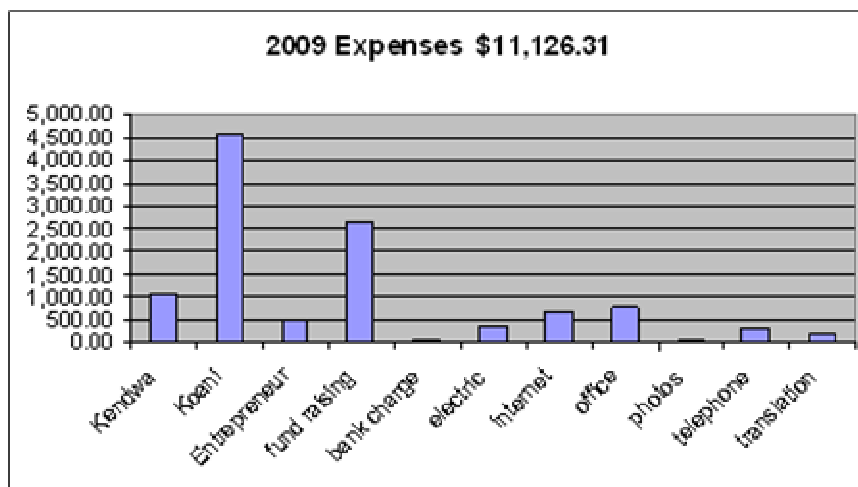
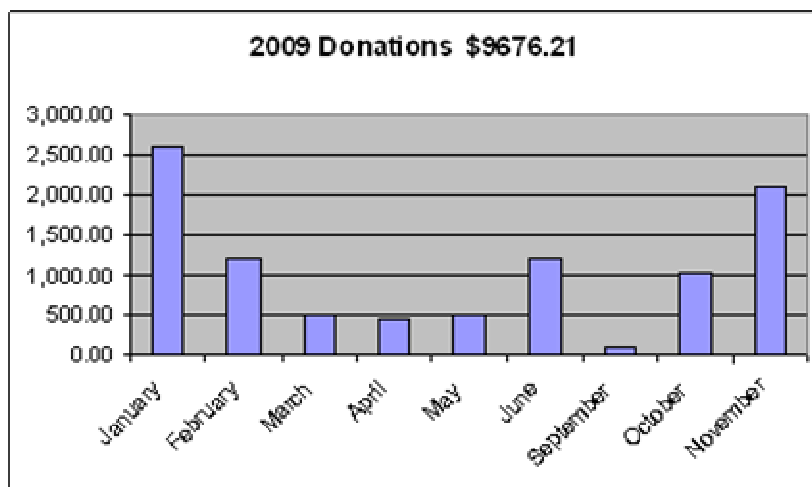


November 29, 2009

2009 has been a year of lessons learned. Poverty creates a terrible state of mind – one of desperation, fear and anger. The feeling of helplessness is debilitating. Action is the antidote to despair and we at Participate Now Zanzibar have certainly been very busy this year. I have been most fortunate – I took a portion of my small savings, rented a flat downstairs in my building, furnished it and I am renting it out to consultants. It is rented for the next few months and a huge weight off of my shoulders knowing that I will be financially secure for awhile. We have been having some good vuli (short) rains lately and our Koani farmers are doing well with their crops. They will have food security for this upcoming dry season. The Kendwa villagers still do not have water but their confidence and self respect has been buoyed. They have been working harder than ever to find ways to get funding.

Donations and Expenses so far this year



People often ask me about the money that we receive – how much is for overhead and administration they ask. That's a bit difficult to answer as we do not take salaries, we are using my house as our office, my computers and printer and we do all of our own fund raising. In 2008 we had received close to \$20,000.00 in donations and I had hoped we could reach that goal in 2009 but it wasn't meant to be. Suleiman, our NGO chairman, told me that maybe it was good for us because we have found out just how committed we really are to our work and the people in

Zanzibar. Everyone on the team has spent as little money as possible and volunteered much of our time and services because we do care so very much.

If you are interested in learning more about our past and current projects please visit www.participatenowfoundation.org. We have completed the **Entrepreneur** project where we trained and worked closely with 9 HIV+ woman from ZAPHA+. They learned about the various businesses that they were engaged in. No – they did not all go on to create successful businesses but they worked well as a team and they hope that ZAPHA+ might be able to find donor funding for them to create a small business support group.

Our **Koani** farmers project includes 7 farmers – 3 men and 4 women. Suleiman told me that we have truly chosen the poorest of the poor because they don't have electricity or cell phones. We included the farmers in all of the phases of the project and let them take the lead as to their needs. They planted healthy banana plants, good cassava and vegetable seeds. They really wanted us to visit their farms and give them ongoing advice rather than just a five day training so that is what we have been doing for the past year. Suleiman has suggested that we visit the farmers with the local sheha (like a mayor) and some of the agricultural district officers. We can talk about how we have implemented this project and get feedback and advice from them as to how to go forward. We would like to continue working with the farmers in Koani.

Kendwa is an amazing village that is an hour away and we have been visiting them twice a month facilitating group discussions as to the how they might get water. We have written proposals to donors and been rejected for one reason or another. We and the villagers have gone to the surrounding hotels with no success as yet. We held a fund raising party and are very grateful for the donations that we did receive although it wasn't enough to cover the project. But that hasn't stopped any of us – we continue brainstorming and coming up with new ideas.

Here are some photos of our work this past year:

Koani farmers tour, banana plants and very little water



The farmers and some of the local agricultural extension officers who have been working with us went to visit three farmers who shared with us their knowledge and experiences. I'm not sure who had more fun on the field trip – the farmers who were so proud of their accomplishments or all of us who were able to practically see how the lessons learned could be implemented. In the center is Bi Mboga's banana plants – this was before the good rains came. On the right is the ongoing problem of water. The farmers dig a hole near their crops and use a small bucket to water the crops. It's time consuming, back breaking work that must be done twice a day for many of the vegetables.

The people who benefit from the Koani farming project



Issa is our star farmer – he listened carefully to all of the trainers, asked lots of questions and took notes. He is one of the few who is literate – we learned that it's helpful to have the participants draw maps and other things to explain what they learn. Bi Mboga and Fatuma are amazing – they taught me so much. These women take care of their homes, their children, their husbands, fetch wood, water, cook and tend to their crops. They always have a smile and Fatuma loves to tease me mercilessly. My Swahili comprehension is not good at all but she will talk a mile a minute with me. On the right is Issa, his youngest son, his wife and Fatuma who is their neighbor. These are just some of the people who will benefit because they have participated in this project. They have gained self respect and dignity and are able to provide food for their families this season. If you are interested in reading more please visit the Projects Page at our website [Participate Now!](#)

Kendwa water project



We began talking with the Kendwa villagers in October 2008 about water. They have 3 wells that are very deep and will be close to dry during our dry season which runs December to March. When that happens the women will try to find leaks in the pipes that run by their village to the hotels and get what they can from the leakage. That is humiliating and sad. I had assumed that I would be able to raise enough money for this project (approximately \$10,000,000) but it did not happen due to the global economic crisis. We had a fund raising party at my house in October and raised enough money to basically pay for the party. If you wish to read about the party and our amazing local donors please visit the Email Archives at [Participate Now!](#)

I was worried that the Kendwa villagers would think we wasted money by having the fund raiser. But that was not the case. They were honored to be invited to my home and amazed at the hard work that we had put into the party. They understand how hard it is to raise donations – just because people are poor or doing good things does not entitle them to other peoples' money. In the end, we all have to take care of ourselves. The villagers were energized – they had raised over \$1,000.00 themselves a few months ago and decided that they were going to meet with each villager and ask them to donate towards the project. They also met with a group of women because they feel it's important for the women to be involved. Now – I have been going up there for a year and I haven't asked about the women at all. I see them all the time but it wasn't my place to suggest what the villagers should do.

They are going to an Islamic charity organization in Zanzibar to ask for funding. They are also going to visit the Commission of Water – we have been told that they have a bore hole digging machine and sometimes they let it be used for projects like this. The point is – these villagers are not sitting around waiting for a donor to solve all their problems. Participate Now Zanzibar has not stopped working with the village because we have so little money. We continue our work because we are a part of this community – a community where we do our best to share with others. If you are interested in more information please check out the water proposal and budget on our Projects Page at the [Participate Now!](#) website.

Kendwa Village Plan Project



We want to finish the water project and then continue working with Kendwa village. We are hoping to help them come up with a village plan for themselves. We cannot decide what is best for the village – only they can do that. We want to keep on visiting the village and help to enable them to look at the existing conditions – the good and the bad. There are so many strengths here. There is no agriculture to speak of because it is coral rock – the main industry is fishing. But I know that there is so much more that is being done in the village that I cannot comprehend because I'm an American. We want to help this village to grow and become stronger. If you are interested in more information please check out the proposal and budget for the Village Plan on our projects page at [Participate Now!](#) As you will see it's not very much money (less than \$5,000.00).

The people who benefit from the Kendwa projects



The women work very hard drying the fish that their husbands bring in. They also make mats that they can use and sell in the village. On the right is a man who is making a limestone pit. I watched it over a few months and took photos of the progress each time we visited. He sells the limestone to the villagers to be used in the construction of their homes. The villagers are kind and generous people – but they find it difficult to advocate for themselves. Being poor can be debilitating but I have great admiration as to how these people just keep going on – they don't give up. I am most fortunate to be able to live in Zanzibar, be involved with the NGO and do the work that we are doing.

Marine Corps Ball 2009 and the new US Ambassador



And here I am back in civilization so to speak. I was grateful to be able to attend the Marine Corps Ball again this year in Dar es Salaam. I don't always realize just how proud I am to be an American. I can be very critical of so many things but I am glad that I am an American. I have had opportunities that many people in the world don't ever get – I had a wonderful education and great work opportunities. I was able to flourish and learn about business and how I fit in this world. I have been making more friends at the US Embassy in Dar and it was good to visit with people. On the right is the new US Ambassador to Tanzania – Alfonso Lenhardt. I only met him for a moment but I believe he has a kind heart. He is going to have a lot of work ahead of him and I have confidence that he will do well.

I want to thank all of you for your support this past year. We are grateful for the donations that we have received and I am grateful for the emotional support that has been given to me. It was a tough year but I am glad that I didn't give up. I am hoping that 2010 will bring glad tidings for everyone around the world. Please – do not give up – things must get better.

“Being rich is having enough to share with others”

Please send a check to either the CT address or if you live in Zanzibar you can contact me directly – we have a bank account in Zanzibar and can accept USD or TSH. Or visit our website [Participate Now!](#) to make a donation through PayPal.

Participate Now!
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Thank you for taking the time to read this email.

Kathryn

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