

Teachers and students from both lands will be able to communicate with each other very soon as the "computer lab in the bush" is expected to be up and running within two weeks. Electricity poles have been extended to the site near Olchoki and a wireless/radio internet tower is being installed. Seventy re-furbished desktop computers, donated by WITAG Denmark (World IT Aid Group) arrived at the port of Dar es Salaam on 9 March and had to go under extensive security checks due to new global requirements imposed since 9/11. All machines have been cleared now and are on their way to Arusha.

The six American partner teachers will be visiting Arusha in early August to continue the work of developing web-based curriculum – using software designed by our other Seattle partner, Digital Partners - that will serve to educate Washington-area teachers and students on the reality of life "inside Tanzania", and Tanzanian teachers and students about the reality of life "inside the Pacific Northwest". This project is funded by The Education for Development and Democracy Initiative (EDDI), a program within USAID. More about the project can be found on the World Affairs Council website at: www.world-affairs.org/class_tech.html

In other school partnership news, Terrawatu is continuing our work in raising funds to complete the additional classrooms at Natema Primary School. Some small funds were raised at a gathering in Seattle during the visit of the Tanzanian teachers. We are working through our school sponsorship program (see "Activist corner" in this newsletter) and at the individual donor level to raise funds for purchasing materials. The community will be providing the labor. As we work to parlay our EDDI project into future activities, we envision Natema having their own computer lab one day...but only if there is a classroom to put the machines in! For those of you who would like to contribute financially to building a classroom, please visit our website: www.terrawatu.org/financial_info.htm

Head teacher of Natema Primary School, Victor Jeremiah, approached Terrawatu in January and explained that their school garden - initiated by Terrawatu last year with funds from Seeds for Africa, UK - was producing an enormous amount of zucchini during the second round of planting. While the soil is indeed quite fertile, the school community - the majority being from traditionally Maasai heritage – had no idea how to use this strange vegetable. With the help of Terrawatu's research assistant, Gladys Lendii, we designed an information sheet in Swahili with a brief history of zucchini, its nutritional value, and recipes for zucchini soup and zucchini pancakes with ingredients and equipment available in the local village. Terrawatu staff then organized a cooking class at the school for a "hands-on" lesson about what to do with the green squashes. Our next stop – Ilkiding'a Primary School for lessons on what to do with eggplant!

plant conservation and indigenous knowledge

On Christmas Day, 2002, members of Terrawatu's tree-planting network groups, *Kwetu Mazingira* and *Oreteti Group*, transplanted 8,000 seedlings from nursery beds to private homesteads and public lands in the village of Nadosoito, Arusha Municipality. Staff forester, Kephass Ndiamasi has been collecting empty plastic water bottles from local tourist hotels around Arusha and transporting them out to Nadosoito. There, he teaches the villagers how to use the bottles for a drip-irrigation system so seedlings do not have to be watered everyday. This is crucial as water is difficult to come by in this desertified area.



Oreteti Group member transporting water for seedlings in Nadosoito village

Convinced of the success of this Green Belt Movement-model of community reforestation in Maasailand,

Terrawatu initiated a third tree-planting network in the neighboring village of Mkonoo. Named *Orkilili Group* after the name of a medicinal plant similar to *oreteti*, this network is comprised primarily of women. We have provided the initial materials for fencing the nursery to protect from livestock, and group members are now busy collecting indigenous seeds. A workshop is planned for April for both villages to educate members about preserving their indigenous healing knowledge, and, to begin discussion about processing and marketing their medicines for the local and international market. Read more about what life is like in these villages in the feature article in this newsletter, "Experiencing the Village".

cross-cultural exchanges

As we announced in *terrat V*, Terrawatu is the tour operator for Global Exchange's (San Francisco) "Tanzanian Reality Tour: Global Problems, Local Solutions". We were hoping to launch the first tour in early May, but, unfortunately, because of the war in Iraq, many Americans are understandably wanting to stay close to home at this time.

We are therefore hoping that peace will prevail in the world soon and real people-to-people ties will be easier to make again. For those of you desiring to visit us in Tanzania, think about doing so in early September of this year. You can read more about the planned itinerary by going to www.globalexchange.org/tours/ and searching for "Tanzania". Or, contact Sarah Dotlich directly at 1.800.497.1994 or sarah@globalexchange.org.

If you and your family and friends would like to book your own customized ecological-cultural safaris into the wildlife areas and indigenous communities of northern Tanzania, and/or to find out dates for a future *Oloipung'o Experience* with Terrawatu, send us an email at info@terrawatu.org.



Organizational News

The Terrawatu office in Arusha shifted to a larger space in January. Located in the same compound as our previous office - at the corner of Haile Selasie and Old Moshi Road - this new office has more space for meetings and for our Medicinal Plant & Sustainable Development Resource Center. For those of you in the Arusha area, do stop by for a visit and a cup of South African Rooibus tea.

On 11 March, Dr. Pergola presented "A Computer Lab in the 'Bush': Linking Up Indigenous Tanzanian Culture to Bridge the Digital Divide" at the Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington in Seattle. Participants in the discussion that developed after the presentation included graduate students and professors who have both studied and helped implement IT projects in developing nations. Some very useful suggestions were made that will help in setting up the lab in Siwandeti village.

Needs section

© **Projector** – It would be greatly beneficial to our work if we could broadcast out to the communities in the field digital photos, PowerPoint presentations, and DVD programs from our laptops. We can plug the projector into our "AC Anywhere" adapter in our vehicle, attach to battery-powered laptop, and show these images on the side of a school building out in the bush. If you have in your possession -- or know of a new or used projector looking for a home -- please contact us at info@terrawatu.org.

© **Contributions for resource center** - The Medicinal Plant & Sustainable Development Resource Center is a collection of primarily academic literature covering the following subject areas: medicinal plants (with a focus on Tanzania and other African countries); indigenous knowledge (from all over the world); pharmacological evaluation of medicinal plants; grassroots environmental movement activity; Tanzanian and East African sustainable development policies; and, Maasai culture and current political issues effecting Maasai people. Users of this center are Terrawatu staff, international students and visitors working and studying in Arusha, and local people. If you have something to contribute to this growing collection contact us at info@terrawatu.org to let us know what you have and we will let you know the best way to get it to us (e.g. electronically or by post). Materials can be in English or Swahili.

Activist corner - what you can do from where you are

CHILD-SCHOOL-SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Our new child-school-sponsorship (CSS) program, announced in *terrat V*, has been receiving a good amount of attention. We already have one young girl matched up with an American family and a dozen inquiries for more information on how to get involved.

This is how it works:

- You send us a note explaining your interest in the program and whether you want to sponsor a girl or boy.
- We work directly here with the teachers of Natema Primary School to identify promising students at either the Standard 5 or 6 level (Grade 5 or 6).
- You make at least a 7-year commitment to the program (either your own funds or a promise to obtain funds from your friends/colleagues). The first 2-3 years, your yearly investment goes towards completing classrooms at the student's school and supporting your sponsored child's education. This long-term commitment is important as the goal is to have more girls and boys COMPLETE secondary school.
- We send you photos and video images of a "day-in-the-life" of your new friend and -- as soon as our computer lab is ready -- connect you via email.
- When your sponsored child is ready for secondary school, we help identify the best place for her/him to attend.
- Your yearly investment: begins as low as US\$400.
- 90% of your investment goes to the program.

If you want to make a real difference in this world, consider joining our Child-School-Sponsorship Program. Send us an email saying so at info@terrawatu.org and we will take it from there!



Recipe- East African specialties

Cooking with the strange green squash

Well, zucchini is not traditionally known as an East African specialty, but it is now! - in a village near Arusha. As described in the "school partnership" section above, Terrawatu staff recently taught a cooking class at Natema Primary School to introduce methods of cooking with zucchini the students were growing in the school garden. The following recipes are for zucchini soup and zucchini pancakes adapted for the ingredients and equipment available in a rural village. Well, not completely, as there is no electricity there and women use a wooden *kipekecho* (long stick with

“propeller”-like endpoint) to blend/puree. So, as you prepare the soup, think about how easy we have it with hand blenders and food processors and what it would be like to do that step manually! Enjoy these yummy, and healthy, treats!

Zucchini Soup

What you need:

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 2 large potatoes, or 4 medium, peeled and diced
- 8 small zucchini, diced
- ½-1 teaspoon fresh chopped rosemary
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper
- 4 cups broth or water
- 1 cup whole milk
- salt to taste

What you do:

1. Melt butter in medium-sized cooking pot. Add onion and sauté until clear.
2. Add diced potato, zucchini, rosemary, and pepper, and cook for 5 minutes.
3. Add water or broth and bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer about 15 minutes.
4. When cooked, puree in pot with hand-held blender, or in food processor in batches. Return to cooking pot, add milk and bring just to boil, but do not boil. Add salt and stir well. Adjust seasonings to taste. Garnish with dill weed if you would like.

Zucchini Pancakes



Gladys Lendii teaches a student at Natema Primary School how to make zucchini pancakes.

What you need:

- 4 eggs
- 2 cups grated zucchini
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Parmesan cheese (optional for those of us who have access to this wonderful cheese)
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ cup butter, melted

What you do:

1. Preheat skillet/grill to medium-high.
2. In a large mixing bowl, beat eggs. Add shredded zucchini and mix well using a fork.
3. Add flour, (cheese), salt and oil and stir to blend well.
4. Finally, add baking powder and mix well using a large spoon. The batter's consistency should be like heavy whipping cream.
5. Spoon batter on hot grill (about 2 tablespoons) for each pancake. Cook until there are no longer bubbles forming in the pancake, about 2 minutes; turn over and cook for 2 minutes longer. Rub pancakes with melted butter and serve immediately.



Experiencing the Village

Cultural liaison, Zawadi David, article by Tanya Pergola

On 21-22nd of February, Terrawatu member Zawadi David and Co-Director, Tanya Pergola, spent their days at the homestead of one of the members of our tree-planting network in Nadosoito village. The idea was to get a glimpse into the daily life of a villager in a transitional Maasai community and understand the challenges related to both planting trees and developing more generally. The following is an account of our experiences...

Zawadi and I arrive at the boma (homestead) during the early evening hours on Friday. After we exchange greetings, we set to work on gathering up maize that had been drying in the sun and placing them into large sacks for the evening. In the morning, the maize would be laid out again in the sun and collected in the early evening. This process is repeated for several days in a row during harvest time. The dried maize is used to make the staple, *ugali*, a very stiff porridge that is eaten with your hand and dipped into meat and/or vegetable stew. Traditionally, Maasai people did not eat vegetables. The introduction of this crop to this village, signifies its transition from a pastoral lifestyle, to agro-pastoral.



I am shown to the place I will be sleeping for the next two days. The family gives me a bed for myself. Made out of wood in a Western-style frame, it is located inside of a two-bedroom house constructed out of mud and dung with a tin roof. The house is rectangular, considered to be more modern than the traditional round huts found in much of Maasailand. I feel badly that I am taking up a whole bed to myself as typically a number of people share these small (single) beds – sisters together, brothers, and moms with small children. But, they understand that I am a visitor from a different culture and am accustomed to having some space to myself. I am very appreciative of this and lay out my things on the very clean, dried mud floor.

I can feel time warp immediately. Just half an hour outside of Arusha town, one senses immediately that things happen here on a different schedule, more in-synch with the earth...based on daylight and nighttime, movements of livestock, and the collective rhythms of the extended family occupying the shared homestead. The house I am staying in is one of several on the compound, the others being of the traditional round variety and housing brothers and elders. There is a separate hut for cooking and a corral for livestock. Over the course of the next day, I am both comfortable with following this schedule, and also uneasy at its relative inflexibility - this is the way it has always been done, this is what has to be done, what is the reason for changing it?

Zawadi explains that the mother of the boma, whom I will call Namunyak ("lucky one"), is preparing the evening meal. She asks if I wouldn't mind talking with one of the brothers as he wants to practice his English. I sit down on a stool outside and chat with the teenage boy. He is in secondary school in Arusha town and had just arrived home for the weekend. He had walked for several hours and is tired. I notice he has a name from the Bible and is wearing Western clothes, as are the majority of the others at the boma. This family had spent time interacting with Lutheran missionaries, as did many in this village, and choose to use Christian names and go to church on Sundays, as they perceive these to be important steps in development. I find out that it is cheaper to buy Western clothes at the used-clothes stalls in Arusha than it is to buy the traditional Maasai clothes. The young boy asks me many questions about America, including why I think President

Bush wants to start a war in Iraq. He believes that doing well in school is his ticket out of poverty and hopes to one day live a life that is more developed than his parents.

A kerosene lamp is lit. Zawadi and I carry our stools inside the house, into a small room in between the two bedrooms, and eat a very nice meal of stewed potatoes and other vegetables. Namunyak and another sister come inside to sit with us. I begin to feel the power of a woman's place. Traditionally, Maasai women do not eat with men, and part of me understands why. Food, as a nurturing substance, is so easily consumed when surrounded by similar energies. But, being of Italian heritage myself, I treasure large dinner parties at a table of both men and women, eating pasta and drinking wine and talking passionately. I suppose there is a time and place for everything and everybody. It is late by this time and I am ready to go to sleep.

I fall asleep easily but am awakened in several hours by a rustling sound. While quite accustomed to sleeping much closer to nature in Africa than I do in Seattle, my mind always wonders which type of creature is making which type of sound. Floating in and out of sleep, I get up the courage to get my flashlight and look under the bed. There sits a very large chicken, ruffling its feathers while incubating its eggs. Rural Maasai people still sleep with baby goats in their huts to protect them from wildlife, and now, those who have added chickens (came together with agriculture) to their stock, house them inside as well. I am used to the baby goat sound, but not the chicken sound! I tell this to the family in the morning and they all find it funny. Especially when I explain that I sleep with a cat on my bed at my home in Seattle. They are surprised... "she sleeps with a cat!" Cats are not pets here in the village and certainly don't get much attention since they provide neither eggs nor meat.

Zawadi, sleeping in the other room, hears me awake and brings some coffee to the table in the sitting room. Locally-grown, the beans had been ground with a large mortar and pestle. I had brought some bread and cheese from town, and we enjoy a nice Tanzanian-European breakfast.

Zawadi explains that the father of the homestead left very early in the morning so he could gather up the large drum of water that belongs to the *Oreteti* tree-planting network group and get to the water tap before anybody else. He is very excited about Terrawatu's efforts in educating the village about the importance of re-foresting their land, and is committed to having the seedlings at his boma survive. He arrives shortly after and gives us a tour of his land where the seedlings are growing. He shows us the new plastic-water bottle drip-irrigation technology. I feel so much joy in seeing his excitement and dedication, and, at the same time, realize how big a change this tree-planting activity has been for the daily life of a villager. Water is typically gathered by the women using buckets, either attached to donkeys or placed on the head. From this boma, the village water tap is about a 20-minute walk. For the male head-of-household to wake up early and collect water for seedlings, a big shift in patterning has had to occur. The father thanks me again for Terrawatu's efforts in giving them hope, and I quietly bless the seedlings growing on his land.



Seedling growing in Nadosoito

Namunyak begins preparing the noontime meal. Her son slaughters a chicken and she pours boiling water over its body to easily remove the feathers. As I watch the whole process from live bird to pieces for soup, I am both in awe at the ease by which Namunyak works, and disturbed by the animal giving its life to feed us. My own tendency towards moderate vegetarianism seems to shift depending on whether I am in an African or American village, but I notice at that moment, how completely disconnected I generally am from where my food comes from. While I completely understand the custom of eating meat in this village, I myself had a difficult time eating chicken for a few weeks after that. I guess it is something you just get used to.

I actually am scheduled to be at a meeting at a nearby church to discuss Terrawatu business at 11:00am. I have to switch my mind from village-time to business matters and find the transition interesting. While life on the homestead feels more like "go with the flow/reactive", my work with the NGO feels more "how can we work to improve things/proactive". It really is quite a dance to honor both ways of being at the same time, but know that this way of doing things is a very good way to bring everybody together in a harmonious way.

After the meeting, I take a short walk with my Co-Director and another network member to visit some indigenous medicinal plant species and to view more places where seedlings have been transplanted from the Terrawatu nursery beds. It is very hot and dusty. I imagine what the place will look like when there are trees there again. I pray that the water will keep flowing from the taps and that the long rains will come soon. I promise the network I will work hard while I am in the United States during the month of March to find some funds for building a water catchment system.

Zawadi and I then go to visit her sister. A nurse employed at a local hospital, her sister and her husband lived in a fairly large-sized house, made out of cement, with their two small children. They ask if I want a beer, and a young child is sent off to fetch one at a local bar. Almost two hours later a warm Safari Lager appears. It is hard to find a spare beer on Saturdays as many men are drinking at the local bars.



Medicinal plant – Maasai "Viagra"

It is extremely hot and Zawadi and I know we can't walk home until the sun begins to set. Her sister feeds us again, (we ate some food back at Namunyak's house just a little while earlier) and we eat a few bites of potatoes and beef out of politeness. Her sister then shows us her new cow she has just purchased. This is her first cow, and she is very proud. She has saved part of her US\$50/month salary for a long time to purchase the \$200 cow. Her husband works on their farm and does not have a steady income. As a near zero-grazing cow, this animal will provide milk for the family. Knowing that Maasai often name their cattle, I ask her the name of this cow. Sister says, "Zawadi!", meaning "gift" in Swahili. All of us howl...two Zawadis present on the same compound!

When the sun begins its decent, Zawadi and I begin our walk back to Namunyak's homestead. It takes almost two hours, and we are walking at a good clip. How different, I think, from driving the streets of urban America after visiting a friend. I definitely feel the community here, passing by friends of Zawadi's and chatting. Walking the landscape, learning the links/pathways from one homestead to another. Again, I think -- this is nice, but also can be suffocating, there is no privacy in a place like this! There are certainly good parts and drawbacks to all types of lifestyles.

Zawadi prepares warm water for me over the fire. I step inside a space constructed of timber poles and plastic bags. The outdoor shower! As I am taking my bucket shower, I notice that the more water I use, the deeper the mud is getting around my feet. When I emerge, Zawadi comments on how sometimes you are not sure whether you get cleaner or dirtier bathing in the bush. I definitely feel better though and wash my feet again while sitting on a stool outside my room.

After a wonderful dinner of beans and rice, Namunyak comes to sit and talk with us. Zawadi explains that I have some questions I want to ask her if she agrees. She does. I explain that I am interested in how her life is different from her mother's and her grandmother's life. That is, what does development mean to her?

The first part of the conversation revolves around the role of religion. Namunyak explains that she has chosen her own husband (her mother and grandmother had arranged marriages) whom she met at church (I learn that the church is the 'meeting place' in the village). Her own mother was a Lutheran and raised Namunyak in that tradition. When I ask her if she kept anything from indigenous Maasai spirituality she says, "yes, Maasai tradition teaches you how to be diplomatic and how to respect everybody."

I am curious whether the Maasai custom of female circumcision is still practiced in this village. Namunyak explains that the church has taught them to stop this practice. She says:

"the men are still circumcised, and some women, but the church is trying to educate *men* to stop being in relations with women who are circumcised. Because it is not right if a woman cannot be married, the hope is that the women will stop the practice of circumcising young girls because they want them to my marriageable."

I respond by saying that that is a good tactic, and one I have not heard about before. I ask her how else gender relations have changed since the time of her grandmother and mother.

"Traditionally, husbands decided everything, and they had more than one wife. Now, I am the only wife of my husband and we share some ideas together. It is better now. In the future, it will be even better as women get more education. That is what is important. That is why my husband and I live in such poverty conditions here, all of our money goes to educate our children."

The conversation then shifts to health care and I ask Namunyak about her thoughts on traditional Maasai medicine versus Western-style hospitals. She explains,

"I still use Maasai medicine first. Just last week I boiled up some for my back problems and it worked so well. Sometimes, if I get very sick and the traditional medicine isn't working, I will go to hospital. But, it is expensive, and many times it doesn't work so well."

Zawadi then translates my question "what does it mean to be Maasai now...what is the 'essence' of that identity?" Namunyak explains,

"Our language, male circumcision/initiation, our beadwork, our traditional medicine, our humbleness and respect. But we have to welcome development. We have to adjust. I hope my children and other women in the future follow what I am doing."

Namunyak thanks me for talking with her, for being so interested in what she has to say. I thank her for being so honest and so helpful and tell her how happy I am to spend these days in her home.

The next morning Zawadi and I go to fetch some water. The father has gone off to church. I pack up my things. It feels like I have been here a week. The village time-warp again. I present Namunyak with a new *kanga* (printed cloth used for skirt-wrap) from Uganda that I had bought in town. She gives me a big hug and looks as if she wants to jump up and down with joy. She makes us stay until we eat some lunch, which we do. My Italian relatives do the same thing. We drive off, looking at majestic Mt. Meru in the distance, and I think about how next Sunday I will wake up in my house in Seattle, take a quick shower in a tiled space with plenty of water and then prepare coffee and breakfast in less than half an hour. I smile inside at how different life is around the world, yet, deep down, how we are all so similar.



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“Violence is unnecessary and costly. Peace is the only way.”

- Julius K. Nyerere, first President of Tanzania

