



# Maragoli

Community Development  
Foundation, Inc.

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*The mission of the Maragoli Community Development Foundation is to assist the Maragoli people of Western Kenya in improving their quality of life through the funding of sustainable development projects that community members themselves conceive and implement.*

## 2014 ANNUAL REPORT



### Message from the President

Dear Friends,

It is important to remind ourselves of the many positive developments occurring throughout Kenya, including in Maragoli, despite the horrific Al-Shabaab attack in Garissa and other terrorist activities that have dominated Western media coverage. This past year of MACODEF's work was marked by a continuation of our core projects and by working visits from several overseas groups, as well as a courtesy call by the governor of Vihiga County.

In addition, in early August, the international trustees (at their own expense) and the local board of governors held a week-long meeting in Kenya to review the first decade of our work and to chart the course for the future. We jointly decided to prioritize three projects over the next five years: completion of the community resource center, digging of a commercial grade well, and launching income-generating activities that will be based at the community center.

In the coming months, we will move forward to complete the first phase of the community resource center and to launch the income-generating activities, which will include poultry and rabbit raising and rental chairs and tents for community events. Our goal over the next five years is to gradually increase the proportion of funding that comes from local (Kenyan) sources.

We are very grateful for the generosity all of you have shown this past year and deeply appreciate the major gift we received from the Noble Foundation. We hope that you will continue your support for the worthwhile projects that meet real needs in Vigetse and Vagina villages. The success of our work to date has been due to your extraordinary loyalty. Please stay with us for this next phase of our journey.

Thank you again for your continued support!

Jan Kees den Bakker  
President

## Summary of Program Activities

Against the backdrop of ongoing insecurity in the eastern part of the country, the past year was one of reflection and planning for our work in Maragoli, Western Kenya. Our core projects in education, environment, health care, and agriculture continued unabated, even as teams of international and local visitors were hosted several times during the year by community members. The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) conducted an environmental impact assessment at the resource center, which passed with flying colors. The international board of trustees spent a week in Vigena and Vigeitse in August to mark the 10-year anniversary of MACODEF. In addition, Joyce and Samuel (both from the local board) joined David (trustee) in attending an international conference in Kisii on “Africa in the New World Order,” where they presented a scholarly paper highlighting the challenges and solutions of MACODEF and the local community working together on development projects. It was exciting to revisit the early years of MACODEF’s work and to see how far we have come since 2004.

### Education Projects

Orphans and students from extremely poor backgrounds continued to receive **school fees and uniforms** through the Joshua and Salome Bunyoli scholarship fund, supported so generously by Lee Peart, Bob and Kathy Gorman, Marilyn McConnell and other donors. More than three dozen students received uniforms and/or scholarships in 2014. Patti Moll continued to supply school materials to pupils of Vigena and Vigeitse Primary Schools. The cumulative effects of these efforts are showing up in attendance and performance rates. For example, students completing grade 8 scored 6 points higher on the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exam in 2014 compared to the previous year.

Patti and John Moll continued to donate funds that enabled girls of the three village public schools to have **sanitary pads** throughout the year. Approximately two dozen girls from the three schools also experimented with washable, re-useable pads made locally by the NGO Days for Girls. The pilot project proved feasible and laid the groundwork for a four-day training session on reproductive health and a separate training session for village tailors, who are now sewing nearly 500 “kits” for female students in the two villages. Our goal is to transition to reusable sanitary pads by the start of the third term of the 2015 school year.

During the year a **youth polytechnic institute** offering vocational training was opened at Vigeitse Primary School. The institute attracted a total of 28 students, who took courses in the following areas: Tailoring, Masonry, Carpentry, Mechanics, and ICT (Information Communication Technology). Pupils who fail to transit to secondary schools from the community now have a chance of gaining artisan skills that will improve their employment prospects/

### Environment Projects

National Environment and Management Authority (NEMA) officials visited the site of the community resource center several times in 2014 and conducted an **environmental impact study**, including surveys of neighbors. Nearby residents were overwhelmingly supportive of the resource center, and appropriate steps had been taken to minimize its environmental impact. The officials asked MACODEF to continue complying with environmental legislation in order to maintain a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. NEMA issued MACODEF Registration Certificate Number 00195560 on November 26, 2014.

**Solar lights and rainwater harvest systems** were given to more than a dozen beneficiaries of this year’s Wooster Rotary Club Alternative Christmas drive. The growing use of solar lighting has lessened dependence on electricity, which is expensive, while rooftop harvesting systems provide a reliable alternative to community springs, which sometimes dry up during the dry season.

## **Agriculture Projects**

The MACODEF local board compiled the final report for the Cordaid **sustainable agriculture** project. In 2014 the parents took full charge of the school lunch programs, payment of the cook's wages and supply of farm inputs. Some of the school parents benefited from subsidized fertilizer and tissue culture bananas that were supplied by the Vihiga County Government. A joint World Bank and Government of Kenya project provided capacity building in dairy farming and banana husbandry to some of the parents of Vigena and Vigeitse primary school students. Under the same program, 14 parents received dairy cows, wheelbarrows and spades, while 5 parents were assisted in planting bananas. These examples illustrate how programs linking parents with other stakeholders are taking place, sustaining the program started with Cordaid funds.

The Avene Women's Group received funds to start a **dairy cow program**. Several cows were initially purchased by this self-help group and calving has gone very smoothly; the total number of cows owned by members has grown to 11. The cow's milk is used both for personal consumption and for sale and has provided a steady, if modest, source of income for the women in the group.

## **Community Resource Center**

Donor gifts and grants from the Noble Foundation in the U.S. and from the Wilde Ganzen Foundation in the Netherlands enabled us to **construct the foundation slab and the walls of the center**. Meanwhile, stakeholder groups continued to crush rocks and donate bricks and other materials for the remaining construction. A local *harambee* (fund-raiser) for bricks is planned for late June, 2015, after which construction of the ground floor of the building will be completed. A large portion of donor funds raised in 2014 are still waiting to be used on the construction of the ground floor of the building, once bricks and rocks are assembled by stakeholder groups.

The local board of governors **developed a business plan for income generating activities** that uses the resource center as its nexus. The first phase of the plan calls for poultry and rabbit cages to be built on the compound, followed by raising and selling rabbits and chickens in local markets. The project will start small and grow slowly. In the second phase, plastic chairs and canvas tents will be purchased and rented for use at various events in the community, such as weddings, funerals, and conferences.

Local MACODEF officials made several visits to nearby projects for **training on the construction and management of community centers**. On a visit to a Cordaid project in Kisumu, for example, they learned a great deal about setting up successful water and sanitation projects to serve the community. During a visit to Mago Polytechnic, they were briefed about running and managing of vocational training programs, a guest house, and a health center, and learned ways to balance sources of power (generator, solar and electricity from the grid) and water (borehole, rainwater harvest systems and government-supplied water). We hope to replicate some of the above-mentioned projects in the future.

## **Emergency Fund**

In 2014, the local board of governors continued to identify individuals who had fallen through the social safety net and needed immediate assistance. The board used the **Wooster Rotary Club's Alternative Christmas** drive to identify vulnerable individuals who could benefit from rainwater harvest systems and solar lights. In addition, the board gave out small grants in emergency situations; for example, Simon Osako received a small grant for tuberculosis treatment, while Mirriam Anamanda, Susan Alivitsa, and Margaret Serenge received medication to treat complications from HIV. Our efforts to combat income inequality and to empower the weakest members of the community continue to be central to our mission.

## Health Center

The Vigetse Community Health Center continues to operate, though patient attendance has dropped off as the stakeholders try to work out an agreement over the management of the clinic. MACODEF officials were prepared to hand over the clinic to a Management Committee in 2014; however, the Vigetse Women's Group, who had donated the land and the foundation of the building to the community, resisted the move. When the governor of Vihiga County visited the health clinic in August, he urged the Vigetse Women's Group to accept a government role in staffing and managing the clinic. The details of a new arrangement for managing the clinic are still under discussion.

## Management and Administration

In 2014, our **international trustees** continued to provide financial support as well as input on the direction of MACODEF through regular E-meetings and an on-site visit to Maragoli in August. The composition of the board of trustees remained stable last year, and our newest trustee, Wade Powell, who taught at Ideleri Secondary School over 20 years ago, was able to join us for the visit to Kenya.

Our **local board of governors** coordinated all of our work within Kenya and continued to provide voluntary service for the betterment of their community. In addition to a half dozen full board meetings to prioritize projects and make recommendations for funding, several committees oversaw various aspects of MACODEF's work. We continue to be fortunate to have such a skilled and dedicated team to coordinate projects at the village level.

The composition of our local board also remained stable in 2014. The term of office of our **three top officials** runs through June of 2015, at which point our newly elected top officials—Nebert Isambe, Chair; Beatrice Chadulo, Vice-Chair; and Jairus Maloba, Treasurer—will assume office. Joyce Adisa Bunyoli will continue in the role of Project Coordinator. Our office assistant, Everlyne Minage, was also reappointed for another year. In July of 2015 we will also welcome other new local board members. We will say thank you to outgoing board members and introduce new members in next year's newsletter.

The local board continued to meet with **stakeholder groups** on a regular basis to get feedback from the community and chart the way forward together. The governor of Vihiga County visited one of these meetings in August and in his address, he offered assistance to some of our stakeholder groups and commended the community's efforts to improve the quality of education, health care, agriculture, and the environment.

The MACODEF local board welcomed **many visitors and volunteers** during 2014 and gave generously of their time to host them and exchange ideas. In March, the Wooster in Kenya Program brought 20 students and Rotarians from Wooster OH to the village for homestays, educational sessions on Maragoli life, and shared work on the community center. In July, Kenya Voluntary Development Association (KVDA) volunteers from Scotland and Kenya assisted community members in work on the resource center. In August, MACODEF trustees spent a week in the village visiting projects and meeting together to analyze the successes and challenges of the past decade and to come up with a plan for the future.

Finally, the president and secretary/treasurer of the trustees worked together with the chairman and the secretary/coordinator of the local board to write an **article on participatory development**, reflecting on the challenges and accomplishments during the past decade of MACODEF's work. We presented our reflections at the "Africa in the New World Order" conference in Kisii, Kenya, in July, 2014, and our article was then published in the journal *Practicing Anthropology*. The presentation focused on the importance of going beyond the rhetoric of collaboration and partnership to take concrete and meaningful steps toward ensuring ownership of projects at the local level and sustainability over the long term.

## Financial Report

Our donor community continued to give generously to support MACODEF's projects. We received donations totaling \$48,296 in the U.S. and \$2251 in The Netherlands, for a grand total of \$50,547. In the U.S. individual donors gave gifts of \$19,304, an increase of almost 10% compared to last year. As in past years, over 98% of donor gifts went directly into the local economy, and funds going to administrative expenses were approximately one-sixth of our total income and revenue. We remain deeply grateful to our loyal donors for their sacrifices.

We benefited from the support of nearly a dozen foundations, non-profit organizations, and businesses. The Noble Foundation led the way with an exceedingly generous gift for the community resource center. The Wooster Rotary Club gave a donations from their Kenya Fund and again coordinated an Alternative Christmas drive. We also received gifts from the Francis and Lemoine Peart Family Foundation, The Center for Economic Organizing, the College of Wooster, the Alliance Rotary Club, First Presbyterian Church, Microsoft, ABR, Inc., and the Wooster Book Company. Once again Patricia and John Moll generously supported a pad fund for girls at all three village schools.

Many individuals gave of their time and resources to support MACODEF's activities. Their in-kind donations are noted at the end of the 2014 Donor List. We continued to receive professional quarterly financial reports from our treasurer, Elkana Buhiru Okwaro. A government-certified auditor approved the 2014 books kept by our local board of governors. The finances were found to be in order and copies of the report were sent to Kenya's NGO Coordinating Board.

### Breakdown of Income and Expenses

BALANCE ON DECEMBER 31, 2013		\$7,035
TOTAL INCOME AND REVENUE:		\$48,296
	Individual Contributions	\$19,304
	Foundation/Non-Profit Gifts	\$28,617
	Corporate Donations	\$375
EXPENSES		
	Program Services	\$12,732
	Administration and General	\$7810
	Fundraising	\$352
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$20,894
BALANCE ON DECEMBER 31, 2014		\$34,437