

October 25, 2020

Dear Members, Friends and Supporters of Hand in Hand for Kenya,

worldwide, we are still fighting against the pandemic. COVID-19 still influences the everyday life of every single person. Likewise, in Kenya.

### **How is the situation in Kenya currently?**

Mid-March the Kenyan government confirmed the first Corona case in the country. At the moment, there are approximately 36.000 Corona cases known in Kenya, approx. 700 people have died of the virus. In comparison: In Germany over 275.000 people got infected up until September. The region of Machakos, in which our children's center is located, registers very low numbers and also in the rest of the country a decline of new infections is visible. But the pandemic didn't spare the East-African country, unfortunately there are only few possibilities of testing, the statistics are deceptive.

The restrictions imposed by the government show that the country is struggling – more than some countries in Europe. While in the meantime some restrictions have been loosened, others remain further: In fully occupied matatus and in public places the mouth-nose protection remains and the curfew between 9 pm and 4 am still exists. Only the ban on travel within the country was already cancelled in July. In addition, in Kenya the VAT has been lowered from 16% to 14% to counteract the impact of the economic slump.

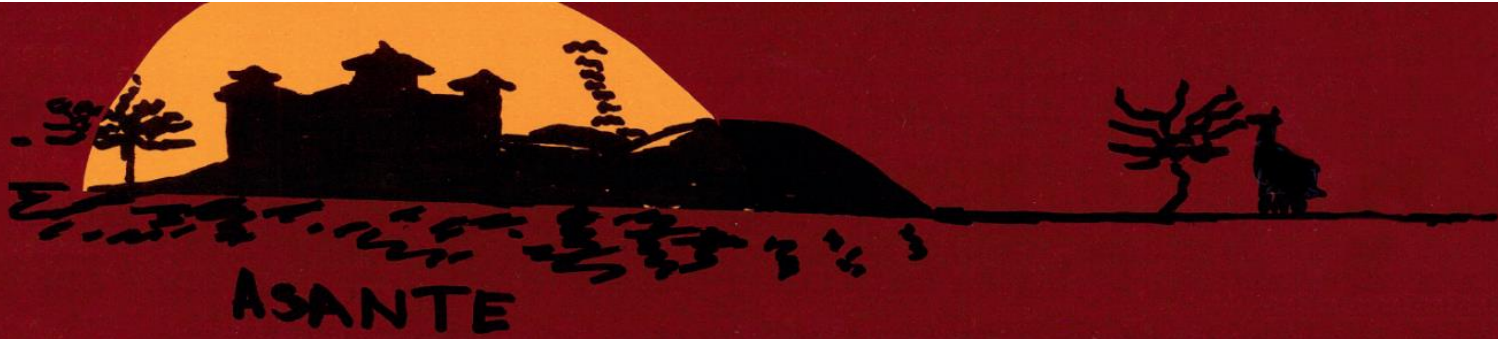
Through the opening of the borders in August, one of the country's largest sources of income should be ensured: tourism. But experts assume that the climax of the pandemic has not yet been reached: Should the virus spread further, the already struggling health care system will not be able to offer sufficient medical care for the population. The majority of the population already lives in poverty. They are fighting for bare survival.

### **How is the situation at MCC?**

One of the largest problems for the Kenyan population is the constant closure of kindergartens, schools and universities for the whole year 2020. The school year has provisionally been crossed out completely. Currently, the government is discussing the change of this decision. On the site of Maisha Mazuri the primary and the secondary school continue to stay closed. While the teaching staff at public schools are getting paid throughout, the teachers at private schools are facing existential problems without continued payment of salaries. Private schools in Kenya are no luxury, but urgently necessary to cover demand. In consultation with Jimmy Kilonzi, our teachers were put on short-time until July and since then are being paid according to the hours worked. They come to the academy once a week to distribute the exercises prepared at home and to take the submitted homework with them for correction. This way school continues at least a little bit.

Our MCC children's center was luckily allowed to stay open and is now a place of safety more than ever. Meanwhile, it offers 41 (!) children a home. During the pandemic nine children of the Mathare Slums in Nairobi were able to integrate into the MCC family. Thanks to the MCC partner programme the proud number of 92 out of 102 children now have a sponsor – THANK YOU to all the supporters (More information about the partner program is available on our website.)

Vorstand: Barbara Krohne Anita Wimmer Stefan Walk



**Important information for all partners: The letters from the children should have arrived by now. The reply letters mean a lot to the children: they give comfort, encouragement, motivation and above all they bring a lot of joy! So don't forget: Deadline for the reply letters: 28th of October 2020.**

### **Which new developments and chances have arisen?**

Thanks to the generous donations of our sponsors and supporters the care and well-being of the children in MCC can be guaranteed further. They have succeeded in finding something positive in the pandemic despite a disrupted everyday life: They are experiencing free time for the first time now because under normal circumstances room for development and creativity is barely existent in the Kenyan school system. The children have to be in school as early as between 7-8 am and leave it rarely before 4 pm. The way back home is mostly long and they have to walk. It is even more beautiful to hear that the newly gained free time at MCC is being directly transformed into positive energy. They are drawing pictures, knotting carpets, knitting, crocheting and playing football.

The lockdown has also been used for renovation work and remodelling on the site of MCC. Many children have helped and could prove their handcraft skills. Meanwhile, the outdoor kitchen is being used actively and chef Julius is happy about the nutritious vegetables of the shamba and the children's interest in cooking.

In the Academy new shelves have been installed and books have been added. The buildings have been dug up externally to guarantee a better drainage, as some areas have been under water permanently since the last rain season.

Also the MMP children and their families had a special reason for joy as the long desired beds were finally delivered. Wherever necessary the families were - and continue to be - helped out with natural produce, and the MCC social workers visit the families attentively.

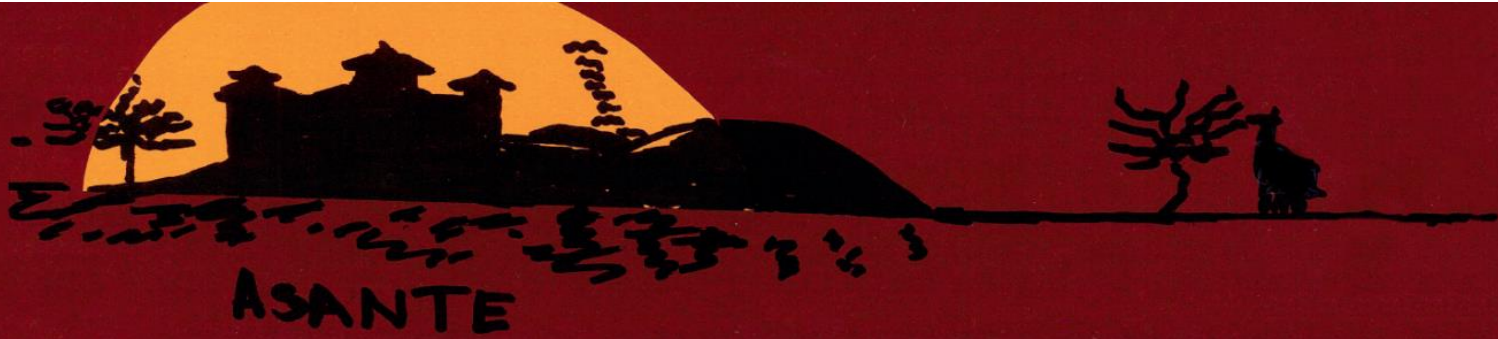
And finally, a new major project awaits: proudly and eagerly we are allowed to announce that thanks to the sponsorship of Sternstunden e.V. the construction of the first wing of the boarding school is able to start. Many thanks to our architect Thomas Mildenberg from Karlsruhe for the planning!

We are learning that even in these difficult times, there is potential for positivity. In Kenya that means helping where normally there would be no time or people available. New is being used to create new. In Germany our association "Hand in Hand for Kenya" has brought to life new, alternative activities to guarantee the growth, safety and education of the MCC family further through donations. The "Juggling Challenge" and the action "Kilometres for Kenya" have been celebrated by many groups of Friends, working groups and sports clubs. They have contributed energetically to the basic financial security. Through the sportive engagement of the participants and some of our partner schools, and also through the generous support of the sponsored run of the Theresien Gymnasium in Munich all in all 19.000 € could be collected for Kenya. That is really great, we are still flashed! Asante Sana!

And it continues further: On our website ([www.4kenya.info](http://www.4kenya.info)) you can find all the important information on the alternative donation activities. We are looking forward to every single one of you!

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The pandemic is going to impact the well-being and life of the MCC children for longer. But as we are all citizens of one earth, we are even more united in these times. With much energy, drive and above all love to our friends in Kenya we continue and are convinced that our effort will be worth it. Thank you for being a part of our community and for supporting us!!

Anne Roll und Carline Mutz  
Translated by Verena Wagner

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