

Arrived at the airport in Mombasa I got kindly welcomed by Mark (director of the school) and Nadja (the president of the foundation Forever Kids Kenya). After packing all my luggage into the car they directly brought me to Tulia House where they have organized a nice room for me. Getting there in the afternoon gave me time to settle in and look around the area for a bit. In the evening Mark and Nadja invited me to their house for dinner. We talked about the school, their program and just had a nice time together.

The next day we went to school together and they showed me around. I got to know all the stuff and the kids of course. First I was afraid about teaching right away but Mark took that fear from me saying that in Kenya they take it all pole pole (slowly). That was nice. I got time to sit into classes and observe the local teachers doing their job. I noticed that they work a whole lot more with repetition than we do in Switzerland. The kids mostly don't have to work out solutions themselves. Quickly I also got familiar with the school structures and routines. When they have game-, debate- or clubs time and how they distribute lunch for example. For the days observing Mark and Nadja gave me one task. I should think of something I can create with the kids to send to all the sponsors. This enabled me to get enough time to get into everything but nevertheless having something to do. I wanted to think of something that wouldn't need a lot of financial resources, which is somehow practical and also easy to make. So we created bookmarks made out of banana leaves.

After more or less a week Mark and I started to work out a work schedule for me. He had his ideas of how he wanted me to help but I could always bring in my thoughts and wishes as well. Throughout my whole stay it has been a very good teamwork with both Mark as well as with Nadja. Even when I came with ideas from Swiss schools like making the kids clean the building for example as a punishment Mark has been very open and even took over different things for himself. The kids have been very cute but also still quite reserved towards the teachers which I wasn't used to. It was hard to interact with the kids during class. They aren't used to answer questions not to mention making jokes with the teachers. They still kind of fear the teachers, which is completely different from Switzerland. During the breaks though they were also just kids and could be quite cheeky as well which you might not expect seeing them in class.

During this time I could of course also get to know the mentality and culture of people from Mombasa a bit. Starting staff meetings 2 hours later than scheduled or jumping into the air as a teacher when we score a goal against another school are only two examples which show the spirit of the people from there.

For me when I went to Mombasa I had no idea what to expect. I hoped to be able to fit into the school and especially getting to know the whole Kenyan way of schooling. I loved to see the differences and similarities between being a teacher here in Switzerland and there in Kenya. The whole staff welcomed me warmly and also accepted me as a foreign teacher without any doubts. I could gain very many new

and interesting experiences which for sure made me develop as a teacher. I also had many beautiful moments I enjoyed. I'm happy that I was able to do this.

With love,
Raheel

