



## “Improve living conditions: start with the children” The succes of the circus

Dear donors, volunteers and other sympathisers of MamboViewpoint,

This time we will not offer you an overview of all activities. This newsletter will highlight **Mambo Sarakasi Watoto: the Mambo Children’s Circus**. In 2010 Gijs together with Herman and Marion hit upon the idea how wonderful it would be to start a circus. What good opportunities this could offer the children to develop. In 2012 Moddy, a local artist and comedian, announced he was willing to lead the circus. When Gijs arrived at Mambo shortly afterwards, with a bag full of single-wheelers, a beautiful adventure took off and it is still continuing. The circus started with 20 children who learned tricks from Moddy and accompanied his performances. Five years later the circus consists of a steady group of 50 children who practise every Saturday and Sunday. They already performed about a hundred times to the guests of MamboViewpoint, at schools, in the village on special occasions and on tours in the region.

Alongside and originating from the circus the children -of whom some have grown into young adults- have evolved quite a few other activities. They became more confident and developed skills for entrepreneurship. Hence getting chances to a better future. This is in short the successful, intended result of the circus activities.

Back to the beginning. Moddy also visited schools in order to stimulate creativity with the elder children by teaching circus acts. In this way they learn how to cooperate and how to solve problems in a playful way. They become more self-confident and assertive. These competences are not presented in the regular school system. In 2014 Moddy left town in order to provide for his family. His successor Evans, a teacher, was transferred to the other side of the country after a few years. In 2016 Gijs luckily came to Mambo to stay for a longer period of time. He took on to lead the circus. While doing so, he had the elder children take over as much as possible. And performed more and more as a supportive coach on the background putting the children into their own newly discovered strength.

Proudly Gijs can announce that this year the leadership of the circus has been taken over by two young adults from the circus group: Amina Yahaya (15) and Shabani Nuhu (20 years of age). They, at their turn, train seven children to become assistant trainers. Of course not everything came without a hitch and setbacks do occur.

😊	😞
- Children become confident, learn to cooperate and solve problems. 90 % of the circus children (against an average of 40 %) succeed to get access to secondary school.	- Due to their problem solving skills, independence and assertiveness, the children fit in more difficultly in the Tanzanian school system; some drop out untimely.
- In 2017 Amina Yahaya (15 years old) and Shabani Nuhu (20) lead the circus.	- Two girls out of three who became assistant trainers, had become attractive marriage candidates because of their grown self esteem. After their weddings they no longer were allowed to attend the circus.
- Seven children are being trained to become assistant trainers.	- Some children were sent to town in order to support their families.
- Gijs is able to stay in Mambo in 2016 and 2017 and manages to spot children’s talents with his unbridled positive energy and background as sports trainer.	- Moddy was not able to earn enough to support his family and hence felt obliged to leave for the city. Evans, being a teacher, was transferred to the other side of the country.
- Seven girls from the circus group learned to cook for groups and have become substitute cooks in the MamboViewpoint kitchen.	
- At two locations in the village six circus teenagers read to 4-8 year old children and play with them.	
- Painting classes at primary schools resulted in wall paintings on the classrooms.	
- Sadi Omari joined the Bike Challenge and went with guests on three day bicycling tours from Mambo to Korogwe. He is now starting a bicycle repair and touring operator traineeship	
- Mambo Sarakasi Watoto performed a hundred times for guests of MamboViewpoint, at special occasions in the village, in neighbouring villages and they went on tour to Tanga, Pangani, Moshi and Arusha.	

Music lesson

## The weekly contact with MamboViewpoint led towards more interest and new talents opened up.

### Making music: the circus orchestra

When a container full of musical instruments arrived in 2016, a few volunteers and a local music teacher facilitated the base for music making. The circus acts are being accompanied by an orchestra ever since.

### Learning how to cook

Seven girls wanted to learn how to cook more varied meals. They joined the MamboViewpoint kitchen staff preparing meals during several months. Afterwards they were able to substitute for women during maternity leave. And regularly help out during the more busy days. They also cook for the circus children every now and then.

### Drawing lessons and beautiful classrooms

In 2016 Amina and Shabani gave art lessons together with the local art painter Makanyaga at several primary schools. These lessons were always finished by having the pupils do a mural in two classrooms which had been renovated all together by MamboSteunpunt/ JamiiSawa. Amina's and Shabani's pedagogic skills supplemented the artistic skills by Makanyaga.

### Bicycling

Sadi Omari showed interest in bicycling. Gijs took him and some other boys along on his mountainbike tours through the hills around Mambo. Sadi took part in the Bike Challenge in Arusha. He twice accompanied guests on a three days bicycling tour, 190 kilometers long, from Mambo to Korogwe. He was offered a two year's traineeship in Arusha in order to learn everything about bicycle maintenance. And to improve his English and learn how to plan bicycle trainings. In doing so developing a sense of entrepreneurship. We expect him to be able to start his own bicycling business after two years.

### Playing with young children in the village

Amina, Shabani, Saidi and three other teenagers play with children from four to eight year old at two sites in the village. Through playing, drawing and reading to them they provide the children with self confidence and offer them positive role models.



*Mambo Sarakasi Watoto on tour in Moshi  
on the background the Kilimanjaro*



## Future dreams and integration with other projects

The circus children regularly stay over for dinner at MamboViewpoint in groups of ten. This is very popular. Wouldn't it be nice when the girls who learned how to cook could **provide the circus children with a nutritious meal every Saturday and Sunday** before their training?

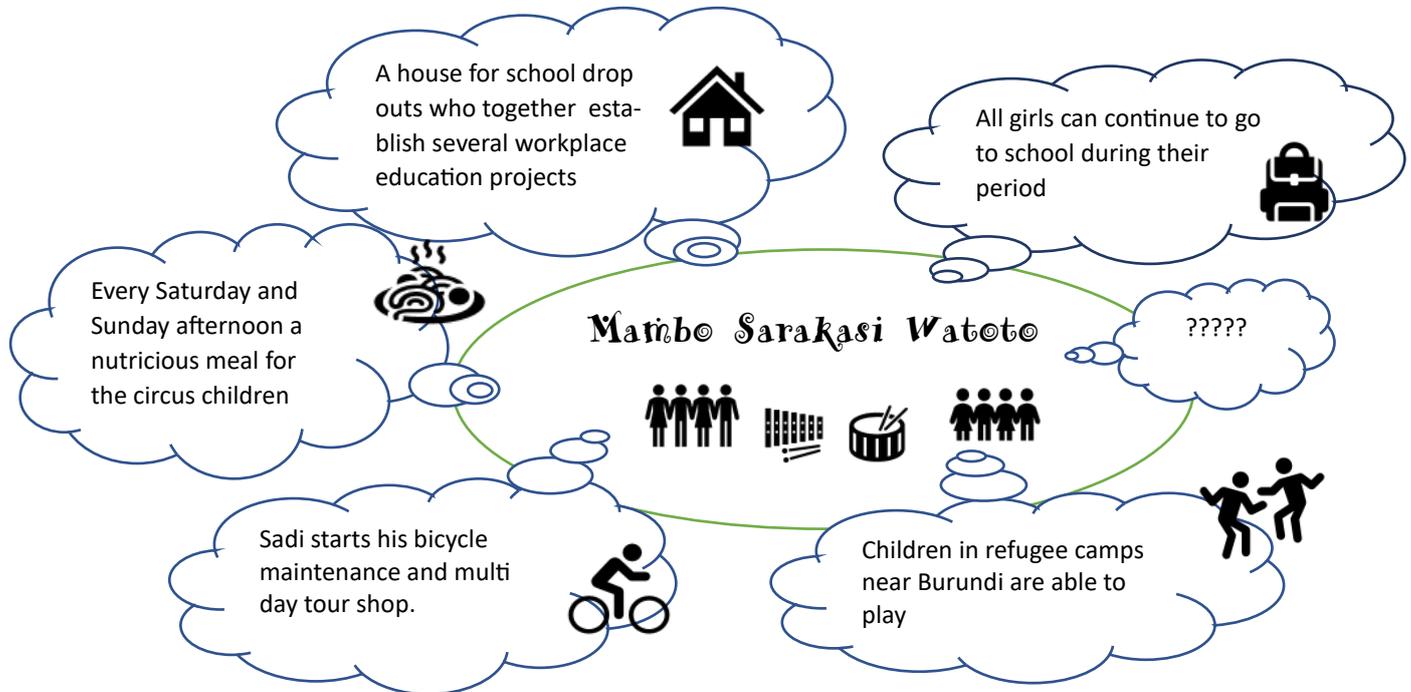
Another future dream is to build a house **for young school drop outs** who could then together establish several workplace education projects. In doing so hopefully start to become self supporting. They would have no urge to leave towards the bigger towns and cities.

Yet another plan is to **visit one of the refugee camps** near the Burundian border during a month with a few trainers. They could play with the children and teach them. At first the whole circus could perform their show for a couple of days. Afterwards a selected group could be taught circus acts and tricks. They later on could spread the newly learned skills and playfulness. Of course this dream, like the drop-out house, still calls for a lot of thinking and preparation.

A dream likely to come through in the near future is to **give all secondary school girls a set of washable sanitary napkins** so they will be able to continue to attend classes during their period. Some 200 girls are attending Sungu sekundari at the moment. Each year 80 new girls start their education. As you might recall from an earlier newsletter, a group of women learned how to make these sanitary napkins. Patterns and sewing machines are available. Each year the fresh female students should be provided with their own set.



Performing at MamboViewpoint January 2017



**To realize these dreams money is needed:**

- 6 euro per set sanitary napkins
- 50 euro per month for accommodation for Sadi during his traineeship
- 50 à 80 euro per week for the meals for the circus children
- 30 euro per week for six teachers playing with children three afternoons each week
- 50 euro per month for the trainers of the circus
- 2.500 euro to arrange for an five days tour with the circus

In total an estimation of €10.000 for 2017.

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Read more about realized and planned projects on:  
<http://www.mamboviewpoint.org/MamboViewPointMain/Projects.htm>  
 For more information also visit <http://www.mambosteunpunt.org/>  
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**Donations**

To accomplish all the projects lots of money is necessary. We would like to appeal to you once more with a request to send a gift to the foundation. You can be certain your money will be fully spent. Overhead costs are minimalised due to the work with expert volunteers only. In case you already made a contribution, we thank you gratefully for your gift!!

Greetings, Herman Erdsieck, Marion Neidt and all other members of the foundation.