

Dear friends of MEDEA e.V.,

the summer is coming to an end and the autumn mood is moving in. For MEDEA e.V. this always means: now the preparations for the candle sales during the Advent season has to start! And at the same time, it shows how much time has passed since the last newsletter. A lot has happened since March and we would like to report about it.

In April our annual general meeting took place and there has been a change in the board. Our board member Astrid Funken resigned for personal reasons; in return, our active member Dr. Susanne Liell was elected to the board. We are very happy to welcome Susanne Liell to the MEDEA Team! Thank you very much for your commitment, Susanne, and we are looking forward to a good cooperation!

Susanne would like to introduce herself, so a few words from her:



Dear MEDEA members and MEDEA friends,

Some time ago I came into contact with MEDEA e.V. through my dear friend Gabi Nasse. From the very beginning I was enthusiastic and convinced of the idea of the association to improve the living situation of the people in eSwatini through education and clean drinking water in a sustainable way, especially since the commandment of helping people to help themselves is fundamental. I was therefore happy to be involved in the board of the association and thank you for the trust you have placed in me. About my person: I am 53 years old, married and mother of three adult daughters. In a broader sense, our family also includes a horse and two dogs. Professionally, I have a doctorate in Classical Philology, but early on I subordinated my university career to family life, and since then I have only studied Latin in my spare time. For decades I have been involved with my husband in various honorary positions, e.g. in the Lions Club. With my commitment for MEDEA e.V. I am now entering the new territory of "Volunteering for Africa". As I am absolutely convinced of the sense and sustainability of our work in eSwatini, I am very much looking forward to putting my skills, time, energy and heart and soul into the service of this organisation. I hope that we will be able to achieve a lot in the coming years and I am looking forward to an exciting and fruitful cooperation with MEDEA e.V.

Thanks to Susanne MEDEA e.V. was able to benefit in two (or three) ways from the already traditional "Schweinelauf" of the Lions Club Mettmann-Wülfrath. On 30 May 2019, the "Schweinelauf" took place in *Wülfrath am Erbacher Berg*. On the one hand MEDEA e.V. was present with a stand and could sell the well-known products from eSwatini. On the other hand, and most importantly, the Lions Club donated a considerable amount of the proceeds of the "Schweinelauf" to MEDEA e.V.! And in all the fire of preparation a MEDEA running team was formed at once; with joint strength the either 5 or 12 km long run was successfully completed.



MEDEA stand at the “Schweinelauf” (from left to right: Gertrud Langensiepen, Ursula Wegener, Marius Heimlich)



The MEDEA running team (above, from left to right: Matthias, Marius, Ursula, Monica, Yvonne, below: Amanda, Cristina)

All in all, the “Schweinelauf” was a great event for MEDEA e.V. Many thanks to all who actively helped, co-organised, sold and participated. And a very special thanks to the Lions Club Mettmann-Wülfrath for their support and generosity!

Besides the activities in Germany, a lot has happened in eSwatini, of course. As already reported in the last newsletter, the administration building at the Sikhandza Bantfu School was close to completion. In the meantime, it has been completed and has already been ceremonially handed over and opened.



Administration building (left) and classrooms (right)

This is now the third BMZ project from the cooperation between Tatort - Straßen der Welt e.V., Caritas eSwatini and MEDEA e.V. to be successfully implemented. Especially the community Maduma of the school Sikhandza Bantfu is very grateful. Thanks to the last two BMZ projects, three additional classrooms could be built at this school, as well as a kitchen with dining area, two teachers' houses and an administration building.

Due to all these good experiences, we have, as reported in the last newsletter, already worked intensively with joint energy on the next application for another BMZ project in the community of Maduma. The content of the project is the construction of a secondary school with a total of five classrooms and a sanitary block with ten latrines. The school is located close to the Sikhandza Bantfu School (primary level), which was supported by the last BMZ projects. This will enable the pupils of the currently expanded primary level to make the transition to secondary school within the same community, and the overall educational situation in the community can be improved

significantly. In addition, we can also draw on the infrastructure already built up in the community for this project. In addition to the construction of the school classes, a series of workshops will be held with the school committees of the new and existing school and the surrounding schools. Ten workshops are planned for the training activities of the school committees. A minimum of 40 people will participate in the workshops and various topics will be discussed in the workshops, e.g. educational reforms and policies in eSwatini, improving access of children to school, prevention of human trafficking and child labour, and strengthening school administration structures. The aim is to make women and men, i.e. the parents of our children, aware of various topics and to educate them, especially in the rural areas where MEDEA e.V. is active, in order to enable children to have a better future. It is the first time that MEDEA e.V. has approached such a workshop series, which serves the capacity development in the community, so we are full of excitement how this will be received by the community. Due to the very good cooperation in the last years and the openness of the community we are full of hope that we can really make a difference.

It is hardly possible to describe the whole project in a few words, but the short description might give you an idea about all the work that went into the preparation of this proposal. After all the hours, weeks and months of planning and discussions, we are more than happy that we received the great news from the BMZ at the end of September: Our application was approved! The team in eSwatini is ready to start! This is another milestone for the sustainable and meaningful work of MEDEA e.V. in eSwatini!

Luckily our team does not have to start from scratch, because the community has already started to prepare the land last month in a great self-organization:





Grader on the road in the bush - in a few months a high school will be built here!

For us in Germany, this may not seem like a special case. For us, who are in close cooperation with eSwatini, it is a huge milestone! In order to get the construction equipment there, each family in the community contributed 200 Rand (about 12€), plus a donation of 10,500 Rand from the traditional and political representative of the community, and the costs were thus completely covered by the community. This is an important step to show the value of the project to the community and thus ensure sustainability and acceptance within the whole community.

The newsletter is coming to an end. Finally, we have a small request: As you all know, we always like to sell the handmade candles from eSwatini during the Advent season. If any of you have a good idea where the MEDEA team could present itself, we would be very happy to hear from you. Best are for example smaller markets at schools or similar with no or low stand fee. Thank you very much!

We wish all friends and supporters of MEDEA e.V. a sunny autumn and a happy Advent season; maybe we will meet again at one of our candle stands. From November on you can also buy our candles at Susanne's home (please call 0160/7526917 to make an appointment). Thank you for all your cooperation and every form of goodwill. Best wishes!

Düsseldorf, September 2019

Ursula Wegener