



Serena News

Insights and Inspirations in the World of Serena Hotels

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Sustainability Newsletter for Serena Hotels

SERENA BEACH RESORT & SPA SUPPORTS CHILDREN OF FORMER EMPLOYEE



Simon Ndugu (left) and Solomon Waweru (right), sons for former employee Mr. Joseph Kigecha.

Simon Ndugu and Solomon Waweru have faced many challenges since their early childhood. In 1996, their father Mr. Joseph Kigecha, a former employee of **Serena Beach Resort & Spa** in Mombasa, passed away, leaving their mother to care for them on her own. However, she suffered from tuberculosis and was forced to sell their house in order to pay for medication. At a very young age, Simon and Solomon were brought to an orphanage where they did not easily adapt in their new environment. Their struggle continued when their mother passed away in 2004 and, a couple of years later they were forced to leave the orphanage with nowhere to go. Despite living on the street, Simon and Solomon continued to hope that one-day the Almighty would lead them on a different path.

Things changed when they visited **SBRS** to collect their father's inheritance. Mr. Kigecha's former colleagues decided to take action through **SBRS** when they met the boys. **SBRS** helped them return to school, and provided them with uniforms and books. Having both finished secondary school, Simon and Solomon continued to take educational and skills related courses on a part time basis in hope of enhancing their careers. Simon has become a Food and Beverage Cashier working at **SBRS**, having completed his ATD Level 1 studies and continuing with ATD Level 2 studies. Solomon is pursuing a certificate in Supply Chain Management while working as a gardener for Turfcare East Africa. Both are optimistic towards their future, as they continue their studies and hard work.

"Saving our planet, lifting people out of poverty, advancing economic growth... these are one and the same fight. We must connect the dots between climate change, water scarcity, energy shortages, global health, food security and women's empowerment. Solutions to one problem must be solutions for all."

– Ban Ki-moon, Eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations

KIGALI SERENA HOTEL COMMEMORATES GENOCIDE VICTIMS

Kigali Serena Hotel (KiSH) staff honoured the lives lost during the 1994 Genocide by visiting the Nyanza Memorial Centre in Kicukiro District in April 2017. The centre commemorates 11,050 victims buried at the site, and the staff of KiSH paid their respects by laying wreaths and observing a minute of silence in their honour. Every April, Serena Hotels Rwanda pays tribute to the lives lost and the resilience of those who survived the Genocide. Several staff members of Serena Hotels Rwanda are survivors. Serena Hotels Rwanda Country Manager Daniel Sambai explained that it is important to remember what occurred during the Genocide so that it will never happen again.

After visiting the memorial centre, staff returned to **KiSH** and were joined by Colonel Jules Rutaremara, the head of the Rwandan Peace Academy, and Vedaste Nsabimana, Vice-mayor in Charge of Economic Affairs in the Nyarugenge District. In their address to the staff, Colonel Rutaremara and Vice-mayor Nsabimana explained that there was no room for genocide ideology and that it was important to focus on a bright future. Serena Hotels Rwanda continue to support a broad range of community initiatives and economic empowerment support towards the survivors of the Genocide.



Kigali Serena Hotel staff pays tribute to victims at the Nyanza Memorial Centre.



Country Manager Daniel Sambai (left) is joined by Colonel Jules Rutaremara (right) and Vedaste Nsabimana (second from right) for the candle lighting ceremony at Kigali Serena Hotel.

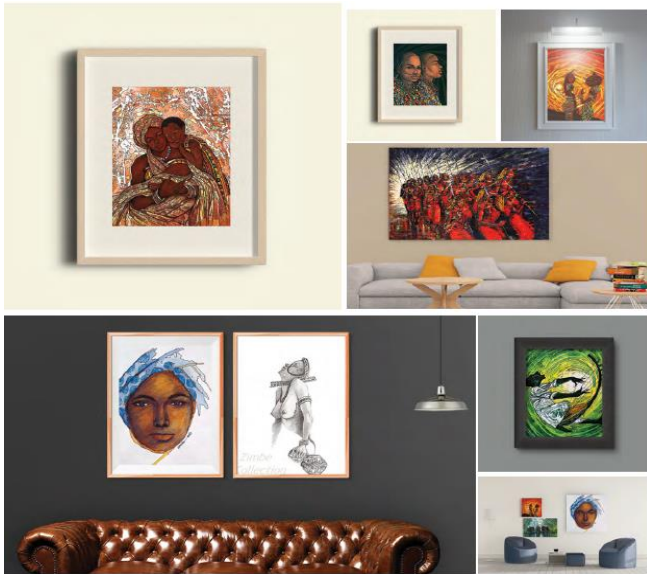
GOVERNMENT OF KENYA BANS PLASTIC BAGS

On August 28th, 2017 the Government of Kenya took a bold stand for conservation by passing a law which bans the use, manufacture, and import of plastic bags. Plastic bags included within the ban are grocery bags, supermarket bags, and duty-free bags. This new law aims at eliminating plastic bag pollution which contributes significantly to reduce environmental degradation, ocean pollution, and animal deaths. They are also a hazard to agricultural land and pollute tourist areas. Plastic bags can take several hundred years to decompose and pose a great risk to conservation. Kenya joins several other African countries, such as Rwanda, who have already banned plastic bags. United Nations Environment Programme estimates that before the ban, around 100 million plastic bags were used in Kenya each year – a number which should be reduced significantly with this new ban. Serena Hotels commends this important step taken to protect the environment as this initiative complements its waste management program.



Reusable and recyclable paper bag from Kigali Serena Hotel, which is personalized and used at all Serena Hotels' properties.

KAMPALA SERENA HOTEL FEATURES LOCAL ARTIST DAVID KIBUUKA



A selection of David Kibuuka's works, showcased at the Kampala Serena Hotel.

Kampala Serena Hotel partnered with local artist Mr. David Kibuuka on one of his charity drives by providing him with an exhibition space on the first floor of the main Hotel where he exhibited 10 of his best works. Ugandan-born Kibuuka immigrated to Canada in 1983, and has made a significant contribution towards humanitarian efforts globally. **KSH's** partnership with Mr. Kibuuka reflects Serena Hotels' commitment to cultural revitalization and preservation of communities through the arts. Serena Hotels believes that culture and architecture are our expression of pluralism that can shape the quality of life and be a potential source for economic and social development.

AMBOSELI SERENA SAFARI LODGE CONTINUES TO SUPPORT WOMEN'S GROUPS



A proud member of the Kimana's Women's Group that is supported by Amboseli Serena Safari Lodge.

From 2014 to 2017, **Amboseli Serena Safari Lodge** has partnered with the International Labour Organization (ILO), Tech for Trade, and the African Pro-Poor Tourism Development Centre to provide opportunity to the Kimana Women's Group in Amboseli. The Kimana Women's Group is a self-started group for HIV-affected women who originally came together to form a business and raise awareness on HIV/AIDS within the community. In line with the UNDP SDGs on gender equality (SDG 5), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), and partnerships for the goals (SDG 17), the partnership has supported the women's group in developing their business which now provides high-quality fresh produce to **ASSL** and other businesses in the area. This initiative has had a significant impact on the livelihoods of the women and their families - the average family size for the women is 5 per household hence the partnership regularly benefits around 250 individuals directly. By supporting a responsible supply chain, **ASSL** was also able to reduce its carbon footprint by buying locally sourced produce. The hotel hopes to build on this partnership in the future, as it continues to be committed to responsible and sustainable economic development.

"No matter what people tell you, words and ideas can change the world." – Robin Williams, Actor

SERENA HOTELS RWANDA DONATES TOWARDS ONE-COW-PER-FAMILY PROGRAM



KSH staff including General Manager Daniel Sambai (right) pictured with *Girinka* recipient (left).

Kigali Serena Hotel (KiSH) continues to support the government initiative *Girinka*, which provides one cow per family to increase income for impoverished farmers and improve child nutrition. This year, **KiSH** donated a Fresian cow to a resident of Gahanga, Kicukiro, who is a father of four. The cow will go towards both improving the economic independence of the farmer as well as contribute to health and wellness within his family. This initiative aligns with SDGs 1 (no poverty), and 8 (decent work and economic growth). Since the *Girinka* program has begun in Rwanda, more than 203,000 families have benefitted and **KiSH** is proud to be part of this forward-looking initiative.

“WE CAN. I CAN” – TAKING ACTION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER

In celebration of World Cancer Day 2017, Serena Hotels partnered with cancer support centers across East Africa and Mozambique to raise awareness on ways to prevent and address cancer. In solidarity with organizations around the world, including the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), several Serena properties participated in World Cancer Day events. Along with spreading awareness, the activities that took place at the various Serena Hotels properties aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 3 ‘good health and well-being.’

Kampala Serena Hotel, engaged their staff and guests in various physical activities at the Maisha Health Club and Spa. **Kigali Serena Hotel** hosted an inspirational and nutritional conference with testimonies from cancer survivors. **Polana Serena Hotel**, Mozambique, distributed cancer awareness material to its staff, guests and surrounding community. Sonia Sultuane, a writer and Mozambican artist, shared her struggles with cancer with staff and guests of the hotel. **Nairobi Serena Hotel**, in partnership with the Faraja Cancer Support Trust, brought together cancer patients and their caregivers to showcase various complementary therapies. The event explored benefits of Zumba and transformational breathing. **Lake Victoria Serena Golf Resort & Spa** hosted events on three consecutive days in partnership with the Programme for Accessible health, Communication and Education (PACE) Uganda and the Makerere University Hospital. These activities included breast, cervical, and prostate cancer screening as well as the distribution of family planning options, health and cancer education. **Dar es Salaam Serena Hotel** hosted a cancer screening day where 30 employees were screened by the Amana Government Hospital.



Participants enjoying a Zumba class while exploring the benefits of exercise at the Nairobi Serena Hotel.



A lively Zumba class at Nairobi Serena Hotel during the World Cancer Day.

“Let us be good stewards of the Earth we inherited. All of us have to share the Earth’s fragile ecosystems and precious resources, and each of us has a role to play in preserving them. If we are to go on living together on this earth, we must all be responsible for it.”

– Kofi Annan, Seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations

RAISING AWARENESS ON HEALTH ISSUES

LVSGR&S supports community health

In August 2017, **Lake Victoria Serena Golf Resort & Spa** partnered with International Medical Link, Uganda Batti, and Uganda Manufacturers Association to host a community health camp in Kitiko, Uganda (aligns with SDG 3 on good health and well-being). During this event, several health services were extended to the community, including HIV/AIDS counselling and testing, safe male circumcision, and deworming for children aged 10 and below. Household utensils and health products were distributed to members of the community. The success of the event was further enhanced by the contribution of USAID's global health initiative which provided technical support and medical supplies such as testing kits.



Health talk on the use of condoms and family planning at LVSGR&S.



Registration for testing at LVSGR&S.



Famous Mozambican singer, Neyma, participates in Polana Serena Hotel Health Fair.



Participant donating blood to the Central Hospital during the Polana Serena Hotel Health Fair.

PSH Health Fair

PSH was a 'bee-hive' of activity when the hotel has its health fair for the 3rd consecutive year. This was in partnership with various organizations and health enthusiasts who congregated at **PSH** to take part in various activities which included, *inter alia*, a mini marathon, aerobics, Zumba, wall climbing, breast cancer screening, HIV testing, and blood pressure testing. 143 staff from the **PSH** participated in the health fair which also featured lectures addressing issues such as malaria, typhoid, nutrition, and the importance of physical activity. Participants and staff donated blood that went to the blood bank at the main Central Hospital.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."
-Margaret Mead, American Cultural Anthropologist

READING FOR CHILDREN INITIATIVE



Children participating in Reading For Children activities.



Education facilitators receive training.



Community members receiving training on language development and storytelling.



Boys reading the book 'Life History of a Butterfly'

Kigali Serena Hotel launched a library under its Reading for Children (RfC) initiative at Nyamirama Nursery in the Kayonza District, Rwanda, late last year. RFC is an education-focused initiative with a commitment towards promoting literacy and early childhood development. Speaking while addressing the teachers and parents of Nyamirama Nursery, Daniel Sambai explained that Serena Hotels strongly believes that one of the biggest hindrances of development in Africa is the lack of access to information brought about by the poor reading culture among people. “We believe that by giving books and having our children read them, they can widen their imagination. Also, the more they read, the more they expand their vocabulary. We have started this initiative and we will keep supporting it,” he said. Serena Hotels recognizes that children who have been read to before they go to school and whose family members continue to read to them are shown to outperform those who have not had such opportunities.

“Reading for pleasure helps to develop children’s language, literacy, critical thinking, communication, social and emotional skills. Quite simply, being read to from an early age helps children become confident learners,” Daniel noted.

Prior to the hand-over of the library, a two-day sensitization workshop was conducted by Serena Hotels trained facilitators at the Kayonza-based school for parents, teachers, community leaders, and other members to encourage reading, language development, and storytelling for the children of the community. The library consists of children’s books in Kinyarwanda, English, and French. A bookshelf was provided to the community, which will be run by librarians chosen and trained from the community.

In partnership with the Aga Khan Foundation, Madrasa Early Childhood Program, and Lions International, Serena Hotels has embarked on the task of teaching local and rural communities the importance of early childhood development and ensuring children in these communities are able to read from a young age, thus enabling them to contribute to development in the long-run. This aligns with Serena Hotels’ commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG 4 on ‘inclusive and quality education’ for all.

To date, Serena Hotels has launched 43 libraries across Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Rwanda with over 16,000 beneficiaries. During this year, Serena Hotels expects to launch 8 more libraries, also expanding the initiative to Mozambique. The upkeep of these libraries is the responsibility of the community themselves. Through the appointed librarians, the communities are taught how to carry out various activities to raise funds and additional books for the library. Serena Hotels released its first ever set of Serena Hotels children’s storybooks through a Book Development Project. They include *We All Went to Serena*, *What is it?* and *Life History of a Butterfly*. Proceeds from these books that are being sold at the Serena Hotels Gift Shops will be used to print and purchase more books, develop additional books, and establish additional libraries.

SERENA HOTELS ADOPT A SCHOOL PROGRAM

Serena Hotels has, in the last decade, worked with schools around its 24 properties in the East African region in various ways to ensure children have an environment that is conducive to learning. This is through its “Adopt a School” program that has seen initiatives that influence children’s positive attributes, thus having a holistic positive impact on a child’s upbringing and development that will assist to gradually transform the quality of life for generations to come. This approach aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals and, in particular, Goal 4 which is about guaranteeing inclusive and quality education for all. The Serena Hotels’ “Adopt a School” initiatives include: introduction of Eco-Clubs, planting of fruit and herb trees, health outreach programs through the Serena Wellness Program, infrastructure support, RFC, Soap for Hope, and its “Light up a Life” Christmas initiative. Highlighted below are some of this year’s initiatives.

Donation of sanitary kits

Kilaguni Serena Safari Lodge partnered with Upendo Women’s Foundation and Kisima Safaris to donate 250 sets of re-usable sanitary kits for girls at Mwitasyaano Primary and Secondary schools. The girls were trained on proper usage of the kits, which can last up to 4 years. The schools are located in a community heavily dependent on small-scale farming which has been affected by this year’s drought. Therefore, this donation has provided the school girls with necessary sanitation during a difficult time.



Girls receiving sanitary kits at Mwitasyaano Schools.



Making soap at Lake Elmenteita Serena Camp.

Soap for Hope Campaign

Under the umbrella of the Adopt a School program, Serena Hotels launched the Soap for Hope campaign late last year. The first leg of the campaign took place at **Lake Elmenteita Serena Camp** in support of the Kiboko Primary School in Naivaisha. With the support of SealedAir, the Soap for Hope campaign transformed 50 kgs of discarded guest soap and recycled it into sanitized and fresh bars of soap using a cold-press method that requires no electricity. New bars of soap were used by the school children and their families, thus providing better opportunities in hygiene and sanitation at no cost while reducing waste. Serena Hotels plans to roll-out this activity at other properties in the future.

Selous Serena Camp (SSC) supports Maasai school

There is a Maasai village located around 13km from **SSC**. Some time ago, the community saw the need for a school, which they built at their own expense. When staff of **SSC** visited the school, they noticed the lack of basic classroom items such as books, chalk, exercise books, and rulers as well as trees to provide shade around the school. **SSC** thus decided to support the school by providing them with books, trees for shade, and prizes for those who perform well on examinations. **SSC** is advancing the *Reading for Children* program at the school and it looks forward to continuing to build the relationship with the community in the future.



Children reading new books provided by Selous Serena Camp.

SERENA HOTELS RWANDA CELEBRATE 10 YEARS WITH *UMUGANDA*

On the last Saturday of each month, Rwandans participate in *Umuganda*, which comprises of people coming together to perform community work such as infrastructure or environmental protection work. This March, **Kigali Serena Hotel** and **Lake Kivu Serena Hotel** celebrated their 10th year in operation in Rwandan. The properties celebrated the occasion by taking part in *Umuganda* and carried out road repairs in the Nyarugenge and Rubavu districts. More than 400 employees were then invited for a lunch buffet and cake to celebrate Serena Hotels Rwanda 10th Anniversary.



Hotel staff, including Country Manager Daniel Sambai (2nd from left), and Nyarugenge residents working together to improve the road conditions.

SERENA HOTELS AWARDS AND ACCOLADES – JANUARY TO AUGUST 2017

Amboseli Serena Safari Lodge (ASSL)

Best Partnership for Poverty Reduction –
Silver Award

ASSL earned this award at the African Responsible Tourism Awards 2017, in recognition of its partnership with the ILO, the African Pro-Poor Tourism Development Centre, and Tech for Trade which supports the small-scale farming initiative of the Kimana Women's Group in Amboseli. This initiative creates economic opportunities for the HIV affected community, by training women in quality production and business so that they can sell their fresh vegetables and herbs to the Lodge, promoting self-sufficiency.



Seven Serena Kenya Properties Eco-rated Silver or Gold

Ecotourism Kenya has a comprehensive certification scheme which analyzes the extent to which tourism businesses engage in sustainable tourism best practices. Tourist facilities are assessed based on a strict set of criteria and standards. Appraisals are generated through extensive questionnaires, site audits, and assessments. Properties are re-evaluated every 2 years. Facilities which meet the challenging standards set by the certification scheme are awarded a bronze, silver, or gold Eco- rating.

Seven Serena properties in Kenya, have received the below rating:

- **Gold Eco- rating:** Lake Elmenteita Serena Camp, Serena Beach Resort & Spa, Sweetwaters Serena Camp
- **Silver Eco-rating:** Serena Mountain Lodge, Amboseli Serena Safari Lodge, Kilaguni Serena Safari Lodge, Mara Serena Safari Lodge



"It is our collective and individual responsibility to preserve and tend to the environment in which we all live." – Dalai Lama



Ideally located on one of Kigali's most charming boulevards, the five-star Kigali Serena Hotel is built around a polished granite atrium, which showcases the very best of Rwandanese cultural art. The hotel's carpets bear resemblance to the landscape of Rwanda, often referred to as the land of a thousand hills.

THE SERENA HOTELS PORTFOLIO

HOTELS

KENYA

Nairobi Serena Hotel

TANZANIA

Dar es Salaam Serena Hotel

Arusha 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

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