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Doing projects with MamboSteunPunt

Version 2.0

Introduction

Mambo is a small village on the edge of the Usambara Mountains in Tanzania. For Mambo and the municipality Sungu where Mambo is based (called Ward in Tanzania), development is still essential at all levels and in almost every aspect. There is no water supply, no electricity and a shortage of firewood and infrastructural facilities.

MamboSteunPunt is assisting to develop the region. We from MamboSteunPunt don't believe in aid as such because aid makes people easily dependent. We believe that development can best be achieved through mutual cooperation in equality and sharing knowledge.

Structure of the organization

MamboSteunPunt is the support organization based in the Netherlands for projects in and around Mambo. MamboSteunPunt is in charge for fundraising and coordination the realization of the projects.

MamboSteunPunt identifies projects together with the local people. They frame projects, draft project proposals, implement, monitor, evaluate and in consultation with the local people they can make adjustments in the project.

Moreover they can assist friends who would like to do a project in the vicinity of Sungu and Mambo in each and every stage of a sub-project. Moreover they can monitor, evaluate and give feedback regarding the continuity of the project they initiated.

MamboSteunPunt gained in the past years the trust of the local people and has a wide experience in what is the best approach. This can boost the sustainability of any new initiative tremendously.

MamboViewPoint is the eco Lodge and also the base of MamboSteunPunt in Tanzania. Actually MamboSteunPunt is originating from the people that initiated the lodge. The intention of building a lodge in the Usambara Mountains was to enhance development in the region. The presence of the lodge is an economical stimulus already on itself. The foundation MamboSteunPunt is put in place to draw a better line and create more transparency between the projects and the lodge.

In relation to the projects, the function of the lodge is to take care for a stable base and infrastructure. Nevertheless also optional profits of the lodge are also spent on structure of the organization and the development of the region. Also the lodge makes it possible to have permanent people with specific skills or knowledge around.

Friends or Mambo are all those who are passing by to give a hand to realize specific projects. On purpose these friends are not called "volunteers" since this has a very bad image in the Tanzanian aid industry and we don't want to be connected with this.

Friends of Mambo fundamental take care of their own costs. It means they pay for their own travel expenses, but also for their own stay, food, translators and everything they need. Also it is appreciated if they organize their own funds for the projects they do, but this is not strictly necessary. Special rates and accommodation are put in place for friends of Mambo.

Friends of Mambo can use the infrastructure, management and the trust and knowledge in the region which is built by MamboSteunPunt in the past years.

Once an agreement started however friends of Mambo cannot use the given trust and facilities to start an own independent private project in the same region. If required MamboSteunPunt even might be happy to assist to set up an independent project, but not in the same region. We experienced such kind of initiatives can interfere too much in a negative way and moreover it is not fair regarding the basic work we did so far and all the energy and investment that went along with this.

Projects which are initiated with assistance of MamboSteunPunt in the region Sungu can be somehow independent but always have to fit within the policy set by MamboSteunPunt.

Vision

Very many relatively minor things can imply a tremendous improvement for the inhabitants of the Usambara Mountains. Small scale initiatives can effectively be guided and supported by MamboSteunPunt.

The precondition for the support for the initiatives from MamboSteunPunt is that projects should not so much be based on the principle of giving aid but rather on the intention of cooperation in equality. Projects should be aimed at local ownership, self management, self maintenance and enhancing self reliance and livelihoods of the local people.

Nature of the projects

Most projects are based on the following principles

- Encouraging people to start their own business. (like woodcarving, cultivating biological vegetables etc)
- Creating an added value to the products which are produced already (like juice from fruits etc)
- Improve local capacities, level of education and enhance creativity. (support existing schools, support theatre, art and music)
- Creating a better infrastructure (like repairing roads, internet access, water supply and health facilities)
- Creating a healthy environment (by planting trees, finding alternatives for firewood, building better stoves etc)

Results so far

Since MamboSteunPunt started in January 2009 many projects like water supply and school toilets are realized already.

For the list of projects have a look at our website www.MamboSteunPunt.org

Besides these projects there are many idea's and proposals left.

For a complete overview have a look at www.MamboViewPoint.org with the tab projects.

Why should a company, organization or private person support the projects of MamboSteunPunt.

As a consequence from the vision outlined above, projects should be focused on meeting local needs, utilize and enhance local capacities and opportunities. The ultimate objective of the projects should be local ownership, self maintenance and thus enhancing the livelihoods of local people.

Besides giving money MamboSteunPunt appreciates it very much if people from the companies, organizations or private donors are joining during implementation of the projects. They easily can combine it with a nice stay in MamboViewPoint eco lodge, will get an unforgettable period and even the best, will create a bond between themselves or the company and the project. Moreover the results will be very clear and can be inspected by the donors themselves. The money is not disappearing and the donors have fully the opportunity to display the results.

MamboSteunPunt is not a religious organization. We have an open mind and respect all religions as far as they are peaceful and don't try to win souls. This implies that also our friends, however they can have a religious background or motivation, have to respect people with other believes and are supposed not to win souls or to try to "paint dark colored people white".

An important consideration to support MamboSteunPunt is the efficiency and sustainability. According to reports, in Tanzania only 15% of all donated aid reaches the destination where it is meant for. Within the concept of MamboSteunPunt donations will be spent maximal for the projects.

Unfortunately many projects are collapsing even short after realizations on the moment donors are gone again. MamboSteunPunt is around for a long time and keeps an eye on the projects.

Doing a project in practice.

Doing projects will have the following phases:

1. *Idea and investigation.*

What MamboSteunPunt does is identifying projects together with the local people to make sure that local needs are met, local capacities and resources are going to be used in an optimal way. Especially when ideas are born abroad, like building a school or a dispensary, it is often questionable if this is a good idea. Many things which are originating from abroad, often encounter a lot of problems in practice because they are not always meeting the real local needs or only serve those who make easily connections with foreigners already and thus the better of. Thorough investigation of the local population and their situation is a necessity for sustainable projects. Moreover, it is very much possible that some other organization is working on the same idea or problem already. Because we are living in the area and are part of the local community, we are well informed about the local problems, the questions that arise and the social situation.

2. *Finding the right people and partners for support.*

Each project needs its own specific partners or organizations on the ground. They should have the experience in the required fields so they can contribute with their capacity to take on the various task at hand. They can be the interface between the project initiators and the local population. In relation to this it has to be clear who is in charge of the various stages of the project, like the project design, the preparation, implementation etc.

3. *Fundraising*

Before starting it must be clear how the money will be collected. This can be from the initiator him/her serves but also through other funds. Nonetheless, it is an important aspect that also the beneficiaries contribute somehow in the project. This not always has to be financial in nature, labor, local knowledge etc. could also be a very valuable contributed asset for the project. This contribution of beneficiaries is tremendously important to give co-ownership of the project straight from the start.

4. *Legal settlement*

If the whole project is clear there might be the need for a legal settlement. For small projects this will not be a problem but for projects with more impact the necessary authorities have to be informed and have to give their approval.

5. *Implementation*

In this phase the project will be realized physically and operationally. Preferable the initiator(s) of the project need to be around to establish good cooperation and to be sure the project is going in the best way.

MamboSteunPunt is a strong supporter to be not too strict to the original design but to adapt to the best and possible solutions in practice. This requires some capacity for adaptation. Constant monitoring, evaluation, feedback and adaptation of the process is necessary in this stage. Also from the start there must be a focus that the project can run on its own also after the expert left.

6. *training*

Related to the implementation, most often training is needed for a good functioning of the project. This can be done by the initiators, by MamboSteunPunt or if necessary, by specialized organizations that are equipped to do so.

7. *feedback*

Once the project is settled there is a need for a regularly guidance and feedback. This can be done by MamboSteunPunt since they are permanent around. Moreover, depending on the type of project, the government also has its own procedures to make regular inspections, like f.e. for dispensaries, schools, public buildings and so on.

8. *Involvement*

Last but not least, there is a need to stay in touch. It will be good if the initiators have a regular contact with the people in the field and pass by once in a while to see how the project is evolving, see if it has the impact that was aimed for.

Considerations

Before becoming a friend of Mambo it is good to question yourself if you have the right attitude and motivation to do so. You have to realize people are living here in difficult circumstances and are not waiting for people to "help" them who actually have problems themselves or just are looking for adventure.

Below some consideration whether you should join or not:

(read the full version on <http://www.thetravelingadvisor.com/2012/12/05/5-reasons-to-volunteer-abroad/>)

5 reasons to volunteer:

- You have a concrete skill to offer.
- The community you are going into has defined their need and invited you to come.
- You are able to effectively communicate and relate with the people you are working with.
- You are willing to take responsibility for the outcomes of your actions.
- You understand that volunteering does not necessarily mean "accomplishing" something materially.

5 reasons not to volunteer:

- You find yourself saying "I just want to help people"
- You assume, without any real investigation, that you can help the people you want to help
- You are volunteering to assuage your own guilt-complex.
- You want to get away with doing things abroad that you have no business doing at home.
- You want others to think you are a good person.

Agreement

The agreement below is meant for all friends of Mambo who are cooperating or intending to do so with MamboSteunPunt.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Country: _____

Agrees to become a friend of Mambo for the following project:

Project: _____

Period: _____

Aim of the project: _____

Undersigned declares that he/she fully understood the terms and conditions to be a friend of Mambo.

As soon as undersigned cannot agree anymore with the MamboSteunPunt policy or wants to follow his or her own plan he or she will redraw from the project and not interfere in the same region anymore.

Place: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____