellers how to gain potable water by using the SODIS method.

We did not only visit private households but also many primary schools. I was surprised to see that many of the Kibera schools lacked teaching material although the schools worked on a private basis. The children were sitting on their narrow benches in crowded, dark school-rooms made of clay. Mostly, they did not have any books, writing materials or exercise books.

Of course, as a former teacher, anything related to school is near and dear to me. Therefore, I bought teaching materials for the particularly likable «Makina Self Help» primary school. When I returned to Switzerland at the beginning of December 2007, I founded the **CHaCHaCHi** organization.

I am happy that our small organization is still working very well, not least thanks to the committed members of the Board working for it but also due to the great support we are receiving from our loyal donators. We have achieved great results and are still achieving more.

Some of the destitute children that we have supported since 2008 – first, during their years at the Makina Primary School and later during their 4-year high school education – have now concluded their professional trainings and earn their own living; sometimes they can even support their families financially (see “Julian and Peter”).

Primary school pupils

Last year, the government closed down some of the private schools in the Kibera slum because they did not meet the official requirements such as sufficient space around the school building. The major problem is, however, that the Ministry for Education does not contribute to the costs of numerous small slum schools. There are only a few state-run schools, and mostly they are hopelessly crowded and often impossible to reach for the small children. None of the 10 slum schools that we support was closed down.

During the course of the last school year, we adapted the conditions to some extent. Together with the head teachers of the 10 primary schools, we analysed the school fee income with the following result: Only about half of the parents or relatives were able to pay the amount of CHF 10 per

month. Many were only able to pay a part of the fee or nothing at all. We helped the most destitute families and paid for the missing fees (from 20% to 100%).

Based on these new criteria, we supported more than 500 children in the second half of last year. At the end of the school year (end of October), we gave every child a little extra so that their families could buy basic food stuffs.

The 57 primary school teachers again received a certain amount to bridge the unpaid holiday months of November and December.

High school students

This year, we helped 74 high school students to study at state-run boarding high schools. Most of these schools are well organized, their head teachers are committed and do their best in order to ensure a smooth running of their schools. Numerous schools are very large, sometimes with more than 1,000 students enrolled in four yearly courses. Almost all the teachers are rated by our students as «easy to understand» and «very helpful».

When Carole and Christoph met a large number of the high school students last August, they unfortunately also heard negative stories besides many positive events: In a boys' school, several discontent boys set fire to the dormitory. Two or three of our students lost their belongings in this incident. In a girls' school, a man sneaked into the girls' dormitory at night. One of our students, Samora, screamed and the man escaped. Some of the students were under shock after the incident. Unfortunately, the reaction of the head teacher was rather unfair and psychologically inadequate, as she forbade the girls to talk about the incident. We believe that she did this to avoid any negative publicity about her school. But even worse, she sent Samora home before the final exams – as a punishment! However, our Kenyan employee Jackline did not accept this and was able to solve the issue.

Professional training and university students

I am happy to report that several of our long-standing adolescents have concluded their professional trainings; most of them are now undergoing unpaid traineeships. It is harder for scientifically educated university graduates to access the working environment than for teachers or nurses. Good craftsmen are most likely to find jobs even though they are not well paid. The labour market is generally very tight.

All of these young people received a loan for their education. However, they often earn very little after the completion of their education. Therefore, we changed the repayment conditions. It is not realistic to expect a young person to pay back the entire loan in a short period of time after his or her professional degree. Since we wish to encourage a culture of helping one another, we agree with each adolescent on a certain amount that he or she will pay back within 2 to 2.5 years; this often amounts to about 25-30% of the loan. The rest of the loan remains with the young person as a so-called «capital with a moral obligation». This means that the adolescents will help and support the education of other destitute children and young people in the years to come.

We have again supported the '**Tania Integrated Rehabilitation Center**', a home for the disabled, with monthly contributions to their running costs. They were lucky to have a Canadian trainee who, after her return to her home country, collected money for a solar system. This installation is a great help to Jennifer and Joseph to lower the horrendous electricity costs of Kenya Power!

Julian and Peter (see picture)

Julian and Peter are both from very poor families. They attended the same class of the Makina Primary School. Julian's family lived in extreme poverty. Her father had been ill for a long time, and her mother worked as a day labourer with meagre daily wages as a laundress. Julian is the eldest of 5 children.

One of her brothers is hearing impaired. She was one of the weaker pupils and very shy. We helped her attend a high school in a Kibera day school. Due to the many burdens at home, she was not able to concentrate fully on her education. After her high school graduation, she started to sell jewellery and learned to create her own pieces of jewellery. Today, she has her own little jewellery shop and also sells her pieces online. She has become a great, self-confident young woman. For a few years now, she has been together with her childhood friend Peter.

Peter sometimes used to live with his mother, sometimes with his older step-brother. He has never known his father. He was a good high school student and worked as a construction worker for 2

years after his graduation. He even became foreman. We then supported his education at the GENTIANA Technical College, where he studied to become an electrician. He even succeeded in getting one of the highly coveted traineeships in one of the biggest electricity production companies, after which he was employed there. He is very happy to have a steady job. He writes to us on a regular basis and pays back the monthly amount of his professional educational loan that we agreed upon.

Check out our website for more information: www.chachachi.org

We are still passing on 100% of all your donations to the children and young people in Kenya.

In January 2020

Heidi Brenner, Managing Director