



OPERAKÄLLAREN
FOUNDATION
TILL FÖRMÅN FÖR UNICEF

YOU CAN SAVE LIVES





A CHANGE STARTS WITH YOU

In 2006 I traveled back to my native Africa to attend a wedding in Nairobi, Kenya. After the ceremony, a group of friends decided to travel further north to Kenya and samburu on a safari, to experience wild animal life and the true soul of Africa's population. The bus came to a stop on arriving at a small village. The houses were made the same way as ancient mud huts and there were no streets or shops. Only the acacia trees provided some shade from the burning sun.

The road where we were standing was separated from the village by thornsbuschand inside the thornbush fence adults and children stood, looking as if they were waiting for something. I asked our guide what they were waiting for and he answered quickly with a sad voice: "They are hoping for possible aid shipments". My friend, the best man at the wedding, took a sip from his water bottle and was instantly approached by a group of

boys and girls reaching their arms towards him. He handed them the bottle and they took it and ran away. As we were prepared for the immense heat, our bus was completely stocked up on water and we started to share our supply with the village children. Finally we stood in the front of the bus surrounded by almost 100 kids who wanted water, but we were starting to run out. Our guide told me that it had not rained there for five years and we all felt an urge to help in some way.

We interrupted our safari, drove along to the next city and searched for a grocery store where we bought all the water, flour and butter that they had. With this load we went back to the village and handed over our "aid shipment". The feeling that we hadn't done enough kept coming back to me after returning to Sweden and I started thinking about what I could do.

I was struck by the idea of arranging an event where the profits go to charity and I consulted some friends and colleagues to see whether it might work.

No sooner said than done. The Operakällaren Foundation was born. After nine years, it is now Sweden's private leading charity event!





Operakällaren works passionately with this event and we do our very best to ensure that Operakällaren's Foundation is a very successful and exclusive charity event on behalf of Unicef

Sincerely, Abbe Ibrahim

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& CEO AB Operakällaren
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Do you know that a simple latrine costs SEK 150, that a water cleaning tablet that cleans 4-5 liters of water costs SEK 0.21 and that a water pump costs SEK 1,336? Together with our water project, UNICEF builds drains and functioning toilets in Kenya.

"We take clean water for granted. But around the world 4,000 children die every day because they lack just that. In Ethiopia, I have even seen hospitals that have no water. Therefore, this initiative is so vitally important to create change and help children to survive," says Véronique Lönnerblad, Secretary General of UNICEF Sweden.

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FIELD TRIP TO SOMALILAND

Since the Operakällaren Foundation was launched nine years ago, we've collected more than \$ 2.700.000 for UNICEF and our joint water projects in areas around the Horn of Africa. In August 2014, the organisation ran its first field trip to the region to see for itself how the projects are being carried out in practice.

he idea behind the Operakällaren Foundation came from Abbe Ibrahim, CEO of Operakällaren, during his honeymoon in Kenya nine years ago. Since then Operakällaren Foundation has been working and supporting UNICEF's water projects in Kenya, Somaliland, Djibouti and Ethiopia. In August 2014 the Operakällaren Foundation ran its first field trip, to Somaliland in north-west Somalia, to see for itself how the projects are progressing and developing.

"For me personally I had a very great longing to see my former homeland. I had a lot of mixed feelings and was very nervous," says Abbe Ibrahim, who was born in Somaliland.

The first step of the trip was to Nairobi, Kenya, at the UN headquarter where the group met Bismarck Swangin, communications specialist at UNICEF Somaliland, who led the trip to Hargeisa, the capital of Somaliland. One of the first visits was to the village of Dheenta, about 35 kilometres from Hargeisa. For the past couple of years, the village, which is home to about 300 families, has had a water system that runs on solar energy. On day two the group visited a refugee camp in central Hargeisa. Abbe Ibrahim describes the experience as one of the most moving visits on the trip.

"It was fantastic to see the joy, pride and friendliness there was at the refugee camp. In just a few seconds we had 50-100 cheerful children spreading noise and positivity despite the fact that they were living in very tough conditions without clean water, limited food or functioning toilets," says Abbe Ibrahim.

The itinerary also included a visit to a children's hospital in Hargeisa, a visit that made a powerful impression on everyone in the group. The majority of the children had not received basic nutrition from birth and some might not even survive the night. Nevertheless it is important to note that





these children who had managed to reach the hospital were the lucky ones and that there were many children in the area who had not even been able to get there.

The field trip also happened to coincide with Hargeisa's international book fair where the group met a number of returned Somalis, something Abbe Ibrahim was delighted to see.

"We met several young girls and boys who had come back to get involved in rebuilding the country. They are making a historic effort for Somaliland," he says.



A second field trip is currently being planned during 2016. Here we will again be able to see developments in the areas we have chosen to support and help in partnership with UNICEF.

We know that we are saving many lives and especially are giving hope to the next generation, while also creating better conditions for development, education, family life and, most of all, survival in these vulnerable areas.

*We can't do everything
but everyone can do something.*





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