

# WHAT DOES DESPERATE TIMES CALL FOR?

## GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

### For the CHILD and for the PLANET



#### KENYA – END of 2022



#### AN OVERWHELMING DROUGHT

A huge drought in Kenya leaves behind intense traces of poverty for plants, animals and human beings.

Hopelessness is all over, like the red dust cloud - penetrates everything. What to do! In October 2022 the drought in Kenya has been declared a national emergency.

- The impact of covid-19 financial consequences in Kenya during lockdowns and loss of jobs for so many underprivileged people was not handled.
- Then the overwhelming and massive drought in Kenya developed – over the whole of Horn of Africa - putting millions of Kenyans under a huge threat of food shortage.
- Then came the Ukraine war and among other consequences there was an import stoppage of essential produce.
- All prices of food, oil, fuel – went rocketing up, with an extreme rise in inflation. This meant a lot of suffering. It is clear that it is the poorest in the Kenyan Society, who suffer the most, especially the children.
- A reversal of years of progress in eradicating poverty and hunger is a reality.
- The latest October report from the UN called UNEP – ‘Open window’ concerning climate changes describes the need for delivering urgent meaningful progress in Africa.

## What to do in this threatening situation?

### A ROLE MODEL for a smaller scale transformation -

### The COMMUNITY OF THE MBAGATHI SCHOOL in NAIROBI



**The Mbagathi School** in Nairobi in Kenya was founded in 1989. It is situated on the old masai land on a large natural/green compound. The school has grown year by year to a strong full operational community with 400 children and 55 coworkers. All the time faithfully keeping the focus on the aim of the school:

Bringing education and creative schooling to the most vulnerable and threatened children in the society, who come from extremely disadvantaged and underprivileged families from the poor under-developed areas of Nairobi. It brings liveliness in the life of the child, - human qualities in the individual child, which can be given back to the society later in life. Many of the children are



orphans or from broken, traumatized family circumstances. Fear and lack of even the most basic needs e.g. food, are realities in their rough lives. These life circumstances have dramatically increased due to the current situation in Kenya. A desperate situation that call for help.

## The financial basis of the school

The Mbagathi School - spear heading Waldorf education - is a Kenyan private school, with a curriculum fully acknowledged and approved by the Kenyan Ministry of Education. Private schools in Kenya are not financially supported by the state. Only a very low percentage of the parents at the Mbagathi School can manage to pay some school fees, so the whole school operation is based on fundraising and sponsorship. It is a constant struggle year after year to keep the school running and at the same time developing. The current financial situation in Kenya makes budgeting very hard and the need for financial help for the Mbagathi School even stronger.



## Green Development

But just in the middle of this dark financial and human scenario in Kenya, a green development is taking place trying to work with the huge challenges in our time: To be an active and sustainable role model in the need for caring and transforming our earth. All through kindly supported by trustful funding organizations especially in Europe.

- **A substantial Biodynamic/Organic farm** of almost 6 acres has step by step been developed over the years at the Mbagathi School compound, including the growing of vegetables, maize and crops, a newly erected large greenhouse for tomato production and a cowshed with 10 cows for milk production. The biodynamic principles support and care for the earth and yields healthy and vibrant produce. It creates a whole sustainable and circular unit, but under very difficult circumstances. Climate change has severely disrupted the yearly sun and rain rhythm, now with the long lasting and threatening drought, where the drip system and the water supply from our borehole becomes crucial for production.
- **A pedagogical awareness** is behind the vision of having a school and a farm complementing each other. The 400 children from kindergarten up until class 9 and out of them the 120 boarding children are a part of the whole caring for the farm. Not only being

taught about plants and agriculture, but the school curriculum includes practical work and learning in the very lively part of the farm – the school garden.

- **To offer a Model Farm** can have a basis for future agriculture, growth and understanding as the basic idea. The farm and school culture is radiating out to local initiatives in Kenya, and to other Waldorf Schools in East Africa, - Tanzania, Uganda and Zanzibar, even to Zimbabwe.
- **Importance of rethinking the diet** - the produce - the vegetables are brought daily to the school kitchen. The 2 school meals (3 for boarders) are extremely important for the nutrition of the underprivileged children: Learning without food is not possible. Many of the children arrive at school without having had something to eat in the morning, or the evening before. Signs of malnutrition are dry skin, grey/reddish hair, tiredness and an imbalanced relation with food are well known complications. Good vegetables and fruits from the school garden and the milk from the cows are crucial in the school's diet.



- **Emergency food** as an emergency program, nutritious and very oily peanut butter and extra milk from the farm is added to their 10.30 am porridge every morning. Peanut butter is also often added in the lunchtime meal together with vegetables. The peanut butter is produced locally by a parent in the school giving her an income. The neediest of the day children are provided with a morning breakfast – a banana and hot chocolate milk since October 2022.
- **Reducing food loss – Waste** the production of the food in the school kitchen is cooked on fire and gas stoves, there is efficient monitoring of food with organic matter being re-cycled. All green waste is carried to the garden and is composted for later use as fertilizer.
- **Increasing own fodder production** is an important part of the whole set up and of reaching economic efficiency. Prices for hay are extremely high.





- **Caring for water** the water is pumped from a deep borehole on the compound. Two very high water towers near the farm allows for high water pressure and more control of water flow, also in the developed irrigation system in all the beds in the garden. All this is resulting in greater efficiency of water use. Rain water harvesting is installed in a number of buildings.
- **Solar energy** the sky rocketing price for electricity means turning to new energy solutions on the compound. The whole irrigation system is powered by solar and a development of more and more solar is to take over from electricity. A new building hosting the important Teacher Training for East African Waldorf Movement is already solar run.
- **Employment of local workers** is a crucial part of daily care and food production. This gives work and an income to local casuals from the surrounding community.



## TURNING POINT

**The Mbagathi School works strongly towards a turning point for the future** where the production of the healthy and nutritious biodynamic food in the farm is improved to cover a higher percentage of the school meals production. The vegetables/fruit coming from the farm currently covers around 33 % of the needed production and the milk production covers 45 %. The school has currently to buy the rest at markets and local distributors – often unfortunately the products have a very high input of conventional fertilizers. Very high and unpredictable food prices are strongly influencing the financial situation of the school.

## We kindly ask for your financial help for 2023 Meals Budget

- To continue to provide the children with their healthy basic school meals, including the special Emergency Food Program: Peanut butter and Milk – and a Breakfast for the neediest children.
- To strengthen and secure the farm-production of biodynamic and nutritious food by employing 5 local workers.

**Total amount for 2023:**

**8,500,000 KSh or 73,911 Euro**

The Meal Budget for 2023 covers all food for the 400 children and the 55 coworkers,- farm staff, kitchen staff, school bus drivers, office staff, cleaners, watchmen, compound staff and boarding parents .

See detailed budget

Items	KSh	Euro
FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES	1,000,000	8,696
ORGANIC VEGETABLES OWN PRODUCE	600,000	5,217
MILK AND DAIRY PRODUCTS	510,000	4,434
MILK OWN PRODUCTION	400,000	3,478
FARM CASUALS	950,000	8,261
GRAINS, CEREALS, FLOUR	1,800,000	15,652
MEAT	650,000	5,652
COOKING OIL, MARGARINE AND SUGAR	650,000	5,652
PEANUT BUTTER AND MILK SPECIAL	900,000	7,826
COOKING GAS AND FIREWOOD	500,000	4,348
SNACKS AND BEVERAGES	240,000	2,086
CLEANING AND SANITATION	300,000	2,609
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,500,000</b>	<b>73,911</b>

