

## Christmas Raffle 2024/2025

“It’s incredible how far they walk to get these items to people. It’s 10 o’clock and we’ve already walked 5 km,” reports Anne-Kristin Henker, project manager at Dentists for Africa, who is helping to hand out the raffle prizes this year...

The bag on Margaret’s head weighs about 15 kg and contains food, matches, soap, washing powder, etc.

Anne, Rhoda, Margaret and a few other members of the cooperative are on their way to visit the widows who can no longer make the journey to St Monica Village for health reasons, due to physical infirmity or old age.

Some live in mud huts in the middle of their fields, others in corrugated iron huts without a proper roof and with little protection from the heat.



The ‘most needy’ – or the ‘grannies’, as they are called by the other members of the cooperative – are extremely grateful for the proceeds from the Christmas raffle. Many find it difficult to scrape together enough money for even one meal a day; sometimes they have to go without food for days on end.

All the grannies are incredibly grateful. They all have moving stories to tell and deep existential worries. ‘Aerokamano’ means ‘thank you’ - Anne hears this word particularly often today.



She is delighted by the visit; she has never had a muzungu (‘white person’) in her house before.



Your She cannot walk; her granddaughter looks after her. Getting something to eat every day is a major challenge for her, and she does not always manage it



All she has is a bed and a few photos of her family on the wall. The holes in the roof and walls let in a little light; shortly after our visit, it started to rain heavily for an hour. We can only imagine how hard life must be for these women.



She is blind, but still makes the journey to St Monica's Village from time to time, when she is feeling well enough. Last year she came by motorbike taxi. Every time, she says a prayer for the supporters of the raffle, who make so much joy possible

The prize-giving ceremony had already taken place the day before, on 21 January 2025, at the premises of the widows' cooperative, St Monica Village.

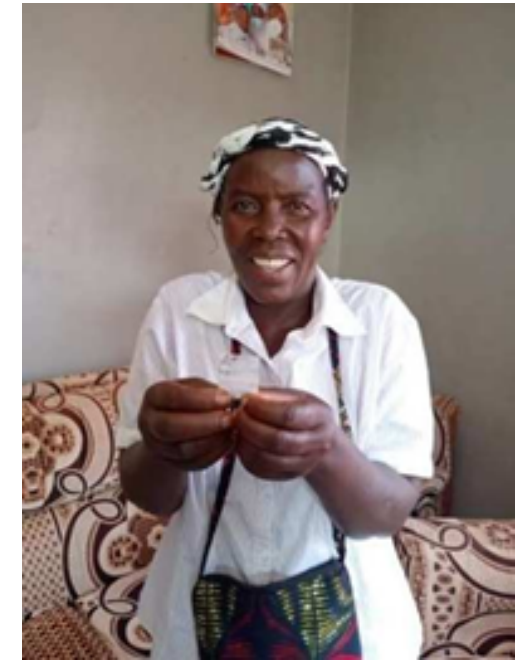
Around 700 widows had gathered to collect their prizes. With temperatures exceeding 30°C, it was a mammoth task for the organising team led by manager Rhoda Ogada, who spent several hours distributing the prizes. However, the widows are well-versed in organisation, as this is the ninth consecutive year the raffle has taken place.

This year, a new fundraising record was set: 21,835 euros were raised for widows and orphans. These included 228 pairs of chickens, 118 goats, 13 food parcels, 72 bags of maize, 28 packets of sugar, 35 jerrycans of oil, 119 fruit trees and 91 bags of seeds and fertiliser, all of which were distributed on the day.

Since 8 January, the widows have known what prize they were due to receive. The raffle took place on that day: a long queue formed, stretching from the assembly hall out onto the street. At the end of the queue stood a wicker basket containing many small folded slips of paper.

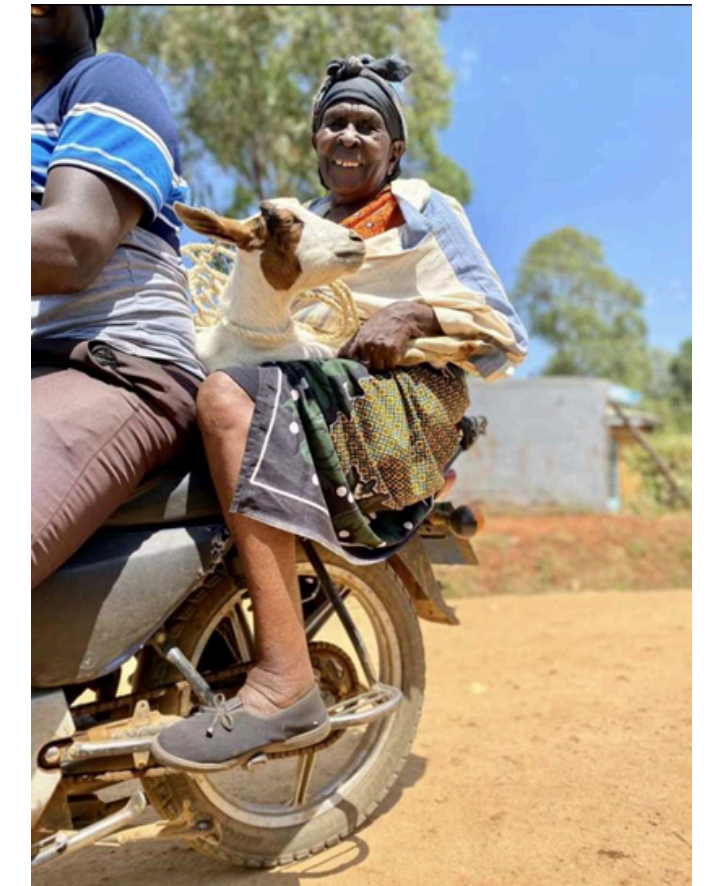
A goat provides a livelihood; it is used for breeding and provides meat and milk. Five goats can be exchanged for a cow. The widows are masters at making the most of their earnings.

Thirteen days later, the time had come! The widows are not only experts at making the most of everything, but also at organising the numerous proceeds.





Particularly when it came to transporting the large number of animals: in just a few days, the widows managed to gather a total of 574 animals and transport them to St. Monica Village – including 456 chickens and 118 goats.

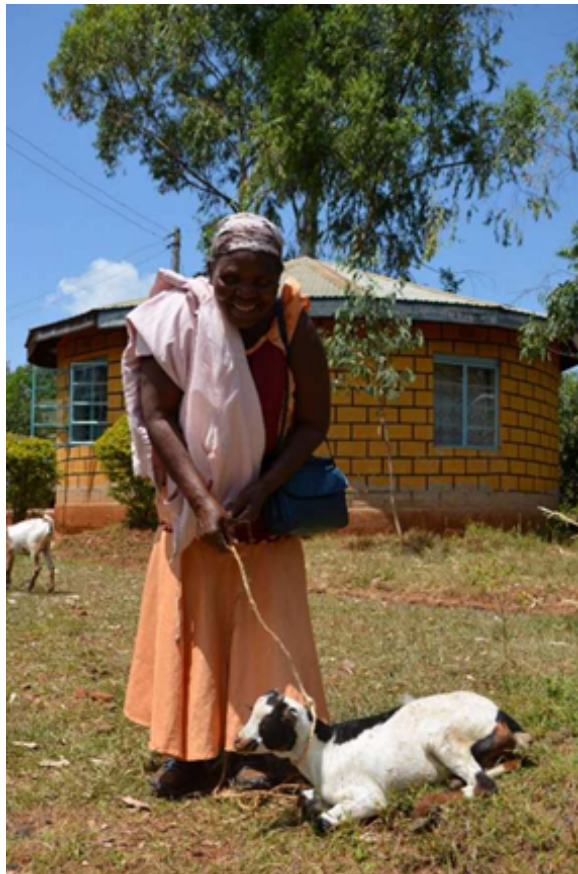


So the goats arrived in a car and were allowed to ride on the motorbike to move into their new home!



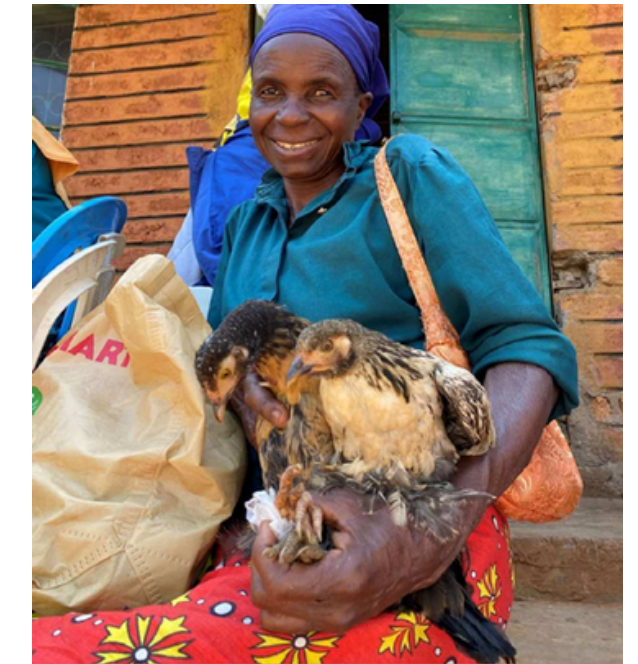


As the widows already knew how much they would receive on the day of distribution, many brought a rope with them for their new goat, so they could take it home safely.



Chickens took their place in the shopping basket.

In fact, chickens actually like being in close quarters and having physical contact with other chickens. This helps them to calm down; in dark boxes, they sometimes even fall asleep.





The proceeds from the raffle provide aid that could not be more sustainable: whether it's a goat for a small family or a fruit tree for one's own garden – a tree that may not bear fruit straight away, but can feed entire generations.

Mango trees are very long-lived, can bear fruit for up to 300 years and grow to a height of up to 35 metres. They therefore not only provide fruit with a high vitamin C content, but also shade in an increasingly hot Kenya.

As well as chickens, goats, food parcels and fruit trees, the widows were particularly delighted with the sacks of maize seeds and fertiliser.



Aus einer kleinen Tüte Maissamen können acht große Sacke Maiskolben werden.





Mrs Opande, Secretary to the Widows, and Salome, one of the pastoral carers, helped hand out the bags, whilst Rhoda, the manager, checked the lists to ensure that everyone received exactly what they had drawn.



Even corn that had already been harvested was in high demand. The 20-kilo sacks were carried home on people's heads.



Maize is a staple food in Kenya and the country's most important crop. Rich in carbohydrates, vitamin B, potassium and magnesium, it supports the metabolism and the immune system. Maize is also an excellent source of energy.





Pamela and Mrs Opande handed out the bags of food to the winners of the food parcels, which were available here in Germany as vouchers for €15. The contents consisted of cabbage, oil, rice, tea leaves, maize, sugar, flour, soap and meat. Whilst here we worry about maintaining the cold chain, in Kenya a piece of cling film is enough to prevent a fly from landing on the meat. Once thoroughly cooked, it is eaten straight away.



Auch Anne half fleißig bei der Verteilung. Die Tüten waren so schwer, dass sich die Frauen gegenseitig helfen mussten, um die Säcke auf den Kopf zu stellen.





The widows would like to express their heartfelt thanks for all these generous gifts. It is very important to them to say thank you. It makes them very proud and fills them with hope to know that somewhere in the world there is someone who has thought of them and is helping them to cope better with their daily lives – in a region where women are severely disadvantaged, exploited and even treated as property. On behalf of all the widows, Rhoda, the manager, has written this letter:

3/02/2025

To all donors

Receive much greetings from St. Monica widows and widows board, We hope this letter finds all of you healthy and happy. THANK you very much for your generous donations of X-mas raffle ie goats, Foodbox, sugar, salad  
 Chicken, fruit trees, Maize, Seeds and fertilizers  
 With all these you put smile and hopes on every widows face. I can't express how much, We appreciate the wonderful gifts but photos can explain better. Be blessed abundantly as we keep you all in our prayers and blessings from the old grannies please. Be blessed more and more for our prayers is that each and every widow with different gift will change our lifestyle in that we can rear goats and change into cows, also chicken into goats or take children to school or to start business. Please its a blessing to us and we appreciate every efforts please. 😊❤️

Kind regards  
 Rhoda Oguda  
 On behalf of all widows.

Dear donors,  
Warm greetings from the widows of St. Monica Village and the Widows' Committee. We hope you are happy and in good health. We thank you very much for your generous donations to the Christmas raffle, for the goats, food parcels, sugar, lettuce, chickens, fruit trees, maize, seeds and fertiliser; with all these things, you have brought joy and hope to the widows' faces. I cannot express how much we appreciate these wonderful gifts; pictures say it better. May you be blessed; we all remember you in our prayers, and the grannies in particular pray that God may protect you for your donations. May you be blessed for enabling us to turn our lives around through these various gifts. We can now breed goats and later exchange them for a cow; we can swap chickens for a goat; and we can send our children to school by setting up a business au@auen. Es is a blessing for us, and we appreciate every effort you have made.

Kind regards, Rhoda Ogada  
on behalf of all the widows

Thank You!

As project manager of the Widows' Cooperative, I too would like to express my heartfelt thanks for the tremendous support, for the encouragement, for sharing the images for the fundraising appeal, for listening, for the interest shown, and for the many donations that have been received. A very special thank you also goes to Gabi Hüttig, who handled the enormous administrative workload and, on top of that, prepared and sent out a large number of donation receipts. Thank you to Anne-Kristin Henker, whose wonderful photos allow us to experience the emotions, joy and gratitude of the widows.

So many donations have come in that every member of the cooperative has received something, and there are even a few extra donations left over, which we would like to spend at Easter.

Thank you for the tremendous support! Many small donations have created something big that makes a difference to the people in Kenya.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "K. Weiland-Zejewski". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Katharina Weiland-Zejewski  
Dentists for Africa e.V.