

HIGH FIVE CLUB

changing lives, £5 at a time

Mara Riante Nursery School, Kenya



We are delighted this month to be continuing our support of the Maasai who live in the Mara Riante area of Kenya's world famous Masai Mara Game Reserve. This is a community that High Five Club Trustees Cheryl & Manny Mvula have worked with extensively over the past 6 years through their social enterprise Tribal Voice Communications, and one that the High Five Club is fostering a long-standing relationship with. This is a very active community that has already brought about significant self-development in their own area.

Background (for our new members!)

The Kenyan government has really marginalized the Maasai tribe and given little or no support for health and education facilities in rural areas. Education provision, particularly for the youngest children, is down to the parents themselves to provide. This is a big challenge for a community like Mara Riante that live hand to mouth, and many

Maasai children never get the opportunity to go to school. Instead they are forced to stay in the village to help look after their family's livestock and do household chores such as fetching water and firewood.

Over the past 3 years the Maasai of Mara Riante have been developing the first nursery school in the area with the support of the High Five Club and one of our corporate sponsors Roffey Homes, along with income earned by the community from their village's cultural tourism activities – an initiative introduced by Cheryl throughout the Masai Mara to end the deep rooted exploitation of this iconic tribe by Kenya's driver guides (see the Pro-Poor Tourism page of www.tribal-voice.co.uk).



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As the school has developed, increasing numbers of Maasai elders have witnessed at first hand the benefits of education and more and more parents are now coming forward to try and secure their children a place at the school. The High Five Club has assisted the school to develop and it now has three classrooms, 3 teachers' houses and 3 teachers, but it unfortunately still has to turn children away because of its limited capacity.

High Five Club Support

In response, we have joined hands again with the Maasai to part-fund the further development



of this community-owned and run nursery school. We have provided 473,445 Kenyan Shillings (£3,623.73) to help Mara Riente expand the school still further so that 40 more Maasai children can be offered a place at the school.

The community themselves have contributed the greater part (623,445 KS = £4,771.82) from the income they earn conducting cultural tours around Mara

Riente village to visiting safari tourists. By joining hands with the Maasai our collective funds (£8,395.55 in total) have enabled the construction of one further classroom, the construction of the very first school office at the school, sixteen 3-seater school desks to furnish the new classroom along with a teacher's desk, chair and cupboard, plus the construction of a small house for the headmaster, meaning the school has been able to recruit and house one new teacher.

The community have additionally paid 250,000 KS (£1,913.49) to purchase and secure formal Title Deeds for 2 hectares of land adjoining the school to provide a sports and play area for the children.



It is unbelievable how far our funds have gone in uplifting education provision in this rural, impoverished community!

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As a result of these recent developments Mara Riente Nursery School now provides quality education to close to 190 Maasai children aged between 3 and 6 years (50% girls and 50% boys), has 4 sturdy stone-built classrooms, a school office, 4 teacher's houses next to the school, toilets for both teachers and pupils, bathrooms for the teachers, a playground and a rainwater harvesting system that

provides clean drinking water during the rains. Those parents that can afford pay a small school fee each term that contributes towards the payment of the 4 teachers' salaries, all of whom are trained and qualified, with the village tourism enterprise paying the balance. A truly sustainable school development!

The High Five Club is thrilled to be able to give the Mara Riente community a helping hand in working towards their ultimate dream of providing quality nursery education for all children in their community. Our contribution was funded through monthly High Five Club memberships, supplemented by £3,000 from our very generous 'educational projects' benefactor Roffey Homes (www.roffeyhomes.com). A BIG thank you from Mara Riente Nursery School to everyone involved!



For further information contact Dr Cheryl Mvula on Cheryl@highfiveclub.co.uk