

RAFIKI YA MAISHA

Amis Pour la Vie

Lifetime Friends

Présidente : Claire MATHIJSSEN

Secrétaire Général : Christian ROTH

Trésorier : Marino PULLIERO

Paris, December 7, 2010

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2010

It is with great joy that we send our members and donors our yearly RAFIKI YA MAISHA news. We continue to foster new friendships, nourish long standing ones and keep our development for the youth by the youth active and focused.

The small rural community of Chepkanga, 15 miles north of Eldoret on the Iten road, is starting to see the effects of our common Kenyan-French-international solidarity.

Should you travel to Chepkanga from Eldoret, along the left side of the road where the main road intersects with the small dirt road leading to the local schools, you would see the white and red lettered board for the "SERGOEK YOUTH POLYTECHNIC AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER".

If you look beyond the sign to your right, along the market strip, you would read "RAFIKI YA MAISHA CYBER CAFE" above the entrance gate of the present college. We have made visible progress this year!

ACTIVITY REPORT

The year 2010 at a glance:

January: Quantity Surveyor's report identifies the cost of the new Sergoek Vocational Training Center at 42.701.700 Ksh, ie 400.000 € or \$500.000.
H.E. Elkanah Odembo meets 4 young volunteers at the Kenya Embassy in Paris.

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- February: President Claire Mathijsen and General Secretary Christian Roth annual visit.
Joint France/Kenya meeting at the French Embassy in Nairobi about development aid.
- March: Opening of Cyber Café at the college in Chepkanga.
- April: AAWE, American Women's Association in Paris sponsors the Brick Factory with 400 €. Brick Factory moves to the site of the future building.
- May: Sad, sad news of the sudden and untimely death of our Kenyan Treasurer and friend, Mrs. Philomena Bullut, on May 12th, 2010. Laura, volunteer from US, arrives for a three month internship.
- June: Opening of the Youth Center in Chepkanga.
- July: Mehves, volunteer from Turkey/US, re-opens the Chepkanga bakery.
- August: A large 8 team youth soccer tournament takes place in Chepkanga. Plans to put up a temporary structure are voted by the Board. The Rafiki Club of Paris contributes a check of 3.500 €.
- September: Interviews start for a prospective administrator for the center. The CDF fund allots RYM 200.000 Ksh (2.000 €). President Claire Mathijsen and General Secretary Christian Roth visit the Odembo family and Kenya Embassy in Wash DC.
- October: Financial audit of RYM France starts. Board members receive their new RYM business cards.
- November: Kenya Ministry of Youth Affairs due to release funds for RYM. Courtesy visit to Kenya Delegation at UNESCO, Paris with Ambassador Mary Khimulu.
- December: Courtesy visit to meet new Ambassador of Kenya in France, H.E Salma Ahmed in Paris.

The time line for 2010 shows the accomplishments of this year. It also demonstrates that our projected goals were achieved. We have reached a new level of professionalism (business cards, ledger books, brick quality control) and the marketing of RAFIKI YA MAISHA has become a reality.

The biggest decision of the year was to go ahead with the building of a **temporary structure** for the school. The local culture is happier with something taking shape now rather than waiting for the funds to build the larger brick building later, even in stage as originally hoped. The Board members in Kenya have advised to capitalize on the momentum they feel at this point.

LOCAL IMPACT:

The **Brick Factory** is now a self-sustaining unit. Production this year, though hampered by the heaviest rains in years, was able to answer the orders and sell 6.800 bricks by friends and committee members.

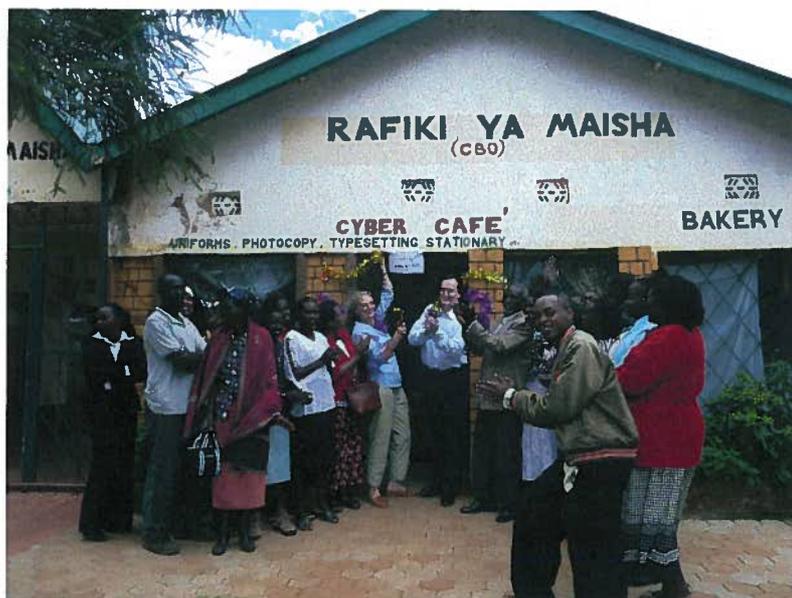
The **Cyber Café** has attracted young and old alike and is a novelty in the village. Power supply is erratic and slow preventing full use of the premises.

Solar power sources need to be investigated here.

The **Bakery** is now training 16 new girls and has a dedicated instructor. They have added American, European and Turkish recipes to the local fare.

The **Computer** class graduated 21 students in two sessions with an additional 8 girls in the **Hair Salon** and 22 in the **Tailoring** workshop.

The **Youth Center** with its hand painted murals, books and activities attracts the youth on week-ends and during the holidays.



The move away from the Tunoi family farm and buildings is a clear sign to the community that the RAFIKI YA MAISHA projects are not a person-centered profit-based operation but a community empowerment movement at large.

For the first time the Kenyan government, through the **Constituency Development Fund, CDF**, has officially contributed to RAFIKI YA MAISHA.

The Board members of RAFIKI YA MAISHA Kenya have recommended that the temporary building start launching new workshops for boys, adding Masonry and Carpentry training.

The CDF money has been matched up by RAFIKI YA MAISHA France and together we will be able to finance the temporary timber and iron sheet 4 classroom structure. This brings the number of existing classrooms to six. The Tailoring and Computer students will be relocated there.

It is to be noted that the students who pass their trade exam after training with RAFIKI YA MAISHA and are certified, will automatically be admitted for further training at the larger Eldoret Polytechnic School in town.

INTERNATIONAL IMPACT:

Our visits to the **Kenya Embassy in Paris** and to the **French Embassy in Nairobi** have brought more visibility to our RAFIKI YA MAISHA partnership.

We will soon be meeting with the new Kenya Ambassador to the French government, H.E. Salma Ahmed, now that Ambassador Odembo has been appointed to Washington DC.

We will also be introduced to the Kenya Ambassador to UNESCO who represents the cultural aspects of French-Kenya relationships before the end of the year.

We continue to be faithfully supported by **AAWE, the Association of American Wives of Europeans** in Paris, who have donated money towards the brick factory to help towards the commercialization of the bricks.

This year the **Association Femmes d'Europe**, directed by Mrs. Baroso, wife of the President to the European Commission, EU, has pledged to help us with the bathrooms and rain gutters of the future brick building. This should become effective by spring of next year.

We are working through the Globalgiving Foundation to open our association to US donors by next year.

VOLUNTEERS:

The **Rafiki Club** at the **Ecole Active Bilingue Jeannine Manuel** has continued to raise awareness about issues in Kenya/Africa and to raise money through successful activities such as the Valentine's rose sale. The Kenya Embassy in Paris participated too. The Club is well and alive again this year with a new president and a vice president insuring continuity in the high school.

The two young women **student volunteers** from **Brown University** spend a total of 14 weeks in Chepkanga this summer demonstrating wonderful dynamism and resourcefulness. They organized a Rafiki Party fundraiser in Providence, RI, USA, among the student body before leaving for Kenya.

Laura decided to focus on the youth and threw all her energy behind establishing and furnishing a room in the center complete with a TV to watch the World soccer games. The Youth Center was decorated by the youth with hand painted murals. She got friends and family in the US to contribute money and books, opened a PayPal account to raise money and tracked a Kenya-bound friend in California who carried the contributions over to her in Nairobi. Before her departure, she orchestrated a large local soccer tournament and distributed the eagerly awaited prizes – new soccer balls – in Swahili!



Mehves who hails from Turkey with a passion for baking, championed the opening of the former bakery, shopped for a new oven, and during her very short stay managed to train the next baking instructor and sell her international flavored baked goods to the Women’s meetings and other social events.

“We really miss her and the good things she did to us youths”, said one young man. “I really want her to come back”, said another trainee from the center.

OTHER NEWS

The death of Philomena Bullut on May really shook our Chepkanga and Paris community. Philomena, our Treasurer and trusted friend, had made herself indispensable in the running of RAFIKI YA MAISHA. Her wisdom, her reliability and her grace as a hostess are her legacies. Her funeral service was massively attended and our message of condolence from France was completed by a souvenir album illustrating Philomena’s presence in the community.

Visitors came from Belgium to visit the development of Chepkanga this past fall. Another exceptional donation was given to RYM and has encouraged us.



FINANCIAL REPORT (November 1, 2009 to October 31, 2010):

Donations and Dues:	19.781,88 €
Interests accrued:	186,83 €
Expenses	
- Donations to RYM Kenya:	2.266,00 €
- Reimbursement of Cash Advances:	1.590,76 €
Bank Balance	
- Checking account:	2.663,24 €
- Savings account:	35.522,81 €

Our accounts are currently being audited by a Certified Public accountant in France.
All donations from France and the EU are tax-deductible.
We hope to offer our US donors tax-deductibility next year after we finish undergoing due diligence through a US Foundation.

PROJECTS FOR 2011

- Open the new workshops in the temporary building
- Continue professionalizing the team
- Develop more fundraising and financial partnerships
- Finalize the hiring of an administrator for the school
- Maximize our resources in Kenya
- Qualify for US nonprofit status and tax deductibility (501(c) 3)

CONCLUSION

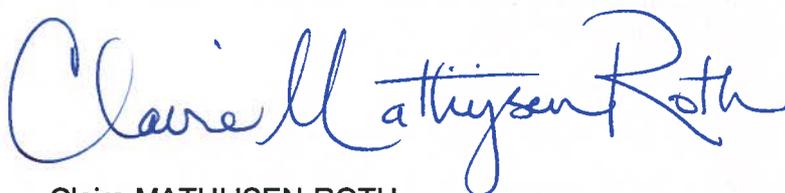
The government of Kenya is making concerted efforts towards "vision '20-'30", the Millennium development goals. With Youth and Education as their main target, we feel that RAFIKI YA MAISHA's agenda is spot on.

The death of our friend and treasurer Philomena Bullut has made our task a bigger challenge and our hearts sadder, but our resolve to achieve our goals without her, even stronger.

The focus this year has gone to developing a core identity for RAFIKI YA MAISHA, CBO, in the Eldoret area. The ledger books for each workshop manager, the business cards and the visibility of each aspect have helped to shape a common project beyond a shared dream.

The action now plays out on the new site, separated from a single family ownership. The Brick factory and the new temporary building attest to the fact that they are owned by the public and held in trust by RAFIKI YA MAISHA.

Lastly, our dynamic young volunteers have demonstrated again that "the difference between a traveler and a volunteer ...is a world of understanding".



Claire MATHIJSEN-ROTH
President

