**Making a Difference in the Maasai Tribe at Lakipia in Northern Kenya**

Joseph Ole Saoli is a graduate of Nairobi Great Commission School and a member of the Maasai tribe near Lakipia 150 miles North of Nairobi, Kenya. Joseph says that in 1966 a severe famine killed millions of the Maasai village’s cows. Until 1967 the Maasai people had not eaten vegetables. Their diet was eating meat and drinking milk and blood. In 1967 yellow maize food aid saved lives as the tribe began to accept grain/vegetables as food. In 2003 the tribe leaders came together with the help of a government grant to pipe water from melting Mount Kenya snow providing clean water to the village. With the contaminated water problem solved, they are now focusing on reducing malnutrition. Healing Hands International, Caring for Kenya, and Meals from the Heartland partnered together in 2012 to bring a 40 foot container of 265,000 pre-packaged meals to Kenya. **(1)** Three times during the current drought/famine conditions food aid has been delivered to 200 men, women, and children in the Lakipia community. **(2)** When the first of the packaged meals were prepared for eating (boiled in water for 20 minutes) the children sat on the ground and began to eat. Nine year old Nasaki took the first bite and then fed his brother Vice and his sister Soni. **(3**)The meals are nutritionally balanced containing rice, soy protein, dehydrated vegetables, and vitamin powder. **(4)** Margretta Karmushu said her 4 children really like the food and expressed her appreciation for the meals. Mary Ntipison, mother of 6 children, said the food came during the dry season at a time when they had hardly any food. She said that with no rain and little food, the meals were a great help in improving the nutrition and health of her children. Christine Saoli, mother of 5 children, said the poverty level is high and she appreciated the food aid. She also said the survival gardening workshops and drip irrigation that Healing Hands’ Ebenezer Udofia is teaching them is helping them with raise their own food. **(5)** Her husband Joseph said, “for what you have done for me, my family, and my village, I thank you and thank God.” **(6)**

Ladies in the village make jewelry to provide income. **(7)** The men and boys herd the tribe’s cattle, goats, and sheep moving them from place to place traveling as far as 50 miles in search of grass and water. **(8)**Healing Hands International African Agriculture Director Ebenezer Udofia has formed a women’s farming cooperative teaching them composting, construction of raised planting beds, and the use of drip irrigation. As the gardens produce vegetables, even in the dry season, the people can move away from dependency on food aid. Ebnezer says in this village 100% of the women trained are committed to using what they have learned to produce food. **(9)**