



Maragoli

Community Development
Foundation, Inc.

International Office:

P.O. Box 776
Gambier, OH 43022
macodefus@gmail.com

Kenya Office:

P.O. Box 40
Vihiga, Kenya East Africa
www.maragoli.org

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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.

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Message from the President: The Story of a Vision and Hard Work



Dear Friends:

MACODEF is the story of people with a vision about community-based development and lots of hard work over many years. Dave McConnell started this vision. He founded MACODEF 14 years ago and did all the hard work of fundraising and weekly contact with the Kenyan staff. He stepped down this year as Secretary/Treasurer and handed the work over to Wade Powell. MACODEF owes Dave a lot and we are truly thankful that Wade was willing to take over this demanding job. Fortunately, Dave will stay on as trustee.

MACODEF is the story of people with a vision about community based development and lots of hard work. Our project coordinator Joyce Adisa Bunyoli has been working tirelessly all these years together with the local Board to develop the community, bottom up. The results are solid: a community center that provides the resources needed, income generating projects that are starting to pay off, education for underprivileged students, local healthcare, and support for the most vulnerable.

MACODEF is the story of people with a vision about community-based development. Thanks to you, donors, MACODEF has been able to continue all these years. Your willingness to commit for the long term made it possible to achieve significant changes in the community, changes that take time to come to fruition.

Your generosity, combined with the vision and hard work of many people, enable MACODEF to improve the lives of so many people in this small rural area in Western Kenya. In the report, you can read about our achievements in 2017.

THANK YOU FOR YOU CONTINUED SUPPORT!

Jan Kees den Bakker
President

Summary of Program Activities

2017 was an eventful year in Maragoli, and MACODEF played a key role in the community during the upheaval following two presidential elections: the first, held in August and subsequently contested, and another in October following a Supreme Court-ordered repeat. In the weeks between elections, government services were curtailed, and many NGO's suspended operations or left the country. Fortunately, the Resource Center, Vigetse Health Clinic, and other MACODEF initiatives continued to function, bridging the gap while the country regained its footing.

Community Resource Center

The Resource Center hit its stride as a community hub, expanding its role in providing internet and print/copy services, television news, electricity for mobile phone charging, and an expanded library for local students at all levels.

New shelves were constructed for the library and stocked with books. Most popular are “revision books,” study guides for the high-stakes standardized exams students take at the end of Class 8 (Kenya Certificate for Primary Education or “KCPE”) and Form IV (Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education or “KCSE”). At roughly 2,500 Kenya Shillings *per subject*, these expensive guides are well beyond the means of most families and even many schools. The MACODEF library enables student access to both the books and a comfortable, well-lit study area.

While the Resource Center is now “on the grid,” electricity blackouts are common in Kenya. Solar-generated electricity provides an important backup that is popular for many individuals to charge their mobile phones. Phones are no luxury in Kenya. They are not only crucial for communication, they also serve as an important means of commerce and bill-paying through MPESA and other phone-based banking services. While many homes still lack electricity, families nonetheless rely on reliable phone charging for many routine daily activities.

The Resource Center is also the hub for MACODEF's local income-generating activities, which expanded throughout the year (see below).

Entrepreneurship and Sustainability

In keeping with the 2014 Strategic Plan, MACODEF continued trials and implementation of various income-generating activities, with the aim of greater independence and sustainability of the Foundation's activities. After trying many different western and indigenous crops in 2016, efforts this year focused on those that were most profitable, especially local vegetables (Sukuma wiki, mutele, and others) as well as napier grass for roof thatching. The poultry project also saw growth, with several hens becoming reliable egg layers. Profits from these efforts were used to buy maize at market during the harvest season. The grain was stored at the resource center and sold at a profit at the retail level as prices increased between harvests. Rental of a large tent and

set of chairs was used frequently by local people to accommodate family gatherings, especially funerals. Additional growth of income-generating capacity will be important for the Foundation's future. 2017 was a year of important lessons and nascent profitability.

Education Projects

MACODEF provided important support for local schools, with projects focusing on schoolgirls and needy students. Once again, approximately 40 orphans and underprivileged students received support through the Joshua and Salome Bunyoli Scholarship Fund. Dozens of students at Vigetse Primary School received uniforms in January, and twenty-seven students at Vagina Secondary School received full- or half-tuition scholarship. MACODEF also helped support the purchase of microscopes for the Vagina Secondary School science laboratory. In 2018, we seek to expand scholarship support to needy students at nearby Ideleri Secondary School.

Collaboration with the non-profit, *Days for Girls*, continued with renewed vitality in late 2017 with the purchase of additional materials for sewing washable sanitary pads for schoolgirls at the local primary and secondary schools. This project aims to improve academic performance of girls by reducing absenteeism during menstrual periods, especially for those whose economic circumstances put the purchase of menstrual products out of reach. We expect these efforts to contribute to improved test scores in 2018 KCSE and KCPE exams.

Emergency Fund

The local Board of Governors prizes their role in providing a social safety net for vulnerable and impoverished neighbors. The needs and requests will always be greater than the capacity, but they were able to fund construction of new houses for two local men (Saul Endoho and Isaac Endoho) whose mud and thatch homes had crumbled to the ground. Living alone and in poverty, and beset by health problems ranging from mental illness to age-related frailty to jiggers, these folks were unable to recover without MACODEF assistance. They now have small but clean and well-built houses with corrugated aluminum roofing.

Health Center

The *Vigetse Women's Health Clinic*, founded with substantial financial support from MACODEF, grew in importance this year as government health care facilities experienced a hiatus in operations related to the political upheaval late in the year. Beyond its primary role in distribution of antiviral medications to treat HIV, the Clinic administered treatment to many more patients for a wide range in illnesses, including malaria, parasitic infections, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

Management and Administration

Professional leadership of MACODEF in Kenya remains under the strong leadership of long-time Project Coordinator Joyce Adisa Bunyoli. 2017 saw minor turnover in the staffing of the resource center, including employment of an assistant project coordinator on a trial basis to oversee the income-generating activities and some turnover of the part-time staff who work the gardens and grounds. The local Board of Governors, which changed composition substantially in 2016, met four times to set priorities and make recommendations for funding. This is remarkable voluntary service to the community.

Representatives of all stakeholder groups met at the Resource Center in November to discuss future project ideas and provide reports on their ongoing activities. Formation of a new group to support recovering alcoholics emerged as a priority for 2018.

We thank Sango Otieno for his nearly fourteen years of service on MACODEF's International Board of Trustees. A trustee since the Foundation's earliest days, Sango stepped down to focus on his other development efforts in Kenya. His place on the board will be taken up by Patty Burns, a former teacher at Ideleri Secondary School and current Director of New Media at Kenyon College. Dave McConnell, visionary founder of MACODEF and Secretary/Treasurer since our group's inception, turned over these roles to trustee Wade Powell at the end of 2017. Dave continues to be a fount on institutional knowledge and a very active and dedicated member of the board.

Financial Report

Our international donor community continued its tremendous generosity in 2017, providing the bulk of funding for MACODEF development projects. Fifty different donors contributed \$16,192. We retained a very small fraction of contributions for the expenses associated with the audit and legal requirements of maintaining status as a 501(c)3 organization. Implementation of electronic distribution of all communications, along with new, low-fee currency conversion and bank transfer service, enabled MACODEF to keep US-based expenses to a minimum. As a result, more than 97% of donations went directly to Kenya, providing a remarkable economic boost to the Maragoli economy through the support of our numerous and diverse projects.

Patti and John Moll once again provided primary support for the sanitary napkins project, while Bob and Kathy Gorman, Lemoine Peart, and Marily McConnell gave designated gifts for scholarship funds. We thank the many donors who have given consistently over the years and even increased their contributions in 2017.

A government-certified auditor approved the 2017 accounting records of the local Board of Governors. The books were found to be in order. Copies of the report were sent to Kenya NGO Coordinating Board.

Breakdown of Income and Expenses

Balance on Jan. 1, 2017	\$5,616.00
<u>Income and Revenue</u>	
Individual Donors	\$16,192.00
Total Income and Revenue	\$16,192.00
<u>Expenses</u>	
Program Services	\$10,747.00
Administration and general expenses (salaries, benefits, professional fees, contractors, Resource Center maintenance, etc.)	\$9,958.15
Total Expenses	\$20,705.15
Balance on December 31, 2017	\$1,102.85

2017 MACODEF Donors

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Nancy and Ken Anderson
Bob and Kathy Gorman
Kristy and William Davis
Janice and William Davis
Jack and Jeannine Love
David and Cathy McConnell
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