

# Naretoi in the language of the Massai means: Many join hands to achieve a goal

Naretoi Newsletter No. 5 Wiernsheim, April 26, 2012

**Sopa Oleng!** (Warm welcome in the Kimaasai language)

Dear friends,

How time flies. Three months have passed already since our stay in Kenya during the turn of the year. Already before we could settle down to write this newsletter in order to let you know all the events of this trip, another 17 children could be admitted in the pupils' program of which 11 sponsorships could already be secured and as regards 2 further requests we are actually in contact with the Kenya Team.

"January" also means the beginning of a new school year in Kenya. The organisation involved in having the school fees transferred for 45 children attending different schools to different banks in time, and to provide all children with the necessary books and clothing is quite a job – but more about it later.



The Kenya Team welcomed us with the joyful news that from now on they will be four of them. Joseph ole Liaram whom we already know from former trips and who was also a student in the adults' project of the Oloshaiki Class in Talek has joined the Team.

In the meantime the territory where the Naretoi projects are being carried out has extended considerably. It covers a big part of the Narok South Dictrict with the districts Talek, Sekenani, Olesere, Koyiaki, Nkoilale and Aitong. Some children attend schools in Maji Moto, Narok or Ololulunga and even a school in Nairobi which takes their pupils to higher levels.





Unpacking and packing donated clothes into different bags to be sent on to the villages is a routine which we have got fond of to a certain extent. When distributing the clothes, we try to pack them in bags keeping in mind that the contents will be suitable for boys and girls of all age groups.

All bags have arrived safely in Kenya



8 bags at 23 kg each and 4 times hand luggage

Again the joy in the villages was great and we would like to say a big thank you in the name of all recipients to all donators of the marvellous clothes, shoes and spectacles.

Ashe Oleng!



Hopefully there will be sufficient clothes for everybody...





She is he lucky one.



Who will fit into this red T-shirt?



The first pair of shoes!



During the first week of the new year our timetable was filled with all kinds of events.

#### January 2, 2012 - Pupils' Day

What we had hardly dared to hope for became reality. We met all 45 children which at that moment belong to the Pupils' Project on one single day in Talek.

What a great moment! For the first time we actually saw the children whom Naretoi with your help as sponsor or donator can give the chance to attend school. Thank you so much! Since school starts in the second week of January, the children were still on holiday. According to the time table all were to assemble at 9 a.m. in the restaurant.



During 1 1/2 hours the children arrived in small groups on foot, by motorcycle taxis, by matatus (public mini-buses) or travelling on the loadroom of small trucks. Some were accompanied by their parents, grand-parents or other family members. Many of them had travelled a long way to take part in this event.

At the beginning it was so quiet in the restaurant that one could have heard a pin drop. Many children looked rather surreptitiously in our direction. We could guess the reason. Massai children are brought up to have respect for grown-ups and besides for many of them it was their first contact with white people. So we decided to start with breakfast consisting of a big slice of bread with jam and a cup of chai (tea) for everybody.



Since there was not much room in the restaurant, we decided to walk to Talek Primary School where we were allowed to use one classroom for our meeting. There too it was getting rather cramped but somehow everybody managed to find a seat. The meeting was intended mainly as an introduction round and took a great deal of time. Our intention was to achieve that at the end of the day everybody would get to know everybody.

Then every child was allowed to pick some of the clothes which had been donated, like a jacket or a jersey each and Birgit shot some pictures for the sponsors.



After all 45 children on the list had been called up, Moses asked if we had forgotten someone. When a boy got up and said that he had not yet been called up, the whole Naretoi team looked rather embarrassed. Had we actually forgotten someone? However, soon we found out that the boy and his teacher had already requested to be admitted to the program, but had not yet been accepted. So at the spur of the moment he was also made a Naretoi pupil and put down on our list as number 46.

Some of the older pupils had prepared short letters for the sponsors in Germany. The younger children were given drawing pads and pencils which we distributed so they could make a drawing for our next meeting. Lea from Germany had prepared some "example drawings" which we showed to the children to give them an idea what they should draw and what would be of interest to people in Germany.



On the way back to the restaurant there was a lot of talking, asking questions, replies and laughs. Many of the children already speak very good English.

Lunch (in the meantime it was already early afternoon) was served in two groups. The children were allowed in the restaurant first, the grown-ups had to wait outside. After a huge plate of rice, potatoes and meat, it was the adults turn.



John helps handing out plates.



Common practice in every Kenyan restaurant. Wash your hands before you have your meal.



The day went by far too quickly and we had to say good-by. But before, we wanted to make a photo of the entire group to remember this wonderful day.



The children, parents, their brothers and sisters and the Naretoi Team Kenya send greetings to all friends in Germany!

# January 3, 2012 - Visit to Nkoilale School for Adults

We set off immediately after breakfast. With our four-wheel drive vehicle we passed a nature reserve in the direction of Olesere. On our way to Nkoilale we wanted to pay a visit to Moses' family who gave us a very warm welcome. After having been offered a refreshment of chai and sour milk we continued our journey towards Nkoilale.

On our way we passed the countryside around Olesere (which means "Good-by" in the Massai language), a very remote and extremely dry region during the dry season. People there still live in a very traditional way. Many of the children from the school project are from Olesere.

Shortly after noon we arrived at the school in Nkoilale. Nkoilale lies about 35 km away from Talek, on a highway between Sekenani (gateway to Masai Mara) and Narok / Nairobi.

From the highway we could already see the big church building which accommodates the School







We were given a very warm welcome and Daniel Ole Korio who is teaching in the adult project told us how important the adult school is for the people of Nkoilale.

Of the 90 adults attending the classes initially, half still take part in classes after 6 months. Reading, writing and calculating are the main subjects.





The oldest present student (we guess he is about 55 to 60 years old, his daughter is also supported by Naretoi and attends secondary school) told us that he was about to move with his family to another town which is about 80 km away near the Tansanian boarder. He had been told that there they had a school for adults. When he knew about the Naretoi project he asked Moses for help.

He explained in great detail how hard it was for him at the beginning even to hold a pencil in his hand so that he would be able to write. He mentioned muscular soreness in his fingers and endless attempts to produce legible letters on the paper.

He expressed his thanks to teacher Daniel Korio for helping him at the beginning with endless patience by leading his hand when writing and for encouraging him by telling him always that soon he would be able to write on his own.

The spokeswoman of the women's section mentioned how important it is especially for the women of the community that school is in the afternoon and is being held in the village. That way they can send the children to school in the morning, look after the animals, fetch water and prepare the midday meal. As soon as the children come back from school and have had their lunch, the women can put their work aside, go to school for a few hours and continue work when they come back home.

We were asked to continue our work at the Nkoilale adult school and we promised to carry on with the project as long as it will be necessary. On the way back to Talek, Moses told us that there are also requests from other villages for an adult school. We all feel that this shows that our plan to bring our school project directly to the villages where people need us, instead of setting up an adult school only in a permanent place, is the right one.





On the return journey we happened to pass the home village of Saitoti, the Massai lad who is a pupil in the Naretoi school project. We were greatly surprised to see about 15 children sitting under a tree with sheets of paper scattered on the floor. They all had a pencil in their hands and were drawing. When they saw us approach, they jumped up and came running towards our car proudly holding up their drawings.

That was indeed a touching moment for us. The day before on the occasion of the Naretoi school day Saitoti had received the pencils and the paper from us and one day later all children of his village were drawing colourful pictures.

#### January 4, 2012 - Sheep-Giving-Day

Our idea which was born in autumn 2011 to help the Massai procure food for their families who as a consequence of the drought in East Africa and drastic price increases for basic food products (also owing to international speculative transactions) were faced by poverty, should become reality for the first time on this very day. Small wooden sheep we had given away in Germany to donors who had given contributions to the sheep project became living ewes in Kenya.

The first "Sheep Day" was set deliberately on a Wednesday which is market day in Talek because then there are crowds of people in Talek. We were expecting 30 women who had been selected carefully by the Kenya team with regard to their neediness.



Before the actual "Sheep Day" took place, the team and the women had met several times and on that occasion it was arranged in a traditional democratic way how to proceed to make sure that the giving away of the sheep would be handled in a fair way. It was also discussed and pointed out that the Naretoi team thinks that it is important that the women should keep the ewes in the first place to breed lambs which could then be sold or slaughtered and to use the milk of the sheep.

The women had come from all directions and some of them had come from far away.



On a field near Talek 30 sheep were grazing which we had bought from other Massai families a few days ago. They were driven together near the village of Depe and looked after for some days. On "Sheep Day" very early in the morning they were driven to Talek.



With the ewes each woman was to be given a sack with mineral salts and medicines against ticks and worms for the animal. Thereby increases the probability of the ewes giving birth to the first lambs still this year (about August). The medicines and the salt had been bought by from Massai women who run a small pharmacy for veterinary products.



We had planned to mark the ewes with numbers from 1 to 30 and to have the women draw a ticket thus making sure that the parties would come together by chance. The evening before "Sheep Day" we sat at the campfire discussing how the ewes should be marked. Should we write the number in colour on the ewe or line up the ewes in a row? Finally Depe said that he had an idea and promised to take care.











While Moses was busy noting the names of the women arriving, our helpers (watched by numerous onlookers because many people in the vicinity had heard of the event taking place) caught the ewes and every ewe had a tag with a number taped to its ear, 3 hours later all women had arrived and all preparations completed.



In the name of Naretoi we again told the women not to sell the ewes immediately but to keep them and sell only the lambs and the milk.



Then the oldest of the women stood up and said:

"My whole life I have been trying to save up enough money by selling self-made Massai ornaments at the market in order to be able to buy a sheep to assure the basic upkeep of my family. Why on earth should I now when a sheep comes falling from the sky, sell it right away again?"

Deeply moved by this statement, we began with the drawing of the tickets. It all took place very quietly and according to schedule. The women lined up in a row and each of them picked a ticket bearing a number.

A few minutes later the calm and quiet was over – people and animals were running about in wild confusion, everybody wanted to help bring the parties together. People were running behind the sheep, shouting and laughing, the frightened sheep ran away bleating and cutting capers.









A bustling swarming of happy people and frightened bleating sheep.



Then we suddenly realized that in spite of having planned everything very carefully, we had forgotten an "important" matter: we had no ropes for the women to tie up "their sheep". After a short confusion and discussion they took off their colourful scarves and used those for tying up the animals.



It was a gorgeous sight to see the happy women on the big field with their sheep.

We were delighted with the self-made Massai ornaments which they put round our necks to express their thanks.

We gladly accepted them on behalf of all those who have helped to make it happen that on this day in Talek "sheep have fallen down from the sky" for 30 Massai women.





One sheep made its way home not on foot but on the back seat of a motorcycle.

In the meantime the 2nd Sheep Day has already taken place on March 8, 2012, in the village of Aitong, 10 further sheep were given to needy women.





## January 5, 2012 - Organizational work in Narok

Early next morning the four of us set off to the town of Narok which is 100 km away in order to remit the school fees for the 46 Naretoi children. Since we were present at the beginning of the new school year, we wanted to use the opportunity to give John and Moses a hand and to get an idea of the procedure. On our way another Naretoi child joined us. She was on the way to the boarding school and appreciated the lift as she had missed the matatu at 4 o'clock a.m. which had been overcrowded.



After a 3 hours' ride over bumpy and dusty roads (3 persons on the back seat and 3 in front in the Toyota car) we reached Narok.

Now it was important to withdraw enough money from our German "transfer account" which then had to be paid into the bank accounts of the different schools.

Equipped with various EC and Visa credit cards, we made our way through the crowds to the bank. Moses had already informed us that in previous occasions there had been difficulties with some banks when withdrawing money, in other words, they had not succeeded to withdraw money. And indeed, of all banks only the Equitiy Bank complied with our request. We queued up in front of the three cash machines wondering why the queue was advancing very slowly. Moses explained that at the beginning of a new term there is an absolute chaos in Narok since Narok is the only town in the district where banking operations can be carried out and that is why there are crowds of people on the street.

At last we stood in front of the cash machines. Of the three machines only two seemed to be working. At the first attempt we immediately managed to withdraw the maximum amount of 400 EUR, and with the second credit card we also got the money without problems. We were quite pleased to have a thick bundle of banknotes (in Kenya the banknote with the highest value corresponds to about 10 EUR, which means that we already had 80 banknotes). Well, we thought that now everything was o.k. and nothing could go wrong any more.

Already at the 3rd attempt there was no more money available and the machine signalled: "ATM will be serviced soon!" Great! So we had to join the queue again and after having spent some time in the queue, the 3rd cash machine was also empty before it had been our turn.

The money we managed to withdraw was not by far enough to settle all the outstanding fees to be paid. We were told that during the day the cash machines would be would be serviced again, however, nobody knew exactly at what time.





We had promised to meet some parents of pupils attending schools leading to advanced levels at the bus station. We wanted to give them the copy of the bank remittance which they had to present at their respective schools. Then we had to cross the town right to the other end to begin paying the fees into the school accounts with different banks.

Stella and her parents at the kiosk when the money was handed over

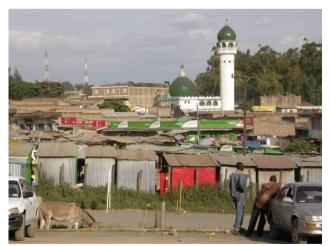
In each bank they had to find out which school had an account with the bank and the name of the Naretoi children for whom the payment was intended for. Then we had to fill in a cash paying-in slip for each child and join the queque again and wait for ages at different counters for paying in the fee. The whole procedure had to be repeated over and over again at different banks.



In the meantime one of us went to check whether meanwhile the cash machines had been serviced – in vain.

Motor cycle - taxi stand in Narok

In the meantime we rushed to a copy shop to make copies for the Naretoi bookkeeping and then after rushing to the bus station at other end of the town we met with the parents and the pupils. Surely we could not hand over the payment slips and part of the fee money which the children were to pay in cash at the school in the middle of the street. We therefore disappeared unobserved (what we very much doubt because everybody was staring at us) in small bars or internet cafes to carry out the transfer procedure.



Narok: mosque and small shops in corrugated-iron huts

On the stroke of 16.30 at bank closing time, the cash machines at the Equity Bank were serviced again and we could withdraw the rest of the money.

Tired but rather relieved we started our way back shortly before sunset and after a long ride on the bumpy roads we reached the Aruba Mara Camp in Talek rather exhausted and hungry.



#### January 6, 2012 - Office day in the beer garden of Aruba Mara Camp

On our last day in the Aruba Camp we set up our mobile office in Gerdi's beer garden.

Supplied with sufficient sodas and under a sunshade one could endure the heat. First of all we discussed the past and the new school year – with respect to each single child. We also had to discuss individual cases. In the case of some children, precarious familiar circumstances required changes, i.e. admission to a boarding school or transfer to another school...



For each amount spent in Kenya for the children or the adult project, the team collects a receipt for the bookkeeping department in Germany.

The Naretoi Team Kenya had already received new requests for the pupil project. We discussed the requests one by one as regards their emergency and wished that we could give as many children as possible the chance to be admitted.

A good proposal suggested by the Kenya-Team which we intend to introduce in the medium run as regards the school program of schools taking pupils to higher levels is a plan to reach a cooperation agreement with 2-4 schools.

The aim is to reduce the number of boarding schools in the project thus making possible or more effective handling procedures (like money transfer, transport of pupils, easier and faster exchange of teachers/pupils/Naretoi Team, planning of coaching lessons). At the moment there are 11 Naretoi children attending 8 different schools taking pupils to higher levels.

This applies always to boarding school accommodation. Girls and boys attend separate schools. Each school has its own fee schedule, own organization and degree of training and besides the schools are widely scattered in the whole vicinity.

At the end of the day all projects had been brought up to date and we had managed to structure the administration proceedings in a clear and practicable and future-orientated manner.

That was our last day at Masai Mara and in the evening we said good-bye to all at the Aruba Camp Team and to Depe and Joseph of the Naretoi Team Kenya.





#### January 7 to 9, 2012 - Visit to Chance e.V. Erishata Learning Center in Olereko

The following three days were spent visiting another aid project (Chance e.V.) for the exchange of experiences and to get to know each other. We left early in the morning to pay Michael ole Maito a visit whom we had met at Ludwigsburg and who, together with Jens Bergmann, has been engaged for several years in similar projects in the Transmara region.



We went about 80 km along the Masai Mara heading North West through the Musiara Gate. After having crossed the Mara River, our 4x4 Toyota Landcruiser climbed the rather rocky, steep slope of the East-African rift valley uphill to Lolgoria in the most adventurous way.

Bridge over the Mara River with the Escarpment in the background

The road to Kilgoris was also in a terrible state. It was unpaved and had deep crevices caused by erosion, parts of the road had collapsed, deep hollow holes were filled with water and at times we had to cross stretches when the track was about the width of our car. To our right and left were big gaping holes and if the soil had given way under our wheels..... well, better not think about it. At times we had to leave the road and work our way plodding through damp fields covered with low bushes.

During our ride we had already noticed the big difference between the region around Talek and the Transmara. The region around Kilgoris is much greener and there is obviously far more water. Fortunately it did not rain and the road seemed to have just dried enough during the last days so that after 6 hours we reached our destination with no incidents (as I said, we only did 80 km!).

The team from the Erishata Learning Center and the German volunteers were already expecting us in the recently completed guest house and gave us a hearty welcome. The following two days were spent visiting the different projects and to get as much information as possible. The entire Erishata-Team gave us their support and our many questions were answered in great detail.



The guest house of Erishata Learning Center



A warm welcome from Erishata team



Within the scope of the agricultural project we were shown cows which although they are grazing in the fields, are being fed additionally with Napier grass every day.



This fodder grass which is rich in nutrients and growing quickly is being grown for this purpose on a part of the farmland. During the night the cows are kept in the stable where they are fed and milked. The dung is collected and taken to a biogas plant for energy production. The gas of the plant is utilized for the school kitchen and the remainder of the fermenting process is used as organic fertilizer for growing vegetables.





Apart from the cows, they also keep chicken, breed fish and within the bee project they harvest honey.



By growing their own vegetables, it is possible to keep the expenses for the school meal program as low as possible.

In gardening they use the double-digging process which means that the soil is turned two spade depths instead of only one and enriched with organic fertilizer. That way the loose soil can store water much longer making watering unnecessary. The rainfall during the cultivation period is sufficient and the crop yield on the loose soil is greatly enhanced.







The home-grown bananas and cooking bananas are also used for school meals. Besides, the guests at the Erishata Guest House can enjoy a variety of delicious banana dishes.

In the entire center, the roofs of the houses are connected by rain gutters leading to cisterns collecting the rain water (water harvesting) is of utmost importance in these projects.



An additional income is obtained by the sale of saplings from the own tree nursery. Great care is also given to using only endemic kinds for cultivation and not the fast-growing kinds like the Australian eucalyptus tree which can be observed frequently and which have a negative influence on the ground water level.

Another point worth mentioning which also greatly impressed us was the simple method used for the extremely important project to keep the watering places clean.

In the Talek region we had noticed that one single watering place was used for fetching water for domestic purposes, for watering animals, for bathing or for washing laundry or even cars.

In the Erishata Center the water sources are protected at their origin with hedges and fences against animals and care is taken that only people fetching water have access to this sensible place. We could convince ourselves of the degree of purity and drinking water quality (under Massai aspects) of the water.









Moses testing the water quality of the water source.

Only at a clearly defined distance downstream the water source is it allowed to water animals. Thus it is prevented that their excrements pollute the drinking water for humans. The washing place for humans and clothes is located even further away from the water source.





On the afternoon of the 2nd day we had a cup of chai sitting in the shade in front of Michael's house discussing the projects we had seen regarding their feasibility in the Masai Mara region.

The entire Naretoi Team was highly motivated and we would have liked to put our ideas into practice rightaway. But we realized, of course, that the conditions in the Masai Mara region are of a different nature.

Dry climate, savanna instead of bushland, wild animals plundering the bee hives and agricultural crops which not seldom can become dangerous for humans and the way of life of the people who are very much attached to the tradition of nomades and herdsmen. They do not know certain types of food like chicken, eggs, fruit and vegetables and especially fish and therefore partly reject these.

On the day of our departure the Erishata Learning Center (the project of Chance e.V) started the new school year at the project-owned school (pre-school and primary school).



The money made with other projects is employed to finance the school, the foodstuffs harvested are used for the school meals and for some of the children exist school sponsorships from abroad.

It was good to see that teaching took place in small classes with about 20-25 children (in Kenya there are usually up to 60 children in one class), in plain, appropriately equipped class rooms and in a friendly atmosphere (in Kenya, the teachers at state-schools are still allowed to beat the children).





The children bid us good-by with a song and so did we by sponsoring sweets for all.



We all agreed that the journey to Olereko, the days spent together and the friends we could make have made our life richer. We promised to stay in contact und to support one another with help and advice. Another important aspect of this trip was that John, Moses and Michael now know each other personally.

We expressed our thanks once more to Michael and his team for the informative days in Olereko and to his wife Cecilia for the excellent cooking.



Provided with a food supply of an enormous bunch of bananas and our car full of saplings and seedlings (John was eager to test whether bananas might also grow in the Mara and in his own garden).

We left for Nairobi where we arrived in the middle of the night after our car had broken down 3 times!!







At the end of our journey we toured a part of Kenya which we had not yet visited before. We spent 2 gorgeous days on the East coast, explored the markets and sights of Mombasa and relaxed on the wonderful white beaches of the Indian Ocean.

Full with new impressions, wonderful and exciting experiences and plans for the future, we set out on our journey back home to Germany.



## Asante sana, Ashe oleng, Thank you, Vielen Dank!

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the Naretoi Team in Kenya for the excellent planning and organisation of our trip and the events. It could not have worked out any better and besides, we would not have been able to see or do much more in this short time.

Many thanks for the many wonderful clothes which we receive as donations. When distributing them, we have the privilege of looking into the eyes of happy children radiant with joy. Special thanks go to Frau Kocher for the many pairs of knitted child socks.

Without the help of Herr Stähle and Herr Glos of Wiernsheim, our "Sheep Campaign" almost did not materialize. The big demand also surprised us and we would like to say a big thank you again for making it possible that carving of the bodies of the sheep, even in special sizes, could be completed in such a short time. Thank you again.

The success of the campaign was also possible thanks to the commitment of many individual persons and the team of the dental surgery Zingg-Meyer, Meyer, Opatowski of Weissach, the team of the bank Raiffeisenbank of Mönsheim and the band Hanak with frontman Micha Hirsch. They have supported this action by creating a great platform for many, many sheep.

Thank you for donating laptops which were received enthusiastically in Kenya and are a valuable contribution to improve our communication between Germany and Kenya. Our thanks go also to Manuel Brackmann from München and Frau Rother of Travel Service Rother from Hohenstein-Ernstthal.

A big thank-you to all children and youngsters who organize campaigns to support our association. Our special thanks go to:



The boys and girls of class 8a of the Rutesheim High School for participating in the "Sheep Campaign".

The guitar students and their teacher Mr. Hopp for their concert during the Christmas market in Plattenhardt.

The confirmees of the protestant community Hepsisau for donating the mass collection.

The Bausch family for participating at the flea market, Wertheim

And a special thank-you to all persons who think of us when celebrating a special day:

Mr. Bausch for the campaign "Donation instead of Presents" on the occasion of his special birthday

Mr. and Mrs. Bosch / Schmiedeknecht for donating the mass collection on their wedding.

Thank you, thank you all and thank you all who support our project by becoming a member or a sponsor or by donating or helping and thinking of us. Without you, all that would not be possible!



#### Bildungsspender

We also thank you all for thinking of us when shopping in the internet and thus have helped that our account with Bildungsspender has risen to 519,32 EUR in the meantime (since 21.8.2011). Please carry on and call up: www.bildungsspender.de/naretoi before you do your shopping

A novelty of Bildungsspender is the web search by means of a cooperation with the search machine Yahoo. For every 2nd web search made via Bildungsspender web search, Naretoi e.V. will get a bonus of 1 Cent. Therefore, instead of calling up google, call up www.bildungsspender.de/naretoi in the first place and then start the web search from the menu

Tip: Instal the Bildungsspender Web search under favourites on the menu bar of your browser, It will go quicker next time.

#### **Envisaged campaigns:**

**Street Festival in Wiernsheim July 7 -8, 2012.** We are planning to participate again this year by putting up a booth

**Hearts for Africa November 25, 2012** on the occasion of the "Day of the open Door" of "HeidiFilz". Plattenhardt

You are all cordially invited to give free rein to your imagination and creative ideas by baking, sewing, moulding or painting hearts of all sizes and shapes made of felt, wood, plastic, metal or any kind of material. The hearts will be sold on the "Hearts for Africa" booth on November 25 and the proceeds will go to Naretoi e.V..

**Ashe Oleng and Olesere!** (Many thanks and good-by in the Kimaasai language)

Heike Längle and Birgit Faas

Please contact us personally for information regarding sponsorships and donations (donations in kind). For further information please contact: www.naretoi.org

If you do not wish to receive our newsletter any more, please send us an email to info@naretoi.org stating "cancelation".