

## Statement Kuku Project

Development cooperation and the work TATU Project does sometimes go with ups and downs. We are very proud of our projects that are up and running, yet we are sad to announce you that we had to end our chicken raising project called the Kuku Project, due to an infectious disease.

We want to explain what happened and assure you that we will learn from this setback. At TATU Project, we strongly value transparency towards our supporters as well as sharing our success and challenges with other organizations that may be doing similar types of work. For that reason we provide this statement.

### The Kuku Project

The Kuku Project started two years ago in the summer of 2014. The idea of the Kuku Project was to start a small business with some of the most vulnerable families in the community. With the help of TATU Project, the business was established and run in cooperation with the stakeholders. Once they are able to repay the start-up costs, they become the full owners of the project and TATU Project can reinvest in a new social business in the community with different stakeholders.

The five women involved in the project were prepared via trainings about entrepreneurship, raising chickens, bookkeeping and how to run a business. After these trainings a chicken coop was built and the poultry farming commenced.

In two years, a total five batches of chicken were raised. Three batches of broiler chicken for meat consumption were raised without problems, yet these were not providing enough profit to become sustainable. These efforts were not a waste because it taught the women who were managing the project a lot about how to raise chicken.

Egg laying chicken take more time to grow but provide more profit because there is a good market for eggs in Msitu wa Tembo and surroundings. We therefore raised two batches of layer chicken with the first batch raised during the first five months of 2015. We saw profit with this first batch of layer chickens but due to a lack of vitamins these chickens became aggressive and started attacking each other. Therefore we decided to sell them to recuperate the investment because due to the stress they experienced they stopped laying eggs.

Since the batch of first layer chickens had two months of good profit we decided to repeat raising layer chickens. At the peak of production of this first batch of layer chickens, a profit of 222.000 Tanzanian Shilling (approximately €100) was realized per month. To put this in perspective: the average salary per month in Msitu wa Tembo lies between 100.000 and 150.000 Shillings per month. The majority of inhabitants do not have formal employment though so income varies strongly from day to day.

### What happened and how we tried to solve it

During the summer a disease named 'Fowl Typhoid' started going around in Moshi and Msitu wa Tembo. This is a form of Salmonella for chickens that has a high morbidity rate and is highly communicable. The Kuku Project chicken were not the only victim of this infection. We talked to various other chicken farmers who lost more than half of their flock. One of them even lost 900 of his 1500 chicken when we talked to him.



For over four months various medicines and treatments were tested, but none of them proved a solution. One of the problems was that it took a long time before the veterinarians could provide the diagnosis of Thyphoid.

### **Lessons learned**

Though we are ultimately closing the Kuku Project, there were key lessons learned that will help the beneficiaries and TATU Project in the future. There was inadequate support from the veterinarians and chicken experts. They lacked the expertise and/or they were just selling more and more medicine as a business model, which we realized too late. This is a vital lesson learned. We have to create stronger relations with experts in technical issues in which TATU Project lacks expertise. We did what we thought was adequate of research on chicken farming, yet we realized too late that we had overlooked some areas.

We started too ambitious with too many chickens and perhaps could have started smaller with less chickens. Although it gave good experience, the raising of the broiler chickens proved a lot of work for almost no profit, so the women and TATU Project wanted to move forward to make a profit. For over two months in 2015, the chicken laid a lot of eggs and the project showed its potential, what made us invest on a large scale to realize bigger profits and have a larger impact. .

Although TATU Project has stepped aside in the project, we have issued the equipment and remaining chickens to the group members. Some have shared their desire to continue to put their knowledge and training to use with smaller scale chicken raising (5-10 chickens). We feel this can still be viewed as a major success as the group members now feel empowered to take on such a project.

Thank you for your understanding, do not hesitate to contact us via [info@tatuproject.org](mailto:info@tatuproject.org) for further questions.

Sincerely,

The TATU Project team

