

# Global School Partners' Newsletter

May 2020



## Kenya is struggling after a tough start to 2020

### Our schools:

We are currently a little out of touch with our students in Kenya because of Covid-19 - the schools are closed, due to re-open at the beginning of June at this stage, and our Program Office Lonah is on 'stand down' due to the school closures and the travel and curfew restrictions in place in Kenya. We have concerns that some of our schools may not 'survive' the challenge posed by COVID, because for them there has been no income for months because there has been no school and most have little financial reserve. So far I have only been informed of one parent of a child at a GSP school in Kenya having died since Covid began, but information is hard to obtain and potentially unreliable, at this stage.

We are finding it extremely hard at the moment with almost all our normal fundraising avenues closed and people here understandably stressed for themselves and their families after the fires and now Covid. In reality we have it easy here compared to our students in our Kenyan schools.

Currently there are 3 main areas of challenge in Kenya:

1. The schools are closed, but the students are expected to learn via lessons broadcast on the radio - our children and their families do not have radios, they don't have electricity and can't afford batteries.
2. Covid is hitting hard and they are asking for funds to buy face masks.
3. There is a food shortage in the whole of East Africa due to the locust plagues, plus the floods in western Kenya have meant farmers have not planted crops this year and consequently all food prices have skyrocketed, so I am getting many requests for money for food.

Although we do not receive much news from Kenya about the impact of Coronavirus, the virus is impacting the people of Kenya like the rest of the world. The official government numbers are 1618 confirmed cases, 58 dead

and 421 recovered (29 May 2020). However, the numbers are questionable, with only 52,507 tests done in a country with 51 million people. The curve is going up exponentially now with approximately 150 new cases each day.

### **Kenyan COVID update:**

Two recent developments are particularly troubling for Kenya. Coronavirus has reached Dadaab Refugee Camp. There are two confirmed cases in an environments which does not lend itself to social distance; the refugees live close together in tents. Much like the migrant worker accommodation in Malaysia, there is a very real probability that infections in the camp will rapidly increase. There are 217,000 refugees and 320,000 people living in close contact in a camp that does not have the infrastructure to handle and control a major outbreak.

The second development is equally distressing following the success of social distancing in Australia. A bus of mourners took a body from Nairobi to Siaya near the border with Uganda. The deceased had passed away from Coronavirus. The Kibera chief signed a travel permit for twelve people to move the body from Nairobi to Siaya, a power not granted to him by the Kenyan government. Seven of the twelve have now tested positive for Coronavirus, with the other five fleeing after the funeral when they discovered that they had to isolate following the ceremony. Those five have not been found. Such a divided response from those in power and the lack of awareness of the need to take precautionary measures is an example of the challenges facing the Kenyan people and many in Africa.

The Coronavirus is exacerbating the effects of the natural disasters which are continuing to affect Kenya. The locust plague has devastated food supplies in the Horn of Africa and led the World Bank to approve a record \$500 Million USD in grants and low-interest loans to help affected countries. The World Bank estimates that the Horn of Africa, of which Kenya is a part, could suffer up to \$8.5 billion USD in damage to crops and livestock by year end. Despite the loss of income, the loss of food is having a far greater impact on the people of this region. The locusts are consuming everyday the amount of food consumed by all Kenyans in two days.

Another natural disaster that has affected Kenya in recent months is flooding. Kenya has suffered electricity outages, leaving tens of millions of people without power. The flooding has left many without homes, forcing the vulnerable to congregate in makeshift camps. These camps have the potential to become incubators for Coronavirus. The flooding has affected infrastructure and the chance for locals plant crops on their land, further exacerbating the food crisis in Kenya.

Kenya is in dire need of support during these tough times and any that can be provided will help.

## New projects

### Kerobe Joybright

Kerobe Joybright academy is looking to further progress towards graduation. Global School Partners earlier in 2020 sent funds for painting the classrooms and new desks provided to the schools. These two projects will ensure that the students at Kerobe Joybright are best positioned to succeed in their quest to receive an education. New desks will provide students with more space to work and the painting will enable teachers to fully use the classrooms.



Kerobe Joybright Students learning with limited numbers of desks.



Jariah Education Centre students and teacher in an existing classroom.

### Jariah Education Centre

Jariah Education Centre received funds to contribute to the building of a brick classroom. Brick classrooms provide a cleaner environment for students and remove the risk of floods or other disasters destroying the classrooms. Building brick classrooms also fulfills the government requirement for schools.

## Riamabana Academy

Riamabana has received funds for the completion of year 8 classrooms. Year 8 is the final year of primary school and determines not only which type of school a student can attend for high school, but often whether they are able to attend at all. By constructing classrooms suitable for KCPE examinations, Riamabana can provide its students another advantage on their journey to further education.



Riamabana Students enjoying a new classroom. Hopefully, year 8 students will be taking their exams in a new classroom soon.



Gesore Preparatory School's to be completed boy's hostel.

## Gesore Preparatory School

Gesore primary received funds to complete a boys' hostel. The hostel will provide male students a safe place to sleep during term time. A hostel on campus means that students who previously would have traveled large distances to get to school do not need to rise early and walk that distance or pay for transport each day. The girl's hostel at Gesore is already in place.





**Nicole Mayaka**

Nicole Mayaka is a student at St Gavin's Academy. Nicole was born in 2013 and is the youngest of four. Her siblings are all in high school, placing a significant financial strain on the family. Her parents are subsistence farmers and life is a struggle to provide food and other basic necessities. Nicole is in danger of being unable to attend school and being sent to work instead.

If you would like to sponsor Nicole, or learn more about sponsorship opportunities, please [click here](#).



**Joan Mongare**

Joan was born in 2013 and has two brothers Tom and Simon. Her parents Consolata and Joseph are casual workers on other people's small farms. The family income is insufficient to adequately feed and clothe the family. Particularly now during the COVID pandemic when work is very hard to find and the floods have meant that many small, subsistence farmers have been unable to plant.

If you would like to sponsor Joan or learn more about sponsorship, please [click here](#).

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