

A. Written Report

Section I

- a. The goal of the *Birds for Peace* project is to restore and develop the infrastructure of Murang'a District, Central Kenya that was disrupted by civil violence resulting from the Presidential Elections in 2007 that was internationally recognized to have been fraudulent. Our project socially and economically invests in the Murang'a community through the establishment of a poultry/dairy business based in the county orphanage that like any good investment, would meet the immediate needs, create opportunities, and generate relatively predictable and regular returns. Ideally, Murang'a will eventually serve as a model district to other Kenyan constituencies, in hopes to engender regional and national peace.
- b. Project funding: In addition to the received funding, funding for the project came from partner organization Kenya KULE Foundation International. The funds from KULE were used for the immediate needs of the orphans like food, and for covering extra costs in the construction of the water tank.
- c. Project details: The project took place in Murang'a, a town in Kenya's Central District. It has a population of 11,000 and is 50 miles northeast of Nairobi. The original idea was to begin by constructing a poultry farm at Koimbi Children's Home. This orphanage was selected as the project site due to the critical role it plays in the county's welfare. It is a government undertaking and is well-known throughout the region owing to its commitment and track record of seeing the children through high school. The prominence and good reputation of the orphanage/farm will assist in breaking into the market and positively impact sales. Furthermore, Koimbi orphanage is accountable to the people of Murang'a which more likely guarantees the project success and sustainability of the business. The home also has adequate land, security measures, and the staff at Koimbi is well vested with the skills required to raise traditional chicken. These were chosen as they produce both meat and eggs. As opposed to the modern chicken, these are very resistant to diseases and require less attention. Above all, these chickens now have a very promising market since they are organic hence healthy.

The farm, measuring 6.5 ft by 26.25 ft, was constructed next to an existing cowshed and has the capacity of accommodating more than one hundred chickens. The structure has two levels and is built mainly from wood, planks, fence and roofed using corrugated iron sheets. Forty chickens, thirty of which are hens, were bought with an initial investment of Kenyan Shilling (KES) 1,200 per chicken. It takes about 90 days for a newly-hatched chick to grow into an adult chicken. Our projection forecasts that in about three months, at least ten hens will have chicks. On average, a hen produces between eight and twelve chicks. Therefore, Koimbi should have about one hundred and fifty chickens in October 2010. In the first cycle of farm operation, about 100 chickens should be available for sale or consumption. Once the farm reaches its full potential, we estimate that twenty chickens will be sold every month. This translates to profits of approximately KES 15,000. Assuming steady poultry reproduction and growth, this sum should be the base profit every month as the project is self sustainable. This figure accounts for the fact that the children will eat some of the chickens and the eggs. The profit will be used for the children's welfare, the home's expenses, and community projects. It is also designed to be an experiential business education device and incentive to maintain the farm in optimum production.

Other than that, Koimbi recently received a dairy cow from Safaricom, Ltd (Kenya's leading mobile network operator). However, the milk produced was inadequate and buying milk was very expensive. Milk demands were also high in this area so we decided to further invest in a dairy farm. Two dairy cows were purchased for Koimbi increasing the number of cows to three. It was decided that half of the milk produced would be used in the home while the rest will be sold to AfroDan, a company that buys milk from farmers in the Central Province of Kenya. We estimated that the three cows will produce about thirty liters of milk. At least, ten liters will be for the children. The rest, about twenty liters, will be sold at KES 30 per liter. On average, Koimbi will make KES 600 per day just from milk. In summary, the businesses set up, the poultry and dairy farm, should yield a combined monthly profit of KES 33,000.

Currently, the children walk for about 1.25 miles on a steep hill to fetch water from a river to be used in the home. Apart from the suffering endured by the children in bringing the water to the home, it is highly possible that the water is not fit for drinking. Also, the farms built will increase water demand hence more trips to the river by the children. To solve the burden we had created, we decided to take a closer look at the water issue at Koimbi. The home buys water monthly but receives irregular supply because of the supplier not supplying and the lack of money to pay for the water. Additionally, the two tanks used to store the water are very old and dilapidated. It appeared to be a worthwhile investment to build a water tank for the home. This tank has a diameter of 16 ft and a height of 12 ft and will collect and store 1,800 cubic feet of water from the roofs of dormitories. Koimbi receives rain almost throughout the year hence the tank will hardly dry up.

Difficulties: The lack of tools resulted in the construction taking longer than planned. As such, the structures could not be completed as much as we hoped and are ongoing. Besides that, budget constraints for the airfare were faced. Due to the World Cup in South Africa, airfares to Kenya were doubled. We did not anticipate this extreme increase during the planning last year. However, minimal language barrier was faced as the staff at Koimbi was fluent in English. Additionally, while we were there, we learned that Kenyan President, Mwa Kibaki, was in Murang'a (the town where our project was taking place) to raise voter support for a new national constitution. There was a lot of speculation and worry that what happened last election might repeat. 700 lives, including that of Olympic athletes were lost the last time. In retrospect, this situation reflected how important a constituency Murang'a was, and the immediacy plus potential of our project to foster peace and impact the nation.

Section II

- a. Peace is defined as the emptiness of an internal conflict. Some of the defining factors are self-satisfaction and personal contentment. Having no regrets and no what if ... that point towards bettering one's life, career and surroundings.

Peace Contribution: The farms will supply the orphanage and local community with a steady source of food, business income, and hope. This would undoubtedly create internal peace in the orphanage, where support is usually intermittent and concrete planning for the future is difficult. For the local community, economic vitality, empowerment, and independence are fundamental and will lead to achieving real stability and sustained peace.

Peace is also fostered by education and empowerment. By locating the farms in the orphanage, the farm operations will teach the children (i.e. the next generation) business skills, the interdependence between human and nature, besides giving them a sense of ownership, marketable skills and most importantly, confidence. Essentially, the farm will be a source of inspiration to the children, inculcating in them responsible values and a positive outlook filled with hopes and dreams. It will empower them with a sense of purpose, giving them independence and the confidence that will overflow and inspire confidence in others to succeed. In effect, the orphans will themselves become agents of peace and advocates of human rights and progress. While we were there, there were 48 children from as far as Nairobi, hence the districts outside Murang'a benefits indirectly as well.

One's view of the world cannot help but be changed through this project. *Birds for Peace* was not only an international entrepreneurial project, but one that also involved sharing, teaching, learning, and service. Most importantly, the project changed not just our view of the world but everyone involved, to one where peace is the way of life of choice. We ourselves had to first listen and learn what the locals were experiencing and the tensions brought about by the precarious political climate. Then through the teachable moments presented during the construction process, practical listening and cooperation skills were cultivated in the local workers, partners, volunteers, and community leaders. We evidenced the importance of setting aside differences and peacefully resolving disagreements in order to complete the farms. Unity and partnership were emphasized and the universality of humanity validated, with the hope for a peaceful future.

At the end of the project, we hope that we will have successfully brought discussions of understanding, tolerance, and peaceful conflict resolution to the grassroots level. We hope that when family and friends gather around the dinner table, they will taste and ask where the poultry and milk come from. We hope that the answer will be that it is from our farms. Consequently, people will question why we set up the farms and the business models. We hope that there'll be a family member at the table who will be able to share the principles of peace on which the farms were founded on and motivate conversations about peace. It is then our hope that the farm will serve as a lasting symbol and reminder of the ideal of peace and that peace can only be achieved when communities are self-empowered, financially independent, and are eager to peacefully resolve issues of contention for the sake of progress.

In the long-term, we hope that the people of Murang'a from all walks of life will intrinsically learn to appreciate peace. And that they will continually strive for and safeguard peace. We hope they will accomplish this goal by going back to where it all began – through the discussions of understanding and peace amongst friends and family at the dining table, over a chicken dish. Perhaps eventually, in one form or another, the work we've done will lead to a national culture of peaceful dialogue. In short, we hope to drive into every home the cycle of peace and progress, and that they drive and mutually depend on each other. Also, as our farms are founded on the Davis Projects for Peace grant, the equation: chicken = peace; will be in everyone's consciousness. Just like doves.

“Though the kids are poor they are very happy – genuinely happy. They have limited opportunities and go to bed on empty stomachs sometimes but dream big, bigger than kids from stable families. They dream of a much brighter future full of achievements.”

Mcolisi Dlamini

B. One-page Photography



Project site – Koimbi Children's Home, Central Kenya.



Together with partner organization KULE delivering the chickens.



The double-storey poultry farm, soon to accommodate over a hundred chickens.



The dairy cows we left at Koimbi. The two on the right, **Kule** and **Hope** are our additions to the Children's home.