



Serena News

Insights and Inspirations in the World of Serena Hotels

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Newsletter for Serena Hotels

HOTEL ROOM TO CLASSROOMS – SOLAR LAMP INITIATIVE

In partnership with Sunny Money, an affiliate of the international charity Solar Aid, **Nairobi Serena Hotel** initiated a campaign 'Hotel Room to Classroom' in August 2015 to raise funds to provide solar lamps for Isokon Primary School students located in the Maasai Mara. The sole aim of this initiative is to eradicate the use of kerosene lamps in rural Kenya, which aligns with Serena Hotels' climate change initiatives.

The funds collected were used to purchase 70 solar lamps that were donated to standard 8 students in an off the grid location. According to Sunny Money, a family can save about USD \$70 per year on expenditure related to kerosene and candles for light.

On January 29th 2016, **Nairobi Serena Hotel** hosted a Solar Lamp Handover Ceremony, where the students and Head Teacher from Isokon Primary School were presented with solar lamps through the funds **Nairobi Serena Hotel** had collected.



Presentation of the solar lamps by Daniel Kangu, General Manager of Nairobi Serena Hotel, to the students of Isokon Primary School during the Solar Lamp Handover Ceremony



Isokon Primary School in Maasai Mara

PLANTING FRUIT TREES – SERENA HOTELS, RWANDA



Charles Muia, Serena Hotels Rwanda Country Manager, at the Tree Planting Initiative

During the last weekend of February 2016, **Serena Hotels, Rwanda** joined the Kicukiro Residents in Rwanda to plant 2,500 agro forestry trees in the Gahanga sector of Kicukiro District. **Serena Hotels, Rwanda** donated the highest quality of mango and orange trees to plant in order to help increase the number and quality of fruits available in the market and increase household incomes.

Charles Muia, Country Manager of Serena Hotels in Rwanda, told The New Times, Rwanda, “Fruit bearing trees are likely to improve residents’ welfare by increasing incomes from their crops. In 24 months, we shall be able to come back to the village and buy the fruits. Gahanga residents will supply the fruits to us as well as other markets.”

Muia added, “At the time Serena started working in Rwanda; we used to import such fruits. We have been encouraging and training people on how to produce more crops and we no longer import.”

SOMETIMES LOVE IS JUST NOT ENOUGH – SERENA HOTELS, UGANDA

Everyone appreciates the light that children bring into our homes. That is the reason why the Serena family in Uganda has pledged their unwavering support in ensuring that this light continues to shine through the Mwana Mugimu Malnutrition Center at the Mulago Regional Referral Hospital.

In addition to over 700 kilograms of assorted therapeutic food delivered monthly since 2012 to cater for both the babies and their parents /caretakers, Management and Staff of both **Kampala Serena Hotel** and **Lake Victoria Serena Golf Resort & Spa** dedicated their Valentine’s Day this year to share love as well as bring happiness into the lives of over 150 children and their parents. The Country Manager, Mr. Anthony Chege, mentioned in his remarks that, “Serena Hotels considers itself very fortunate in being able to extend support to these innocent souls.” He noted that as a company whose core business is that of touching people’s lives, what better day to share this love than on Valentine’s Day with our extended family. “As a hospitality establishment, we are greatly equipped with vast knowledge on nutrition and so this was an area we knew that we would be able to directly touch young lives as well as bring a smile to both the parents and their children”, he added.

The Serena Hotels, Uganda team also gave the center’s dining room and kitchen a facelift by applying a fresh coat of paint and conducting minor repairs. To show their appreciation, the mothers put up lively performances all afternoon and for a couple of hours it seemed like their plight had faded away.



TPS (Uganda) Country Manager Mr. Anthony Chege (right) serving one of the Mothers



Children from the Valentine’s Day Initiative at the Mwana Mugimu Malnutrition Center, Uganda

COMMITMENT TO PROMOTE READING AND LITERACY IN EAST AFRICA



Top Left to Bottom Right: (1) Reading for Children (RFC) Staff Workshop at Serena Beach Resort & Spa, Mombasa, (2)(3)(4) Reading for Children (RFC) Community Workshop at Olorobi Primary School by Ngorongoro Serena Safari Lodge

In 2016 Serena Hotels, in partnership with the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), Madrasa Early Childhood Program (MECP) and Lions International, expects to expand its milestones from the 19 Community Libraries in Kenya that were launched in 2015 to a total of 23 more libraries across Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

Serena Hotels Reading for Children (RFC), Kenya

In February 2016, Serena Hotels Kenya launched 7 additional libraries for the Serena staff. Beneficiaries of these additional libraries are expected to be approximately 723 staff members. The books featured in these libraries include fiction, non-fiction, motivational and career development books, as well as children's books for the family members of Serena staff. Along with the launch of the library, a one-day Sensitization Workshop was held for staff focusing on the importance of reading to their children and for themselves.

Serena Hotels Reading for Children (RFC), Tanzania

An RFC Training Session was held during March 2016 at **Ngorongoro Serena Safari Lodge**, introducing the initiative to 8 Serena properties located in Tanzania: **Lake Duluti Serena Hotel, Lake Manyara Serena Lodge, Ngorongoro Serena Safari Lodge, Serengeti Serena Safari Lodge, Mbulizi Mawe Serena Camp, Kirawira Serena Camp and Selous Serena Camp and Serena Mivumo River Lodge**. One facilitator was chosen from each property to undergo a one-week technical and practical training session. During the week, facilitators had the opportunity to hold a Community Sensitization Workshop at Olorobi Primary School in the Ngorongoro Conservancy Area, launching a library for the 712 students at the school and its surrounding community. Furthermore, a Staff Sensitization Workshop was held for **Ngorongoro Serena Safari Lodge**, followed by the launch of a library for the staff and their family members.

Throughout the next few months, the RFC-trained Facilitators from Tanzania will launch an additional 4 Community Libraries and 6 Staff Libraries, which is expected to have over 1,000 beneficiaries.

SERENA HOTELS CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

March 8th 2016 marked International Women's Day, celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievement of women across the globe. Serena Hotels commemorated this day by sharing the stories of a few of the many successful ladies across the Serena properties and Head Office. These ladies serve as an example of some of the outstanding people we have at Serena Hotels, whom we sometimes fail to recognize for their extra efforts and commitment to their daily work. Below are some of their stories.



Naomi Imbayi (right) with Shenin Virji (left),
Executive Assistant to the Managing Director, at
TPS Serena Hotels, Nairobi, Kenya

TPS Serena Hotels, Head Office – Nairobi, Kenya

Twice a day, Naomi Imbayi pushes her trolley around the Serena Hotels head office in Nairobi serving the 'fix' for the day to over 100 staff members. As well as tea and coffee, Naomi serves whatever healthy treat the staff might have selected for the day, such as ground nuts, sweet potato and arrowroot.

"From top to bottom everyone has to pass through my hands; to me I am a mother to all" says Naomi. She also loves the fact that her job gives her the opportunity to meet and interact with all kinds of people who walk into the office. One of her most memorable moments at TPS was when she offered a client tea and he asked for champagne instead, to which Naomi replied on a light note that champagne is for after work.

While she comes from a big family of 8, Naomi is a single mother of 2 children, a daughter and a son whom she says are her biggest inspiration and the reason she is in the office by 5:30 am. "People start coming into work from 7 AM, so you need to have everything ready by the time the first person walks in through the door" she says.

With every job, there are challenges to what she does. With an office of over 100 people, serving tea and coffee alone is not easy. However, she does it all with a smile and will on a daily basis check in to find out how a new baby is keeping or how school is going for some of the employees that are still studying. "To me, TPS is not just my workplace, the entire team is like my second family" says Naomi.

Lake Duluti Serena Hotel, Arusha, Tanzania

Growing up, most people do not know what they want to be in terms of their career. There are those who discover it along the way while others spend their entire life trying to figure out their purpose - but not Jane Tarimo, the Assistant Manager at Lake Duluti Serena Hotel.

Ever since she was a little girl, Jane knew she wanted to work in the hospitality industry. Born in the Kilimanjaro region of Northern Tanzania, Jane grew up seeing large numbers of tourists flock to their home area as they sought to explore the Serengeti or climb the tallest mountain in Africa, Mount Kilimanjaro. Through sheer determination and hard work, Jane not only got to work in the hospitality industry, but made history as the first lady ever to be Assistant Manager at Serena Hotels in Tanzania.

Jane was asked, as we mark International Women's Day, what is her advice to anyone looking to venture in the Hospitality industry?

"Being a female Assistant Manager has given me an opportunity to be an inspiration to other women; but I also want them to know that success will not be handed to you just because you are a woman. In my 20 years of service, I have learned to survive, you require a lot of tolerance, serenity and most importantly hard work, and I would encourage women to pursue their desires."



Jane Tarimo of Lake Duluti Serena Hotel, Tanzania



Chef Peace Butera of Kampala Serena Hotel, Uganda

Kampala Serena Hotel, Uganda

When you think about professional chefs, the first name to come to mind is probably Chef Gordon Ramsey, Jamie Oliver or Olivier Brucker. However you may start to wonder where are all the women?

Currently working as the Executive Sous Chef, second in command at **Kampala Serena Hotel**, Chef Peace Butera demonstrates a strong commitment to her work.

“I have been privileged to work in a total of 10 Serena Hotel properties across 5 African countries, as well as trained at a number of five star establishments in both South Africa and Turkey. When I returned to **Kampala Serena Hotel**, I was assigned the responsibility to co-manage the **Kampala Serena Hotel** kitchen together with Chef Eshton Muthai for one year before the refurbishment (in 2005)” explains Chef Butera.

One of Chef Peace’s most memorable moments was when she got to cater the Queen of England. “She stayed with us during the Commonwealth Head of Government Meeting period and we catered for all her private banquets and luncheons. I cooked part of her menu dishes personally, as assigned by our executive Group Chef Mr. John Macharia”, says Chef Butera.

Chef Peace notes that while more women are joining professional kitchens, many great female cooks lack the opportunity to grow and are under paid. She encourages them not to lose hope during the ups and downs of the industry. “I choose not to play victim and worked hard for my family. I am blessed with 2 biological and 2 adopted children. If I made it, anyone can” she says.

Kigali Serena Hotel, Rwanda

Picture yourself floating on your back at the pool, your skin sun kissed and looking up to the clear blue skies with a touch of a few clouds. While the pool is one of the most relaxing places to be, there is a peace of mind that comes with knowing that you have a professional attending the pool. The Pool Attendant is the most important man or in the case of **Kigali Serena Hotel**, woman, in a hotel. As we celebrate International Women’s Day, meet Salama Twizeyimana, the Pool Attendant and Lifeguard at **Kigali Serena Hotel**.

Salama first started working at **Kigali Serena Hotel** as a Changing Room Attendant. She first learned of the vacancy through a newspaper advert and submitted her CV. After three interviews, Salama emerged as the top candidate and was called in for her first day at work the next day. She worked as a casual for a year after which she was offered a contract as a permanent staff. Salama worked at the changing room for another 3 years then became a Swimming Pool Coach, which is the job she still has today.

In Salama’s opinion, the most important qualities to have in her job is to be careful as you are dealing with people’s lives. Good customer service and self-sacrifice play a big role in her position.



Salama Twizeyimana of Kigali Serena Hotel, Rwanda

LIGHTS OFF – EARTH HOUR INITIATIVE



Live Performance at Dar es Salaam Serena Hotel, Tanzania



Cooking Class at Lake Elmenteita Serena Camp, Soysambu Wildlife Conservancy, Kenya



Tree Planting at Mara Serena Safari Lodge, Kenya

Earth Hour is an initiative started in 2007 in Sydney, Australia by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). The initiative promotes individuals and groups globally to partake in building awareness on climate change by participating in various environmental activities to promote the cause.

Typically, lights are turned off across the globe between 8:30 PM – 9:30 PM local time in order to conserve energy and to make a visual call-out on the important cause. However, it is encouraged to go beyond the one-hour and to fight climate change on a daily basis. As of 2016, 178 countries across the globe participated in Earth Hour – from families to major landmarks.

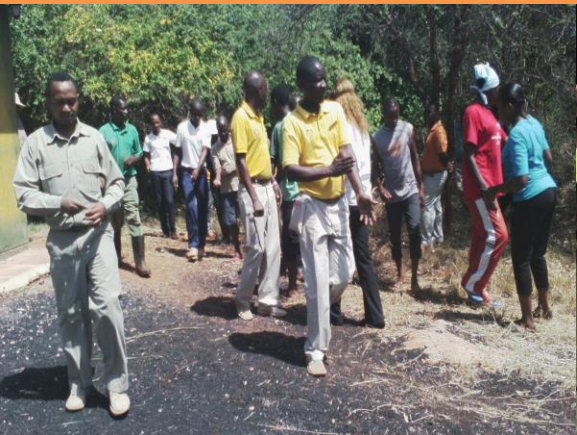
According to the WWF website's 2016 statistics, over 400 iconic landmarks switched off their lights, over 1.2 million individual actions were taken to embrace climate change, over 28,300 individuals that changed their profile picture on Facebook and a total of 7 countries worked towards legislative changes.

Serena Hotels' Contribution to Earth Hour

Serena Hotels played its part this year in reducing their carbon footprint. In partnership with WWF, Serena Hotels' properties across East Africa participated in Earth Hour through various climate change activities. These activities included: turning off all non-essential lights, reducing the amount of energy-consuming equipment used during the hour, providing information on Earth Hour to increase awareness to guests and local communities, tree planting, litter collection, candlelight yoga sessions and candlelit dinners with live entertainment.

Serena Hotels also joined WWF's social media campaign on Facebook in order to promote Earth Hour to WWF and Serena Hotels' followers. The campaign promoted **Serena Beach Resort & Spa's** Sea Turtle Conservation Project. The audience was asked to visit the WWF page to answer a question regarding sea turtle conservation, with a chance to win lunch for two at Serena Hotels.

A few highlights from Earth Hour across the various properties are as follows:



Litter Collection at Kilaguni Serena Safari Lodge,
Tsavo West National Park, Kenya



Candlelight Yoga Session with Africa Yoga Project at Nairobi
Serena Hotel, Kenya



Candles lit at Kampala Serena Hotel,
Uganda

Nairobi Serena Hotel partnered with the Africa Yoga Project to hold a candlelight yoga session during the hour in the garden.

Lake Elmenteita Serena Camp's chef had a Cooking Lesson Menu featuring organic and sustainable produce cooked using energy saving methods.

Kilaguni Serena Safari Lodge had over 70 participants come out to help in litter collection in order to commemorate *Earth Hour*.

Dar-es-Salaam Serena Hotel hosted four organizations active in environmentally friendly practices at the Hotel to promote the organizations' products, activities and create awareness.

Lake Duluti Serena Hotel had traditional Marimba music as entertainment for guests, using instruments that do not use electricity.

Kampala Serena Hotel had a beautiful dinner, lit by candles and solar lamps as they turned off all non-essential lights in the lobby, gardens and restaurants / fine dining areas.

Ngorongoro Serena Safari Lodge (NNSL), along with staff from Serena Hotels Tanzania properties and TPS Serena Hotels Head Office Kenya, participated in tree planting with the 712 students of Olorobi Primary School in the Ngorongoro Conservancy Area. Altogether, there were 100 trees planted around the school property.

TOP SCORES AT SIKIZANA TRUST – KILAGUNI SERENA SAFARI LODGE



Joel Lesirma (right) from Kilaguni Serena Safari Lodge with Mumbi (left)
from Sikizana Trust

Sikizana Trust is a center for orphaned and rescued children located in Nthongoni Cillage, approximately 10km off Kibwezi / Mombasa Highway in Kenya. For the last 6 years, **Kilaguni Serena Safari Lodge** has been one of the greatest supporters of Sikizana Trust offering moral support and donations such as food, toiletries and linen for the Center.

Mumbi is one of the children living at Sikizana Trust. She sat for her Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations in late October 2015 and had an exceptional outcome - with an overall score of A-. Staff from **Kilaguni Serena Safari Lodge** joined the Center in celebrating this great achievement whilst encouraging other children to work hard and to defy the odds.

NGORONGORO'S 'MAASAI ENTREPRENEURS'

Located in the Crater Highlands area of Tanzania lies the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) – a UNESCO Heritage site. This conservation area is quite unique, as it is a game park site while also inhabited by local tribes – all within one enclosed area. The Maasai tribe is the most popular tribe in NCA.



Mini Maasai Market at Ngorongoro Serena Safari Lodge

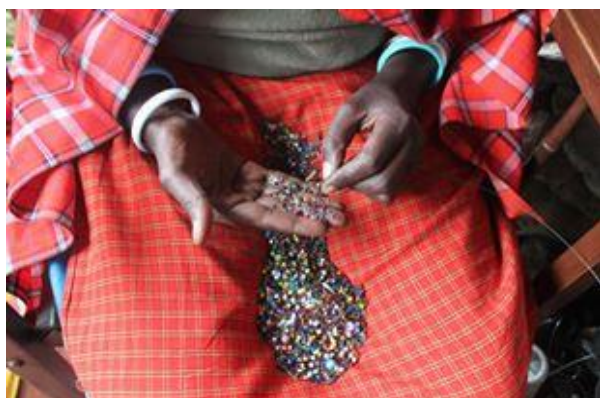
Ngorongoro Serena Safari Lodge (NSSL) has been a part of the NCA since 1996. Living as one with the communities that surround the lodge, **NSSL**, in a sensible manner, continues to contribute and supports the local communities, just as it did prior to construction. Though Management was given a “go ahead to build”, one of the outcomes of Serena Hotels’ Environmental Impact Assessment prompted changes in design - **NSSL** could have negatively impacted water availability of the Maasai people. The company decided to invest in 5 kilometers of pipeline to bring water from an alternative source. Within 2 years of operating the Lodge, there was a drought in the NCA and the water source that the Maasai people were using dried up. **NSSL** then provided clean drinking water to the Maasai community.

Six years ago in 2010, a Maasai community member by the name of Chipapa Ole Moko, along with a team, approached the various lodges in the NCA with a business proposition. The team wanted an opportunity to sell their handmade goods within the lodges to tourists. **NSSL** found this to be a sustainable idea, as it would not only help to support the community, but also provide guests with an enhanced experience of the culture through providing them with an opportunity to purchase locally made products directly from the Maasais.



Chipapa Ole Moko, Head of the Team

For six years, Chipapa and a team of women have been operating a “mini Maasai market” within the Serena lodge. The business involves 25 individuals, of which 5 of the women work at the Serena location, with the remaining members set up at different lodges and areas within the conservancy.



Maasai woman hand making products to sell

Most of the products are made beforehand and brought on-site and the women also make some of their products on site to demonstrate their creative craftsmanship to guests. Not only does Serena provide the team with a space to sell their products, but also purchases their products to be used around the lodge. Some of these are wall/door décor and toothpick holders for the dining tables. The Conservancy also teaches the Maasais in the community about financial skills, such as recordkeeping, in order to help the team keep track of their business.

NSSL, for a number of years, has been a strong supporter of the Maasai artisans for years. Profits from the Maasai venture has helped to economically empower the Maasai community, as they have been able to purchase food and clothing for families and

pay school fees. Farming and agricultural activity are not allowed within the NCA. Therefore, selling within the Ngorongoro lodges is the only source of income for these ‘Maasai Entrepreneurs’.

THE STORY OF: THE ‘AMERICAN’ MAASAI

1948 is remembered by some as the year of the Summer Olympics in London and the Winter Olympics in Switzerland. Perhaps it may be remembered as the year the United Nations created the World Health Organization, or the year our famous leader Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated. Israel, Burma and Sri Lanka all gained independence and The Marshall Plan was agreed upon to provide aid to war torn Europe.

However, the community in the Ngorongoro Conservancy Area (NCA) also remembers 1948 as the year the ‘American’ Maasai was born.

Located in Northern Tanzania just west of Arusha lies the Ngorongoro Crater – the world’s largest inactive caldera. Over 2.5 million years ago, the Crater was known as a volcanic mountain rumoured to be taller than Mount Kilimanjaro, making it the highest mountain in all of Africa. The collapse of the peak created the giant caldera, which is now inhabited by over 25,000 animals and 5 different types of landscapes. Within the Crater, one can find forests, plains, savannahs, lakes and hills.



View of the Ngorongoro Crater, Tanzania

Clement was born in the year 1948 near the flat-topped Engitati Hill in the Ngorongoro Crater. As Clement mentions through discussion, Engitati Hill is also known as The Round Table, obtaining its name from its visual appearance. However, in 1974, the Maasais living in the area were forced out of The Round Table, and Clement is now found living in a small village in the NCA.



Clement, the ‘American’ Maasai, in the Ngorongoro Conservancy Area (NCA)

Clement belongs to the Maasai Tribe and has now lived in the NCA for majority of his life. During his time there, he had the opportunity to meet an American woman who was visiting Tanzania to conduct a study on baboons. The connection between Clement and the woman was instant, and he found himself moving to the United States with the love of his life, where they had a child together. Clement enjoyed an amazing year in America before moving back to his home in Tanzania. He currently has 12 children from 2 different wives, as polygamy is considered a norm in the Maasai culture.

It is unclear what happened between Clement and the American woman, but America has sure left an impact on Clement. With his perfect American accent, Clement enjoys sharing stories on his life’s journey and about the Crater with one and all. Though living within a small Maasai village in the NCA, Clement has become a hidden gem of the whole Conservancy – full of life, knowledge and stories for days.

The Ngorongoro Crater, in all its natural beauty and history, is a must-see destination in itself. However, if given the opportunity to visit the Crater, meeting the one and only Clement – the ‘American’ Maasai – is an opportunity one would not want to miss.



Long and low, the Ngorongoro Serena Safari Lodge (NSSL) is built from local river stone, and camouflaged with indigenous vines, as is entirely invisible from the floor of the Crater 600 meters below. Designed to blend completely into the landscape, a hundred years on a magnificent Fig Tree (Scientific Name: *Ficus Thonningii*) lives on thanks to Management's decision to invest in re-designing the footprint of NSSL around this enormous tree.

THE SERENA HOTELS PORTFOLIO

HOTELS

KENYA

Nairobi Serena Hotel

TANZANIA

Dar es Salaam Serena Hotel

Lake Duluti Serena Hotel

UGANDA

Kampala Serena Hotel

RWANDA

Kigali Serena Hotel

MOZAMBIQUE

Polana Serena Hotel

SAFARI LODGES

KENYA

Mara Serena Safari Lodge

Amboseli Serena Safari Lodge

Kilaguni Serena Safari Lodge

Serena Mountain Lodge

Ol Pejeta House

TANZANIA

Lake Manyara Serena Safari Lodge

Ngorongoro Serena Safari Lodge

Serengeti Serena Safari Lodge

Serena Mivumo River Lodge

TENTED CAMPS

KENYA

Lake Elmenteita Serena Camp

Sweetwaters Serena Camp

TANZANIA

Kirawira Serena Camp

Mbuzi Mawe Serena Camp

Selous Serena Camp

RESORTS

KENYA

Serena Beach Resort & Spa

UGANDA

Lake Victoria Serena Golf
Resort & Spa

RWANDA

Lake Kivu Serena Hotel

ZANZIBAR

Zanzibar Serena Hotel

RESERVATIONS

SERENA SALES CENTRE

KENYA

Williamson House, 4th Floor

4th Ngong Avenue

P.O. Box 48690-00100

Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +254 20 2842000/2842333

Email: cro@serena.co.ke

TANZANIA CENTRAL RESERVATIONS

TANZANIA

2nd Floor, Diamond Trust House

P.O. Box 2551

Arusha, Tanzania

Tel: +255 27 2545555

Email: reservations@serena.co.tz

JOHANNESBURG RESERVATIONS OFFICE

SOUTH AFRICA

Grayston Ridge Office Park

(Block C, Ground Floor)

144 Katherine Street, Sandown

Johannesburg, South Africa

Tel: +27 21 2607/8/9

Email:

reservations@serenahotels.co.za

Website: www.serenahotels.com **Serena Hotels Blog:** www.theserenaexperience.com

Email: sustainability@serena.co.ke



www.facebook.com/SerenaHotels



www.twitter.com/serenahotels

Tourism and Promotion Services (TPS), operating under the brand name Serena Hotels, is an affiliate company of the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED). TPS promotes tourism by building, rehabilitating and managing hotels, resorts, palaces, forts, safari lodges and camps that contribute to economic growth and the overall investment climate in an environmentally and culturally sensitive matter.