

Merrueshi Primary School Project

How a Dream Becomes Reality

Education for indigenous people plays a vital role in protecting wildlife and habitat. The Merrueshi Primary School in Kenya demonstrates this role. However, the school was too small and grades K-5 shared the use of two classrooms. Due to lack of space, only a limited number of boys and girls could attend school.

In 2001/2002, Woodland Park Zoo, through grants and volunteer/staff donations, provided funds to Maasai people of southeastern Kenya to construct two new classrooms in the Merrueshi community. A dream became reality.



This building was too small to meet the educational needs of the Merrueshi community.



The Merrueshi community is located in the savanna of southern Kenya, near Amboseli National Park.

Community members dug the foundation for new classrooms.



Women collected water needed to make bricks. Each woman collected an average of 100 gallons



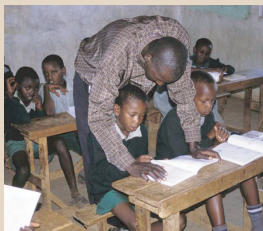
Maasai youth made bricks for the school's walls.



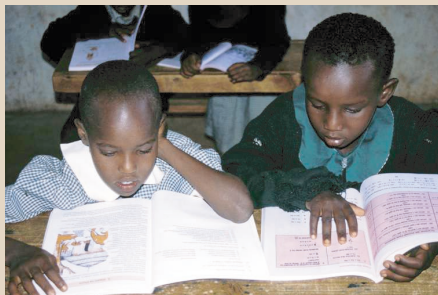
Students often visited the construction site.



The Merrueshi community received school supplies donated by Woodland Park Zoo.



Teacher Samuel Ole Ntauti helps student in classroom.



After graduating from school, these and other Maasai students will become knowledgeable guardians of savanna wildlife and habitat.

All photos courtesy of Kakuta Ole Maimai Hamisi



Community members met to discuss the construction of their new classrooms.

The Maasai of the Merrueshi community

thank Woodland Park Zoo for its

generous support in the construction

of our new classrooms.

This is an unforgettable gift;

our appreciation exceeds whatever

could be put in words.

The Maasai have a great reverence for the land upon which they live, and the wildlife that it supports. Education empowers the Maasai culture to protect its homeland. Woodland Park Zoo's support of the Merrueshi Primary School Project is evidence of the zoo practicing its mission: "helping to create a sustainable future for wildlife"



Kakuta Ole Maimai Hamisi, Jr. Elder Representative of the Merrueshi Community and Woodland Park Zoo Staff Member, 2002

To find out more about this project and Maasai people or sponsor their community development projects visit www.maasai-infoline.org
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