



Picture right:
measures against hunger



Dear friends of the THOMAS ENGEL-Foundation,

we turn to you once again WITH AN URGENT REQUEST FOR SUPPORT. The world has changed dramatically to an extent that none of us thought possible. A year ago, we reported a decline in donations, mainly due to the Corona pandemic and the floods in Rhineland-Palatinate and North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. These reasons still exist, albeit in a somewhat weakened form. But others have been added: The war in Ukraine, the resulting energy crisis and inflation, not to mention other crises and disasters. Nobody knows where this will lead, and most of us are rather reluctant to spend money. We fully understand this behaviour.

BUT... there could hardly be a worse time for the decrease in donations. In terms of our foundation's work, we are confronted with significantly lower income; on the one hand, we are confronted with significantly lower income, but on the other hand with increased expenditures. The war in Ukraine, for example, is not only a tragedy for the people in the country. The increased grain and energy prices are also hitting hard many countries in the Southern Hemisphere with full force, including Eswatini, Tanzania and Ecuador, where the THOMAS ENGEL-foundation is active.

Within our modest means, we are tirelessly striving to eliminate the causes of hunger and poverty and to improve living conditions in the aid areas. In the 13 years of the Foundation's existence, we have achieved considerable successes. However, now much of what we have achieved is in danger of disappearing. We will not accept this and want to fight against it, but we still need your support. This is what we are urgently asking for.

As in every newsletter, we thank you very much for your support so far, without which the remarkable successes mentioned above would not have happened.

Despite the depressing global situation, we wish you a reflective Advent season, the best possible holidays and all the best for 2023.

Best regards

Ernst Engel
Chairman of the Board

Bettina Haubner und Jaime Garcia
Deputy Chairs of the Board

The members of the advisory board of the THOMAS ENGEL-foundation

The board members of the three sponsoring associations

Freunde der THOMAS ENGEL-Stiftung Fulda e. V.

Freunde der THOMAS ENGEL-Stiftung Nastätten e. V.

Amigos de la Fundación THOMAS ENGEL in Ecuador

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Aid measures at a glance

ESWATINI

Within the framework of the aid project **LITSEMBA** – (Litsemba = Hope) help for almost 3,300 children of pre-school age:

- construction and maintenance of currently 104 *neighbourhoods Carepoints (NCPs)*. These are simple but solid built day care centres
- providing children with one warm meal a day; if possible, every day
- early childhood development and pre-school education (*ECCE = Early Childhood Care and Education*)
- basic medical care through a Mobile Clinic, consisting of a robust SUV with all-terrain capability, two nurses, two assistants for various tests, e.g. for HIV, and a driver
- obtaining birth certificates, which is important for the further future life of the children, but often complicated
- winter clothing and blankets for the children, because nights can be cold in southern Africa, far from the equator
- income Generating Activities (*IGAs = Income Generating Activities*) to remunerate the volunteer caregivers work performed in the NCPs. Such as raising poultry and pigs, vegetable growing, sewing clothes, candle making, etc.
- construction of solid 2- or 3-room houses for very poor families previously living in dilapidated mud huts. Mainly with donations from the association **Hunde helfen Kindern e. V.**; so far, 32 houses have already been built or are under construction

Since 2010, the aid project, which is now under the umbrella of the renowned local aid organisation **Young Heroes**, has been supported with about € 1.4 million. The money comes from the two project sponsors, the **THOMAS ENGEL-foundation** and the **Möwenweg Foundation**, which generated it from other organisations, including the sponsoring associations of the THOMAS ENGEL-foundation, as well as from numerous private individuals. Another sponsor of Litsemba since 2020 is **Kindernothilfe e. V.**, which provides additional financial resources.

TANZANIA

Cooperation with the association **TAKE A MALAIKA e. V.** to support needy children and their families:

- health insurance for 24 people to enable them to seek medical help
- support for 5 families or single mothers, partly with micro-credits for the establishment of self-employed livelihoods

In order to optimise the relief efforts on the ground, the international non-governmental organisation (NGO) **Home of Malai-ka** is being founded in the city of Arusha, which is located in the north-east of the country.

So far, the THOMAS ENGEL-foundation has supported the projects of **TAKE A MALAIKA e. V.** with 8,160 €.

ECUADOR

Here the THOMAS ENGEL-foundation and the booster club **Amigos de la Fundación THOMAS ENGEL** support the following institutions and help with further measures:

- **Melvin Jones Education Centre**
- **Helping Kids in Ecuador.** Children from very poor backgrounds with deformities and serious illnesses are operated on by local doctors who donate their time free of charge
- interest-free micro-loans for poor families and single mothers who are self-employed craftsmen and women and farmers or who run small businesses
- other projects

Since 2010, the THOMAS ENGEL-foundation has supported the projects in Ecuador with € 73,000. Added to this are 17,000 USD in income generated locally by the Amigos de la Fundación THOMAS ENGEL, founded in 2020.

Eswatini – Self-sufficiency in food is the goal

The *World Food Programme (WFP)* of the **United Nations** unexpectedly stopped supplying food to the 104 **LITSEMBA** NCPs, affecting almost 3,300 children ages 1 to 5. In the simple but solid built day-care centres, volunteer caregivers prepare a hot meal for the children almost every day, mostly based on maize flour, rice, beans and cooking oil, largely provided by the WFP. Recently, however, they have changed their strategy and only supply “starving people” and no longer “hungry people”. According to the WFP, the poor sections of Eswatini’s population belong to the second category, although two-thirds of the approximately 1.2 million inhabitants live below the national poverty line. The World Hunger Index 2021 of **Welthungerhilfe** is interesting, but only of limited use. Here, Eswatini ranks 69th out of 116 countries for which sufficient data is available for calculation. With a WHI value of 17.0, Eswatini falls into the “moderate” severity category. According to this, the population there is on average “only” moderately affected by hunger. The categories at a glance:

< low	
10,0-19,9	moderate
20,0-34,9	serious
35,0-49,9	alarming
> 50,0	extremely alarming

However, the WHI of 17.0 is hardly relevant for Eswatini and especially for the aid project LITSEMBA, because there is a strong poverty gap in the country. Eswatini is divided into four districts. LITSEMBA only provides aid in Shiselweni, the poorest, very rural, sparsely populated and little developed district. According to their own assessment, the rating there should be “serious”/“very serious”, i.e. just before “serious” and thus equivalent to “starving”.

In the short term, the sponsors of LITSEMBA, i.e. the **THOMAS ENGEL-foundation**, the **Möwenweg Foundation** and **Kindernothilfe e. V.**, together with their partners, are prepared to close the supply gap with additional financial contributions of about 12,000 €/month. However, this cannot be sustained long term and is not effective in the sense of “helping people to help themselves”.

The sudden discontinuation of the WFP’s food supplies has created what can be described as a dramatic situation that requires us to act quickly and, as it were, thoughtfully. At the same time, the WFP’s decision, hard to believe, also has something good. Now, finally, the pressure is there to force people to take action for themselves. There is enough land. There is no lack of willing people and the necessary knowledge is also available in the country. However, the people concerned have to be treated as equals, they have to be involved and, in the end, they have to be allowed to decide. That is why the concept in Eswatini was developed by our partner **Young Heroes**.

Water is often lacking, but this problem can also be solved. For example, years ago, we expanded the rainwater collection capacity at the NCPs from 5,000 l to 10,000 l.

What the people need is start-up financing for the first seeds, fertiliser, fencing and storage. A few weeks ago, LITSEMBA started a pilot project in which maize and beans are cultivated on 2 hectares of land in each of 5 NCPs in 5 different communities. It is also planned to add sweet potatoes and pumpkins. The concept envisages that the committed community members will also generate a surplus and thus income in the future. The start-up financing for this pilot project has now been provided by the LITSEMBA executing agencies and their partners. The newly founded **RC Afrika e. V. (Rescuing Children Afrika)** deserves a special mention.

In the coming years, more NCPs are to be enabled to supply themselves on the basis of this pilot project. It is planned to scale up by an additional 50 NCPs. Because these are located in 9 communities, the active participation of the village communities plays a central role. We therefore already attach great importance to them taking responsibility.

In future issues of the newsletter we will report on the progress of this unique and exciting project.

Eswatini – early childhood development is so important

In international terminology, this early childhood support measure is called ECCE = Early Childhood Care and Education.

Education in Eswatini is still shaped by different influences, namely traditional, colonial and those of the missionaries. Therefore, it is not at the level it should be, although that would be so important. Education should develop the personality and enable a fulfilled life. Education should provide well-trained professionals for the labour market and make the economy competitive. Education should secure democracy and pass on cultural knowledge across generations. The problem seems to have been recognised, and work is being done on modernising the curricula for education and training, according to the responsible Minister.

Primary schools are free in Eswatini. However, children need school uniforms, which is a challenge for disadvantaged children. Preschools, on the other hand, are just as expensive as secondary



Picture above: Training of parents/guardians
Picture below: Ceremonial graduation of the preschool

schools. The education system thus already suffers at the lowest level. Children living in poverty are unable to attend state and sometimes private preschools. In the very rural Shiselweni, one of the four districts of Eswatini, many of the disadvantaged children, currently 3,282, benefit from the **LITSEMBA** project. There, two volunteer lay teachers teach in each of the 104 Neighbourhood Care Points (NCPs). They are regularly trained by three qualified teachers employed by LITSEMBA and by the Ministry of Education. LITSEMBA also provides teaching materials and educationally useful play equipment for indoors and outdoors.

ECCE activities are important because they use early childhood brain development. They foster social skills and teach important life skills that will stay with them forever. In school enrolment interviews, children from LITSEMBA NCPs perform remarkably well and perform better in first grade. Thus, more children living in poverty can benefit from free primary education.

LITSEMBA NCPs are now officially recognised as preschools. Incidentally, simple but effective homeschooling was organised during the pandemic when the NCPs were closed.

Tanzania – that is TAKE A MALAIKA e. V.



Picture above: "We women can do it"; picture below: TAKE A MALAIKA - Chairperson Tanja Schmitt-Kupcik with the orphans in front of their home

The non-profit association supports mostly single mothers in Arusha, Tanzania's third-largest city with 519,000 inhabitants, in taking the step towards a self-determined life.

In the Mianzini district, where the unemployment rate is high and poverty is high, they help with educational measures, which include learning manual skills:

- 181 Sponsorships for children with integrated after-school care
- support for currently 9 needy families is within the framework of the *FamilyFriends* programme
- sewing and creative project, where women not only learn to sew by machine, but also to make jewellery, soap and other products
- project "Monthly Hygiene for Schoolgirls". These are taught in public schools how to sew reusable sanitary towels, along with further information on the topic
- operation of a family-run orphanage for 13 children

In future, these activities are to be bundled under the umbrella of the international non-governmental organisation (NGO) **Home of Malaika**, which is currently being founded. A separate house with a total of 10 employees is available for this purpose. International volunteers, who are placed by the partner organisation **Step Africa**, are very welcome.

"Thanks to the generous support of the THOMAS ENGEL-foundation, all employees have health insurance. Furthermore, the money will be used to support five needy families, mostly single mothers, with the FamilyFriends programme for three years to build up a small self-employment by paying for rent and utilities as well as weekly business training. This enabled a young mother to earn a small income by selling coal on the roadside," says Ms Schmitt-Kupcik, Chairperson of TAKE A MALAIKA e. V.

Ecuador – 2 years Amigos de la Fundación THOMAS ENGEL

The **Amigos de la Fundación THOMAS ENGEL**, founded on 25.10.2020 in Salinas/Ecuador, now has 78 members from Ecuador, Canada, USA and Germany. It is a great advantage for the support of disadvantaged children and families in the country that **Jaime Garcia**, Vice Chairman of the THOMAS ENGEL-foundation and first Chairman of the Amigos, and **Edith Garcia**, Treasurer of the Amigos, live in Salinas.

The THOMAS ENGEL-foundation has been supporting the Melvin Jones Education Centre for the handicapped since 2010. In addition, Jaime Garcia has become an indispensable advisor there in the meantime. We are all the more pleased that **Dr. Britta Kellermann** from Hamburg has now also joined the THOMAS ENGEL-foundation with her circle of donors. She has been supporting the Melvin Jones Education Centre since 1998 and has contributed significantly to the development and continued existence of the facility. Please read the message from Dr. Britta Kellermann in this newsletter.

About five years ago, Edith and Jaime Garcia established contact with **Helping Kids in Ecuador**, an association that organises operations for children through a network of local doctors and clinics who largely forego their fees – 770 children have been helped so far. These children come from very poor families, often have deformities in the mouth/jaw area or are seriously ill. The operations are free of charge to the families. The association only bears a share of the costs and is supported by the THOMAS ENGEL-foundation, among others.

Since the foundation of the **Amigos de la Fundación THOMAS ENGEL** two years ago, further aid measures have been launched, first and foremost the micro-loan project. So far, 75 interest-free loans in the amount of 90-300 USD and with a total volume of 20,790 USD have been financed. They have to be repaid after 6 months and are only granted twice per borrower. The borrowers are seamstresses, shoemakers, farmers and small shop owners. In the financial year June 2021 – June 2022, USD 10,320 were repaid, which corresponds to a repayment rate of 99%. Without these loans, people would have no way to improve their lives because the government and banks do not provide assistance. The mini-loans make the difference between begging and working.



Further aid measures were or are:

- Repairing the bathroom and constructing a multi-purpose room for a school in a remote, very poor community.
- Collecting old, partly damaged children's bicycles to repair and distribute to disadvantaged children.

- *Playa Play Day* – an experience day for needy children at the beach. 54 of these children, many of whom had not yet experienced a day at the beach, although they do not live that far from it, were picked up by a small tourist train and brought to the beach, where they received a packed lunch. Members of the Amigos de la Fundación THOMAS ENGEL and the partner organisation **Ecuador from the Heart** had prepared games and provided the children with drinks, ice cream and other sweets, as well as a beach towel, a T-shirt, and a group photo. This was a successful event, which was an unforgettable experience for the children and we will do our utmost to repeat it next year.

- Other projects. These include, for example, 4-year-old **Gina Samara Rosales**, who has cerebral palsy and a heart condition. Her father was hit by a drunk driver, had to be treated in a clinic for months with a severe head injury, and since then can only work to a limited extent. Among other children, 8-year-old **Mayckel** is being helped with ointments, shampoo, special soap and food supplements. He has an incurable genetic disease called "butterfly skin" (*epidermolysis bullosa*) and also suffers from anaemia. The 8-month-old **Angel Gael Rosales**, born with Down's syndrome and living in the poorest conditions, was helped with a bed, and **Dairiana Milagro Semeco**, a highly gifted 13-year-old living in the poorest conditions, was enabled by an anonymous donor to attend a private school.

In addition to the financial contributions of the THOMAS ENGEL-foundation, the sources of income to finance all this help are the membership fees of the Amigos de la Fundación THOMAS ENGEL, as well as events such as the annual Christmas bazaar and other fund-raising events which unfortunately could not take place due to the pandemic.

*Playa Play Day
- a successful day
of experiences for
children in need*



Gina Samara Rosales



Mayckel



Angel Gael Rosales



Dairiana Milagro Semeco

Ecuador – Message from Dr. Britta Kellermann

After two years working as a development aid worker for the German Development Service (DED) in Ecuador, I have been involved in social projects on the coast of Ecuador since 1993. I got to know the **Melvin Jones Education Centre** in 1998, when 8 students with severe hearing impairments were taught by 3 teachers in a simple rented house.

The further development was very dynamic thanks to the very committed managing director, also due to the support of the **Guayas-Ecuador-Hilfe e.V.** from Hamburg, of which I was a board member until 2006. In addition to material and financial support, we were able to finance the construction of the school complex with therapy rooms in 2001 in cooperation with the children's missionary organisation **Die Sternsinger e. V.** and the workshop building with 4 training rooms in 2007 with the participation of the **Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)**. In 2006, I separated from the association and founded a donor group with friends, relatives and acquaintances, which supports the project mainly through donations from its members.

Since the Education Centre very heavily on donations due to a lack of sufficient government subsidies, problematic funding bottlenecks occurred time and again. During one such crisis, **Ernst Engel** and I got in touch in 2016 to help the Education Centre further together. Since then, we have been in contact. In recent years, the cooperation has intensified through exchanges with Jaime and Edith Garcia and the Amigos de la Fundación THOMAS ENGEL during my visits to La Libertad. Since my stay in Ecuador from 1990 to 1992, I visit the country every two years and then also take care of the project on site.

So I am delighted to become part of the THOMAS ENGEL-*foundation* with my donor group for the Melvin Jones Education Centre.

My data:

Dr. Britta Kellermann
born 16.05.1946
Kurt-Küchler-Straße 13a
22609 Hamburg
Britta.Kellermann@gmx.de
Phone: 040-821862
Mobile: 0163-1533529
Hamburg, 05.10.2022

Advisory Board of the THOMAS ENGEL- foundation appointed

The seven-member advisory board of the THOMAS ENGEL-*foundation*, appointed on 5 November 2022, has already begun its voluntary work. It will not only be involved in an advisory capacity, as was initially envisaged in the constitution, but also in a collaborative capacity. *"Not only I am pleased and relieved about this reinforcement, but also my two representatives Bettina Haubner and Jaime Garcia,"* says Ernst Engel, Chairman of the Foundation.



From left to right: Stefan Forstner, Dr. Barbara Jörg, Stephan Coester, Jan Menzel, Stephanie Müller-Trost, Rüdiger Gries. Missing: Ingrid Britz-Averkamp

UPCOMING EVENTS

02. 12. 2022 Annual Christmas Arts and Crafts y Algo Mas Bazaar

Freunde der THOMAS ENGEL-Stiftung Fulda e. V.

10. 12. 2022 Weihnachtsbaumverkauf zusammen mit dem Haimbacher Sportverein 1952 e. V. auf dem Sportgelände des HSV bei vorweihnachtlichem Ambiente mit Glühwein, Würstchen und mehr

25. 02. 2023 Um 19:00 Uhr Mitgliederversammlung im Hotel Am Dom in Fulda

Freunde der THOMAS ENGEL-Stiftung Nastätten e. V.

26./27.11.2022 "Weihnachtsstraße" in Nastätten

10.01.2023 Mitgliederversammlung im Bürgerhaus in Buch

CONTACT

THOMAS ENGEL-*foundation*

Executive Director

Ernst Engel
Sonnenstraße 4
36041 Fulda
Phone: 06 61-9 01 53 38
Fax: 06 61-9 01 53 42
Mobil: 0171-8 16 87 56
E-Mail: ernst.engel@thomasengel-stiftung.org

Deputy Executive Directors

Bettina Haubner
Auf dem Daubus 26
56357 Lierschied
Phone: 0 67 71-59 98 68
E-Mail: bettina.haubner@thomasengel-stiftung.org

Jaime Garcia
Malecón de Chipipe,
Edf. El Velero Azul, 1 B
Salinas, Provincia Santa Elena
Ecuador
Phone: +593-96 82 63 448
E-Mail: brook1904@icloud.com
USA
Phone/WhatsApp: +1 703 408-1194



www.thomasengel-stiftung.org

Donation Account

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Your donation is tax deductible and will be used 100 % for our aid projects.



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