

ComeTacts
YMCA Experience Path

Active Help towards Helping Oneself Kenya

For many years we have been supporting what the YMCA Kenya offers for job training by the *Action Signs of Hope*. In job training centres different handicraft and administrative jobs can be learnt. Meanwhile working on a personal computer is part of this training. The diplomas are recognized by the state. Sports and games, Christian programmes and prevention courses regarding HIV/Aids are part of the programme for the apprentices.

At the moment there are 15 YMCA job training centres, which are used by up to 800 apprentices per year. Many different professions can be learnt: sowing and producing clothes, clerk, car mechanic, electrician, technical drawing, farming. Most of these centres have been there for about 30 years. The councils are aiming at making their own money so that they can give what they earn towards their own development projects. One example is the YMCA in Mugona. By means of a coffee plantation which had been planted by the YMCA, they earn money that is invested into their job training programme.

In Kenya the YMCA is one of the oldest non-state organizations of the country. Its origins reach back to the year 1910, when the then US president Th. Roosevelt was on a safari in Kenya. Until 1961 the YMCA was a British institution, when the leadership was taken over by Kenyans. Since then 31 local councils have been founded, with all in all more than 16,000 members.

The economical difficulties of the country and the high HIV/Aids infection rate are still an enormous challenge for the YMCA. Resolute prevention and information measures have led to a standstill of the spreading of the disease, but about 30 % of Kenyans are affected. There are many Aids orphans, who have to get a chance for job training. All in all there is an increasing number of youth who aim at making a clerk or handicraft apprenticeship.

Giving a future to the young people of Kenya. Part of such future is, among other things, a good job training, with which one can earn one's own money as an employee or self-employed – for example in a "shop under the open sky" – to feed one's own family.

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