



Newsletter: June 2015

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TOP STORY: FOUR SUCCESSFUL WEEKS IN TANZANIA AND KENYA?

NEWS SUMMARY

I have just returned from a four-week trip to Tanzania (with a few days in Kenya) to check on the projects and teams in East Africa.

Follow-up on my last newsletter: In 2015, with the support of generous supporters, ADEA was able to provide the Maasai neighborhood of Esukuta with a wooden primary school to help them fulfill their wish and need of education for their children. Since that date the school has continued to grow with the dedication of the teachers, Pillars of



Maasai Development (PMD) leadership (Tipape and Tumaina), and varying levels of support from ADEA. On the volition of PMD, cement floors were added to the building and metal sheet classrooms were added to either side of the wood building to accommodate the annual growth of students and grade levels (these classrooms were highly vulnerable to strong winds). This year, the Italian water project AMREF, a non-profit working in the region, has constructed four stone class rooms, and two more are soon to be built. After many years of stalwart

perseverance, the teachers' efforts have been rewarded. The combination of our wood building and the new classrooms will provide enough classrooms for each of the eight gradelevels and the pre-school.



HANDCRAFTED MAASAI BEAD DOG COLLARS



In collaboration with long-time Dutch friend Paul Mudde, ADEA is exploring the production of beaded dog collars for the exploding pet product market. This visit was a chance to review with the Maasai women issues of design and quality for the dog collars we provide. Over the next year we will seek out markets and try to learn how we can best distribute and market the collars, while simultaneously teaching the Maasai how to manage the business. You can visit: www.maasai-beadwork.org to see the site as it is taking shape. Any upscale dog shops or events that you can suggest would be welcome!



Glasses: Before leaving Euro, a quick visit was made to a “euro” store to buy several pair of low-magnification eyeglasses for our aging beaders!

Power of the lights: In 2013 ADEA supplied this beading team with solar light to help ease their life challenges. Here is the list of advantages they mentioned. The lights allow for:

- working at night.
- their children to study at night.
- safety when going outside at night.
- seeing and chasing away wild animals that threaten their cattle.
- preparing food in the evening.
- saving money and time by being able to charge their phones at home versus paying in town.
- supporting neighbors by allowing them to charge their phones for free.
- elevating their status in the community.



ADEA's Lease Not to Be Renewed!

When I last wrote to you, I noted that our lease would not be renewed at our ADEA home of twelve years. Though this condition has not changed, we have been granted a six-month extension to find a new home. This week meetings with a government lawyer began to secure the use of an abandoned government building in Mtwara. Though the roof needs to be replaced, electricity installed, and eventually a ceiling and windows constructed, it is a great beginning. Our museum-to-be is located in proximity to a secondary school and college with whose faculty we hope to do collaborative education programs. We also plan to reach out to primary and secondary schools throughout the Mtwara municipality.



The current museum in our office is managed by Chilumba Saidi. In the past ten weeks he has received 210 visitors with 90% of them local students and residents of Mtwara! This participation of the local population is very impressive and very encouraging.

After a thoughtful discussion with the team, we have decided to balance our investment in the museum between building improvement and exhibit improvement. For what is more important, we asked ourselves: a great building with a mediocre exhibit, or an adequate building with a meaningful museum experience? (I've attached the budget breakdown at the end if you should feel so inspired to kick in for a ceiling, windows, or exhibit collection fund).



We will be basing our exhibit on the extraordinary expedition of Karl **Weuke** in 1908 that I learned of while I was documenting the anthropological visit throughout the Mtwara region. Its breadth of ceremonial, leisure, and everyday life artifacts provide us the exciting task to work with elders to recover or recreate former cultural artifacts.

My PhD studies at Michigan State University focus on education in museums and other non-formal classroom activities. Over the year I worked on researching ways to make our exhibition engaging and educational for all ages.

September 30 our lease runs out – so that's when we need to be in our new space. It is likely I'll make a 10-day trip at that time for the final installation

For just \$3000 to \$3500 we can make necessary renovations (new roof, metal security door, basic electricity, and a new paint job – and secure the first few months of operating costs for the museum! (extended budget attached). Our goal is closer to \$10,000 to finish the work and secure the running costs for the year ahead.

MaKuYa Rafiki – Rafiki Tamasha / MaKuYa Friend to Friend Festival

Last June, MaKuYa team member Dominic Chonde brilliantly encouraged the Makonde village of Nanyamba to host a day-long village festival by including seven nearby dancing groups, traditional games, and a small exhibition of traditional artifacts. The festival was a huge success with easily 2000 visitors and a budget of less than \$75. Chonde proved it could work in Nanyamba, and we believe it can catch on like wildfire throughout Mtwara – ending the dependency solely on our large – much more costly – festival, and improving sustainability.

In the spirit of sustainability and local initiative, we are seeking support for Mr. Chonde to help launch 19 such village festivals throughout the Mtwara region. It is a brilliant initiative with a budget of \$10,000 to \$12,000 to cover costs related to travel, accommodations, team wages, and promotion and documentation of these groups.

MaKuYa has caught the eye of UNESCO

Ever hear of UNESCO (the United Nation's Education, Science, and Culture Organization)? Ever heard of UNESCO World Heritage Sites? Ever heard of UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage? Much to my joy and surprise, it has been recommended to the UNESCO delegate to East Africa based in Dar es Salaam that our MaKuYa Festival be registered as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage event! Though this may ultimately grant us access to funding, by their noted appreciation of our traditional culture promotion efforts, this will elevate the esteem and perceived value to the world of our efforts. Whether or not we ultimately receive this designation, discussion for proposed collaboration with UNESCO related to digitalizing and making available to the national archives of Tanzania all our cultural research and traditional dancing recordings, and other cultural education initiatives, will be a very exciting development for ADEA.

As I am considering future professional aspirations with UNESCO, this is an incredible opportunity. I am thankful to my MaKuYa team, to Kiluku Heneriko who attended the meeting with me, and especially to Philipo Lulale, the former co-director of ADEA (who was a key participant in recording and conducting interviews with elders) who has agreed to represent ADEA at upcoming meetings I will not be able to attend.

Work in East Africa continues.

There were times recently that I believed my work in East Africa would be diminishing. It appears I was mistaken. The focus of my PhD studies is fitting well with ADEA development, and we seem to be moving forward.

Thanks to all of you who have supported me and my team for over a decade.
Needs continue at every level.

Spiritual note

*He who waters will be watered himself.
Proverbs: 11:25*

Sincerely, *Douglas, Kupikita, Oloikurrukurr*

Educational Policy PhD Third year student at Michigan State University

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