

Yearly Report 2014



It is our pleasure to present our yearly report in English, German and French, due to the growing number of international partners and friends. It was a year full of surprises for River of Hope and our project, the center "Tala Mosika" ("look beyond", in Lingala) Kinshasa. We even exceeded the goals set for this year. <http://www.ariverofhope.org/media/reports-jahresberichte/>

Overview

During our last trip (Véronique Cialfi and myself) in April 2014 visited the literate- and football program, which we launched in September 2013 with over 60 participants in each program at our newly opened center "Tala Mosika" in Selo. It was a real pleasure to see how this village of 1,000 inhabitants without any kind of infrastructure, located on the main road N1 between Kinshasa and the harbor, had hope of a better future. Upon our arrival, the container sent from Switzerland arrived at the same time as us and together with the team and all the football kids we offloaded everything. The first half of 2014 was very hard and until the beginning of July we didn't know how to open the school in September. No water yet, not enough money to secure the salaries for the teachers and the finances for the football program was missing as well. Hard to believe that today we are better off than expected. Even though the sun was missing last summer in Switzerland, it was shining for "Tala Mosika". During the summer break we received one good news after the other and the financial support from our partners, and different foundations and organizations made it possible to make the grand opening of the snack bar and school on 30 August 2014. Our Congolese team has done a fantastic job and implemented our ideas with great commitment and passion and we are pleased to report on our progress.

Our Goal - Turning on the economy in a village that has no infrastructure.

To build a center in a village without any kind of infrastructure is a challenge for everyone concerned. It was clear to us, that if we want this center to become sustainable and independent there has to be another approach and a change of thinking has to take place. The local team understood that we have to manage the center as a business and that each cent we invest to build the center has to grow. To explain this to the poor village people was a challenge for our local project team. For them it was obvious that when the white people are coming from Europe there is money flowing and everything is for free. Through our micro economical approach we explained to them that nothing is for free and that they have to pay school fees and other services. In order to make this work, we offered them different options.

1. They have a job and earn money and therefore can pay a low school fee
2. They have a lot of natural resources and can pay this way
3. If they don't have a job, we can offer them one at the center and keep a part of the salary to cover school fees.

Everything takes time and we did not want to start with bad habits. If you start giving everything for free at the beginning, you can't change it later and the project will eventually fail. Of course we need to have patience, speak with the families, and find individual solutions, but some parents are paying the school fees, others took a job in agriculture or construction and others paid with a goat, vegetables and oil. <http://complexe-tala-mosika.blogspot.ch/>

The opening of the center

In the village Selo, where our center is located, live around 1,000 people without any future perspective. Some of the villagers are now directly involved. The working conditions are a huge challenge because we have no water or electricity, but at the same time we had to start with simultaneous projects to ensure a boost in the local economy and make our project work. The last 20-foot Container we bought over a year ago and left at the end of January 2014 was positioned on the main road N1 and converted into a snack-bar, for boosting the economies of both villagers and our Center. On 30 August 2014 we opened the container snack bar and the school; it was a great success! Véronique Cialfi went to Selo for the opening period, to support the local team in the set up and the communication with the locals. <http://story-of-a-container.blogspot.ch>

In the meantime, we bought another Container and DHL Buchs offered us again a free parking slot to load it. Once in place next to the snack bar, we will transform it into a shop. The location in Selo on the main road N1 (Kinshasa-Matadi) is a strategic meeting point for travellers to meet, shop and refresh.

Programs

Football: In October 2013 we opened our 2nd CIPERFOOT football center. This offer targets underprivileged children and teenagers living in poverty and in the streets. The training takes place 3 times per week. Most families cannot afford this activity, and we are very pleased with the financial support we received this year to cover the costs for trainers, meals, medical care, and related programs.

Our football school CIPERFOOT of Sanga Mamba was registered as a first of its kind in 2010.

- Our U-18 team has qualified for the 2nd consecutive time for the final round of an all-African tournament organized by Manchester United and Airtel.
- This year we also celebrated the "Peace one Day" <http://ciperfoot-talamosika.blogspot.ch>
- We participated in a few tournaments <http://ciperfoot.blogspot.ch>.
- "One World Futbol" developed a unique ball that does not require air and is almost indestructible. We are very proud to be part of this story, and that our project can benefit from the free balls. <http://www.oneworldplayproject.com/our-impact/blog/river-hope-brings-power-play-congo/>
Interview with the singer, Sting: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYV86ogAuQY>

The Football-Program is very important since we can, through the attraction of football, reach disadvantaged children and young people living in poverty in the region. The training takes place 3 times a week, and the children are divided into 2 age groups. **Sanga Mamba:** <http://ciperfoot.blogspot.ch> **Selo:** <http://ciperfoot-talamosika.blogspot.ch>.
Training Movie: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a7_d-BmCD2s&feature=c4-overview&list=UUJdzxfy2Gax3CQS2tws4Zlw

Tailor - Atelier „Tala Mosika“ The tailor-atelier was sponsored in December 2012 by the Swiss Embassy, Kinshasa, and the program was launched in January 2013. Since we had no premises at the time, we rented a building in Sanga Mamba where we started three years ago. We train young women and take in tailoring orders from customers with the goal to become a self-sufficient small organization. The atelier was moved to our center "Tala Mosika" and starts in January 2015. In order to become a tailor, women need to know how to read and write or they need to be in our literacy program. Knowing how to read and write and make them a part of our economy are the basis for success. Our goal is the creation of a cooperative that everyone can become a member of. Products can also be sold at our shop. <http://atelier-couture-tala-mosika.blogspot.ch/>

Agricultural Program: At the beginning of the rainy season in September 2013, we started an agricultural program in collaboration with Caritas Linz/Kinshasa. It is important for the villagers become self-sufficient and they are actively trained and involved. We started with 6 hectares of land, whereby 4 hectares are owned by the villagers of Selo, but prepared, planted and cared for under the guidance of an agronomist. The biggest challenge was the missing rain, water supply and the sandy earth. We might only plant manioc in order to have a successful harvest on a regular basis. Animals like goats, sheep and chickens found also a new home at our center. Caritas Linz-Austria, has decided to continue its support for another 18 months for which we are very grateful. <http://agriculture-tala-mosika.blogspot.ch/>

School: We planned to start with 2 classes of 30 kids each, to our surprise we started with 8 classes (ca. 200 students), since the families of Selo have realized that they get a unique chance to make a change through education. There is a class with kids, who visited only 3-4 years of primary school, and one class with kids who have completed the primary level and start the official Junior High school program. In addition we had a whole group of parents with primary school children who wanted us to find a solution so that the kids don't have to walk 5 km on the main road to the next school. In collaboration with the parents we built other classrooms, received the permit for those levels, hired teachers, and with joined forces we tried to cover the salary for the teachers and purchased educational material. It's amazing what can be achieved when everyone works together. We found some sponsors and schools in Switzerland who helped us raise money to ensure some salaries, buy school material and books. The center has strong relations with the ministry of education, who is in turn very impressed by the work accomplished so far. Our school will be soon a registered state school and the authorities wish to use our campus for delivering the state courses for teachers and related final exams. Eventually the government will finance a part of the teacher's salaries <http://talalmosikaprogrammescolaire.blogspot.ch/> <http://iskk-tala-mosika.blogspot.ch>

A canteen financed by "Cuisine sans frontières" - CsF: Following an inspection trip last summer, the board of CsF has given the go ahead for cooperation with our project. The project team under the guidance of board member Ivo Müller, and in cooperation with our local team and myself developed the plans for the school canteen. The construction started in December 2014, and the CsF-team together with Véronique Cialfi will travel to Selo from March to May 2015 to install the kitchen equipment and the training. Véronique will help and train the locals in hygiene and management of the kitchen. <http://cuisine-talamosika.blogspot.ch>

Important Issues

Water – Water is LIFE! Without water we would not have received the permit to open the school. Digging for water and installing a fountain required a budget of over \$30,000 and we still need funds to install the fountains and to bring the water to the buildings. We are urgently looking for funds. <http://complexe-tala-mosika.blogspot.ch>

Electricity - by using simple solar solutions, spaces can be operated individually. A complicated wiring system and constant power failures are not an adequate solution, whereas the bright sun never lets us down!

We are speaking with a Swiss Technical University in order to help us with the solar project, in order to provide our center with an independent solution. The goal is substantial improvement of the economical, educational and environmental situation for people of the "bottom of the pyramid". <http://solar-tala-mosika.blogspot.ch/>

News from our team

Christophe Mbedi: Our local project manager is a teacher and journalist and attended, at the beginning of January 2014, at the Bala Vikasa Center in India, a 1-month seminar/workshop about "Community Driven Development-CDD". He did not just receive great information on how to implement new strategies in Congo but met also Roseline Roy, an active women from Canada.

Roselyne became a good friend and is representing us with great dedication and momentum in Canada. We thank her for her trust and her support and welcome her in our team.

Coming Up

On 29 May, 2015 – River of Hope collaborates since 5 years with a great team in Congo!

Health Center: Since over four years our team includes 2 doctors who provide medical care and counseling. With limited means, we managed to run health checks for all the children entering the football program. Many suffer from bad hygiene, malnutrition, malaria, and typhoid fever, and are unable to play football or go to school. We are extremely pleased that the Catholic communities of Buchs, Grabs, Sevelen (Switzerland) under "Solidarität für eine Welt" are financing our project to build a small medical center at the end of March 2015. This provides medical care for all the villagers and gives them precious tips on health issues and hygiene. The closest clinic is located 17km away. <http://dispensaire.blogspot.ch>

Professional Center – We are planning a professional center for our students in the fields of tailoring, construction, agriculture, etc. But we would also like to offer courses for adults, leading to a certificate/diploma, so that people have the possibility to get a job, or become self-employed. We are discussing a possible collaboration with a Canadian institution.

Looking for support

Sponsoring School Children – We offer a day school for kids from Selo and surroundings, as well as a boarding school for kids from Kinshasa, where we will collaborate with different organizations. We will offer a strong educational program based on national standards, which enables them to learn a profession or to pursue further education. We want to provide access to sports, academics, and extracurricular activities. Children receive the necessary support to become independent and confident individuals, ready to face the challenges of their personal and professional lives. We aim to free them and their families from the cycle of poverty and misery. Further details about the program will follow.

Sponsor a classroom or a dormitory: We are growing and we need more classrooms and dorms. Support us in financing furniture for classrooms or beds and cupboards for the boarding school. Please find information on the following site. <http://www.ariverofhope.org/help/name-a-room/>

Construction of dorms: For children who stay at school during the year

Transportation: We need urgently a second car to transport people and goods

Information from Switzerland

Events in Switzerland – International School Rheintal & Kreuzlingen, César Ritz Colleges in le Bouveret and St. Georges School in Clarens have organized a number of different fund-raising activities. In March we organized in collaboration with Koj-Werdenberg on behalf of the "International Water Day" a water bottle sale <http://dispensaire.blogspot.ch>. In May, Censeo Relocation organized an International Werdenberg Rally and around the year we presented the project in the church, schools and associations.

Media – Thank you to the local media for the coverage

Press: <http://www.ariverofhope.org/media/> Movies: <http://www.ariverofhope.org/media/movies/>

Interviews: <http://www.ariverofhope.org/media/interviews/>

For your information – we would like to point out that all board members and associates of River of Hope work on a voluntary basis. Therefore all funds collected are injected entirely in the project. All administrative and project-related costs have been, so far, always covered by specific donations aimed to that effect. A big thank you for that.

Time to say thank you – It is amazing to see that we were able to achieve such results having started from scratch without a cent. This was made possible thanks to many individuals and organizations that trusted us and believed in our vision. Financial controlling performed by: ACV Revision in Buchs/SG.

Thank you so much for your support – together we are strong



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