

Dear friends of MEDEA e.V.,

all good things take time, so does our newsletter!

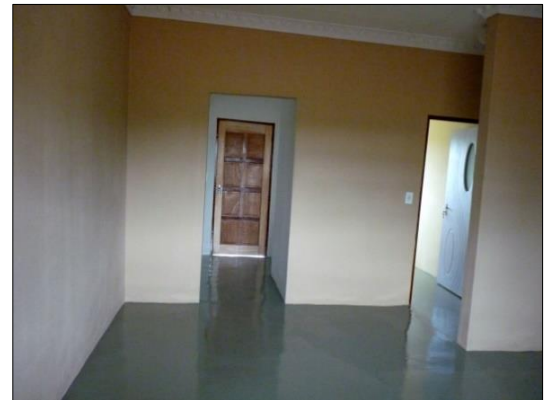
The pre-Christmas candle sale at the Ratingen Christmas market was a great success thanks to Ms. Romhányi and Ms. Wegener. Ms. Nasse and Ms. Liell were also in the pre-Christmas continuous operation for MEDEA involved.

I had the nice opportunity to get some sun from 03 Dec to 13 Dec, I flew to Eswatini as part of a project trip. The purpose of the trip was our commitment together with Tatort - Straßen der Welt e.V. Cologne and Caritas Eswatini at the BMZ (Ministry of Education for Economic Cooperation and Development) and of course to visit Gertrud.

The personal contact in conversation with “our” children at the Sikhhandza Bantfu Primary School, the teachers, the mothers, has once again made me feel deeply humbled and at the same time strengthened that we with MEDEA e.V. are following the right approach to promote capacities in our partner community, which should ultimately limit the inequality of opportunities. The current project, the administration building at the school, is almost finished. Like everything MEDEA has built so far, the classrooms, teachers' houses, dining area for the 252 children, is built in a sustainable, stable way. The Chief - Mayor, the community and the responsible Ministry of Education show MEDEA their gratitude by a friendly welcome, a lot of laughing, singing and praying for the successful infrastructure we have implemented.



2 Teacher Houses



Interior View



Dining-Area colourful painted



Space for 252 Children



First Seated Lunch



Short Break



Frontview with Windows



Frontview with Roofing



Interior View with Electricity



Entrance Painted



Interior View Painted

The second reason for my visit was to plan another structural project. The construction of the secondary school, further classrooms with latrines and a Women Empowerment / Women Promotion Project financed by BMZ for 2019/2021. In the run-up to the project, Gertrud and Valencia evaluated a Need Assessment / Needs Analysis with women from the whole community. To support the equal rights of women brings a great potential of change for the whole region with its eight communities and about 600 to 800 women. Studies confirm that the informal labour sector is an increasing problem in middle- and lower-income countries. A further focus of MEDEA's engagement in the future will be on strengthening the equality of women and girls, especially with regard to domestic violence, women's rights and economic independence. MEDEA's view of the high youth unemployment rate of 47% is equally dramatic. Gertrud has the current figures from the Nhloso Lukusasa Lelichakazile - NLL, an NGO that tries to get young people with unsuccessful school-leaving qualifications into work.

Leonie Koumassa from the African School of Economics describes how important the advancement of women and girls is in a society. She stresses that the promotion of gender equality also has a strong influence on other areas such as health and nutrition. Her experience is based on research conducted by a government programme in Benin, in which girls have been exempt from secondary school fees since 2007. If you are interested in this topic, there is an interesting article by Katja Dombrowski from the Development + Cooperation (D+C) discussion forum:

<https://www.dandc.eu/de/article/gute-bildung-fuer-alle-hilft-soziale-ungleichheit-zu-ueberwinden>

We still have a long, "difficult" way ahead of us. Thanks to your great and outstanding support, it makes sense and gives us pleasure to continue on the path that MEDEA has been following for 15 years now here in Eswatini!

We say siyabonga kakhulu - many thanks

March 2019

Marius Heimlich