

## INTERVIEW AT THE TOP OF THE BOARD

Heart of Africa organization was founded in Pomezia on 19 September 2008 in order to provide support and education to children and teenagers with serious family and financial difficulties, through sponsorships and the creation of micro-projects for the construction of shelters.

Heart of Africa is working with the Kenyan organization "Community of Hope", directed by Father Charles Kyallo Mutual, which operates in the villages of Machakos district, about 60 km from Nairobi.

We met the president Fabio Caroli and secretary Pamela Tonelli for a brief interview that could best describe how the industriousness of this association is very active in our town.

MC: "Mr. President, would you tell us of the first projects the association was able to accomplish?"

FC: "With the proceeds of the first registration of our members we were able to send to Kenya a container full of clothing, mattresses, toys, computers, bicycles and educational material, which arrived in Nairobi on 31 December 2008. On the following days my wife Pamela, who is the secretary of this association, and I flew to Kenya to expedite the customs clearing of the goods stored in the container and to buy a small plot of land near Machakos".

MC: "How did you find the funds for this investment and what is the destination of the land acquired?"

FC: "We managed to collect the necessary sum, 3,300 euros, thanks to donations from friends and associates, charity dinners organized at the headquarters of the association and the Christmas markets in which we sold various crafts from Kenya. With this amount we could buy one acre of land, on which it has been built a hostel that will accommodate disadvantaged children to enable them easier access to education and, in some cases, removal from families who abuse them".

MC: "You say the structure has already been built ... you've been working very hard!"

FC: "Fortunately on 13 October 2009, after further fundraising with lotteries, raffles, dinners and new membership, it was possible to kick off the work, and within a year the workers who are building the structure were able to complete the coverage roof. We are promoting new initiatives that will allow us to build toilets and provide for the purchase of furniture, in order to settle the first 20 children in the hostel just after the end of summer".

MC: "Are you working on some other projects, too?"

FC: "Sure! In 2009 we have started a collaboration with the "Calosci in 2000" School of cutting and sewing. The institute was about to be closed because of a severe lack of funds, so we've been asked for support in order to assure the continuing of professional courses attended by girls who want to learn a trade to become economically independent. This achievement not only allows them not to weigh on the family budget anymore, but also gives them the opportunity to contribute with new incoming."

MC: "Pamela, you care directly for sponsorship. Tell us about this reality."

PT: "The contribution we ask our supporters allows to pay school fees, medical costs, food, clothing, start of employment for those who have completed their studies, and help for the child family itself, where necessary."

MC: "Is there any connection between sponsored children and their sponsors?"

PT: "That's for sure! Every year Fabio and I fly to Kenya to visit all 86 sponsored children. On these occasions, we shoot a movie, so we can show it to sponsors when back in Italy. Moreover, every year our three employees in Machakos, Monicah, Milcah and Lucy, provide photographs of all children, wearing their new clothes, and write a short report of the most important news about their school situation, their health status and their family conditions".

MC: "So there is always a sort of bridge and a constant connection between Italy and Kenya. "

PT: "We consider it is very important, indeed. Sponsorship sounds like something given from apart, but we want our sponsors to feel as close as possible to all their children."

We would like to thank Fabio and Pamela for their kindness in answering all our questions.

We also want to remember all our readers that since last year Heart of Africa has become a non-profit organization, thanks to so many accomplishments recognized in such a short time.

Starting from this year, your 5x1000 funds can be devolved Heart of Africa projects by indicating the tax return code 97552400585 on your declaration.