

ABC Kenia Schulen Einmaleins e.V.

Newsletter

An unsere Mitglieder und Förderer

Berlin, Juli 2024.

No 2/2024



Dear members, dear supporters,

we are delighted and proud to announce the official opening and commissioning of our new, additional school building in May 2024! We now have a laboratory on the ground floor and 2 more classrooms on the first floor.



Why another building

The Kenyan government has decided to restructure the school system in Kenya in 2022. The current 8-4-4 system is to be replaced by the 2-6-6-3 system and gradually implemented over the next few years.



2-6-6-3 means

2 years of pre-primary school

6 years of primary school

6 years of Junior Secondary School and Senior Secondary School

followed by 3 years (or more) of higher education

For Kenyan children, this means an extension of 1 year to 9 years of basic education (6 years of primary + 3 years of junior secondary school) instead of the previous 8 years of primary school. Our school, the Joerges Learning Centre (JLC), must also be restructured for this and permission to extend the Joerges Learning Centre to junior secondary level must be applied for. It has been available since 2023.

The new junior secondary school also needs a laboratory for science lessons. The existing premises are bursting at the seams and additional rooms are needed.



Our existing school building continues to serve us well up to Year 6

Not an easy task! So what to do given our limited financial and organisational resources?

After a brief pause for thought, we did not hesitate for long and set everything in motion to tackle this mammoth task. A complex bureaucratic and school-political course (school authorities at district and county level, building authorities, health authorities, etc.) was completed, agreement reached and the necessary authorisations obtained.



Our long-standing partners Agnes, Monika and Andy from the Help-Keniakinder e.V. association are

bearing the main burden for the new building itself with strictly earmarked donations.

A huge thank you to them!

In addition, Jörg Hempel is responsible for the electrical and gas installation and pays any fees incurred.



And so, in October 2023, an 8-month construction period begins for the new school building (top right and left) with an additional toilet block (top centre):



In April 2024, it already looks like this:



The laboratory can be set up...



...and on 17 May 2024, the building will be officially and ceremoniously opened with lots of dancing and singing and the local imam:



Now we can get started: Our Year 7 and 8 pupils move from the canvas-covered table in the schoolyard into the new laboratory building. Year 8 has its first really practical chemistry lessons in a real laboratory that can stand comparison with other schools.



We are delighted to now fulfil the new requirements of the Kenyan government for schools in grades 7 - 9 and to be able to continue teaching, caring for and educating our protégés in this age group.

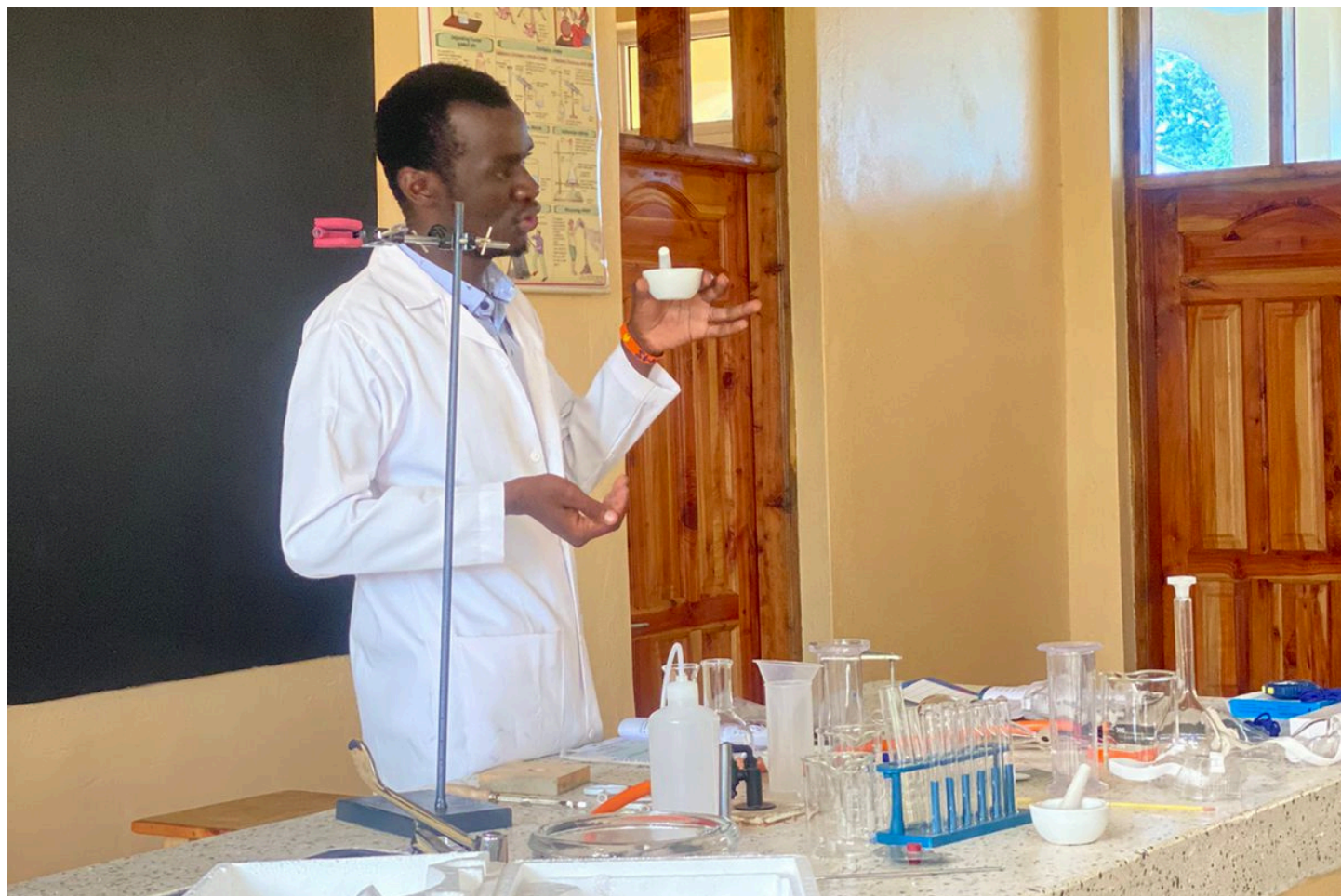


Unfortunately, the downside of the government's certainly well-intentioned policy at schools that have not yet been able to reach this new level required by the authorities often looks less attractive:

Schoolchildren now have to leave inadequately equipped schools after the 6th grade and are then looking for junior secondary schools, which unfortunately do not exist in sufficient and affordable numbers.

As a result, some of these junior secondary schools are hopelessly overcrowded (100 pupils per class and classroom are not uncommon!) and for some children it even means the end of their schooling after Year 6. This, of course, primarily affects children of particularly poor parents.

Apart from educational and legal aspects, a science lab is an immense benefit for our pupils!



Up to now, they have been doing well in their theoretical school education with textbooks, exercise books, chalkboards and various supplementary teaching materials and have been successful in examinations. However, the practical part of their education has so far been neglected and could only be realised to a very limited extent.

For example, the experimental setup of evaporation with subsequent condensation was simulated on the wooden table under the tent roof, but for safety reasons without ever carrying out the actual experiment, which would have required heating with a Bunsen burner.

What would have been seen in a real experiment was only explained to the pupils in theory and written down for them to memorise. The children now really enjoy becoming little explorers themselves in the new laboratory and deducing the laws of nature based on their own 'research' and visualisation.

It lifts the heart to see them doing scientific experiments. That is the best reward for our efforts!



Sewing becomes a school subject

The BINTI project is making an impact:



Under the leadership of Elisabeth Horstmann-Neu, we collected so many donations with the theme 'Hygiene for girls' that we were able to buy 2 more sewing machines and enough special fabrics to sew a basic set of Bintis for all our upper school girls and teachers.



With the move of the 7th and 8th grade students to the new school building, one of the vacated rooms in the previous building will be set up and used as a sewing room.



As sewing is an integral part of the new compulsory Home Science subject in Kenya according to the CBC curriculum, all the boys and girls are now sewing Bintis. So many that we now have enough for everyone and further sewing projects can be planned.



We also have a sporty side

The pupils of our Junior Secondary School deliver an excellent football tournament at sub-county level and take first place. The pupils from our Lower Secondary School came second (boys) and third (girls) in football. Their motivation is already immense and they are continuing to hone their technical skills.



We owe the jerseys to the generous donation from Torsten Steppin. Thank you very much and congratulations!



Training in the school



Our volleyball players are also exceptionally successful and win the subcounty competition.



At the sub-county athletics championships for schools in Mombasa, five pupils qualify for the county competition, one of whom makes it to the regional championships in the long jump: Tutu (Year 8).



The downside is that the higher we go up into new leagues, the greater the burden on our budget. From the supra-regional level upwards, the travelling costs, participation fees and expenses add up to around 300 euros per team. This has not yet been included in the budget planning.

Music is in the air

From the very beginning, our school has also been musical. Singing and dancing are in the blood of our children and teachers from an early age and a drum for rhythmic accompaniment is always easy to find.

Since we now employ Mr Julius as a music teacher for two half days a week and have invested in 3 guitars, a keyboard and 40 inexpensive plastic flutes through donations, music lessons have become a constant part of the curriculum. Now music is really finding its way into our school! Each class has its own choir and can create its own programme.



In addition, 20 pupils practise choral singing and learn to play instruments in a music promotion group. They successfully take part in music competitions at district and regional level and even achieve an impressive 3rd place in choral singing at national level. Our guitar and flute-playing girls are also doing very well. And they are still practising for the national level next year!

Teachers also learn

We have had a first aid kit, a basic supply of over-the-counter medicines (paracetamol, etc.) and a doctor working in the neighbouring village and committed to our school for some time now. However, in order to be even better prepared for medical emergencies, all teachers at our school take part in a six-hour first aid course as an introduction to the subject at our school.

Instructors from St John's Hospital visit us for this. Our teachers are enthusiastic about the course and now feel much more competent in this area. In addition, 2 teachers each attend a 3-day basic first aid course and are now available for paramedic and first aider functions at our school.



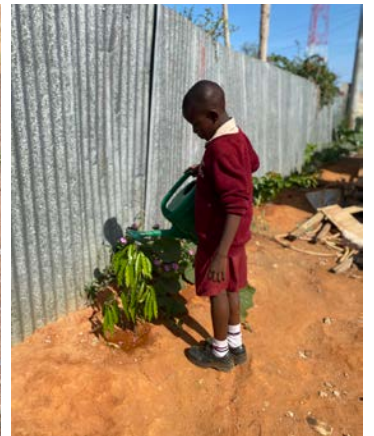
In addition to improving preparedness in the event of emergencies or accidents, this further training also makes a welcome contribution to relativising superstitions of all kinds: seizures or fainting spells can now be explained and treated medically. Fire drills for all or at least 3 teachers and 2 cooks are planned next.



We already have the correct number of fire extinguishers, which are tested annually, and evacuation drills have already been carried out. Now we need to expand our basic knowledge and acquire a few practical skills.

Tree planting for climate protection

A public holiday for climate protection: the Kenyan government is focusing on trees to improve the climate and attract rain.



So we are also planting 40 trees along the boundaries of our site as part of our horticulture lessons.



New co-operation with Löwenrot Gymnasium

We are very happy about our new partnership with a school from Germany: Löwenrot Gymnasium from St. Leonrod! Löwenrot Gymnasium is interested in a mutual exchange between their schoolchildren and teachers and our schoolchildren and teachers in Maweni. Together we would like to establish communication between the pupils of both schools and thus enable an intercultural exchange.

To this end, the students of the advanced level of St. Leonrod Gymnasium will be in regular contact with our 8th and 9th graders and exchange ideas on various topics (family structures, democracy, political systems, religion, etc.). There are also plans for charity events, which will be organised and carried out by the advanced level and will benefit our school.



The postgraduate level of Löwenrot Gymnasium is a special kind of orientation school year: it is a kind of voluntary sabbatical after year 10, during which the students work practically on a social project and, among other things, set up a real company. From the 2024/2025 school year, the project is called 'Cooperation with the abc Kenya Schools Association e.V.'

Last year, a football tournament organised by Löwenrot Gymnasium raised a huge donation for our children. We are very happy about this new partnership and warmly welcome Löwenrot Gymnasium, especially the teachers Jasmin Zimmermann and Stefan Vogel!

Our daily bread ...

.... remains a challenge:

Every month, considerable effort is required to maintain and build on what has already been achieved. We have to pay our teachers and cooks every month, provide daily school materials and simple meals to keep them full. We continue to look after our schoolchildren both as a class and individually. Reading, writing and arithmetic were, are and will remain the foundations on which the secondary subjects and the new CBC programme are built.

These compulsory subjects must be in place so that we can also tackle the freestyle programme. Your support remains essential for both the compulsory and the free programme. Please continue with us and don't let up!

We would like to say THANK YOU for everything you have done and donated so far! Your donations go to the right place and only do good.



Best regards

Dr Jörg Hempel

Chairman of the association

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