



Newsletter: April 2011 Douglas McFalls

USA: P.O. Box 45751 – Seattle, WA 98145 Tel. 206.227.0082

Tanzania: P.O. Box 410 – Mtwara, Tanzania

Kenya: P.O. Box 142 – Loitokitok, Kenya

Email: Douglas@ADEAAfrica.org

www.ADEAAfrica.org

ADEA is a registered 501c3 Not for Profit and all contributions are tax deductible

Contributions can be made on line at ADEAAfrica.org by Paypal or a check payable to ADEA at the address above - Your support is greatly appreciated.

News from Mtwara, Tanzania

Greetings! The month of March was spent in Mtwara, with the ADEA artisans. It was very encouraging to see that they had succeeded to maintain the high quality of craft production they had reached when I had left. This is key to their sustainability.



“A fruit squeezed of all its juice”

This analogy has helped me to articulate the fact that I don’t have so much more to offer these artisans currently. Aside from developing a few new designs, I believe that Philipo and I have given them the tools they need to succeed as craft producers and sellers. It is now their choice as to whether or not they will choose to implement what they have been taught.



Philipo recently managed one incident brilliantly. When I commented to him how pleased I was to see the organized state of the gift shop, he replied, “It wasn’t that way a month ago”. He explained that a month back he visited the gift shops (in the building adjacent to our offices), and found them in disarray despite the fact that I had carefully laid out and tagged every product prior to my previous departure. At the weekly leadership meeting he challenged the members, “Douglas has taught you and shown you how to effectively arrange the gift shops. Now they are a mess. You decide as a team what you want to do about it. I’ll be back in 30 minutes to hear what you decide.” Since then, the gift shop has been kept in order!



Philipo has a blessed gift (and restraint) of not doing, but challenging the artisans to challenge themselves to implement what they have been taught. This is a crucial component for the artisans’ development. Something that I, Mr. “Let’s just get this done now!” struggle to do. It is reassuring to me to have Philipo in Mtwara, to be a nearby support to the artisans.

Marketing the Oil

Oil exploration is happening along the coast of East Africa. Mtwara is not exempt. With three exploration companies currently exploring (with a four out of four drilling success rate – I am told), there are well-moneyed people coming through Mtwara. So, in the spirit of marketing, we sent a letter to the main office of logistics for the international employees telling of our shop in town. Soon after the sending of the letter (and small poster for the wall) we saw immediate results with a few buyers coming weekly, (and the word has just gotten out). I am hopeful this will be a new lucrative market for our in-house gift shop. This issue launched discussion on advertising strategies in town – including street side signs and flier to distribute to visitors found walking our dusty streets.



Makutano in Dar – A presence in the Big City

The opportunity to open a gift shop in Dar es Salaam has finally emerged. A non-profit team called Makutano has opened a social center in the middle of the expatriate part of Dar. This center includes a café, a venue for artistic events, and a house that's rooms are dedicated to Tanzanian products produced in rural communities (like ADEA). April 1 our contract begins as we fill the former pantry with our products. After just two weeks we have heard that our products are being well received! We hope that this will prove to be profitable for ADEA, the artisans and the Makutano NGO (who takes 20% for the shop management work, and additionally charges for annual rental). If we can stock it well, and price things effectively to keep product moving, this will be potentially a lucrative market.



Clean up – focus

As the artisan work is now into an established production groove, and the MaKuYa Festival on hold for the year, Philipo and I dedicated this March to cleaning up what we have completed, before dreaming too much about the future. We spent two weeks cleaning out our offices, organizing all past projects and filing them carefully. It was a very edifying and pleasing feeling!

Daudi begins teaching English to the Artisans

Daudi – for those you who do not know – is a young man (an orphan) I have taken under my wing, sponsored him through secondary school, and who was to have begun his second year of Bible College in February. However his small, mission sponsored school had to cancel classes days before the term was to have begun because of the large number of students unable to meet their tuition requirements. Suddenly, Daudi and I found him task-less until the August term. In a country where jobs are few and day labor pays abysmally, it was agreed that he would return to Mtwara, to teach English to the artisans.



For years we have talked of the need for English language training. Now something is starting. I have no illusion that English will soon, if ever, be mastered by any artisan. I am only hoping that the fire to learn English will be kindled among the team and that will slowly spread into a passion to continue.

Historical note: It was decided by the first President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, that Swahili would be the national language of the newly independent country. Though clearly the most commonly spoken language among the 120 tribal groups, and one that in my early, naïve days living in East Africa, I applauded; I now feel that this decision has left the country handicapped and resulted in the delay in its development. With all high-level business and education occurring in English, and the vast libraries of books and magazines from around the world inaccessible to the majority of Tanzanians, it was a regrettable choice. As this relates to artisans, the majority of shop owners and international buyers (the lion's share of our customers) have little or no working knowledge of Swahili, making direct negotiations with buyers nearly impossible, resulting in revenue and market opportunity loss.

A Book and a Video



As I return to the USA for the continuation of my year of assessment in America, I will assemble a photo book documenting our discovering in the Makonde and Makua cultures in Mtwara through our MaKuYa work. This project is being funded by the Swiss Embassy. I aspire to have this book ready for distribution and sale by Christmas 2011. My dream is to make it a family friendly book. One with informative content, but also accessible to younger readers as well. *I'll let you know how to order it if you are interested.*

Philipo is putting together an exciting project to produce a pilot video of interviews of the Makonde and Makua elders on a variety of life issues: marriage, justice, children, story telling, medicine/medicine men & women/witchcraft, birth/death, rights of passage and more. Video is a powerful media to capture the character and humanness of these hidden people. It is an important work for which I hope he will find generous support quickly.





News from Rombo, Kenya

A test for Esukuta families: Tuition.

Schools must be viable. After a season of full support for the Esukuta Maasai schools, the parents will have to show their dedication to their children's education by paying 200 Ksh (\$2.50) per month, during the term. This is half the actual cost of teachers. In the last term of the year we will increase the fee to the actual cost of 400 Ksh to see the parents' true willingness (or ability) to pay for the teachers.



Good Developments with our beadwork initiative.

Lydia Mukami Waigwa – ADEA's local Beadwork Initiative Director: On April 20, Lydia will be a dedicated member of our beadwork initiative with the Maasai in Rombo. This initiative is to bring non-weather related income into a community where the rains have become less dependable and sporadic in recent years. Already she has begun cooperation with Natalie Everett, a jewelry designer from Seattle, also working with ADEA, on a small order.



Having Lydia on the team considerably strengthens the viability of long-term sustainability of this initiative. Lydia is a gifted designer, well aware of the challenges of life in Rombo. She is an excellent team player, not resentful of correction, and appreciates direct confrontations verses, round-about criticism. This sort of loving but professional transparency will be an asset to this team. These next few months will be spent on organizing systems of receiving, documenting, pricing and producing samples while we wait for funding for larger endeavors.

Background - 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 – No longer so sure! – Good news comes and it goes.

Though seemingly assured to receive the support – a month after the submission of our mini-project proposal, we received the oddly sudden news that our proposal had been reconsidered and denied. The initiative was the idea of the FF director. Perhaps what we purposed was not intensive enough for the director? We felt it important to be cautious, for in our experience too much prodding and testing only leads to expectation. If those expectations are not met (or misunderstood) we can loose our integrity within the community and find cooperation even harder in the future. We are waiting for a reply to our response.

Back in the USA

By the time you receive this letter I will have returned to the United States from a very successful and also challenging visit. The purpose of the trip was to meet with ADEA team players in East Africa to get a clear sense of where things stood from their perspectives, and what were their hopes and expectations for the future of ADEA. I now have a much clearer picture which allows me to make much more informed decision in the months and years ahead.

Stay tuned! Thank you for your support and interest.

With warmest regards, *Douglas, Kupikita, Oloikurrukurr*



This months Spiritual Note is a prayer that I found I my files as I cleaned my office. For me it was divine timing, as I experienced some of the dangers of being distracted by emotional frustrations.

Spiritual Note: A prayer by Thomas Merton

- below the picture



My Living/Dinning Room – Mtwara, TZ

God,

Let me use all things for one sole reason, to find my joy in giving you glory.

Therefore, keep me, above all things, from sin.

Keep me from the death of deadly sin, which puts hell into my soul.

Keep me from the murder of lust, which blinds and poisons my heart.

Keep me from sins that eat a man's flesh with irresistible fire until he is devoured.

Keep me from loving money in which is hatred, from avarice and ambition, which suffocate my life.

Keep me from the dead works of vanity and the thankless labor in which artists destroy themselves for pride and money and reputation, and saints are smothered under the avalanche of their own importunate zeal.

Stanch in me the rank world of covetousness and the hungers which exhaust my nature with their bleeding.

Stamp out the servant envy that stings love with poison, and kills all joy.

Untie my hands and deliver my heart from sloth.

Set me free from the laziness that goes about disguised as activity, when activity is not required of me.

And the cowardice, which does what is not demanded in order to escape sacrifice.

But give me the strength that waits upon you in silence and peace.

Give me humility in which alone is rest, and deliver me from pride which is the heaviest of burdens.

And possess my whole heart and soul with the simplicity of love.

Occupy my whole heart and soul with the simplicity of love.

Occupy my whole life with the one thought and the one desire of love that I may love not for the sake of merit; not for the sake of perfection; not for the sake of virtue; not for the sake of sanctity

BUT for you alone!

- Thomas Merton