

News 5 Autumn 2011

As if conditions weren't difficult enough for Kenya's poor, the extreme drought in East Africa and the strong increase in food prices are aggravating the situation to a great extent. Additionally, many „landlords“ have raised the rents of the slum shacks. On the other hand, the revenues of the day labourers are still as low as before the crisis. Thus, the daily struggle for survival has become even tougher.

This unparalleled dire situation caused us to establish an „emergency station“ in the slum of Kibera when we were on site last August. Desperate mothers can apply for **emergency relief**, be it for foodstuffs, school fees for the children, medical assistance, or rental fees for their huts. Our confidant and CHaCHaCHi representative Jackline (former teacher at Makina School) visits the applicants at their homes and examines their situation. This emergency relief is considered to be a temporary aid to bridge the worst gaps.

In order to improve their situation in the long term, the mothers are given the opportunity to join the women's group „CHaCHaCHi Women's SACCO“, founded by Jackline. This women's group has a clear structure and grants **microcredits** according to democratic rules once a woman displays a distinct business idea. CHaCHaCHi has financed the basis for the allocation of such microcredits and is willing to ramp up the capital next year, if possible. Some of the women who have taken out a credit and who operate their own small business (household articles, secondhand clothes, self-tailored articles etc.) can feel the enormously difficult economic situation in the slum. Their sales have severely dropped compared to a few months ago. This is a cause of great concern to them and to us.

Our **56 students and apprentices** are fully committed to their studies and work. Some of them are providing excellent results as we have seen in our regular meetings with them. The public high schools, however, are also struggling with high food prices. Therefore, some of the schools closed their gates a week early at the end of July or they limited the food rations. Even drinking water has been rationed in many places.

The Makina School now has to do without **Jackline**, a fact that we strongly regret because she was a very good teacher. On the other hand, we can now benefit even more from her great initiative and her education as an accountant.



Jackline with her 2 daughters, her foster son and a friend

We have provisionally employed her as our CHaCHaCHi representative until the end of 2011. She is the contact person for the students, she acts as the head of the „emergency station“, she is responsible for the contributions we make to the Makina School and for the entire accounting. Additionally, she regularly informs us about any kind of activities and incidents and independently suggests possible adjustments in terms of our work.

The **Makina Primary School** excelled with outstanding final exams, which led to an official award. Bravo, well done! The changes in the teachers' team seem to result in the fact that head teacher Justus, who is sometimes almost too sensitive, can now better exercise his leadership tasks because Jackline's (and Heidi's) pressure has decreased. A 6-hour (!) teachers' meeting (without any break) brought about various critical contributions and suggestions from almost every teacher. This happened for the first time and surprised us. At the same time, it filled us with optimism as we have targeted a democratic school organisation from the very beginning.

Two everyday stories

Mary, an excellent pre-school teacher, is pregnant for the third time. She lost both of her previous babies, but she survived. She asked me whether CHaCHaCHi could grant her a loan to pay for a Caesarean that she urgently needed. The hospital and surgery costs are 25,000 KSH (approx. CHF 250.- or about 4 monthly salaries), but she told us that she could scrape together only about 10,000 KSH. We gave her 5,000 KSH as a gift and granted her an interest-free loan in the amount of 10,000 KSH to be deducted from her salary. If

we had not helped her, she would not have been able to have the necessary surgical intervention. There is no medical assistance for people without the respective money. Therefore, it happens time and again that babies and young mothers die in childbed because they do not have the money to go to the hospital. Mary, extremely thankful for our help, texted us that she had given birth to a healthy baby boy named Ian at the beginning of September.



Pre-school teacher Mary, briefly before giving birth

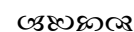
Zaina was one of our first students for whom we made a high school education possible in 2009 (I wrote about her back in 2009). She is from a very poor background. Since she is an excellent soccer player, she attends the „Kibera Girls’ Soccer Academy“, a rather inexpensive daily high school in the slum. Besides school, daily soccer trainings are on the agenda.

Last April she told me that she was no longer able to participate in the soccer trainings. She explained that her 9-year-old brother had suddenly died and that her mother had fallen ill subsequently. Her mother just couldn’t bear the loss of her son. Zaina told me that she had to take over at home, do the housework and look after her mother. That’s why she had to go home directly after school without attending her daily trainings. I wasn’t happy about this and asked her to come to see me together with her mother so that we might find a solution.

In August, when Jackline handed me all the documents of our students and apprentices, I saw that Zaina’s file was missing. I was quite surprised as Zaina had always been on time and her reports had always been very extensive. I called her stepfather Julius and asked him about Zaina. He promised that she would come to see me the following day. When I greeted Zaina, I was a bit disappointed and asked her why she had not handed in her documents in time. Zaina looked down to the floor and started sobbing. I tried to comfort her and asked her what had happened. “My mother died 3 weeks ago... she

had a broken heart.” Zaina said that her mother just could not cope with the death of her little son. The worst thing, however, was when Zaina told us that her stepfather had chased her and her little sister away from the house after her mother’s death because they were now a burden to him. We were completely shocked about this. I asked the girl where she lived, whether she had any relatives. Zaina answered that she now lived with a friend and neighbour of her mother’s. She added that her name was Sofia, that she had a little girl and that she had a part-time job as a housemaid. But of course, the neighbour did not have enough money to care for Zaina and her sister.

I promised Zaina that we would help her and that I would call Sofia to arrange for a visit at their home. We agreed with Sofia that we would provide her with a monthly contribution to accommodate the two orphans and thanked her for her generous help. When Zaina came to fetch her school cheque a week later, she already was a little bit less desperate because she knew that she could rely on our support.



The Managing Committee

Heidi Brenner, Chairwoman and Executive Director
Nicolas Miescher, Vice-Chairman
Fabienne Dumoulin, Accounting
Danielle Friedli
Sophie Markwalder (new)

Information and Contact

www.chachachi.org (updated)
info@chachachi.org
Heidi Brenner, tel. +41 (0)33 243 27 22

Support

We would like to thank you very much for your donations. We depend on your contributions in order to carry out our projects in a successful and sustainable way. We assure you that the **full amount** of your contribution is **directly donated to the children in Kenya**.

Donations Account

Berner Kantonalbank BEKB, 3001 Bern, PC 30-106-9
CHaCHaCHi, Chance and Change for Children
3625 Heiligenschwendi
Account No. 42 4.214. 469.57
IBAN: CH31 0079 0042 4214 4695 7

Our **Annual Report 2010** can be downloaded from our website. Please call us if you would like to have a copy sent to you by mail.