

Kula Malaika Foundation
for Childcare and Youth Development



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Newsletter

Lancewood July 2026

Dear Friends in South Africa and abroad,



This autumn I had the pleasure of welcoming my childhood school and scout friend Jutta for a visit. We have known each other since we were seven years old and have remained in close contact ever since. She was deeply impressed by the friendliness and relaxed spirit of South Africans. She noticed how people take the time to have a friendly conversation with complete strangers—for example while standing in the supermarket checkout queue. She was equally impressed that, despite all the setbacks we have

experienced over the past few weeks, we did not fall into despair but faced them with a sense of calm and hope. But let me begin at the beginning.

At the beginning of May, the Garden Route and surrounding areas were hit by severe storms that brought flooding and uprooted hundreds of trees. Driving through the town of George after the storm felt like being on another planet. Enormous trees lay across roads and pathways everywhere. Several of our staff members and the families of some of our children had water standing several feet deep inside their homes. Fortunately, our centres in Kleinkrantz and Hoekwil suffered only minor damage.

Only a few days after the storm, however, disaster struck us as well. For reasons that are still unknown, a fire broke out in our Café kitchen on Sunday, 31 May. Because our farm is located so far from the nearest town, both the kitchen and our scullery caravan had already been completely destroyed by the time the fire brigade arrived. From teaspoons to the stove and refrigerator, everything was lost within just a few minutes.

Even so, we were fortunate in many ways. No one was injured, and the fire did not spread to the neighbouring buildings, including the lapa and the rest of the Café. The insurance



company has since completed its assessment, and we are hopeful that we will receive compensation. Nevertheless, we are now losing valuable income that the Café normally provides.

We are not allowing these setbacks to discourage us. In the meantime, we continue to serve coffee and cake, and somehow we will rebuild our kitchen.

One might think that would have been enough bad luck, but unfortunately our farm bakkie also broke down. We were told that water had contaminated the diesel fuel. It is entirely possible that floodwater entered the storage tanks at a filling station during the

floods and mixed with the fuel. We cannot know for certain, but the repair costs were substantial. Combined with the continuing increases in fuel and electricity prices, these unexpected expenses once again place a heavy burden on our organisation.

Apart from these challenges, our programs in both Kleinkrantz and on the farm are running very well. Our cooks, Dienie and Letitia, prepare fresh meals for the children every day. We are proud to see the children developing emotionally and intellectually in ways that are appropriate for their age.

We were especially encouraged by the positive feedback from Lancewood Primary School regarding our preschool children, whom we have only been preparing for school for the past year. According to the school, every one of them made a significantly better start to primary school than previous groups. The school management also greatly appreciates the progress of our aftercare children and even expressed the wish that all fifty learners at the school could attend our aftercare programme.

Unfortunately, there are still parents who are unwilling to pay the modest aftercare fee of only R50 per month. In addition, children from Beervlei, Bergplaas and Mandalay have to leave on the school bus at 2:00 p.m., preventing them from participating in our afternoon activities.

Melissa, who managed the Children's Centre on the farm, left us at the end of 2025. Fortunately, we were able to appoint Lizande Smith as her successor. Lizande spent eleven years working as a teacher in our toddler group in Kleinkrantz and knows our organisation extremely well. She now leads both the preschool and aftercare programmes on the farm. Geneva, who completed her work-integrated learning placement on the farm last year, has since taken over Lizande's former group in Kleinkrantz.

At the beginning of 2026, we also entered into an official partnership with the Knysna Education Trust (KET). KET supports Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes throughout the Knysna area by assisting with government registration, teacher training, educational materials and programme development. They had already guided us through the registration process during 2025.

Since the beginning of 2026, our Children's Centre on the farm has officially achieved Bronze Level registration. This confirms that our ECD centre meets all the basic government requirements. We have therefore taken an important step towards full official recognition of our Hoekwil centre as an accredited early childhood education facility, which will also allow us to apply for government funding. Our Kleinkrantz centre has already achieved this recognition.

Zenobia and Lizande continue to participate regularly in KET's professional development programs.



In March, we organised a training workshop for all staff members from both children's centres. The topics included values education, child protection, teamwork and communication. We were delighted that our friend and long-time supporter from my home parish of Handorf, retired pastoral worker Hans-Dieter Sauer, happened to be visiting South Africa at the time and was able to join us.

We have also made a small step forward in Kleinkrantz. After "only" twelve months, the George Municipality finally approved the rezoning of a property from church purposes—which the municipality itself has allocated to us—to educational purposes. The delay was caused by objections from neighbours who view our children as a threat.

One final objection is now before the Mayor, who must decide whether we may proceed with building our children's centre. We continue to wait patiently for the outcome. Only once this hurdle has been cleared, our building plans have been approved and we have raised the necessary funding will construction be allowed to begin. That may still take quite some time. Living in South Africa certainly teaches you patience.



Today I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to the association *Ein Regenbogen für Afrika*, which has faithfully supported our Kleinkrantz Children's Centre for almost twenty years—especially Olaf and his late wife Inge. Over the years they became much more than supporters; to many of the children in Kleinkrantz they were like grandparents.

At the end of this year, the association will sadly cease its activities due to the age of its members. We thank every

member from the bottom of our hearts for their many years of friendship, generosity and unwavering support.

We are happy to announce that we do have partners now in the UK and in the Netherlands.

In case you would like to donate to us from any of those two countries, you will find their contact details at the bottom of this letter.

During my years in South Africa, I have learned one lesson above all others: in the end, only God is in control. Through love, hope and faith we are able to continue our work and build meaningful lives, even in difficult times. These are exactly the values we want to pass on to the children and young people entrusted to our care.

Every donation you make helps ensure that a child at Kula Malaika and at the Kleinkrantz children's centre receives love, care, nutritious meals, and support for both their preschool and school education.

With heartfelt gratitude for your continued support,

Monika, Watson and the entire Kula Malaika Team



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