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## **REPORTING PROJECT (MIKITA) – MITINDO YA KIMATAIFA TANZANIA**

Project MIKITA was first implemented in Tanzania in 2009. The main goal of MIKITA is to support marginalized groups, specifically women who are in vulnerable social-economically positions, to learn vocational skills such as tailoring, making tie & dye materials, making fashion accessories and other related crafts.

The first MIKITA courses in Dar es Salaam suburbs were completed in 2009 under VETA vocational training college. In 2010 MIKITA was successfully implemented in Moshi under Mkombozi Vocational training college.

Between 2009 and 2010, 35 women received diplomas in different vocational skills that certified them as professionals. The skills include tailoring of women and men clothes, making of fashion accessories, making tie and dye materials and various entrepreneurship skills.

By 2010, the Short term goals for project MIKITA were realized. The women who attended the courses both in Dar es Salaam and in Moshi were able to gain new and improve their existing knowledge. This has had a positive impact on their household income and health.

Some of the skills learnt by the group have helped them to create different products and expand their businesses. i.e. entrepreneurship.

In the past, the women mostly focused on making products that are already on the market. They could not negotiate prices with their customers because they had no comparative advantage. Through the entrepreneurship course, they have received a business knowledge that is necessary for sustainability.

We were pleased with the willingness shown by our group in helping others in the community to learn some of the skills they have learnt.

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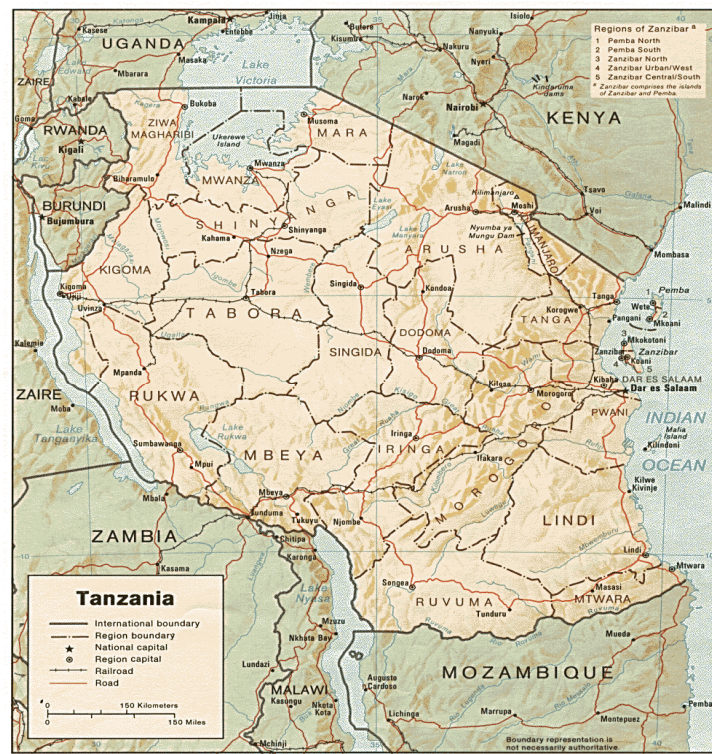
### 2011 – MIKITA stage 2:

Entrepreneurship skills learnt by the women in Dar es Salaam led them to Singida region. Singida is a rural area in central Tanzania. It is bordered to the North by the region of Shinyanga and to the Northeast by the region of Manyara. To the east it is bordered by the Dodoma region, to the Southeast by the region of Iringa, on the Southwest by Mbeya region and to the West by the region of Tabora.

Singida is also one of the poorest regions in Tanzania due to the current unpredictable climate patterns that make agriculture difficult, limited infrastructure, health centers and education facilities. Until recently, it had the disadvantage of having low rainfalls and poor soils. The population is about 1.1 Million according to the Tanzania national census conducted in 2002. 95% of the rural population practice sustenance farming.

95% of the girls and women in Singida work hard on the farms, a practice that is made possible by irrigation, which is usually also a task for the girls/women. The performance of other domestic duties also falls onto the shoulders of the girls/women, as traditionally expected by long established customs.

Despite spending most of their time doing manual work, the women in Singida also have other excellent skills.



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In 2011, MIKITA graduates from Dar es Salaam made contact with a group of women in Singida and proposed working together to create unique products. Originally the women in Singida have skills to weave i.e carpets, baskets and table mats. However, usually the products are sold at very low local prices which doesn't enable the woman to earn a sustainable income.

Our MIKITA graduates were able to convince the women from Singida to make products that stimulate customers outside their communities. They worked together as a group and exchange knowledge about product creation and improvement. This enabled a price increase of the product by 200%, a fair product price of 20 Euro based on 4 days of work and limited environmental resources. Earnings made by selling MIKITA products are re-invested in the project.

The women used special grass called "nyasi" to weave the baskets. Nyasi is a renewable resource that usually grows under specific weather conditions.

By being able to raise the standard of the product and raising the price, the costs on the environment are reduced. The women are able to save some money and therefore leave the land to rest for at least a few months.



By taking into account the existing primary skills of the women in Singida, our group in Dar es salaam created a new design for wine baskets. Working together, the two groups produced a winning product which proved to be a great gift during the holiday season in the Netherlands.

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**The long term goals:**

The long term goal of MIKITA is to encourage social-economic cooperation among the women from all regions of Tanzania. In other words, 'harvest the skills and create a recipe for sustainable social-economic development.' We believe in empowering others so as they can be able to empower the people they come in contact with and the process of empowerment can continue exponentially.

Sustainable development in this sense means development that take into account the social, the economics and the environment.

This includes encouraging local production using local resources such as raw materials, skills and people, creating a market niche for MIKITA products and being in a position to set up a production house and create internship opportunities as well as opportunities for further professional learning.



Currently, 60% of the women who learnt under MIKITA are in production individually. 20% have been able to build partnerships with other women groups and 20% are willing to give classes in rural areas of Tanzania that do not have vocational training colleges.

Extra support is needed in order to start skills training "classes".

For the year 2011 we were able to promote MIKITA products made by the women at Africa day event in Den Haag. We will continue with this practice and also ask advice from Netherlands consumers how the products can be improved to suit the target market taste.

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Other results that have come to light:

1. In Singida, the women use a type of grass called 'Nyasi' to make their baskets. This raw material is limited and depends on favorable weather conditions at specific times. Currently the resource is limited due to draught earlier in 2011 followed by heavy rainfalls. By paying a fair price, the women can save money to use at the time when their livelihood is threatened. Considering that the land is their only base for production, at some point it is necessary to let the soil rest and recover so that in time of draught, erosion and/or other land degradation can be avoided. To ignore the situations means poverty in Singida and specifically for the target group will be worsened due to human damage on environment.
2. We have realized that the graduates of MIKITA also want to make a difference in communities where they live and where they originally come from. Further understanding about the importance of social-economic cooperation between regions, have made the graduates even more motivated because they see their role as important within the process of development and women empowerment. In reality, they can implement a development projects under guidance and support. The only thing they currently miss is some knowledge such as, where to go for information – there is no central point and they can't use internet because it is mostly in foreign languages. They also lack formal skills in project plan development as well as how to make grant application or how to work with partners from different cultural backgrounds.
3. It has also come to light that the training programs in 'far to reach' rural areas can also be implemented by the women who have graduated the courses at vocational training colleges under MIKITA. This will solve the problems of vocational training colleges sometimes being too far for the women to attend without consequences of i.e leaving dependents for a whole day with neighbors which usually means an extra expense for the women that is sometimes is difficult for the target group to cover and therefore they skip classes.
4. Another thing that has come to light is that in order for the foundation to be able to perform at it's best we need a permanent project coordinator in Tanzania as well as a permanent project manager in Netherlands. This means, we have to take into account the salary of at least 2 people.

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**The strong points of the project are:**

**Quantitative**

- 30 women were involved in creating MIKITA products. The group in Dar es Salaam included 8 people and in Singida 22 women.
- MIKITA products made in 2011 includes:
  - 311 Knitted flowers
  - 8 Baskets
  - 10 Wine bags
  - 10 Aprons

**Qualitative**

- The women who attended the courses are currently working on small projects.
- Home training on different skills are being offered by MIKITA coordinator – Mama Rukia in Dar es salaam
- Cooperation has been formed between Singida and Dar es Salaam women.
- The products quality is good and has been accepted in the international market.
- Further cooperation is in progress to create new products.
- Green Waters Netherlands and MIKITA graduates work very well together.

**The weak points of the project are:**

**Quantitative**

- Green Waters foundation has been unable to sponsor women to attend class trainings at vocational training colleges in 2011 due to lack of sustainable funding.
- Some of the products couldn't be delivered i.e Baskets, due to lack of raw materials needed to make them.

**Qualitative**

- It has been expensive to get all information required from Tanzania.
- The running costs have proven to be quite high.

MIKITA in 2011 has been made possible due to the trust, hard work and cooperation between Green Waters Netherlands and our group in Tanzania.

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**External factors that have had a negative influence:**

**Raw Materials**

The raw materials needed to create the products i.e baskets & Wine bags were not available due to climate change and impact on rain patters.

**Additional costs**

The travelling costs between Dar es Salaam & Singida are high.

**Target group**

Target group still need more understanding on product trends.

**Project coordinator expenses**

Lack of available funding to pay for the expenses of the project coordinator have been challenging to her.



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### **External factors that have had a positive influence:**

#### **Internal**

##### ***Project Management:***

Experience gained from past projects enabled smooth running of the project.

##### ***Project Evaluation – Target groups in Tanzania:***

There has been a 80% improvement of the product, production coordination, and project understanding by our target group in Tanzania .

##### ***Tanzania Project coordinator:***

Mama Rukia has made the initiative to build cooperation between women from Dar es Salaam and Singida. This is a big step forward.

#### **In the Netherlands**

For the second time since we started Green Waters Foundation in 2007, we were able to attend Africa day event and represent project MIKITA as well as other projects implemented under our foundation. In the past event has enabled us to build strong partnerships with World School organization in Netherlands.

Working together with Worldschool Netherlands has been positive for Green Waters.

Through Worldschool we have been able to work with 6 volunteers and together we have developed project CHANCE – a secondary school scholarship for orphans and children from low income families in Tanzania.

Currently 6 other volunteers are working to develop MIKITA stage 2, which will focus more on products improvement and building partnerships with outlets in the west.

#### **In The South**

Our project coordinator speaks to women tailors about the project. They have been able to spread the news within and outside the community.

We wish to raise more awareness in Tanzania. We would like to do some promotional campaigns using local institutions in different regions. This is because the most marginalized groups haven't been reached as yet. The rural areas need this project, but it will require having a permanent project coordinator in our staff to be able to do the research, negotiations with nearest training college, preparing budget, coordinating the project.

There are differences between how we inform target groups in Netherlands and in Tanzania. This is because in Tanzania it is expensive to advertise in local newspapers, there are no free newspapers and no NGO events organized.

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## **Project reach 2011**

### **Directly**

- 22 women in Singida and 8 women in Dar es Salaam.
- 800+ people were able to hear about project during Africa day event in Den Haag 29/10/2011

### **Project Evaluation**

We have done the evaluation of 2011 based on SMART tool.

S- The products made are sustainable in quality and usefulness.

M-Product quality can be monitored and maintained throughout the supply chain..

A- Details and quality can be easily analyzed to match the price.

R- Resources used are local.

T-Technology used is local and the time spent on production is reasonable for the given price.

### **Follow up and sustainability**

We continuously try to involve our network of friends on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

Basically the project has made people aware of the different struggles that African women face. Men have no equals in Africa. Women are treated as an inferior gender and have few opportunities. They are always trying to catch up and they need help to be able to move forward and gain financial independence. This is a step forward for women empowerment, because when they have the financial power, they can be able to say no to negative practices example early marriages for their daughters in order to acquire a bride price and female genital mutilation

MIKITA project is for women. The number of women who have directly benefitted are 30. Indirectly the dependents have also benefitted and that is the average of 60 in number.

Project MIKITA 2011 has empowered the women with skills and networks. The sales they have made has given them room for financial freedom and bettered the domestic situation.

The women know what they want to do and they are aware of that the newly gained skills can make a difference if used properly. In this case, the project has raised the position of the women in society where they live in. This can eventually help improve communication and equal participation in decision making.

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To support Green Waters, you may buy some of the products made under MIKITA from our webshop: <http://www.freewebstore.org/greenwaters>

A direct donation can also be made via paypal (see [www.green-waters.org](http://www.green-waters.org)) or directly into our bank account:

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We hope to have established a sustainable working relationship and we can continue to work together and enable more women to receive trainings through project MIKITA – *Mitindo ya Kimataifa Tanzania*.

Green Waters management team Ms Stella Evelyne Tesha & Ms Bianka Wettin would like to thank all who have assisted us in our efforts for empowerment.

**PROJECT MIKITA 2011 WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE HARD WORK OF MIKITA WOMEN IN TANZANIA AND GREEN WATERS TEAM NETHERLANDS.**

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