

Children's Home: Lipela in Kenya

In 1997, a group of Peter Mutahi's friends decided to establish an orphanage in Kenya in order to offer a small contribution solving some of the big social problems, which the country is suffering from due to poor economical management during the last many years. Before **Lipela** all of us had been donating money to different charity organizations, but we wanted to make sure that ALL of our donated money went directly to the ones, who need it the most. We also wanted to avoid all extra expenses for management here in Denmark.

Peter Mutahi was born in Kenya but is now a Danish citizen. He, and his wife Jane, has donated part of the land (4.000 m²) for the Children's Home. They have also accepted to be partially responsible for administrative and practical matters on behalf of the donors. The undersigned Lisbeth Bergholdt Hansen and Lars Blavnsfeldt have accepted to undertake the financial responsibility for the orphanage, including financial administration.

Today there are 60 donators, who have agreed to pay from between 1.000 DKR to 12.000 DKR yearly for the next 10 years. All together, more than 175.000 DKR per year. In addition to this **Lipela** has received 600.000 DKR from other donators. 1 US\$ is approximately 5 DKR.

Lipela needs more donators in order to care for more children. There is a need for people who are willing to undertake a yearly donation for the fixed time of 10 years. By doing so they will be getting tax exemption for the full amount in Denmark. That money will be used to meet the running expenses such as – food, clothing, school fees and salary for the staff. Moreover, there is a need for single contributions from foundations, organizations, or individuals. These contributions will be used to improve the conditions for the children such as landscaping, establishing a playground, putting in a new water tank and so on.

Currently there are 31 children in the Children's Home. The children are put into custody of **Lipela** by a local judge. They are ranging in age from 3 to 16 years, including 15 boys and 16 girls. For the time being we do not have funding allowing us to take in more children, even though Lipela can hold up to 40 children and this is why we need your help.

All 31 children are healthy, well functioning children, and they are very happy to be living at **Lipela**.

Geographical situation

Lipela is built at the foot of Mount Kenya in Nyeri-district not far from the small town of Naro Moru 200 km / 125 miles North of Nairobi. The altitude is 2.000 m / 6500 ft and the climate is that of a North European summer in spite of being situated so near the Equator, which can be reached by car in 15 minutes from **Lipela**.

The building

The construction of the orphanage was started in 1999, and late 2000 the first 5 of our now 25 children could move in. The actual building is 400 m² (as measured from the outside). Out of those 400 m² there is a courtyard (of 100 m²) surrounded by 4 wings, which are interconnected. This design is used to ensure, that nobody from the outside can enter the building when the gate is closed.

All of the inside rooms are complete and usable now. There is a large and very well functioning kitchen, a big living/play room with a nice fireplace, 8 smaller dormitories, 2 showers (with cold water) and 4 toilets.

There is for the time being no electricity, but in the future the installation of electricity or solar energy will be necessary. There is indoor water – coming from the snowcap of Mount Kenya.

In 2006 an extra building was constructed. It has room for 10-12 of the oldest of the children.

Approval and supervision

The authorities have approved the Children's Home, and the land has been registered in **Lipela's** name. This makes **Lipela** a self-governing institution, which is authorized to take custody over the children. This means, that the local judge can refer children and entrust **Lipela** custody over them. This is very important as we want to make sure, that no person at a later date can claim custody over any of the children or claim parental rights. This is especially important, when a child reaches the age, when he or she is able to work and earn money. The authorities inspect the Children's Home on a regular basis with regards to the health and welfare of the children.

Employees

Since March 2001, 4 women have been employed. We do not expect, that it will be necessary to hire more staff to take care of the children. The older children are expected to help taking care of the younger, and to help with the daily work.

Sabina is 45 years old and has an education in administration. Earlier she worked for a Danish engineering company in Nairobi. She does not have children of her own, but has stayed with her sister and been part of the upbringing of her children. Her husband deserted Sabina, because she could not have children of her own. She looks upon the running of the Children's Home as the mission in her life. Sabina lives in **Lipela** and is the daily manager.

Besides the 4 women, **Lipela** also employs a man, who lives on the neighboring plot of the land. He is working as a general caretaker.

Besides the above-mentioned, hired help is brought in for holidays.

For supervision of Lipela we have entered into an agreement with Francis – a close friend of Peter Mutahi – who is educated as an economist in Poland, and who has spent time in Denmark with Peter. He is now working for the government of Kenya to help newly established companies with loans, advice and supervision. He is working in Nyeri-district, where **Lipela** is situated. **Lipela** does not pay him, but he contributes a lot of free work and advises for us. **He** is the one who managed to get the Children's Home approved by the government. Not a small task!

Operation of Lipela

Currently there are 31 children in the orphanage. They range in age from 3 to 16 years old.

In the next 2 years the number of children is expected to rise to around 40, which is the maximum capacity of **Lipela**, including the new building. We expect to build a new children's home within the next year. It will be placed on a spot of land 10 km north of Lipela.

The cost of a fully utilized **Lipela** will approximately be 10-15.000 DKR per year plus 4.000 DKR per child per year. This includes the running of the Home and the daily costs but does NOT include expenses for the building.

The children will be brought up as democratically thinking human beings. They will be brought up to be responsible for **Lipela** and the day-to-day running of the Home. Furthermore they will be brought up as any other Kenyan children, which includes being brought up as Christians.

The children are attending the local school, and are given as good an education as is possible.

Economy

Donors and contributors have by 2007 made a total payment of mere than 1 mio. DKR. This money has been used for the construction of the building as well as the furnishing inside and the running of the Home. The total costs of the first building are 375.000 DKR, and we have got a donation of 160.000 DKR covering the costs for the second building.

For the time being the 175.000 DKR a year in donations secures the running of the **Lipela**. That is enough for the 31 children, who now live there, but we would like to take in another 9 children, which is what the Home can hold, and that is why new donors are badly needed. There will be room for 30 children in the new children's home.

We guarantee that the Children's Home gets 100% of all money donated. Nobody in Denmark gets any kind of payment for anything in connection with the Home. There are no refunds for travel expenses, accommodation, consumption or anything else while visiting the Home. In addition, in Kenya, nobody other than employees of the Home receive any form of payment.

Please note the following:

While visiting **Lipela** we have several times in the past years been told by the neighbors and the local people, that they are very happy and pleased by the establishment of the Children's Home. It is of great advantage for us, that people like Peter Mutahi, Jane and Francis who were born and brought up in Kenya and raised locally, have the supreme responsibility for the running of **Lipela**. Peter and Jane are both held in great esteem locally, and lots of problems are more easily solved, when they ask people for help. It is a great force for the project that it is "local" people, who want to help "their own kind" now that they are better off or living abroad, and not a bunch of "whites" – muzungos – who intend to "teach and develop".

We hope that many people will sign up as donors for the Home. Everybody is welcome to visit the Home, if you happen to be in the vicinity. It is really worth your while to see and to meet "our" children. It is not possible to stay in **Lipela**, as we have decided, that nobody but the employees and the locally responsible – plus of course the children – can stay in the Home. If you visit, you are to pay for your meals, while visiting. There are also good hotels nearby.

Everybody who so wishes can sign a letter of donation for **Lipela** through International Børnehjælp for a fixed amount over 10 years. If this is done the full donation is tax deductible!

If you want to sign a letter of donation for 10 years for Lipela, you have to do it through us in order to make sure, that **Lipela** gets the money. If you want to donate money to **Lipela** the account is:

Jyske Bank

Sundbyvester Plads 1

DK - 2300 København S

Account number 5019 103919-2.

If you have any further questions please contact:

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