

HIGH FIVE CLUB

changing lives in Africa, £5 at a time

Church Planting, Masai Mara in Kenya



The great majority of Kenyans are Christian, with impoverished communities living in rural areas holding firmly to their faith in the face of abject poverty. Having faith in Jesus and being part of a church community is of immense importance to the Maasai tribe living in the wildlife-rich Masai Mara, with communities gathering together to worship near their villages, usually under the shade of large trees. This was, however, not the case up until fairly recent times – the Maasai were largely an unreached people. This changed when Maasai village pastors began to go out into the community and share their faith.

Unlike in the west, church is central to the vast majority of people's lives in rural Africa. It not only provides for people's spiritual nourishment but is a vital source of practical help to many, with local churches in rural areas running feeding programmes for orphans and widows, building remote community schools where children had no previous access to education, bringing safe clean water to communities for the first time, along with other life-changing welfare initiatives. Increasingly, insightful conservationists are also recognising the power of God's word to speak to people about what good stewardship of nature and wildlife looks like, bringing positive benefits for conservation too.

HIGH FIVE CLUB

changing lives in Africa, £5 at a time

We are, therefore, delighted to launch our very first church planting initiative by supporting **African Inland Church-Kenya (AIC)** in Sekenani, Masai Mara to plant new churches for the benefit of the wider community. This is a community that High Five Club Co-Founders Manny and Cheryl Mvula have worked alongside for the past 15 years on livelihood initiatives linked to cultural tourism. It is also a community that High Five Club members have supported previously with the construction of a classroom at the local Sekenani Nursery School, equipment for the Maasai IT Centre and the provision of safe, clean water.

High Five Club Support

AIC in Sekenani, Masai Mara first started its ministry in January 1990 with a handful of people gathering under a tree. Since then the church has grown rapidly with many Maasai becoming Christians. The first church (AIC Enchorro Empuan) has become the mother of 8 churches in the Masai Mara, and new church planting continues as more and more Maasai come to faith.



The Pastor overseeing these churches is James Ole Lesaloi, the first Maasai to become a Christian in the area, and a co-worker of Manny and Cheryl's in overturning the exploitation of the Maasai by the tourism industry in Kenya.

Five of these churches have a permanent shelter, the other three meet under a tree. This is absolutely fine in the dry season

but is very challenging during the rainy season and as the numbers grow the trees can no longer provide sufficient shade on hot days for everyone to gather together.

High Five Club members have provided resources to AIC Mara West District Church Council to build a simple, iron-sheet constructed church called **AIC Ole Sere** for people to gather together. This church currently serves a community of 55+ adults and



HIGH FIVE CLUB

changing lives in Africa, £5 at a time

their children and is growing rapidly. With our support people can now meet, worship and practically support vulnerable members of the community from a weather-proof church building. The community



raised 100,000 Kenyan Shillings (42% of the funds needed) for this development with the High Five Club providing 138,600 Kenyan Shillings (£846). Amazing value for money! And the good news is that people can grow and worship together and expand the practical help they give to vulnerable members of their community.

For further information and to help with further church planting in the Masai Mara contact Dr Cheryl Mvula on Cheryl@highfiveclub.co.uk

