

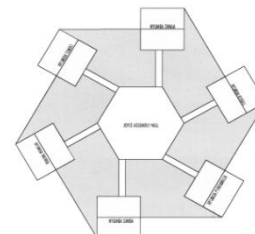
VEREIN - ASSOCIATION

KINDERDORF MBINGU

VILLAGE D'ENFANTS MBINGU

CHILDREN'S VILLAGE MBINGU (ST ELIZABETH ORPHANAGE)

MBINGU REPORT 2026_07_19



Dear friends of the Mbingu Children's Village,

We are pleased to share with you the trip report from Ueli, Lorena, and Leandro Knobel regarding their visit to the Mbingu Children's Village.

Brief trip report: Mbingu Village, Tuesday, July 7, 2026 – Monday, July 13, 2026

We spent a week at the Mbingu Village children's home together with our daughter, Lorena, and our son, Leandro. After a smooth flight to Dar es Salaam via Addis Ababa, we continued our journey that same day by private transport to Mikumi. There, we enjoyed a day safari before being picked up the following day by Sister Sapientia. Our driver, Simoni, brought us safely "home" via Ifakara.

We received a very warm welcome from the children and the "mamas." It was Lorena's third visit to Mbingu, my second, and Leandro's first.

Life in the Children's Village

The more than 50 children (about 35 of whom are permanently based there) are doing well; they appear healthy and well-nourished. We spent the whole week playing and laughing together. The children are very affectionate and love to be close to others... We were able to bring along a large supply of clothing and knitted wool blankets from our home community. The children received new toothbrushes, some toys, and basic educational materials.

Residential Houses and Grounds

In 2025, thanks to numerous donations, all six houses were renovated after twenty years of use. Every house underwent a complete interior and exterior refurbishment, including the installation of new sheet-metal roofs. This work was necessary, and Sister Sapientia did an excellent job of organizing it. The grounds also look well-tended, featuring plenty of flowers, numerous banana, mango, avocado, and papaya trees, and garden beds for fresh vegetables scattered throughout. The fields are currently filled with sunflowers, peanuts, and various types of beans. The rice harvest has just been completed and should be sufficient to meet the annual needs in Mbingu.

Farm and Animals

Close to the village, there are many chickens and other poultry. Further away, at the new farm, there are 11 cows—though currently, they are producing very little milk for the children. There are about 20 goats and some more chickens. The pigs throughout the region had to be slaughtered due to an outbreak of disease. It was a loss for the village, but Sister Sapientia plans to start pig farming again.

Mbingu Village Association

Baba Beat is greatly missed; wherever we sisters went, people asked about him. Warm greetings and best wishes to Beat, as well as to Christian "Baba Disch," Laura, and "Bibi Esther." It would be wonderful if Baba Beat and other

members of the association could visit the Children's Village again sometime. "Most welcome" — that was the sentiment everywhere, and we can highly recommend it...

New Sisters' House

The New Sisters' House was completed within a year. It looks wonderful. It will provide a retreat for the two or three sisters working at Mbingu — a place for prayer, quiet reflection, and faith-based community.

While on-site, we were able to identify a few construction defects and make some minor improvements. The Sisters' House was co-financed by the Baldegg Sisters and will be ready for occupancy in one or two months. We were able to bring along a few religious items, such as a crucifix, a holy water set, and rosaries. The highlight, however, is a statue of the Madonna; with the help of Baba Beat, we were able to present it to the New Sisters' House on behalf of Sister Etienne.

Sister Etienne served for a long time in Simbasi Orphanage, Dar es Salaam, and has now returned to Baldegg, Switzerland. Sister Sapientia sends her warmest greetings; she is deeply grateful and overjoyed at the prospect of moving into her new home. The old sisters' house will now serve a new purpose as a home for young women who remain connected to the orphanage but lack sufficient privacy in the children's houses.

Facility for Young Men

The next step involves converting the small school building in Mbingu into a facility for the older boys of the community, featuring a space for studying, recreation, organized activities, and information sessions. The project is already funded by the Lions Club Zimmerberg (Thalwil). We have reviewed the plans on-site with the architect; a construction sketch and a cost estimate are to follow. The goal is to complete the project by autumn, before the rainy season begins.

"New Men's House" Project

Sister Sapientia, together with her associates from Mbingu and the architect, has identified a site where a building for tradesmen and harvest helpers could be constructed. It is located between the Children's Village and the new farm, accessible without having to pass through the Children's Village itself — a very suitable location, in my view, as it is slightly set apart and safe from water-related hazards. The goal for the first phase is to build four living units with a shared kitchen and common room, with one shower and toilet shared between every two units. The inner courtyard will be large enough to accommodate motorcycles. Phase 2 is intended to add two more living units, with another two to be built in Phase 3. Sister Sapientia has been tasked with preparing a preliminary design sketch and a cost estimate.

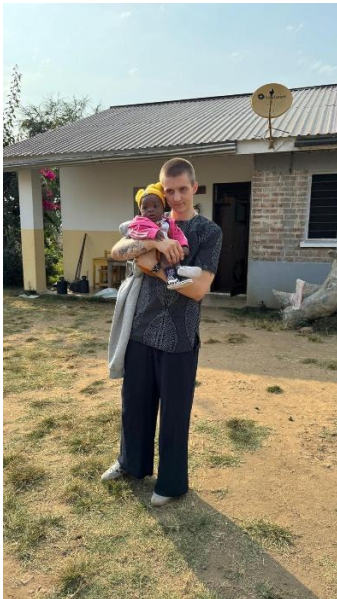
Request

The community has a high level of self-sufficiency. This includes a well-maintained banana plantation. An elderly couple lives in a mud hut right in the middle of the banana grove. The man guards the harvest against theft, even at night. The couple sleeps on the floor. Sister Sapientia and I would like to have a small brick house built for them, complete with a bed and mattress. The estimated cost is CHF 2,500. Ideally, we would fund this through a designated donation.

1. Departure and arrival in Mbingu



2. Meeting the residents of the Children's Village

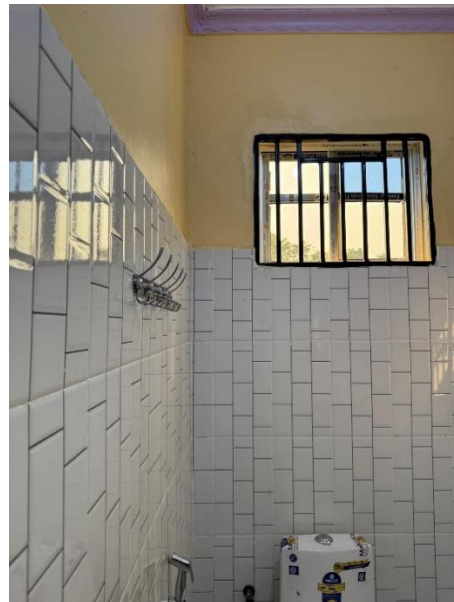


3. Greetings from friends and supporters



4. The New Sisters' Residence is nearing completion and is ready for occupancy





5. Produce from the farm and work on the banana plantation, followed by our departure



Many thanks for the journey, the path taken to reach the people of Mbingu, and the joy brought by the presence of Lorena, Leandro, and Ueli; thanks also for the support from Corina, Flurina, Christian, Felisitas, and Simioni (driver), and especially for the work of Sr. Sapientia and the other Sisters.

Many thanks to everyone for the heartfelt goodwill shown toward the Children's Village and its residents.
Mbingu Children's Village Association (Mbinguvillage) + Beat Wandeler + Sr. Sapientia