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Doing projects with MamboSteunPunt

introduction

Mambo is a small village on the edge of the Usambara Mountains in Tanzania. For Mambo and the municipality Sungu where Mambo is based (called Ward in Tanzania), development is still essential at all levels and in almost every aspect. There is no water supply, no electricity and a shortage of firewood and infrastructural facilities.

MamboSteunPunt wants to assist to develop the region. We from MamboSteunPunt don't believe in aid as such because aid makes people easily dependent. We believe that development can best be achieved through mutual cooperation in equality and sharing knowledge.

Structure of the organization

MamboSteunPunt is the support organization based in the Netherlands for projects in and around Mambo. MamboSteunPunt is a low profile fund for fundraising. It's counterpart in Tanzania is MamboPoaPoint.

MamboPoaPoint (Fund/NGO in formation) is the Tanzanian counterpart of MamboSteunPunt and is based in Mambo, to be specific at MamboViewPoint. MamboPoaPoint identifies projects together with the local people. They frame projects, draft project proposals, implement, monitor, evaluate and in consultation with the local people they can make adjustments in the project.

Moreover they can assist others who would like to do a project in the vicinity of Mambo in each and every stage of their project. Moreover they can monitor, evaluate and give feedback regarding the continuity of the project they initiated. This can boost the sustainability of these private initiatives tremendously.

MamboViewPoint is the eco Lodge and also the base of MamboPoaPoint in Tanzania. Actually MamboSteunPunt and MamboPoaPoint are originating from the people that initiated the lodge. The intention of building a lodge in the Usambara Mountains was to enhance development in the region. The presence of the lodge is an economical stimulus already on itself. The organisations MamboSteunPunt and MamboPoaPoint are put in place to draw a better line and create more transparency between the projects and the lodge.

In relation to the projects, the function of the lodge now is to take care for a stable base and the optional profits of the lodge are also spent on the development of the region. The lodge makes it possible to have permanent people around and they support private initiatives with their gained knowledge regarding construction and knowledge of the region. Moreover, special rates and accommodation are put in place for volunteers for the private initiatives.

Vision

Very many relatively minor things can imply a tremendous improvement for the inhabitants of the Usambara Mountains. Small scale initiatives can effectively be guided and supported by MamboSteunPunt.

The precondition for the support for the initiatives from MamboSteunPunt and MamboPoaPoint is that projects should not so much be based on the principle of giving aid but rather on the intention of cooperation in equality. Projects should be aimed at local ownership, self management, self maintenance and enhancing self reliance and livelihoods of the local people.

Nature of the projects

Most projects are based on the following principles

- Encouraging people to start their own business. (like woodcarving, cultivating biological vegetables etc)
- Creating an added value to the products which are produced already (like juice from fruits etc)
- Improve local capacities, level of education and enhance creativity. (support existing schools, support theatre, art and music)
- Creating a better infrastructure (like repairing roads, internet access, water supply and health facilities)
- Creating a healthy environment (by planting trees, finding alternatives for firewood, building better stoves etc)

Results in 2009

Since MamboSteunPunt started in January 2009 many projects like water supply and school toilets are realized already.

For the list of projects have a look at our website www.MamboStuenPunt.org

Besides these projects there are many idea's and proposals left.

For a complete overview have a look at www.MamboViewPoint.org with the tab projects.

Why should a company, organization or private person support the projects of MamboSteunPunt.

As a consequence from the vision outlined above, projects should be focused on meeting local needs, utilize and enhance local capacities and opportunities. The ultimate objective of the projects should be local ownership, self maintenance and thus enhancing the livelihoods of local people.

Besides giving money MamboSteunPunt appreciates it very much if people from the companies, organizations or private donors are joining during implementation of the projects. They easily can combine it with a nice stay in MamboViewPoint eco lodge, will get a unforgettable period and even the best, will create a bond between themselves or the company and the project. Moreover the results will be very clear and can be inspected by the donors themselves. The money is not disappearing and the donors have fully the opportunity to display the results.

Doing a project in practice.

Doing projects will have the following phases:

1. Idea and investigation.

What MamboPoaPoint does is identifying projects together with the local people to make sure that local needs are met, local capacities and resources are going to be used in an optimal way. Especially when ideas are born abroad, like building a school or a dispensary, it is often questionable if this is a good idea. Many things which are originating from abroad, often encounter a lot of problems in practice because they are not always meeting the real local needs or only serve those who make easily connections with foreigners already and thus the better off. Thorough investigation of the local population and their situation is a necessity for sustainable projects. Moreover, it is very much possible that some other organization is working on the same idea or problem already. Because we are living in the area and are part of the local community, we are well informed about the local problems, the questions that arise and the social situation.

2. Finding the right people and partners for support.

Each project needs its own specific partners or organizations on the ground. They should have the experience in the required fields so they can contribute with their capacity to take on the various task at hand. They can be the interface between the project initiators and the local population. In relation to this it has to be clear who is in charge of the various stages of the project, like the project design, the preparation, implementation etc.

3. Fundraising

Before starting it must be clear how the money will be collected. This can be from the initiator him/her serves but also through other funds. Nonetheless, it is an important aspect that also the beneficiaries contribute somehow in the project. This not always has to be financial in nature, labor, local knowledge etc. could also be a very valuable contributed asset for the project. This contribution of beneficiaries is tremendously important to give co-ownership of the project straight from the start.

4. Legal settlement

If the whole project is clear there might be the need for a legal settlement. For small projects this will not be a problem but for projects with more impact the necessary authorities have to be informed and have to give their approval.

5. Implementation

In this phase the project will be realized physically and operationally. Preferable the initiator(s) of the project need to be around to establish good cooperation and to be sure the project is going in the best way.

MamboSteunPunt is a strong supporter to be not too strict to the original design but to adapt to the best and possible solutions in practice. This requires some capacity for adaptation. Constant monitoring, evaluation, feedback and adaptation of the process is necessary in this stage.

6. training

Related to the implementation, most often training is needed for a good functioning of the project. This can be done by the initiators, by MamboSteunPunt or if necessary, by specialized organizations that are equipped to do so.

7. feedback

Once the project is settled there is a need for a regularly guidance and feedback. This can be done by MamboSteunPunt since they are permanent around. Moreover, depending on the type of project, the government also has its own procedures to make regular inspections, like f.e. for dispensaries, schools, public buildings and so on.

8. Involvement

Last but not least, there is a need to stay in touch. It will be good if the initiators have a regular contact with the people in the field and pass by once in a while to see how the project is evolving, see if it has the impact that was aimed for.