

1. Introduction



Another year passed in the history of UNCSO with lots of achievements as well as challenges. Our institution was fortunate once again to be blessed with volunteers from Germany who contributed tremendously towards the objectives of the organization. It is critical for the parents to supplement their efforts for the common-good of the learners. However, more commitment is needed from the side of the parents in order for the kids to realize that their parents are also role players within this endeavor.

Our aim is to create a shelter of our own in the near future in order to ensure that more activities can be carried out, hence the intention to vigorously solicit funding for the construction of our own centre in the near future.

It is challenging to operate an organization of this magnitude with donor funding, making it cumbersome to employ additional staff on a contract basis who could run the operations on a daily basis. However, the need is being addressed and we hope that a solution will be found in the distant future.

We as UNCSO wish all the donors, everyone, who supported us during the year and all the volunteers a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

2. Volunteers



Done by: Anne, Bianca, Kerstin, Helene and Marianne

Bianca Krüger (23), student of mechanical engineering, Lemgo, Germany, 7.9.-5.12.2011

Kerstin Watermann (24), student of social work, Kirchlengern, Germany, 7.9.-5.12.2011

Anne Hanika (24), student of social work, Nürnberg, Germany, 7.9.-5.12.2011

Helene Steigertahl (25), student of, English, German and Art studies, Heidelberg, Germany, 20.9-21.10.2011

3. Work at UNCSO

With point three and five I would like to inform you about the feelings and views of the volunteers, when they are coming to work in Namibia. It should give you a deeper view of the relationship between the UNCSO the volunteers and the kids and also of the daily work at UNCSO.



a) Our daily work

Our first week in Usakos was filled with lots of overwhelming impressions, new people and a very different lifestyle. But with the great help of Marianne and Arianne it was easy to start our daily work at the center.

After preparing the material for our study groups in the morning, the center day starts with the arrival

of the smaller kids at 12 o'clock. School, for the older children, ends at 1 o'clock, which gives us the chance to spend one hour individual time with playing and talking to the smaller once. This time helps a lot to get to know them and build up a relationship. Especially with the once, who are shy or speaking and understanding only a little bit of English.

Appropriate to their end of the school day the lunch is ready. And for some of the children the food at the center is the only meal for the day.

After the children's bellies are filled we are trying to motivate them, even though it is very hot in Usakos, to do some exercises. So we all can be awake and fit for the study time.

During the study time, which is not liked but really more than needed from the kids, they are divided into different groups.

One of us had to handle the very active group of grade 1-2. Which had the biggest challenge in keeping the small once on their chairs without fighting and beating each other.

The second group is formed by the third and fourth grade. This was often not easy, because of the already very big differences in their knowledge. With some of the kids we could do math, which is expected from a grade 4 learner, but some of them are still struggling with easy addition worksheets.

The third group was compiled with the children of the grades 5, 6 and 7. In this group the differences in knowledge are even bigger. With some of the kids we only had to struggle with their teenage behavior of "no I don't do that". But some of the kids, who are in grade 6 or 7, are still not able to write or read or do the easiest mathematics.

During the time Helene was with us we had the chance to build a special group for the children, which are really in need of individual attention. That worked out very well and gave every group the chance to work concentrated on their worksheets.

During our three months we had a lot of successes, but the study time is and will be the most important part to support the children at the center.

After we and the kids have survived the study time the more pleasant part of the day started. The last hour of the center day we spend with doing nice things like crafts, games, reading books, this is the time of our center day we liked the most. Here we don't have to force them to do anything. We just enjoyed spending nice and most times very funny time with the children. We laughed and learned a lot with and from the children.

At 4 o'clock our day at the center is over and we are most times arriving very tired but happy at the Izaaks house our "Namibian home". Marianne was there in the afternoon to listen to us and solve problems as far as possible.



b) House visits

In our first week in Usakos we started with the house visits. The house visits gives us the opportunity to know how the kids are living and which problems they have at home. And also the parents can tell Marianne their problems with the kids and together they are looking for a solution.

When we arrived at the houses the family members were very friendly and they allowed us to look inside their houses and we could ask any question we had. Most parents only speak Afrikaans, so Marianne had to talk with the parents, and translate it for us in English.

Some kid's don't live with their parents, because they are orphans or the parent's can't look after them. They live with their aunts, uncles or grandmothers.

For us it was very hard to see that some kids are living in shacks and don't get food regularly. Most of them have to sleep with other kids in one bed and they have only the blanket, which was given out from the Center. Some of the families even live without running water and electricity. If they want to get water they have to go to the community tap. The food, when there is food, is prepared over a fire. Often their only food is Pap, because that is the cheapest food you can prepare in Namibia.

The biggest shock for us was to see that a kid of 9 years lives alone in a shack next to their uncle's family, because there is no space in the uncle's house. The living conditions in that small shack were absolutely horrible. The boy had to sleep on the ground on a blanket, which he got from the center and they also used the room to dry their family's meat. That was a horrible smell and a lot of flies were in there.

Marianne told us that there is a change in the way of live from some kids. Some of them are living now in small stone houses (2 rooms for 5-8 people) and not any longer in a shack. That is a good improvement. But that doesn't mean that they have water and electricity in the house. Some houses have installed water pipes and electricity, but the family don't have enough money to pay for that, so they can't use it.

For us it was really shocking to see their way of living with our own eyes and not only on TV or in the newspaper. It helped a lot to understand the kids and made us realized how important it is to give them love and support during our time at the center.

c) River Party



The teachers' day at the school gave us the chance to do something special with the kids. In the morning before the river party started we prepared nice food for the children. We baked a cake, made some sandwiches and peeled a lot of carrots. The kids came to Marianne's house at 9.30 a.m., although the party should start at 11 a.m.

The children were so excited and they couldn't wait to walk to the river until we finished our preparation. When we packed our stuff, many children walked with us through the hot sun carrying many buckets full of food. When we arrived, the first problem started. One kid dug its shoes in the sand and couldn't find it anymore. The shoes were new, so they had to be found. After a long search in the river bed full of sand they were luckily found. Finally the party could start with almost all the center kids. After a little bit of playing with the ball, the kids complained that they are hungry, because they didn't eat anything for breakfast. This is a big problem for all the families. Most of the children come to the center without eating something for breakfast. The kids finished and enjoyed all the food. With a full stomach the kids had more power to play. They played soccer, dug holes in the sand or only lay down in the shadow. The bigger once sit alone in a circle and talked to each other. The smaller once ran around and climbed at the tree. Then we had a nice cake, from which the kids couldn't get enough. They ate all the crumbs and also turned into rabbits, because we ate the carrots, which looked funny.

The sun was getting hotter and hotter and we sat in the shadow and talked to each other. After great three hours with the children we packed our stuff and went back home.

It was nice to see the children outside of the center and not in school uniforms.

During the daily work at the center the children have to behave. They can't do

whatever they want, because there are rules, they have to follow. At this kind of special events the kids can do what they like to do and can feel free. Also our behaving is different. We don't have the stress that the children must study and be quiet. At the river they are allowed to scream and to play free, because nobody is bordered by the noise. We could see how the children played with each other and how they are behaving in their free time. Both the children and we enjoyed these few hours at the river, because we felt free and relaxed!

d) Parents Evening



We had a stressful time before the parents evening. In the beginning of the preparations we volunteers have to think about it, what we would like to perform with the children at the parents evening. In the end we decided to act our daily work at the center in a funny way. The parents should see, what the children are doing during a "normal" day at the center, which

problems there are and how the children behave. Now the hard work started. Every kid got a role, even the volunteers were acted by some kids. We volunteers played the role of a child. We had a lot of fun, because we played our roles in an overdone way. We were fighting, crying and miss behaving. And the children had big eyes, when they saw two of us fighting against each other, when we acted the role of a child. Also the kids, who played the volunteers role, realized the hard job as a volunteer, because nobody listened to them and everybody screamed and ran around. We also practiced some songs and dances. The kids danced "Cotton Eye Joe", "Macarena" and "Chicken dance". The "Chicken dance" was their favorite, even after the parents evening they still love to dance it. It were funny, but hard weeks of practicing. All of us needed a lot of patience.

We invited all the parents to come to our parents' evening, but the parent involvement is very weak. It was hard for us to see, that the kids practiced a lot for this event and after that not every mum and dad came to see, how their own kid was acting. Some parents aren't interested in the center work and these kind of special events aren't important enough for them to take part.

After a chaotic final practicing we had doubts about a successful parents evening, which was hold in the big hall of the school. But the children acted nicely and we had a lot of fun. The parents clapped their hands for the acting of the children and we were very proud of them, because they made a good job. In the end of the parents evening we ate meat curry and rice. After a nice dinner cook by Auntie Lena and Petra everyone was gone. It was a pity, that the parents went straight back home after eating. We couldn't talk to them and step in contact with them. It is helpful to speak to the parents to understand the behavior of the children. But we hadn't the

chance to do this. It is our wish for the future, that the parents do not only give us the responsibility for their child. We would like that the parents are involved in the center work and take part that they can see what we are doing and how the children are behaving when they are not at home.

e) Hair washing Day (2x)



In our second week at the center we realized that some kids have some white spots on their head and the hair looks very dirty. It is because of their living conditions, sleeping on the ground or only because some of the parents don't care about the hygienic and cleanness of their kids.

So we decided to wash the hair one week later and to crème the parts with the white spots. At the beginning a lot of kids said: `I don't wash my hair` but in the end it was a lot of fun.

The kids had to stand in a line and wait for their hair washing. It looked very funny to see the kid's heads hanging under the tap with a lot of shampoo. Also the kids had a lot of fun and the bigger once helped us to wash the hair of the smaller once. The girls with long hairs got a nice hairstyle from Aunty-Lena. At the end of the hair washing day every kid got some nice cookies.

f) Hygienic & HIV Day

The hygienic day is an event which every volunteering group that is coming to work at UNCSCO has to prepare. We spread up the children into 4 different groups. Boys and girls were separated and the younger children from the older once. That made it much easier to talk about topics like body and cloths hygiene, prevention, owns limits, the right to say no and HIV. Every kid got a toothbrush, which they directly used to brush their teeth in the center.

All groups worked really well and even the difficult subjects where easy to discuss. All of us where really positively surprised how much knowledge the children already had from school and from previous

4. Donations



Donations from the Volunteers



Donations from some visitors



Donations from Japan



Donations from former Volunteers



Donations from Germany

We whole-heartedly say thank you for the kind donations!

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5. Our Christmas Week

A highlight for us was the Christmas Week, which had its final in the Christmas Party. During the week we made Christmas decorations for the room and the Christmas tree and we baked some cookies, which the kids took home after the Christmas Party. We learned some nice Christmas songs, which we sang at the Party.



On Friday after school the kids went home to clean and dress up themselves. At two o'clock the Party started. First we listened to the Christmas Story, after that we sang some nice Christmas Songs. Every kid bought a Christmas Present (not more than N\$ 10) for another kid, which they gave each other with a lovely hug.



Our highlight for this day was the visit of Santa Claus. We had to wait a little bit for him; meanwhile the kids played with the presents and ate fruit salad. To let Santa know that he is welcomed, we sang "Santa Claus is coming to town". It was great to see the big eyes when Santa came into the room. Every kid sat on Santa's lap and he wrote something about the behavior of the kid. Santa was also able to speak Damara to the kids, who don't understand English very well. It was interesting for us to see how the kids reacted, when they realized that Santa knows everything about them. Everyone got a nice present from Santa Claus, which they unpacked directly. It was great to see the happy faces of the kids.



After Santa left we ate potato salad and meat and vegetable sticks. Desert we had nice watermelon and fruit sticks. The kids enjoyed the special food and the Party, which we had after dinner. At six o'clock the Party was over and asked directly for the next dancing party.

6. Achievements

A special day of this school term was the price giving, where the kids got prizes for their good marks in every subject, best in class and best in grade or for their participation in school activities.

Seven kids from our Center got prizes and we were very proud of them. This showed us, which important part the study time in the center takes.



Collins, Violencia, Joeliën, Stanley, Taleni and Frieda

Missing:

Paolette and Claudia

7. Votes of Thanks

- Deutsch Namibische Gesellschaft (DNG)
- Namibian Press & Tools / Walvis Bay
Weser-Metall-Umformtechnik GmbH&Co.KG/ Mr. Heimrich
- World Net Logistics / Mr. Rico van der Merwe
- Luftfahrt ohne Grenzen e.V. / Wings of Help
- Air Namibia
- Madeira Garne U. + M. Schmidt & Co. GmbH / Anastasia Turdo
- Coats Thread Germany GmbH / Bettina Schmid
- Westfalenstoffe AG / Elise Mackenbrock
- Sister Angela Plassmann and Sister Heike Homberg
- XX Designpartner Atelier für visuelle Kommunikation/ Mr. Schuler
- Mr. and Mrs. Pfannkuchen
- All volunteers and parents
- OK Super market Namibia Usakos
- All visitors
- And last but not least all donations via DNG



A special thank goes to all the involved people, who supported the daily work at UNCSCO.

Auntie Lena, start the needlework.

Petra, prepare and serve food everyday.

All Board members of UNCSCO

Marianne and family

8. Future

Hopes and wishes for the future

- Money for Schoolbooks, School fees and Uniforms
- Clothes for Summer and Winter
- Craft Materials (for example hard Paper)
- board games
- softballs and soccer balls
- English children books
- copy paper and black ink for HP C4283 and Canon MP160
- Computers or Notebooks (with a CD and DVD drive)
- Needle Work Material
- Organized trips for the children, in order for them to become acquainted with the vicinity of Usakos and of the region

Furthermore, we take the opportunity to say thank you to all our sponsors and donors over DNG and the private ones for your loyalty and support during 2011!!

Deutsch- Namibische Gesellschaft: Savingsaccount:
Kontonummer: 2 113 508 00 First National Bank; BranchKaribib;
Bankleitzahl: 300 800 00 Branchcode: 281073;
Bank: Commerzbank AG Account no. 62124732258
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For any information please contact Marianne Izaaks (Project co-ordinator Namibia) or Ingrid Pfannkuchen (Germany) or have a look at our homepage:

www.uncso.com or www.praktikum-namibia.de