



Visiting a Maasai school nearby Kilimanjaro

April 2nd to 3rd

Sunday, April 2nd 2006

Arusha

We have arrived from our safari tour in the Ngorongoro crater to the hotel in Arusha enabling us to have a good night sleep before travelling to the Masai school in Kutembeine. The crater was really fantastic but now we need to prepare for the next school project. In the hotel lobby we could hear some Swedes talking and that was employees from "SIDA" (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) who were there to hold a seminar of Infrastructure strategies.

After dinner we went early to bed to be "fresh" for the trip to Kutembeine tomorrow

Monday, April 3rd 2006

Arusha – Kutembeine

Up early in the morning to have breakfast and then immediately depart by road to Kutembeine. Kutembeine is located nearby Mount Kilimanjaro. The road trip to the school is expected to take some hours and we need to be there as early as possible as the road from Arusha to Kilimanjaro is dangerous after dark to avoid the bandits...



Before arriving to our school we had a pause, getting some water to drink and visiting a small Maasai market where the women are selling their beautiful pieces of art, necklaces, bracelets, statues, spears, machetes, textiles. Some women were really pushy to sell and at last 2 machetes & 2 belts were bought which would well fit to the Maasai textile sheet we intend to bring back home as well. When time to leave, one of the small Maasai boys jumped into the car for a ride, after a while he accepted to get out so we could continue to school.

Soon we went off the fine road and followed a sandy road. We saw which we thought was a Maasai village with 11 mud houses in a circle, the village was surrounded by lots of thorns. But we learned that this was not really a Village. This was one Maasai man with his 10 wives, each wife having a house...



The sandy road now reaches the bush and it begins to be a bumpy road and we need to pass some smaller rivers, not so deep though, so we can easily drive through with our jeeps. Soon we can see lots of different animals like Giraffes, elephants, wild beasts, etc. In fact in this particular area we see even more giraffes than we did when visiting the Ngorongoro crater the other day. Indeed a very nice experience and this is more close to how I thought it would be when volunteering the World Food Programme here in Tanzania.

We are now close to the school and have not much distance to go before arriving to the mission we are going to do at this school.



The school is not that far away from one of Tanzania's active volcanoes, named "Ol Doinyo Lengai" (known by Maasai as the mountain of god). This volcano is expected to have an eruption in the near future and they have started to prepare a possible evacuation of people who might be affected of an eruption.

Just before arriving to the school, we went in to a Maasai village to order something to eat on our return back to Arusha. Lots of people, mostly women was around in the village, it is amazing that they all are so thin and long and all of them is wearing colourful bracelets, earrings and beautiful textile sheets covering their bodies.



Our mission at Kutembeine School is to follow up the work of a previous team as they built a new kitchen and to check if everything was OK and in full use. Positively they are in use without any problems. As usual we also checked the sanitary to check if everything were properly handled, i.e. washing capabilities after visiting the toilets, no water was available which was pointed out to the Head Master of the school, recommendations were given to place a bucket of water enabling the pupils to wash their hands after a visit.

We also visited one of the class rooms as usual to have a look and here it really looked nice, compared to what we have seen earlier. A Maasai school is a bit different compared to other schools pupils as we here are talking about Maasai people. The Maasai are nomads and constantly moving around in the country and this creates problems for the children to get proper education. Therefore this is a boarding school which made us a bit curious of the standards of the sleeping facilities. Sadly many of the beds were in a very bad shape and condition, and not all of them had a mattress. This resulted in that 2-3 pupils are forced to share the same mattress. This made us a bit depressed and we immediately decided to donate more mattresses to the school as soon as we will be back in Arusha town.



As usual before leaving a school, they want us to listen to the orchestra and the unique song dedicated to the school. Lots of singing and marching were done before we finally had to leave to be back in Arusha before the darkness. This because of the bandits which sadly ravage the road to Arusha as mentioned earlier.

But before leaving the bush and the Maasais, we will have a dinner which was ordered before going to the school. The "restaurant" was a hut made of clay and in the first room which we passed was an open fire where a whole goat was under preparation. Next room contained a table and 2 stools which we could sit on and after a while the goat arrived in pieces. No spices as usual but we were very surprised when they put a dish of some salt on the table and asked if we would like to have a coke!!! Amazing, Coke must have the world's most efficient logistic team as a Coke can be found everywhere, also in the bush of Africa.

On our way back through the bushes we once again had the opportunities to see all the giraffes in full freedom of the nature, indeed a very good trip today.



We discussed the possible prices of mattresses and how many we could afford to buy, we decided to take care of that immediately tomorrow morning as we are expected to start our trip back to the World Food Programme Head Quarter in Dar es Salaam tomorrow.



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