



Maragoli

Community Development
Foundation, Inc.

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The mission of the Maragoli Community Development Foundation is to assist the Maragoli people of Western Kenya in improving their quality of life through the funding of sustainable development projects that community members themselves conceive and implement.

2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Message from the President



Dear Friends,

As we begin our eighth year of work, I want to take a moment to thank you all—individuals, foundations, and corporations—for what you have collectively achieved. In spite of the anemic economy, your generosity turned 2012 into one of our best years of fund-raising to date. We deeply appreciate your gifts.

But the long-term results of your support are even more impressive. You have endorsed a philosophy of development that works because it values transparency, local decision-making, and practical projects coordinated by community members themselves. It has proved to be a winning combination.

Seth Munson, a 2001 Earlham College alumnus and a MACODEF donor, recently visited our projects and came away very impressed with the enthusiasm and pride expressed by community members. Especially inspiring to him were the soil conservation program, the clean water projects, and the story of the women's perseverance to build a health clinic against all odds. If others of you are "in the neighborhood," please let us know, and we will arrange a visit!

This past year was filled with exciting projects, and I invite you to read about them in the enclosed annual report and newsletter. We have also just updated our web site. Please visit www.maragoli.org to see a new look, new photos and new accounts of the impact of our projects and partnerships. We have also begun a Facebook page to allow our friends in Maragoli to connect with us.

Joyce Adisa, our project coordinator, reports that in Maragoli, community members are now saying they have moved from *vudaka* to *gai gai*, which she translates as going from "being poor" to "being better off". But there is much important work to be done, not the least of which is getting the health clinic fully staffed and the community center completed.

We sincerely thank you for your continued support!

Jan Kees den Bakker
President

Summary of Program Activities

In Kenya, the year 2011 brought more unsettling news on the national scene, as Al-Shabaab carried out bombings and kidnapped tourists on the coast, leading Kenya to invade Somalia. Though these events were far removed from Western Province, a roller coaster ride of currency fluctuations hit closer to home. The shilling, which began the year at about 80 cents to the dollar, rose to more than \$1.15 to the dollar in September, before settling back in the range of 90 cents to the dollar in December. The resulting inflation rate, which climbed as high as 20%, created real hardships for the rural poor and for the administration of MACODF's programs. Meanwhile, the date for new presidential elections was set for March 4, 2013, and implementation of the new Constitution has proceeded at a snail's pace.

In this context of uncertainty at the national level, and with few fruits from Kenya's 4% rate of economic growth trickling down to rural areas, MACODEF continued to give priority to two major projects—a sustainable agriculture/school lunch program and a community resource center—that integrate educational, health care, and environmental goals. These two projects benefit virtually all community members. Based on the success of pilot initiatives, we also expanded our solar cooking and lighting projects and established a pad fund for primary school girls. We provided scholarships and uniforms to primary and secondary school students, built latrines and installed rainwater harvest systems, and extended emergency funds to the neediest segment of the community.

Sustainable Agriculture and School Lunch Program

Our signature program in 2011 was a major initiative to improve food security in the two villages. With a matching grant from Cordaid, we were able to launch a project to improve soil quality and farming practices in the two villages and, at the same time, set up a viable school lunch program for students at the two primary schools. Many parents attended training sessions run by agricultural officers on composting, farm layout, land tillage, use of cover crops, and other conservation measures. For those without, hoes and wheelbarrows were available on loan through the schools. Parents also received seeds and fertilizers and committed to donating 10% of their increased yields back to the schools in order to sustain the school lunch programs, for which new kitchens and food stores were built.

The results thus far have been very positive. In spite of heavy rains, the maize harvest far surpassed previous years. According to our project coordinator,

Health and performance in the two schools has improved due to lack of absent minds in class, for most used to go to school hungry. Parents have had time in the day to attend to other things instead of preparing lunch for their children. Most have started valuing the soil conservation measures and composting. Enrollment in Vigetse and Vigena Primary Schools is on high demand.

In light of very strong community support for the program, we have continued it in 2012, with ongoing training but reduced inputs, so as to ensure that soil fertility measures take hold even in the absence of outside assistance.

Community Resource Center

Preparation of the site for the community resource center moved steadily forward in 2011. While the local board treasurer, Elkana Okwaro, worked tirelessly to navigate the Kenyan bureaucracy and acquire the title deed for the land, a fence of small shrubs was planted around the site. Then very large boulders blocking the path to the center were removed, which required building fires on top of them to make them brittle, and laboriously crushing them with hammers. A permanent gate and a temporary storehouse for materials were constructed, and a well was dug. Stakeholder groups also worked with two visiting teams from abroad to

make and bake over a thousand bricks for the main building. We are now poised to begin construction on the main building itself, which will be one of major projects in 2012.

Education

In 2011 we provided scholarships and school uniforms for 35 AIDS orphans and students from very poor families to enable them to continue their primary and secondary school education. The students from Vigna Secondary School, Vigetse Primary School, and Vigna Primary School who received assistance this year were:

Denis Mahugi	Collins Mage	Danlord Adoro	Salim Amadi	Mildred Mmbone
Purity Engefu	Winnie Mmbone	Kennedy Chogo	Sharon Agama	Frankline Alungu
Stannley Ameta	Ruth Khalegi	Purity Vudinga	Milcent Makungu	Ishamel Obuya
Anne Njeri	Agnes Anzemo	Esther Bulimu	Eusther Esendi	Vincent Kabayi
Felix Fundi	Eunice Esendi	Mary Aseyo	Mildred Musimbi	Kelvin Lohongo
Faith Lovega	Stanely Devida	Stanely Kimala	Fredrick Kimiyu	Christine Mmhoja
Jane Alivitsa	Mildred Chabeti	Lida Kasaya	Flora Munyore	Vincent Oyangi

In addition to supplying educational supplies to the two primary schools, Patti Moll helped start a pilot project dubbed the 'pad fund' in the third term of the school year. The purpose of the fund is to supply sanitary napkins to girls in grades 4-8 from Vigetse and Vigna Primary Schools. According to our project coordinator, the customary practice is for girls to stay home during their menstrual periods or to use rags that become too wet, at which point they leave school. Over 250 girls at the two schools participated in the program, and teachers report that monthly attendance by girls has greatly improved. Though the Ministry of Education has pledged to provide pads to girls in the future, we are continuing the program in 2012, with Patti Moll's generous support, until the government's promise becomes a reality.

MACODEF also sponsored a four-door latrine for Vigetse Primary School students, and the Wooster Rotary Club's Alternative Christmas provided additional school uniforms to the primary schools, allowing students to attend school without visible reminders of class background.

Solar Cooking and Lighting

We expanded our solar projects in 2011 in the wake of strong community support for harnessing the power of the sun. Continued support from the Alliance Rotary Club allowed for the purchase of additional solar cooking and water pasteurization kits, plus insulated fireless baskets used to prolong cooking after the food is taken out of the cook kit. Julius and Simon, two facilitators from Sunny Solutions, a local affiliate of Solar Cooking International, provided extensive on-site training and follow-up. Based on their assessment that MACODEF's solar cooking project was the most successful one in Western Province, our board of governors and stakeholder groups hosted a team of American and Canadian visitors from Solar Cooking International who came to see the program in action.

Building on the success of the solar cooking project, we piloted a new project in solar lighting as well. With a grant from the Wooster Rotary Club, more than 130 families received small solar lamps that can be charged during the day and give off up to 8 hours of light per night. The solar lamps can also be used for charging cell phones, and recipients estimate that a solar kit can save them more than \$200 per year in paraffin for lamps and charging fees for cell phones. Joyce Adisa, our project coordinator, writes, "It was a blessing that the solar lamps came when we are facing a big problem with scarcity of trees, and oil prices are at their highest yet." We are expanding the pilot program in 2012 with a generous grant from the Noble Foundation.

Health Clinic

In 2011 our health clinic continued to serve as a biweekly stopping point for the Maseno Mobile Clinic, which provides HIV-testing and medicine and other services to People Living With AIDS. The Ministry of Health also used the clinic for immunization campaigns. The clinic took a major step forward by acquiring designation as a community health clinic from the Ministry of Health. Our clinic management committee has approached Ministry officials about getting a letter of support which will outline the government's plans to support the clinic once it is up and running.

Emergency Fund

The emergency fund continued its vital role in serving the poorest segment of the community. In 2011 MACODEF provided a small number of grants to individuals who needed immediate assistance due to severe poverty, AIDS, or disability: Beatrice Adisa, Joseph Musera, Martha Mugeresa, Rofiza Muyoma, and Mable Ingado. Through this program, we have been able to assist a segment of the population that often does not show up on the radar screen of social welfare agencies.

Wooster-in-Kenya Program

In March 2011, MACODEF and community members in Vagina and Vigetse hosted a group of 12 College of Wooster students and 6 Wooster community members for nearly a week. Led by David McConnell and Doug Drushal, this was the third visit by Wooster students but it came under a new official title and structure, the *Wooster-in-Kenya* Program.

The two-week spring break trip to Kenya is now embedded in the middle of a semester-long course titled Peoples and Cultures of Kenya. Local board members planned a very educational week for us, including homestays, participation in MACODEF projects, school visits, sessions on Maragoli customs, traditional dance and food, and a trip to the Mungoma caves where the ancestors of the Maragoli people lived. Students rated our time in Vigetse and Vagina as the high point of the trip. The program has proved to be an effective way of forming a long-term partnership between community members and supporters from abroad.

Management and Administration

In 2011, our old and new representatives on the local board of governors completed their second full year of work together. We are exceptionally fortunate to have a talented and experienced leadership team comprised of chairman Samuel Amukono Kidini, coordinator Joyce Adisa Bunyoli, and treasurer Elkana Buhiru Okwaro. With many big projects underway in 2011, the board relied heavily on the organizational skills and volunteer spirit of board members. Sadly, we said good-bye to Sheilah Vugutsa, our very capable administrative assistant, but warmly welcomed Everlyne Minage as our new office assistant.

The local board faced numerous challenges this past year due to the high rate of inflation, which played havoc with our budgets. Still, the board was able to tighten up on administrative expenses and kept the percentage of funds going to 'administration' in line with past years. Throughout the year, the local board continued to hold "stakeholder meetings" in order to maintain close communication with the 30-plus community groups we have funded and insure their participation in planning and building the new community center.

As in past years, MACODEF officials were called on to share their experiences with other NGOs and with regional and national organizations. Our three top officials attended the annual conference of the Kenya Voluntary Development Association. Our project coordinator, for example, served as a board member of Solar Cooking International. Our projects have been featured in government reports on the Vihiga Division, and many look to MACODEF because of its transparency and its proven track record.

Financial Report

In spite of the ailing economy, we had one of our best years of fund-raising to date. We received donations totaling \$49,841 in the U.S., far surpassing our campaign goal of \$30,000. Sixty-five individual donors gave gifts of \$17,621, an increase of nearly 20% over 2010. More than 98% of donor funds went directly into the local economy, and in spite of record-breaking inflation in Kenya, we again achieved our goal of 80% of donor funds from the U.S. and the Netherlands going directly into projects.

Support from nearly a dozen foundations, non-profit organizations, and businesses was outstanding this year. Leading the way, the Noble Foundation contributed \$20,000 to support solar and other projects in the two villages, and The Korver Huisman Charitable Foundation gave us a grant of \$5000. The Wooster Rotary Club gave \$3000 for a pilot project in solar lighting and conducted an Alternative Christmas that netted more than \$2345 in gifts. We also received \$500 each from the Alliance Rotary Club and The Francis and Lemoine Peart Family Foundation, and \$400 from First Presbyterian Church. Corporations supporting MACODEF included Microsoft, ABR, Inc., and the Wooster Book Company.

We are deeply grateful for the in-kind donations from many individuals noted at the end of the 2011 Donor List, all of whom gave generously of their time to support MACODEF's work. In addition, Vagina Secondary School continued to grant us office space free of charge.

Our sustainable agriculture projects also benefited from Cordaid matching funds of roughly \$22,000 that were sent directly to MACODEF Kenya from Dutch MACODEF. Jan Kees den Bakker gave many hours of time to ensure that these funds were secured and transferred properly.

We continued to receive professional quarterly financial reports from our treasurer, Elkana Buhiru Okwaro. As in past years, a Kenyan government-certified auditor completed an official audit of the 2011 books kept by our local board of governors. The finances were found to be in order and copies of the report were sent to Kenya's NGO Coordinating Board.

<u>Breakdown of Income and Expenses</u>		
BALANCE ON DECEMBER 31, 2010		\$21,138
TOTAL INCOME AND REVENUE:		\$49,841
	Individual Contributions	\$17,621
	Foundation/Non-Profit Gifts	\$31,745
	Corporate Donations	\$475
EXPENSES:		
	Program Services	\$18,020
	Adminstration and General	\$7,655
	Fundraising	\$452
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$26,137
BALANCE ON DECEMBER 31, 2011		\$44,842