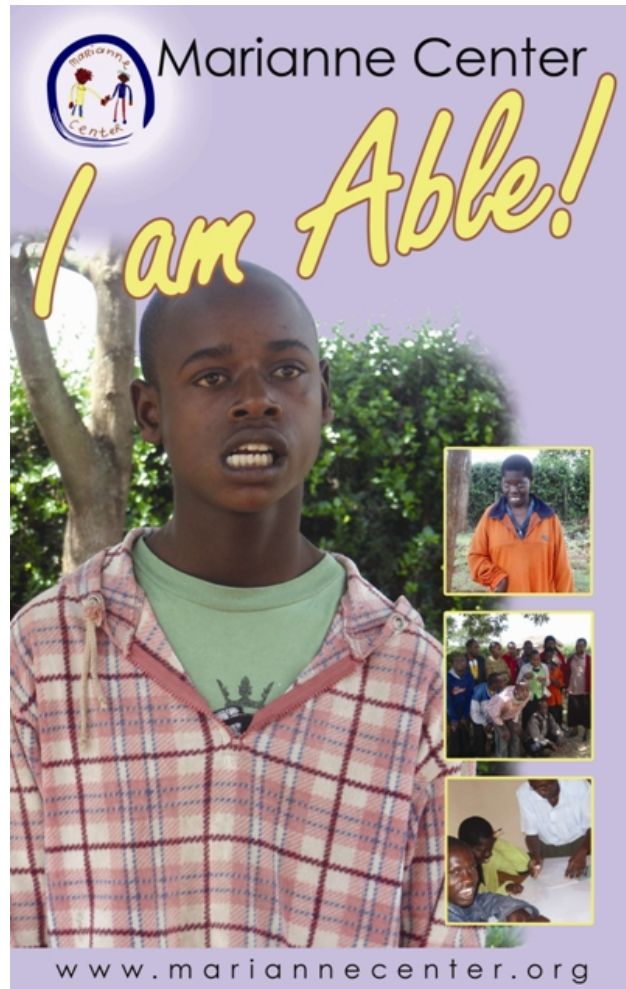


# Report Marianne Center

2014



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## INTRODUCTION

In 2014 we received several donations for the activities of Marianne Center. Through this report we want to update you about what we have achieved with the help of these donations.

## RESULTS 2014

Since we opened our doors in January 2010 we have achieved a lot. We are very grateful for this and we are planning to continue our activities in 2015.

In our proposal of last year we wanted to achieve the following things:

- Approximately 20 students who have graduated;
- Construction of dorms and class rooms finished;
- Minimum of three awareness events (among which an open day);
- 7.5 million have been reached through media activities about the capabilities of people with a mental disability;
- At least 2 income generating activities have been set up;

Our objectives for 2010-2015 are as follows:

1. Start a training center for (young) adults with a mental disability
2. To support (young) adults with a mental disability, by providing specialized training and equipment, social functions including personal hygiene, gardening, cooking and uncomplicated vocational skills that can enable them to get basic employment
3. Fight the social stigma associated with people with mental disabilities
4. Sensitize the government of the need to support people with mental disability in education
5. To reach out to the 2,9 million people with mental disabilities and give them and their families hope for a better life

Below we indicate per objective which activities in 2014 have been done to achieve our goals.

### ***1. Start a training center for (young) adults with mental disabilities***

In January 2010 we opened our doors for the mentally disabled (young) adults. Together with the local authorities, community leaders and churches we spread the news about Marianne Center and her activities. At the moment we have 49 disabled students among which 24 are female. We have more than 55 students who applied, but due to the lack of space at our new location we can't host more students.

At this moment we have 3 full time teachers, a janitor who takes care of the boys, a matron who takes care of the girls and the cleaning of the centre, a cook, agricultural trainer and security guards. The cook and cleaner also train our students in domestic activities. We also regularly have volunteers who support our teachers in executing their tasks. In this way we can ensure that every student, including the weaker students, receives the attention and training they deserve.

### **Volunteers**

Our partner Centre for International Voluntary Service often places volunteers at Marianne Center. This year we received two German volunteers, Maria and Johannes. Both were sent through the German Welwart government programme. Tasks they executed were; supporting teachers and our board members, helping the students in the performance of their tasks, teaching computer skills to our students, helped placing our fence and providing teaching materials.

They enjoyed their attachment at Marianne Center and the interaction with our students. Their support and interaction was highly appreciated.



*Maria with our students*

### **Construction**

With the help of subsidies and donations from The Netherlands we were able to proceed with the construction of our premises. We managed to finish the classroom block and are in the final stage of the dorm block. The dorms can each host up to 48 students. We are planning to finalize the construction in 2015 and with the help of some Dutch donors, who are doubling the donations of other parties, we expect this to happen.



*Dormitories block*

The recession in the West has a negative effect on Marianne Center as well. Our plans for the mentally disabled students are very promising, though this does require investments for activities like the construction and the set up of income generating activities. These activities will largely contribute to the financial independency of Marianne Center. Due to the fact that funds are released in low amounts and are hard to find, our goal will most likely be reached

at a much later stage. Even so, we are still able to offer our students the programmes, support and care they need.

### **Income generating activities**

Our goal is to become financial independent before the end of 2015. Currently all running costs of Marianne Center is being covered locally, through school fees, financial support from the board members or through donations of other Kenyan parties. We are working hard to set up income generating activities like a poultry farm and even a biogas installation.

At the beginning of this year we welcomed a new board member. He is specialized in business models and proposal writing. During this year he supported us in developing board guidelines to give directions on individual responsibilities, developing excel-based management information system (MIS), developing a business plan and networking and fundraising on behalf of Marianne Center.

### ***Poultry project***

Early this year, the Ministry of Agriculture donated 25 x 2 weeks old indigenous chicks to Marianne Center. At the end of this year they donated 100 chickens to Marianne Center. One of the government's programs is to assist the disabled and vulnerable groups in society to achieve self-reliance.

The indigenous chickens are less expensive to rear due to the fact that they do not only rely on processed feeds. They can fend for themselves on available vegetable leftovers if let out to roam in the compound. One of the major challenges in poultry farming is the high cost of feeds. Prices have continued to rise in the last two years making poultry farming less attractive as a commercial venture especially when the number of birds is below 1,000. Marianne center is working towards establishing a fully thriving poultry business with up to 3,000 birds within the next two years.

A well-wisher donated money towards the construction of a chicken house to accommodate up to 300 birds. The construction was completed half way the year.

Poultry rearing is of the training activities at Marianne center. The students will be able to practically cater for the chicken right from when they are one day old to maturity. They will be taught how to feed them, clean the chicken house and even marketing the eggs and meat. They can graduate to go practice this business back home.



### Greenhouse project

We have managed to set-up a greenhouse with the size of 8 by 30 meters. This could be done with the help of a loan. Before we could start planting the tomato seeds we first had to do a two-week soil treatment in order to successfully plant and grow the tomatoes. We planted the first tomatoes at the end of August and the first harvest will take place after four months. Each tomato plant is expected to produce 40 kg. The 800 plants that are bearing fruits will be expected to produce in total about 32,000 kg of tomatoes. The second harvest (after approximately 7 months) from these plants will be less and is expected to be around the 20,000 kg.

The greenhouse will help us generate income for our center and to provide partly for our food programme. At the same time it will be used to teach our students how to grow crops like tomatoes.



*Greenhouse*

### Biogas digester

With the help of SACDEP we managed to construct a biogas installation. The installation has not been completed yet. We have purchased an initial 10 tons of cow dung from neighbouring farms to set off the project. After this two wheelbarrows of cow dung will be required per day. This will come from our two cows. The biogas digester can produce gas to cook for up to 400 people per day. With this excess amount we plan to get a biogas power generator so that we can also generate electricity from this gas. We shall save on firewood that we use for cooking and also electricity bills. Since it will not be enough to provide electricity for the whole center we are in the process of getting solar panels as well.



*Installation of the biogas digester*

## **2. To support (young) adults with a mental disability, by providing specialized training and equipment, social functions including personal hygiene, gardening, cooking and uncomplicated vocational skills that can enable them to get basic employment**

We are offering the following programs at Marianne Center; gardening, ADL (Activities of Daily Living), sports, beauty lessons, sewing, animal husbandry, computer lessons and handicrafts.

Since 2012 we have the plan to graduate some of our students. Because of delay in the construction of our premises this has not taken place yet. Not only was the postponement of the graduation due to construction delays, but it also seems to be a bit complicated to have graduation process be recognized by the government. We are now searching for solutions to give our students the opportunity to graduate with a recognized diploma.

We are already in contact with several employers who are willing to provide employment opportunities to our students as soon as they have graduated. Task descriptions may include packing groceries in supermarkets, car washing, cleaning, gardening, and doing laundry and other basic jobs. Other students might be better fit with a small business at home, like clothes making. Initially students will receive close supervision and support, but in time, as the tasks become a routine and the student can work more independently, this support can be phased out gradually.

### **Outing**

At the end of the year we took our students to Nairobi National Park. It emerged out of concern when it was noticed that most of our students couldn't recognize wild animals. Limuru C.D.F assisted us with their bus that could bring all of our students and teachers to the park. The students went for a safari walk and learned about the wild animals they saw. This is important for our students to know since they can encounter dangerous animals which they should be able to recognize.

### **Health**

At Marianne Center we ensure that our students stay in good health. We do that by providing a proper diet, ensuring hygiene, providing them with exercise and medical care if needed. Costs involving medical care are covered by one of our partners or the local church.

### **Feeding programme**

The kitchen and serving area is still a temporary structure as the center tries to raise funds to put up a proper facility. Despite that we are able to offer our students proper meals. Cooking is mainly done with firewood and saw dust.

Meals at the center consist out of a variety of food items. Some days we serve rice with beans and vegetables, and other days maize with beans and potatoes – also known as 'githeri' in the local Kikuyu language. Also ugali, chapati and green grams are local food items, which are being eaten regularly. Of course meat is also occasionally part of the diet as well as fruits. A varying diet will help our students stay in good health.

The initial food preparations are done by the students under supervision of Regina Wambui who is the cook at Marianne Center.

## **3. Fight the social stigma associated with people with mental disabilities**

To achieve this goal we organise several activities. 2014 was financially wise a difficult year for us and we were therefore not able to organize many (costly) activities. We did organize an open day and attended some events, to fight the social stigma associated with people with a mental disability. We try to connect Kenyans with our students through church services and visits to e.g. farms. Next to this we have our weekly nature walks with our students where other pedestrians get in contact with our students. This often results into them asking questions and/or visiting Marianne Center.

### **Open day**

The open day was held in November, which simultaneously was our annual closing celebration. Several visitors attended our open day, among which were; the parents of our students, Muturakwa church members, Limuru Member of Parliament, and a representative of Limuru Sub County for Disabled People.

Students entertained guests with songs, dances and poems, which made the event to be very lively. Later our visitors visited the exhibition room where products made by our students were displayed, such as braceletts, mats and pillow cases. The visitors were amazed by the capabilities of our students. This is the reason why we organize open days, to show Kenyans what people with a mental disability can accomplish.

### **Nature walks**

Among the activities at Marianne Center are the weekly nature walks that take place every Friday afternoon. This is one of the activities that students and staff enjoy most and always look forward to. The Center is located in a very scenic area of Kiambu County bordering a natural forest with vervet monkeys, plenty of bird species and butterflies. About three kilometers from the center is the breathtaking Great Rift Valley View Point. On one of the recent trips, the students visited this place accompanied by teachers and one international volunteer as seen in the photo below.



The nature walks are a physical therapy necessary for the students with mental disability because they help to relax mind and body. Walking helps some of them firm their body muscles and exercise the joints. Students are exposed to different environments apart from the one they are used to at the center complex. It also helps them to learn the various tree species and their properties. On some of the trips, they pass through farmlands seeing different farming practices in the area. They are able to appreciate nature more and begin to understand the need to conserve the environment.



*Great Rift Valley View Point*

During the walks, the students interact with other people in the community as they meet on the way. Greetings are encouraged and staff accompanying students always takes this opportunity to talk about training activities at Marianne center. This interaction is very helpful



as it makes them feel part of the society. This exercise is also a way of exposing Marianne Center to the local community, creating awareness about the existence of such a center and the need to embrace people with special needs in the society.

### **Limuru Marathon**

Towards the end of our last term (August), Marianne Center participated in the Limuru Marathon. This event was organized by CDF (Community Development Fund) Limuru and sponsored by the banks KCB and Equity Bank among others. The theme was to empower youth and people with a disability. Some of the funds raised will be used to put up cottages where these vulnerable groups can display their wares.

The marathon distances were 21, 12 or 5 km. Marianne Center students, who were physically able to participate, partook in the 5 km race and three of them took the lead. They acquired positions 1, 2 and 3, which they were awarded for in the form of a small donation. They later attended the Henry Wanyoike Foundation marathon as well and were awarded with certificates.

This year's was the first event but the plan is to have the marathon annually.

### **Media**

Our goal for 2014 was to reach at least 7.5 million people about Marianne Center and her mentally disabled students through media and (awareness) events. During the previous years we managed to reach more than 5 million and therefore increased our goal for this year to 7.5 million. The reason why we easily reached our goals the previous years is because of the open days and other events we had organized. Due to the lack of funds we were only able to organize one open day this year and therefore were not able to reach our goal of 7.5 million people. Through nature walks, church visits, lunch meetings, etc. we managed to reach at least a few thousand people this year.

All of these activities have contributed to fighting the social stigma associated with people with a mental disability and it is therefore important that we continue with our activities.

### ***4. Sensitize the government of the need to support people with mental disabilities in education***

We are working closely with the local authorities and the chief of Karura Village. They are helping us in informing the community about Marianne Center and motivating parents to send their children to us.

We also closely work with the government assessment centres in Nairobi. They often join us for meetings and advise us where needed. Two of our board members, Jane Ngiria and Samuel Kago are working for these institutions. This makes our connection to the government much easier.

Some of the parents are not able to pay for the school fees of their handicapped children. They therefore request support from the National Council for People with a Mental Disability. This government institution pays 2/3 of the school fees of our students. With this we can continue our programmes at Marianne Center and take care of our disabled students. Because of many changes this year at government level, the expected support from NCPDW was limited this year. We hope to see a positive change in their support next year.

Not only is communicating with the government important to make Marianne Center successful. It is as important to have a good connection with the local government, organisations and businesses. These actors are often willing to support Marianne Center. By fund raising locally and inviting them to take a closer look at our programmes we encourage them to fund our activities.

We occasionally receive food items or small donations from the local government and county.

## **5. To reach out to the 2.9 million people with mental disabilities and give them and their families hope for a better life**

Marianne Center can only accommodate a certain number of mentally disabled people and therefore reaching out to 2.9 million mentally disabled people is a big challenge. To make sure that besides our students other mentally disabled can benefit from our activities as well, we are organizing awareness activities. This includes open days, annual event, awareness walks and media attention where we inform people about people with a mental disability. 2014 was relatively seen a difficult year for Marianne Center. Due to lack of finances we were not able to carry out some of our activities, like awareness events. We therefore were not able to reach as many people as we had hoped for.

We will keep on organizing awareness events (if funds allow) and networking with the local government so that not only our students can benefit from our activities but also other mentally disabled people in Kenya.

## **EFFICIENCY**

The workshops, church visits, open days and media attention has proven to be very effective in achieving our goals. With this we were able to inform many Kenyans about people with a mental disability which result in to reducing the stigma associated with this marginalized group. Not only had our students benefited from our activities but also other mentally disabled Kenyans. The students at Marianne Center benefit greatly from our activities and show improvements every day. The activities at Marianne Center will help our students to be able to contribute towards the (financial) needs of their families and to society at large. The support from the chief, the local government, the assessment centres and our other partners have helped us in reaching the families of the mentally disabled and in creating awareness about the capacities of people with a mental disability. The fact that local government and partners have supported us financially will make us confident that in the nearby future Marianne Center can fully be run and supported by Kenyan professionals and organisations.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Our activities are monitored and evaluated against the project goal and objectives. Monitoring is done on a regular basis during every management meeting, which takes place on a monthly basis. We want to keep on improving and optimizing our activities to be able to provide the best training based on the needs of the mentally disabled people. We therefore gladly receive any advice, comments, and critique from government or other actors.

Student Performance Reports are prepared every term. These reports assist in assessing any changes in the development of the students. Performance appraisal for project staff is being carried out at least once a year.

Financial reports are made every quarter and our aim is to have an audit report done annually.

Twice a year we send all donors, partners and other people connected to Marianne Center a newsletter, which contains updates about the activities, a note about our donors and success stories about our students.

Our team of directors consists of seven professionals with broad experience in subjects as management, entrepreneurship, organizational development, networking, fundraising, healthcare and mental disabilities. Our general manager and board member has 7 years of experience in a similar occupation at a comparable training center in the UK. Also other

employees who are or will be hired by the training center will be professionals with extensive experience in related fields.  
All staff, except for one board member, is Kenyan and they are responsible for the daily activities of Marianne Center.

## **PLANS 2015**

Marianne Center Foundation (MCF) wants to continue fund raising locally. Fund raising in The Netherlands has proven to be quite a challenge because of the recession. Due to lack of funds we couldn't execute some of our planned activities. Therefore searching for funds locally is necessary, especially to be able to cover the running costs of the center.

### **Goals 2015**

We would like to have achieved the following by the end of 2015:

- Approximately 10 students who have graduated;
- Rest of the construction to be finalized;
- Minimum of two awareness events (among which an open day);
- 7.5 million have been reached through media activities about the capabilities of people with a mental disability;
- At least 3 income generating activities have been set up;