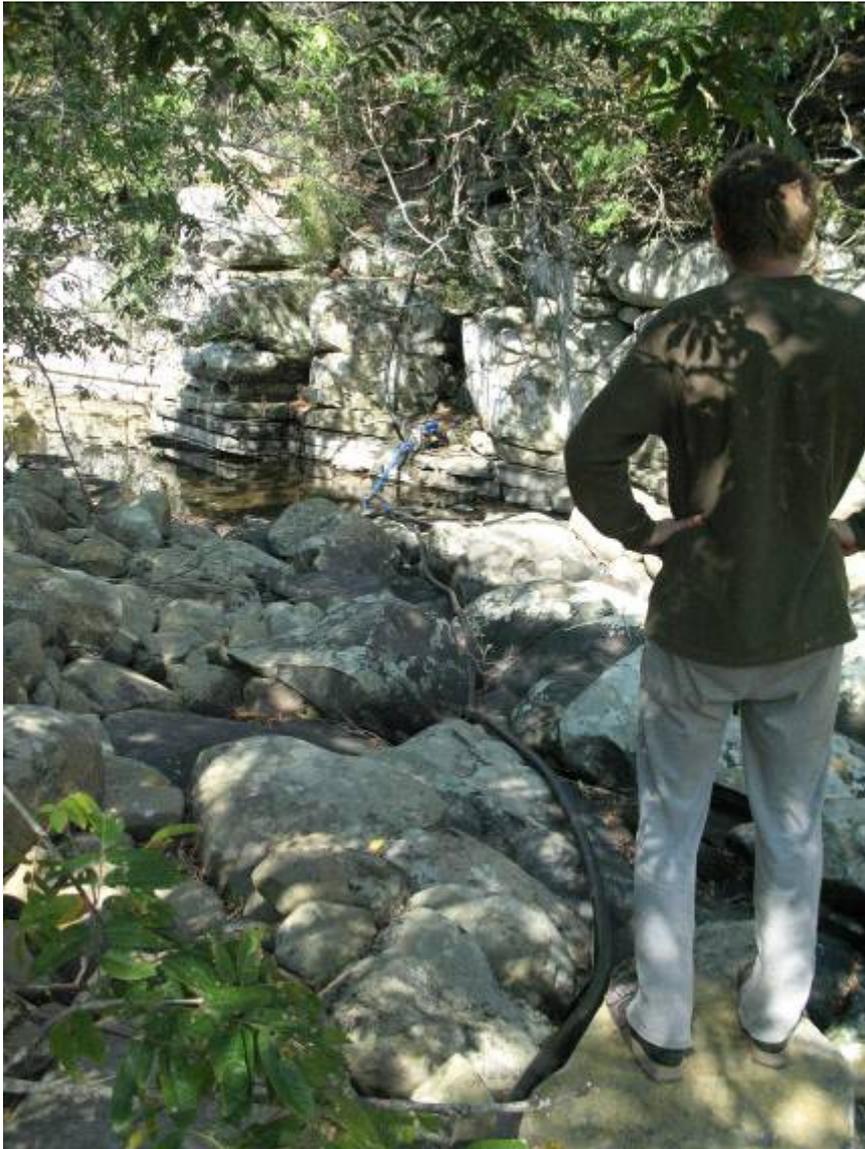


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Yearly Report 2009



Dried out Mbhanjana river bed with our water pump in the back

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This time I will keep my written report very short; I'll more or less just list the facts. At the same time I have put together a small video-clip, which will be available to you from January by postal order (in form of a CD) in return for a small donation. My reason for creating this self-made-movie from photographs and film clips is to inform you further about our work and life but also to raise funds to fill this specific financial shortage:

The families of our residents do all still, once in a while, experience difficulties in paying Ikhaya Loxolo's monthly fee. As you know, the governmental disability grant is often the only 'income' a many-headed family has to live on (R 1000= E 100 per month!); if they then suddenly have unexpected transport, medication or funeral costs, there's no way they are able to settle with us the monthly fee.

For Ikhaya Loxolo to be able to fill this loss, we need to raise funds, which I am trying to do through different methods, one of which is to offer the 'film' against a small donation.

We would appreciate your interest and simultaneous support by ordering the CD- I think you'd enjoy watching it!

Yearly Report 2009:

1. Developments

- A) at the Farm**
- B) in the Garden**
- C) the Residents**
- D) our Team**
- E) Products for Sale**

2. Donors/Sponsors

3. Comings and Goings

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1. Developments

a) At the Farm

All our farm animals, pig, cow, goats, rabbits, chicken and geese, have delivered their kids without complications. All are well and healthy.

Our jersey cow has delivered her female calf only last week, so now the serious milking and milk product production starts. We are looking forward to see how it goes but are confident of it being a very positive undertaking.

The stables and pigsties have been completed, and we have the feeling that some of our farm animals enjoy better accommodation than some people!



b) In the Garden:

The size of our gardens has, with the help of local Tabo Gola, increased significantly during the year. It is brilliant, of course, to see amounts and varieties of vegetables which we are cultivating by now; our appreciation of going down to the gardens and choose what we feel like cooking today and seeing that whatever we want is available aplenty, is endless!

On the other hand, this year was a year of drought, and from February to October it did not rain more than 2mm at a time, maybe once in 2 or 3 month. Meaning that we were not only kept busy watering these huge gardens- which require about 3000ltrs of water each day, 1000ltrs dripped and 2000ltrs hand watered, but also that watering water became very scarce.

As you can see in the picture on the first page, the rivers dried out completely, leaving some more or less filled waterholes behind. We then had to make plans of buying longer pipes and moving the water pump from water hole to hole in the riverbed, in order for us to keep on filling our water tanks.

Just as we were emptying the last for us reachable waterhole, and we knew in another 8 days time we'll be out of water like everyone else, it rained for the first time. Lucky us!

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In this time of drought, the gardens of Ikhaya Loxolo have been about the only green spot within a radius of approximately 150 km- we were so proud!



Green gardens in the time of drought!

c) The Residents

Our 8 (previously 9- Nosiphiwo has left to live with her father) residents are all very well, healthy and happy!

Little 'sunshine' Lulama (going to be 2 years of age in January 2010) is developing by the hour; she keeps on impressing all of us with her cleverness! But so are the other residents, one by one they make big progress, as one or the other individual has learnt to write his/her name by now, others learnt to bake bread or work in the garden more independently. We have also started beading work, due to a spontaneous 'order' we were given by the Haven Hotel to make 80 key rings; but after completing the order we never again stopped beadwork as it seems to be so much fun for volunteers as well as residents. From January on we have planned to take on 3 more residents, who have been waiting for their Disability Grants to come through all year. More residents are on our waiting list, but due to unreliability of the Governmental Departments it is not known at what time their Grants will be paid out.

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Some of the 'Haven' key rings



Residents at play

d) The Ikhaya Loxolo Team

Our team (all of whom we call 'volunteers'- but they do get paid wages, below the SA minimum amount, though) presently consist of five female local volunteers as well as 3 male local volunteers. Together with Michael and myself, these are our permanent 'Co-workers'- half of them have been with us for two years and received our training for this period of time. Others have started with Ikhaya Loxolo during this year and their training has therefore been shorter.

Nevertheless, the quality of working together in our team is impressive, I have never before in my life encountered a team that quarrels so little and laughs so much during work. It is not only a joy to work in this team, but by now also an equally shared taking on of responsibilities and reliability. By the ongoing training of our locals, they take on, independently, more and more duties, involve themselves more in decision takings and care fully for this homestead and its residents, as if it was their own.

e) Our 'products' for sale

- Throughout the year we sell vegetables from the garden. But in this year's drought, our sales went up immensely, since the locals had no other ways to get their hands on fresh produce. We sold lots of spinach and cabbage every single day, not just 'now and then' like before. We often had to sent customers away (or tried to persuade them to buy broccoli, cauliflower, beetroot, onion etc. instead) when we were sold out.

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- Towards the end of the dry season our vegetable seedling orders went up from zero (during drought) to 8000 with the start of the rainy season in October and November. We still buy these vegetable seedlings monthly in the almost 5 hour away East London, as we could not yet secure a donation to start our own vegetable seedling nursery.
- Our chick (3-4 weeks old) sales also went up significantly during this year. More and more people within and outside our village make use of their opportunity of accessing chicks through Ikhaya Loxolo. We purchase between 50 and 100 chicks every month in East London, and within a few days we are usually sold out. People have the option to order these chicks from us in advance (as well as the seedlings) when they want to be certain to purchase, or come and buy from us at Ikhaya Loxolo in the days after returning from East London, when customers are sometimes too late and we are already sold out.
- When the Saanen goats are in milk, we sell the milk fresh or sour- which is a very common part in the local people's diet (not self-made by the locals but readily bottled in local shops). We also sell goat's cream cheese to some of the doctors in the nearby Madwaleni Hospital. Since our Jersey Cow has also calved now, the milk/sour milk/milk product sales will rise. Besides, the diet at Ikhaya Loxolo will change as more milk products will become part of our diet.

2. Donors/Sponsors:

In this regard not much has changed since my Half Year Report in July of this year:

- We are thanking the **Mahle-Stiftung** in Stuttgart, Germany, for their support in our running cost. It is obvious that this specific support is the most important one for Ikhaya Loxolo. Due to Ikhaya Loxolo being situated in an area inhabited by the poorest of the poor at the same time the government being so unsupportive, we would not be able to cover our running cost without it being supported by donations.
- The same goes for the **Donald Woods Foundation** as well as **Ikhaya Loxolo Entwicklungshilfe e.V.**- thank you (and the above mentioned Mahle-Stiftung) so much for supporting our running cost! Thanks to you we were able to pay wages and by doing so, support up to 10 families in

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our village. Thanks to you we were able to feed our resident healthily and could hold on to residents whose families were unable to meet the payment of our monthly fee. E.g. Lungiswa and her baby girl Lulama joined our home in January 09, whereas, due to departmental delays, her grant was only paid out for the first time in August 2009. But because of your support, we were able to cover Lungiswa's/Lulama's expenses from donation money. Otherwise these two girls would have had to remain at their home, unsupported by the alcoholic mother and in the hands of Lungiswa's abusive assailant.

- The **Solheimar Community in Island**, as explained in the Half Year Report 09, has not only sponsored 5 of our residents (with R 500 per month per individual) for the whole year, but also given financial support towards building extensions. Thank you again for your ongoing support!
- **The Rotary Club** in Mthatha has again donated blankets, biscuits and food parcels- thank you so much, Graham Lessing and Sharron Oosthuizen and the whole Club, for your trust in us and ongoing support!
- Special thanks this year to my father - **Willi**- who has organised a 'Sommerfest' (summer festival) to raise donations for Ikhaya Loxolo! Thanks to you, dad, and all hard working helpers and donors of cakes and foods etc!
- Thanks a lot to all those, who, by giving a little make a big change to us at Ikhaya Loxolo! There are so many people in Germany who contribute! Thank you so much!

3. Comings and Goings

- Elke, hardworking volunteer from Germany
- Matthias and Marianne Guenther, family from Germany
- Willi and Beate Drechsler, family from Germany
- Songelwa, a local volunteer, who left us due to marriage
- Thembeke, who took half of Songelwa's place, but will leave again in January to finish her education
- Mama ka Blondie, who took the other half of Songelwa's place/shift at Ikhaya Loxolo
- Jason and Emily from the USA, who came to volunteer for 6 months but left prematurely after 3 months.

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- Zou, a young local, who started work with us in April 2009. He leaves us at the end of November, when he takes part in a traditional ceremony/schooling. He'll join us again sometime in the beginning of next year, after this tradition is ended.
- There were others too, mainly day visitors, who I won't mention here individually.

Welcome and Good Bye to all of you!

Our Christmas-outing.....



“What kind of funny animal is this?” More about it on the CD....

If the information in this little report intrigued you, please remember to check our website, look at/order my self-made video clip CD (just contact me on any of the details in the header) or support us financially by donating into our account below.

Wishing you merry Christmas and a happy new year,
Alexandra Guenther with Ikhaya Loxolo

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