

# Suomi-Tansania seura

Annual Report 2011-2012

During the operational year 2011 (april 2011-march 2012) Suomi-Tansania seura has remained an active member-driven organization. The activities during the past year have focused mainly on arranging events and happenings for the Finnish-Tanzanian community in the capitol area. The operational year was marked by the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Tanzania's Independence. The Independence Celebration arranged by the Association on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2011 was by far the largest event of 2011, which is hardly matched by any event in the Association's history in terms of attendees. During the afternoon of the same day, the Association also arranged a seminar for Finnish organizations active in Tanzania, and in addition, a Special 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition of Taarifa was published the same day. Apart from the Independence events, the Association kept up its commitments in Finland and in Tanzania, and strived to cater for the increasingly diverse Finnish-Tanzanian community through its events and activities.

## 1. Events

### Independence Day Celebration

Tanzania celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011. In the absence of a Tanzanian embassy in Finland, Suomi-Tansania seura took the responsibility of arranging a celebration worthy of the occasion. We arranged the Independence Celebration on the actual day of Independence, December 9<sup>th</sup>. The venue was Puotinkylän-Marjaniemen työnväentalo, which we were able to rent for a reasonable price.

We decided to combine the Independence celebrations with two other processes: a seminar for Finnish organizations working in Tanzania (see below) and the release of a Special Independence Day Edition of our membership magazine Taarifa (also below). The arrangements of these three events on the same day proved to be rather challenging for a small organization based on the voluntary work input of its members; the bulk of which have full-time commitments elsewhere. Also the financial part proved a challenge, since a large celebration of this type requires substantial funding.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the Independence event can be described as a success by most standards. The number of participants exceeded our expectations by far, and it is estimated that at least 350 guests arrived at the celebration. The feedback from the guest was overwhelmingly positive.

The main speakers of the event were Prof. Emerita and Honorary Member of the Association, Mrs. Marja-Liisa Swantz, who gave a most memorable speech about the early days of Independence in Tanzania. The other main speaker of the evening was Anderson Mwegerano, long-standing politician and author based in Salo. The speeches were complemented by an outstanding performance by Dr.

Arnold Chiwalala performing on kantele. Mrs. Eeva Ahtisaari also gave a short speech, sending greetings from her husband President Ahtisaari and reminiscing about their time in Tanzania.

The food during the celebration was prepared and sold by Tufahamiane club, the Tanzanian-Finnish women's association, and it was immensely popular. However, there should have been a clearer notification in our invitation that the food was for sale and not provided for by the Association.

The musical performances continued with Johnson Mluge, Teho Majamäki and Riikka Palander, who had convened exclusively for this event to form the group Udunamoyo. Next in turn was The Mponda Family featuring Cheza Ngoma, who stood for a great show. The event was rounded up by DJs Edo, D. Mihayo, Fidelis Tungaraza and Miikka Mwamba.

The Association had applied for funds to support the celebration and was eventually given a grant by the City of Helsinki of 1000 EUR. This grant was divided among the artists – who had first agreed to perform free of charge – and was used to cover some of the expenses in connection with the performances, such as audio rental and travel expenses.

## **Tanzania Outreach Event**

In connection with the Independence Celebration, we also decided to arrange a seminar for organizations that have projects or activities in Tanzania. The seura had for a longer time been contacted by people who inquired about possibilities to work, do internships, volunteer or cooperate with Finnish organizations in Tanzania, and asked us to recommend suitable organizations.

More often than not, this proved a challenge and both among board members and those active within the NGO field, it was felt that there was a lack of coordination and cooperation among Finnish organizations active in Tanzania. There was thus a need to improve cooperation structures as well as to map the various activities of Finnish organizations in Tanzania, especially regarding smaller organizations that function outside of the formal networks of Kepa or the MoF.

We therefore arranged a seminar on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2011, with the objective to bring organizations together to discuss the challenges and opportunities in working and cooperating in Tanzania. As a concrete suggestion, we proposed the creation of an organizational database, where information about the organizations and their work could be readily available for both outsiders and the organizations themselves. The database would contain basic information of organizations and their projects in terms of field of work and geographical location.

The idea was rather well received, if with some reservation, and in a follow-up to this seminar on the 12.3.2012 – Kepa's Tanzania meeting – the idea got more prominence and support. It was agreed with Kepa to cooperate on this issue in the future.

During the seminar, the Association also opened the discussion on the Tanzanian diaspora in Finland and the potential that lies with Tanzanian professionals and

their cultural and technical knowhow. This could be more readily utilized by Finnish organizations and NGOs. The aim of the Association is to develop a database of Tanzanian professionals working in Finland, and to attempt to elevate their role in both development cooperation and business. Also this idea was very well received at the Kupa event 12.3 and will be further pursued.

## **Capacity Building Workshop**

In the spring of 2011, the Association applied for funds from the City of Helsinki to implement a project, which aims at supporting the operational capacity of immigrant organizations in Finland. As a long-standing civil society organization with a strong immigrant base, the Association decided to arrange a series of workshops to assist other small-scale organizations in improving their administrative capacities.

The Association was granted 2500 EUR to implement the project, and during the autumn of 2011, the two events were arranged to this end. The first one was a workshop concerning participatory decision making methods in organizations. It was facilitated by Edward Anderson, deputy director of Involve, a British NGO specialized in democratic public participation structures and considered one of leading organizations in this field. Around 25 participants from different organizations took part in the event, and it was very well received. Participants expressed the wish for more similar events in the future.

The second event within this project was the seminar 9.12 referred to above. Here the focus was in particular on the diaspora and the utilization of their potential by Finnish organizations. This is a form of empowerment for Tanzanian immigrants to enable them to take a more active part in the organizational life of Finland.

The third event of this project will be arranged during the spring of 2012 and will focus on strengthening the formal capacities of organizations. The Association will arrange a recruitment workshop focusing on special challenges and opportunities in the recruitment of immigrants.

## **Maailma Kylässä Festival**

The Association took part in the Maailma Kylässä-festival (World Village Festival) in the end of May 2011 as usual. The Association had its normal stand at the festival, and in addition, we also supported Tufahamiane Club in renting a food stall, out of which they sold Tanzanian food. The food was very popular among the festivalgoers and even sold out during the festival. The Association's stand also had many visitors, and material sales were decent.

## **Summer meeting**

The association held its traditional summer picnic this year on Iso Vasikkasaari in Espoo on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July. The event was a great success with many participants from the Finnish-Tanzanian community.

## **2. Processes**

In the AGM 2011 and the first meeting of the new Board, a range of processes were agreed upon that aimed at addressing some of the weaknesses and problems of the Association that had been identified. Some of these processes have been initiated during 2011, others have not.

### **Bridge building and organizational work**

We had identified a need to be able to act as a form of “bridge” between Finland and Tanzania. Through the Association, it should be possible to get a good overview of Finnish activities in Tanzania, as well as Tanzanian activities in Finland. To this end, we initiated the database project for organizations and the diaspora mentioned above. These activities will be developed further in the future.

### **Improving communications, membership and financial basis**

The Association identified the need to expand our membership basis, re-establish contact to old members and attract new members. Also, it was seen as important to improve the diversity of the membership, in particular with regard to Tanzanian women’s participation in the activities of the Board.

In the spring of 2012, we initiated the process to reach old members by sending a copy of the second Special Edition Taarifa to all those who had paid the membership fee from the year 2008. Also, during the Independence Day Celebration, we attempted to attract as many new members as possible. These attempts will continue in the spring of 2012. This also relates to the financial basis, which improves in relation to the membership basis. Exploring other means of increasing revenue will be a task for the next board.

During the Independence Day preparations, there were also attempts to involve members who had not previously taken active part in our activities, but with little success. Increasing the approachability of the Board and broadening the participation of the board is a challenge for the next board.

### **Logo**

The Association initiated the search for a new logo, and eventually chose one of the logos drafts submitted by Sanna Hukkanen. The new logo will be used on the webpage and various prints and other output.

### **Webpage and E-mail**

The work with creating a new webpage started during the autumn of 2011 and will continue throughout 2012. A new domain for the Association was created and including also new email addresses. These will be put to use during the spring of 2012.

### **Cooperation with Tufahamiane Club**

During 2011, the Association planned to outline and clarify the cooperation with Tufahamiane Club. This did not happen. While there was cooperation with Tufahamiane in the arrangements of the Independence Celebrations, communication and cooperation structures need to be agreed on more clearly in the future.

### **Committees**

The Board of 2011 decided to create three committees under the board, which were supposed to ease the workload for the executive board and advance plans and processes also outside of the Board meetings. Three committees were instituted:

#### **Communications**

Manages and develops the external communication of the Association: Taarifa, e-mails, website, facebook.

This committee has worked actively during the past year and handled communication tasks efficiently.

#### **Projects and Activities**

This committee is divided into activities in Finland and Tanzania. The activities in Finland concern all events, gatherings and seminars arranged by the association. Activities have indeed been actively implemented in 2011, but by the whole board collectively or certain individuals rather than by the committee. The activities in Tanzania were limited to the Rehema fund, but the aim was to brainstorm ideas and possibilities for future projects and partners in Tanzania. It has, albeit not formally, been decided to focus more on facilitating the work of other projects than to initiate our own. However, the Rehema fund should be followed up more actively next year. In all, neither part of the committee was properly activated during the past year.

#### **Developments**

This committee was created to outline the future structure, function and activities of the Association. Specifically, it was supposed to plan for the expansion of the membership basis and its diversity also outside of the capitol region as well as solidifying the financial basis of the Association. Although some of the processes were indeed initiated, again, it was more due to the actions of the board, as the committee did not convene last year. This is another point of development for next year.

## **3. Miscellaneous**

## **Taarifa and Special Taarifa**

The third process in connection to the Independence Day celebration was the release of a Special Edition of our membership magazine Taarifa. For this special edition we asked members to send in anecdotes, stories and pictures relating to the topic of 50 years of Independence. We received more articles than we were able to publish in one edition, so we decided to publish a second edition of the Special Taarifa in February 2012. Both Taarifas turned out well and we received positive feedback for both.

Apart from this, the Association published two normal editions of Taarifa in the summer and autumn of 2011.

## **Rehema Stipend**

The Association has continued to sponsor Rehema Charles in her studies, which have been progressing according to plan. The Association has been able to cover the expenses of the program through earmarked contributions from individual donors.

## **Swahili Club**

The Association continued the Swahili discussion groups from a few years back, and the Swahili club has convened regularly every second Saturday at Kulttuurikeskus Caisa in central Helsinki. The idea has been to initiate tandem session in Finnish and Swahili, and the club has been free of charge. Despite high initial interest, attendance has varied considerably, and during some sessions only a few attendants have showed up. The Swahili club curriculum, advertising and structure will be developed during the spring of 2012.

Annual report prepared by Sebastian Gahnström, Chairman of the Board.