



# MPC

**Monthly Newsletter**

June 2020

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 6

## Mukuru Promotion Centre **NEWSLETTER**

*Empowerment Step by Step*

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*From the Director*

Dear Friends

June again was dominated by CoVid19 and our concern over pupils in the slums and the danger they are in from being crowded together with youth and adults at awfully close quarters. We requested permission to bring in our Form Four students to do distance education in the multipurpose hall but so far have been denied permission. Mukuru students are at a disadvantage as they cannot benefit from on-line learning as they do not have the equipment or means to access learning on-line.

There have been reports in the media of many pregnancies of very young girls all over the country. We have requested our social workers to find out the true situation in slums. So far they have come across two cases. One case being a thirteen year old primary school girl and the other one a seventeen year old intellectually disabled girl. The latter has already aborted and had to be hospitalised due to severe bleeding. The girls need support with nutrition so that they and their babies may be healthy. Arrangements need to be made for the care of the babies so that the girls can return to school and get some means of earning their living. We also hear reports of boys joining gangs who are breaking into homes and businesses and robbing people. Many slums dwellers have little or no income at present leading to a rise in crime.

We are concerned about the rise in confirmed CoVid19 cases which are now above 7,000. The majority of which are in the Nairobi area. Our clinic is well stocked to treat normal diseases of the many slums dwellers and refers suspected CoVid19 cases to the local government hospital. We do not know when schools will resume face-to-face learning as the Government had hoped cases of the virus would begin to fall. Vocational colleges will open in September. An announcement was made by the Government saying that the vocational colleges can now only accept those who have finished Form Four secondary school. We have had a mixture of students from primary and secondary dropouts to secondary graduates, including youth with disabilities. We have had meetings to plan ahead to implement what the Government requires and yet to still train those who most need training. We will have to divide the vocational centre into two centres of learning: one for secondary graduates and one for the other students in need of training for employment but without secondary certificate.

We are grateful to you and to local donors for support at this time in feeding those Mukuru residents without incomes and with enabling the students to access education and training.

Best wishes,  
*Sr Mary Killeen*

With the increase of infections across the country the Government remains cautious on decision making with learning institutions. The plan is underway by the Ministry of Education to have face to face learning by September 2020. The opening will be gradual with a possibility of KCPE and KSCE candidates resuming. The resumption will depend on whether the pandemic curve has flattened and when the Government deems it safe for schools to have face to face lessons. There are many schools who have offered on-learning. There could be restrictions to the number of pupils in each classroom which would cause a huge issue for MPC schools as we could not employ extra teachers.

We have done a survey on MPC classrooms in our schools and each class can take 18 students per session. This will require that the teachers run four or five sessions on a topic if we consider KCSE & KCPE candidates. The kind of teachers likely to be deployed for our public primary schools are those on Ministry of Education internship programme. This group of teachers may not be in a position to prepare candidates since most are new college graduands.

The Ministry of Education data states that there are 41,779 Early Childhood Centres and 39,910 Primary Schools in Kenya with a total of 17.8 million pupils / students. The Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) has put the shortfall of teachers at 104,087 in both primary and secondary schools while the current number of teachers stands at 305,568. The current situation in most schools' infrastructure requires improvement and if the new CoVid19 measures on admission, are to be strictly adhered to, will further complicate the situation. The current public classroom has an average of 60 to 100 learners, and with the Government still committed to a 100% transition from primary to secondary, it makes the situation much worse in public secondary schools.

With heavy rains in June St Elizabeth Lunga Lunga experienced some damage. MPC initiated the planting of bamboo and cedar trees all-round the school's perimeter wall to help to hold the ground parallel to the walls. To plant the trees the local administration was requested to support us with the help of National Youth Service (NYS) team who have been cleaning and clearing grass in our schools.



*Offloading of tree seedlings by youth*



*Planning with NYS supervisors on tree planting*



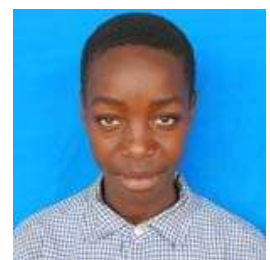
*Tree planting at St. Elizabeth Primary*

NYS and youth from the neighbouring Lunga Lunga have been working at the school to prepare the area for planting. The Government's project called 'kazi mtaani' (work in the community) targets the jobless youth. The teams supervised by NYS have done commendable work in keeping the schools clean over this long holiday. The activities have helped keep the youth busy and out of the temptation of gangs. It has also helped in giving the youth some income during this difficult period.



*Grass cutting session supervised by NYS*

MPC has recorded a death however it is not due to the current pandemic but its effects. The recent loss on 22<sup>nd</sup> June this month was of class eight candidate from St. Bakhita Primary School. The boy died on the spot in a road accident while crossing the road. The case is still with the police.



*Robinson Onyango*



Sponsorship is a powerful way to help an underprivileged child break the bonds of poverty. The contribution by many of our donors guarantees the sponsored child receives benefits and support that changes their living conditions.

In the month of June, various meetings were conducted regarding a discussion on how to effectively disburse some starter kits donated to four students. They were proud to have been awarded the starter kits by their donor as a way of improving their future prospects upon completion of their courses. The four were enrolled in Dressmaking, Catering and Hairdressing courses.

The starter kits aim at helping these girls develop their self-worth and enable them to envisage a life where they are not living in poverty. That in itself is a step in achieving poverty reduction. Being first timers in these ventures the department had to involve their trainers in taking them through capacity building sessions. The purpose of the sessions was to help them know what steps work well in formalizing a business, useful management tips and marketing strategies.



*Trainers discuss the disbursement of Starter Kits.*



*Training in session.*

We are constant in communication with our sponsored students. We invite the students to come to the office and have a chat with us. While they are at the office they write letters to their sponsors. We had some of the St. Michael's students come to write appreciation letters and give an update on how they are progressing under CoVid19. Some of you will receive your letters soon.

*St. Michael's Students writing appreciation letters.*



June has been a slow month for students at St Michael's even though some activities were carried out. These quieter times enable the Principal and his staff to catch up on some much needed administration.

The school social worker has been kept busy with following up on desperately needy students and their families. The case assessment and profiling were ongoing and managed to do 40 assessments. Over 35 vulnerable and needy households received food hampers. A couple of the orphan students also received weekly upkeep from the office. The counsellors were also kept fully occupied with 15% of the students receiving some form of counselling. Sadly, one Form Two student was killed when run over by a truck.

One of our donors, Pankaj Team, will be supporting 80 parents at St Michael's with cash support. There are so many parents who desperately need financial assistance as their means of income has significantly been impacted by CoVid19.

The laboratory technician did some re-arrangement of the labs so as to prepare for the reopening of schools to observe the social distancing measures. When we put the 1.5m rule we can only accommodate 18 learners in a single session.



The re-arrangement was also applied in the classrooms. This means we can manage a sitting capacity of approximately 12 to 13 learners in a classroom. The multipurpose hall will be able to take 40 learners per class.



The agricultural students have attended school to manage their projects. The seedlings were planted in March and the watering and weeding has been ongoing. There has been good progress in the project. It is apparent that the project might be assessed this year according to the circular from KNEC (Kenya National Examination Council). Therefore, the trees the students planted can be used within the schools where there is need for more trees.



#### *KCSE Agricultural Project*

The uncertainty of what is going to happen with the academic year has had a negative impact for many students. When we launched the online classes, the students were so ready to work with the teachers. However, as time went the number of the students who started, decreased. The major issues for the students are:

- the uncertainty on the face-to-face resumption date
- exams could be conducted next year
- lack of money to buy data bundles
- some families cannot manage to put food on the table and they are engaged in manual and casual labour to sustain themselves

Despite all this, the teachers are still engaging them through various platforms like individualized WhatsApp groups for specific subjects. Other students opted to come to school to collect books and other materials for revision. It is a stressful time for the students and we are trying to help them every way we can.

The social workers have worked tirelessly during the month providing much intervention for the cases received in the different offices. The main activity was issuing nutritional food support to the sick and vulnerable as well as attending to clients be it home visits, fire breakouts, following-up cases, profiling students, and referrals from the different villages in Mukuru. Unfortunately, we had 3 deaths, one student died due to motor vehicle accident, one died from the fire outbreak and one from an asthma attack. It is understood that the young girl who suffered from asthma could not afford the ventolin spray for her condition.

### June Activities

Case Type (Activity)	Number of Clients
Home Visits / Hospital Visits	22
Abuse Cases	5
Amaranth Client (Nutritional Supplements HIV/AIDS)	79
Nutritional Support	1,061
Malnourished Babies	16
Sanitary Towels	103
Disaster Victims (Fire outbreak Kayaba and Kingstone)	2
Teenage Pregnancy	2
Profiling Secondary School	55
Counselling	56
Deaths	3
Discipline Cases	22
Medical Cases	44
Needy Family Assistance Medical	52
<b>Total Clients Served</b>	<b>1,522</b>



In addition to servicing clients across the Mukuru catchment area there were several meetings and some training sessions that were well attended by the social workers. The networking is particularly important and as we continue to raise awareness on child protection and safeguarding it is essential that our workers know the appropriate County offices to refer cases.

- ✚ Kamkunji Police Station and Sub County Children's Office.
- ✚ The Assistant County Commissioner South B.
- ✚ Community Health Workers on the identification of very needy and sick clients in the community for nutritional support, referrals from community.
- ✚ The DCI Child Protection Unit.



*Immune booster Parcels*



*Food support to the vulnerable clients from Songa*



*Sanitary towels distribution*





*Two separate fire outbreaks. Kayaba and Kingstone.*



*In Kayaba village a pupil lost his life.*



A

*Home visit for a St. Elizabeth pupil in KPA Village.*



The month was successful with various schedules taking place in the facility. The patient numbers were average at 1,252. As they say health is wealth and so the patients' good health is our main priority. Thankfully, we have had only two suspected CoVid19 cases at the clinic which were referred.

A generous heart, kind speech and a life of service and compassion are the things that renew humanity. This gesture has been genuinely shown by several well-wishers. Michelle Kawira donated face masks that we distributed amongst antenatal and postnatal mothers. We also received three wheelchairs from another well-wisher.

All patients with chronic illnesses received immunity booster parcels. Our patients have been able to get a meal for a day or two. As we know, hunger is the worst form of deprivation for the human race. Among the people who have benefited from this program are:

- ✚ malnourished children,
- ✚ people living with HIV/AIDS,
- ✚ tuberculosis,
- ✚ cancer patients,
- ✚ diabetics and hypertensive patients

We distributed 300 immunity booster parcels in June.



*Grateful patients receive an immunity parcel*



*Content of the immunity booster parcel.*

The Ministry of Health's "Continuous Medical Education" program started in June. Two officials from Starehe Sub County Health Office conducted the training. The sessions for the month focused on the Comprehensive Care Centre. The clinical staff underwent training on drug interactions, dispensing drugs, laboratory tests and consultation for the patients. The Clinic started the program with 4 registered patients who were started on anti-retroviral drugs. On revisits, they showed good progress. They were also supported with immunity booster parcels.



Although the CoVid19 positive cases have continued to rise in the country because of more testing and despite all the tough times due to this pandemic, at the clinic we have maintained good hygiene standards and continued sharing updates from the Ministry of Health. In June we had one 13 year old girl who presented with a dry cough and a high fever. The girl was referred to Mbagathi Hospital and on follow up she was CoVid19 negative therefore we had no cause for alarm.

The clinic assisted the 14 TB patients and 3 patients were put on supplementary foods to boost their immunity. There was no new TB case in June. We had attended to 76 Antenatal mothers and 99 children were immunized.

#### Patients Treated in June

Category	Gender	Under 5	6-17yrs	18yrs – 35yrs	Above 36	Total
New Cases	Male	31	31	53	52	167
	Female	63	27	155	67	312
		94	58	208	119	479
Revisits	Male	76	29	92	106	303
	Female	118	29	206	117	470
		194	58	298	223	773
<b>Total June</b>						<b>1,252</b>

#### The Most Common Treated Diseases in June

	Diseases	No. of Cases
1	Urinary tract infections	277
2	Acute upper respiratory tract infections	248
3	Gastroenteritis	213
4	Fever unspecified	94
5	Gastritis (unspecified)	81
6	Hypertension and diabetes	73
7	Respiratory tract infections	68
8	Neuralgia and neuritis unspecified	68
9	Abdominal pregnancy	59
10	Wounds	47
11	Others	325
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,553</b>

The total number of laboratory tests was 597 with the top five listed below. We have seen an increase in Malaria. This could be a result of the heavy rains.

	Highest Laboratory Tests for June	No. of Tests
<b>1</b>	Stool for ova and cyst	104
<b>2</b>	Full Haemogram	104
<b>3</b>	Urinalysis	162
<b>4</b>	Malaria test	56
<b>5</b>	Random blood sugar test	32

The month of June saw a return of many activities. The experts inform us that we need to learn how to live with the CoVid19 so our safety measures have continuously been applied to make sure that everybody at the Centre is safe. Essential services such as therapy, administration and social services have been carried out. We have discovered that the number of malnourished children and adults is on the rise. One of the Daycare clients was admitted to Shalom Hospital for 5 days. The girl is now discharged but very malnourished. The social workers are following up on the cases.

The Centre continues to distribute food to its clients. Currently the Centre has fed 40 needy families in the slums and 83 families from the Centre. Most of the food provisions have been donated by well-wishers and MPC. The Centre also received other items from Naivas supermarket such as clothes, sanitizers and diapers. Stanbic Bank group in conjunction with the Lottery Club of Kenya donated a 100 litre tank and stand for hand washing which will help maintain good hygiene standards at the Centre. Our security guards ensure that all visitors to the Centre are checked for high temperature, mask and wash of hands. They have done an outstanding job as we are building a new facility and there are many people coming and going all the time.

The drugs promised by Miss Africa Elite to 10 pupils at the Centre were delivered and parents received the drugs on behalf of their children.

As the therapy session commenced with the return of the occupational therapist, we have seen an increase in the number of clients returning, 29 in number. Each client came three times a week for the 45 minute sessions. Clients have been consistent in therapy and this has brought about great improvements. Four new clients were admitted, two of them with cerebral palsy, one with a clubfoot and the other one with rickets.

The compound is kept clean despite the movement of people. All corners are regularly cleaned and therapy materials and equipment disinfected all the time. The play area is always swept and the areas frequently touched by children are disinfected to curb the spread of the virus.



*Miss Africa Elite visit to the Centre*



*Temperature check at the Centre*



*Stanbic Bank relations manager donates the water tank to the Centre.*



*Food distribution continues*

Construction of the new education facility is nearing the completion of the substructure stage. The column work is almost finalizing in the upper ground floor. The beams work started on the lower ground floor. The progress so far is great. We have fortnightly Zoom meetings to ensure that all the stakeholders are fully briefed.





*Most of the column work has been completed*



*Lower ground beams have commenced.*



*Columns extended on the lower ground floor.*

## Songa Mbele na Masomo Disabilities Outreach

Case Type (Activity)	Number of Clients
Sick Cases Follow Up	9
Clothing	15
Food Hampers	142
Nutritional Support	2
Sanitary Towels	31
Home Visits	2
Profiling for Therapy	4
Therapy Sessions	29
Needy Family Assistance Medical	<b>10</b>



*Families receive assistance with clothes, food, medications, and home visits*



After five months into the rehabilitation program we look at the home searches and visits of the boys at the centre. The boys eagerly wait to meet their parents/guardians as they now understand the importance of a family. To prepare for this especially important step we engage the boys through art therapy. So far, the response has been positive with a lot of enthusiasm. Our hope is that the CoVid19 pandemic will be contained soon so that we can meet their parents/guardians and hear the other side of the boys' stories.

June has seen great improvement and stability for the majority of the boys. Individual counseling has continued, and the Group counseling sessions were held in the afternoons. Each class has two lessons per week and the boys' participation is great. The focus for the month was coping with cravings and how to cope with them. With the help of narrative and expressive therapies the boys were assisted with ways to manage their reality.



On the education front the boys have remained focused on their studies. We managed to re-deploy some of the primary teachers to the Centre to assist with the boys' learning. It certainly is making a difference as the teaching ratio is 1:12. The class 8 candidates are slightly above their targets. Three of the candidates are ambitious to achieve 400 /500 mark. Three other boys are holding the above average mark while one boy scored below average and is really trying to catch up with the rest.

The carpentry students are perfecting the simple joints and can construct different items commendably. The latest was a TV cabinet that is so fine and an excellent coffin.



*TV cabinet*



*Coffee table*



*Coffin*

Art can always provide a creative outlet for those talented boys. We have discovered the potential of one boy. Let's hope he can develop his talent further.





To keep the boys active, we have organized them into four competitive social houses after Kenyan lakes. The house with the most wins receives a prize. Among the activities involved are cleanliness, sports and gardening. Each house has two to three staff members. The acrobatic team has been very active under instructor Brian. They had been using old mattresses to practice on but Brian suggested a pitch would be better for training purposes. We approached Mr Singh who donated sacks of sawdust.



*Boys offloading saw dust*



*Filling in the pitch with saw dust*



*Testing out the sawdust*



*Acrobatic team receive instructions*

The Pankaj Team accompanied by Murielle who runs La Terrazza Italian restaurant, visited the boys and brought them queen cakes and pizza. During her visit she bought cooking sticks from the carpentry class and also showed interest in the tea tray.



*Pankaj team giving cakes to the boys*



*Pankaj visiting carpentry class*



*Boys enjoying their Pizza from Murielle*

The Kerry Group visited the Rehabilitation Centre and spent the whole day with the boys. They also provided immunity booster parcels for the Clinic. We look forward to more visits.



*A warm welcome and thank you to the Kerry Group*



On World Environment Day the boys joined the rest of the world in appreciating and taking care of Mother Earth. They planted trees with the help of the Mercy Education office (Sr Rose who managed to get some seedlings from City Park). Each boy planted and adopted his own tree. Watering is done every morning.



On the same day the Sisters of Mercy (*Sr Lilian, Sr Agnes and Sr Mary*) visited the Centre with some food donations. They encouraged the boys to continue being good and focus on their studies.



Alfred, a farmer and supplier from Meru County, was driving by along Dunga Road and saw our sign. He decided to enter the gates with his fresh farm produce. He normally sells his produce at the Nairobi markets but this day he shared some of his produce with us.



As part of the curriculum all schools teach their students about campaigning, politics and democracy. The boys were well briefed and we held an election for the different positions. This exercise also helps to boost their confidence and nurture leadership skills. We had given the candidates a week to campaign and the elections were free and fair. We did not have the United

Nations representatives to observe due to the CoVid19 but we invited a neutral observer from the Clinic, everyone was satisfied with the results although some positions had very tight competition.



*Counting of votes*



*Student Council Elect 2020*

The Student Council 2020 expressed their delight and felt honored to be part of the leadership team. Every section at the Centre had a representative who talked to the boys on leadership. MPC Education Coordinator, Mrs Risper Ogutu, addressed the Student Council and gave them badges.





Sonia Birdi has visited the Centre and taken the boys through yoga sessions. They thought that yoga was simple and easy. A few stiff bodies were seen after the session!



*Different positions in Yoga session*

Since we could not attend the Day of the African Child celebrations, we did however connect onto the Zoom webinars. There were two topics, one being A Children's Forum and the other one A Child Friendly Juvenile Justice System in Kenya.



*Hon Martha Koome responding to children's concerns on Juvenile Justice System*

To put things into perspective for the boys the Franciscan brothers and sisters' group and Catholic University students came to celebrate the Day of the African Child and explained its origins.





*Referee giving instruction*



*Boys in Action*



*Winners with their trophy*

A group called “Action in Focus” came with donations of vegetables. The group provides vegetables to other children’s institutes and came to learn about our Centre. We are very grateful for the donations. Young growing boys eat quite a bit of food. At times we think they must have hollow legs!



The Pro Futuro tablet classes are still on going and the boys are really enjoying the sessions and most of all they are learning.



*Great to see the learning*

The Vocational Centre continued to prepare for its re-opening. The Cabinet Secretary for Education said TVET institutions have a better chance of survival in terms of social distancing than primary and secondary schools. The proposed modalities from the Ministry of Education states that, all TVET institutions will be reopened in a phased manner with effect from 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020. TVET institutions will be required to have clean running water and soap for hand washing, sanitizers, and adequate space for social distancing, face masks for learners, trainers and non-teaching staff and last but not least thermal guns for monitoring body temperature. On our part we are getting ready.

The Deejaing course resumed classes in early June in a phased manner (two students per session) as it has been before CoVid19. Although the current classroom is small in size, the space is adequate for two students per session. We have therefore put in place the relevant measures as directed by the Ministry of Education. Attendance has been good with 100 percent turn up. The 2019 students were happy to be back to class. This means they will be able to cover the syllabus within the set time frame. Students who were admitted this year and have never had a session were also excited and happy. This prolonged stay at home is affecting students psychologically and definitely life must continue.



*2020 Deeja students during the Pandemic*

Around 100,000 disabled children in Kenya are out of school meaning that they do not have access to education. Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre is trying to change this situation and we have embraced inclusive instruction and learning. The practice of inclusive education is growing in Kenya but there are challenges. The challenges include violation of human rights, lack of specialized teachers to handle special needs learners, socio-economic variables and socio-cultural factors among others. Since containment measures were put in place, including closing schools and restricting movement, Kenya has recorded a sharp surge of defilement cases. The majority of these numbers are children living with disabilities. Our Centre has recorded one case and although the case has been reported to the Director of Criminal Investigation's Child Exploitation Unit, we hope that the perpetrator will be convicted.



Malak Juma is a pupil at Sancta Maria Kayaba Primary School. Malak began drawing at eleven years of age. Although the mother was unable to support him, he now has the chance to nurture his talent. During our usual home visits in the slum we identified this unusual talent and decided to give this young artist an opportunity. Malak has since then been coming to the Centre for tuition from Andrew Otieno our Art Instructor. These sessions have provided Malak a safe space to communicate and express himself through art. Despite his young age, Malak has already created many incredible works of art. His favourite piece being a portrait of a lion. Malak seems wise beyond his years, and has been sharing his talent freely, teaching his friend to paint. His work has inspired many and we hope that his talent of fine art will improve the life of his family.



*Malak doing what he does best*

## Happenings...

- ✚ The Day of the African Child 2020 produced an Outcome Statement. We have posted the statement on our website. If you wish you can access further details on [www.acerwa.africa](http://www.acerwa.africa)

- ✚ There were many meetings in different departments across MPC during June. A special one was the meeting between Cheshire Kenya and MPC.



- ✚ We are grateful for people in Perth, Western Australia who have helped MPC over the last few months through donations and sponsorships.

## This Month in History...



## Mary Immaculate Rehabilitation Centre

The issue of street children became rampant within Mukuru streets due to poverty and domestic violence in 1990s. As a result, MPC set aside three classrooms in each of its schools for the street children. Sadly, some parents did not want their children mixing with these “wild street children”.

The fact was the street children needed more attention than those from stable family backgrounds. In June 1997, the Mary Immaculate Rehabilitation Centre opened as a special drop-in centre for street children. It started with a single classroom stationed at St. Catherine’s Primary school.

The facility was later extended to three classrooms in August the same year. A carpentry room, metal workshop and a night shelter were added.

Over the years through kind generosity, donors have transformed the Centre into much more. In 2018 a new permanent building called “HEKIMA HOUSE” was constructed. Over 1,200 street boys have been rehabilitated from the Centre. Now, that’s worth celebrating!



*Hekima House June 2020*

## **Mukuru Promotion Centre**

**Empowerment Step by Step**

*Sponsored by Sisters of Mercy*

[www.mercymukuru.co.ke](http://www.mercymukuru.co.ke)

*Email: [info@mercymukuru.co.ke](mailto:info@mercymukuru.co.ke)*

Thank you for your support to improve the quality of life for thousands  
of children,

youth and seniors each day.

We can not do it alone.