



Newsletter: March 2011 Douglas McFalls

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Back in East Africa - Nairobi

I landed in Nairobi February 7th, a week ahead of schedule. If my original travel plans had not been thwarted, I would have been in Cairo January 6 – 13 for the celebrated farewell of Hosni Mubarak. Instead I was diverted on Turkish Air to Nairobi, leaving the revolution to the Egyptians.

My decision to return to East Africa early in the New Year has turned out to be a wise one. My intent is to get a clear understanding of where everything (and everyone) stands. My first stop was Kenya to meet with the leadership of Maasai Boma Schools. We spent Monday February 15-18 in day-long meetings. It turned out to be a very challenging but important week. I liken the Maasai Boma School project to a vineyard that has become overgrown and unkempt. Our meetings served as a time to prune the vines, pull up sickly plants while giving care to other weak, but important vines. With my creative problem solving head, I tried to avoid suggesting new plans to grow, but instead focus on the tasks at hand (not such an easy task for me). Though sobered by some of my discoveries, I am beginning to feel the calm that comes with order and clarity.

Some pruning and rehabilitation decisions:

The hardest transition of all: It was decided that (for now) it is best to shift from the A.C.E. home-schooling curriculum to the Kenyan National Curriculum. The decision was made for a variety of reasons:

- The passing of Kenyan exams is required to receive the ever-crucial “Kenyan Educational Certificate” essential for employment in Kenya. *
- A.C.E. South Africa’s costly registration, testing and material fees are making it financially prohibitive for poor communities like ours to use A.C.E.
- Our current lack of a program for acquiring used paces (A.C.E. workbooks) via contribution from the USA.

**Though we have long had the idea of merging the A.C.E. and Kenyan curricula - this has yet to materialize. However, teachers are trying to augment the new Kenyan curriculum with our A.C.E. workbooks. This is particularly helpful for students who finish their work quickly and is enhancing their learning.*

Present at the meetings: Tipape Loomu-Director, Lydia Mukawe – Jewelry Initiative Manager, Benedict Kitaika - Head Teacher, Douglas McFalls, ADEA USA Director.

Some of the tasks for Head – Teacher at Esukuta Schools after Feb. 14 – 17 meetings.

Topic: Maasai Culture Celebrated in the Schools

Discussion: Should the visits of elders/adults be reinstated into the school program?

Conclusion: Yes

Action: Wednesday's class schedule will be extended to 2:30 p.m. Children will be told to bring food on Wednesday for a snack. Lunchtime will be at noon. Day schedule will be flexible for presenter who may be late.

Coordinator is responsible to schedule the dates, confirm with presenter a day or two prior to Wednesday, make sure presenter has what they need, and greet the presenter when they arrive at school.

Presentation should be between periods. Scheduled time will be closest break to 11:00 a.m.

One hour at least should be used for this purpose.

The School Treasurer – Tipango might be a good contact.

Person Responsible: Benedict (or another, must be decided)

Deadline: March 16

Topic: Testing

Discussion: Proposed by Douglas to use government mid and end of term exams in addition to teacher's monthly exams to measure how the students are grasping the government teaching format as well as broader learning.

Conclusion: Purchase government exams

Action: Present cost of midterm and final exams to Douglas in February monthly costs. Purchase ASAP to assure availability.

Test will be presented three times:

1. With no translation
2. With translation of questions
3. Oral exam in Swahili or Maa to assess students' full understanding.

Person Responsible: Tipape and Benedict

Deadline: Feb 23 for budget March 11 for purchase

Topic: Kenyan Curriculum Religious (Christian) Studies Classes

Discussion: It was felt that the purpose of bible study is more than another English listening exercise but a chance for the children to understand it and be able to discuss the subject thoughtfully without the barrier of English.

Conclusion: The bible verses should be read in English, Swahili (for non Maasai children) and Maa. Discussion should also be in the preferred language of the child. However vocabulary in English needs to be taught in preparation for national exam.

Action: Swahili and Maa Bibles were purchased

Person Responsible: Benedict to explain to teachers the new format.

Deadline: Monday, February 28

Topic: Teacher Development – A.C.E. Paces

Discussion: Possibility of teacher development through the use of A.C.E. paces in office.

Conclusion: Teachers will be required to compete one pace a week (Testing to occur on Monday's after school.) Teachers will be like A.C.E. students, required to achieve 85% on tests before moving

on to next. Teachers may begin where they choose. Calendar (goals) should be made at the beginning of term (or year) to know which they will study and to show progress.

Action: Make chart for schedule including weekly dates, arrange tests to be ready each Monday.

Person Responsible: Douglas for schedule template, Benedict or other teacher to present and oversee.

Deadline: Form: February 18. Introduce at First teacher/Benedict meeting Feb 24. Feb. 28 complete form and distribute first pace.

Topic: Training for teachers on how to do lesson plans.

Discussion: Most teachers are trained in ACE, not in the Kenyan Curriculum where lesson planning is required.

Conclusion: Teachers will need instruction and supervision to be able to implement this.

Action: From 1:00 – 3:30 p.m. M – Th, Benedict will train the teachers in lesson planning, he will continue with them over the term after classes to help them to stay on top of lesson planning.

Person Responsible: Benedict

Deadline: Lesson planning Feb 17 – Instruction Feb 28 or sooner



Good Developments with our beadwork initiative.

Lydia Mukawe Waigwa – ADEA’s local Beadwork Initiative Director: I am very thankful that Lydia has accepted ADEA invitation to manage fulltime our beadwork efforts. Her participation in our emerging project is vital to the sustainability of the project. Rombo is her home; Kenya is her country. She is a fashion designer by training and passion. She has a mind for business, and a heart to help the marginalized of her own community. I am also exceedingly grateful to a generous donor who has made the hire of Lydia possible. Many thanks.



Crisis PMD/ADEA is addressing:

Nearly 100% of the financial stability of the Maasai of Rombo Kenya project has depended on livestock and, in recent years, agriculture. The 2009 drought brought repeated crop failure and depleted herds by 85 – 100%, reducing this community to a level of poverty they have never known before. This is forcing men to leave their families and communities to seek work in urban areas, while women struggle for income through random tasks like collecting and selling firewood. The loss of their traditional income source has made basic survival a struggle for these Maasai and is hindering them from advancing their children through education and even basic health care. Income generating initiatives that are non-weather related are imperative to assist this community to survive and develop. We are proposing such an initiative.

Goal in addressing the crisis:

We will make possible the viable generation of income by providing business and production training that will lead to the establishment of a small-scale mass-production beadwork industry in Rombo, Kenya. This new industry (capitalizing on the superior beadwork tradition of the Maasai) will target the international and East African jewelry and gift markets by joining forces with American and

Kenyan designers and businesses with a strategy for long term sustainability. Our goal is the establishment of a profit-sharing beadwork production center.

Ford Foundation – Finally! – Though invited to meet with the Ford Foundation in Nairobi in March of 2010, following the general submission of our beadwork initiative, it has taken eleven months before our scheduled visits in Nairobi coincided. On Tuesday, February 10th, our meeting took place. I attended the meeting with Lydia who wowed the director with her understanding of the crisis the people Rombo are experiencing, and her self-confidence. Though the FF are primarily focusing on agricultural efforts (since the international economic cutbacks), and is cautious of another Design/Maasai bead worker initiatives which statistically a poor survival rate, Dr. Kaaria of the FF agreed to give us a chance to better prove the validity of our strategy by awarding us a \$5000 grant to do additional study. This was a great boost and encouragement to us.

Lydia will begin April 1 to get things organized, make some initial products with Seattle jewelry designer, Natalie Everett, as we seek more funds for materials.

Priority: Classrooms

Over all the sobering talk of the Maasai Boma Schools and the planning for teacher support, remains the looming, under addressed need for classrooms. Ideally six classrooms and a teacher room is the minimum needed. This is a big task to undertake, but I understand it now as the most pressing challenge to be addressed if the school is to consider ever standing on its own. So in the weeks, months and year ahead I will aspire to muster up the focus, determination, support, creativity, team and fundraising spirit needed to fill this gaping hole in our development.



A Landscape Designer Already Recruited for the Team: It was a wonderful surprise to find my Vermont friend, David Jacobs, living in Dar es Salaam with his new wife and stepson. David is a landscape professional who has followed my work in East Africa since its beginning. Now that he is half the year in Tanzania, he has agreed to help with the planning (and possibly construction) of the Maasai Boma School campus! This is the sort of teamwork I have been praying for; and, hopefully, it will continue to grow. My ideal is to build something as “green” as possible, with inspiration from the Maasai culture and landscape.

Family Planning

We have been discussing tuition for families with many children in our school, and whether or not to reduce fees as the children attending school from one family increase. The Maasai tradition is to have many children (even many wives). When land was limitless and cattle abundant this model was more sustainable. But those days are over and children from large families are suffering. It was agreed at our meeting that Family Planning needs to be a point of education for the parents in our school, and participants in our bead work initiatives.

With warmest regards, *Douglas, Kupikita, Oloikurrukur*

Fundraising and grant seeking continue to cover the balance of Tipape's studies, teacher wages for 2011, and my efforts in the field working with artisans and Maasai.

**CONTRIBUTION CAN BE SENT TO: ADEA - P.O. BOX 45751 - SEATTLE, WA 98145 – USA
OR PAID VIA PAYPAL AT: ADEAAFRICA.ORG – CONTACT AND CONTRIBUTE PAGE**

Interested in making a loan to ADEA?

Wholesale craft catalogs have been sent to three interested vendors; one in Britain, two in the US. Our hope is that this number will expand over 2011. While in the US I have learned there is a great interest in products to purchase. With many holiday markets (including World Market at my home church in Seattle) it would be a great kick start to the "African Makonde Arts & Craft Cooperative Society LTD" (formerly ADEA artisans), to receive an order in the low tourist season, an opportunity for me to develop a few more products with them while in Tanzania and generate income for ADEA projects through product sales during the 2011 holiday season. By ordering early, shipping costs will be reduced by sending them surface mail. I would like to order from \$1000 to \$4000 worth of product.

So as not to divert funds committed to the school, I am looking for persons interested to contribute or offer a loan, to be repaid at the end of the year, for this purpose. Already ADEA has received \$1000 for this purpose. Thank you.

While in Tanzania we will be improving our wholesale catalog. If you would be interested in receiving one for a shop or market you know of, please contact me and/or ADEAOrders@gmail.com. FYI: Orders must be paid-in-full including shipping estimates prior to shipping.