



Mukuru Promotion Centre  
*Empowerment Step By Step*  
Sponsored by Sisters of Mercy  
[www.mercymukuru.co.ke](http://www.mercymukuru.co.ke)

# Newsletter

December 2021

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*Paula Cullen prepares some of the Boys from the Rehabilitation Centre for the on-field battle.*

*Dear Partners, Supporters and Friends,*

The year 2021 had many challenges, everything complicated by the CoVid19 Pandemic, its new variations, and its impact on the economy especially for the poor.

Many of the residents of Mukuru were devastated by demolition of houses to make way for roads, and demolition of many acres of Mukuru Kwa Njenga slum, by developers. We used to work in Mukuru Kwa Njenga but handed over our work there in 1998 to the Marianist Brothers. The Medical Missionaries of Mary opened a clinic where we used to have an outreach from MPC Clinic. A number of our students lost their houses, some relocated in villages closer to us, other families had to return to their ancestral homes as they had lost their home and their businesses. Hundreds are still living in tents on the site of their former shacks hoping for some form of compensation.

The Competency Based Curriculum did get children out and about fulfilling cultural and sports activities as well as environment awareness raising and simple science experiments. This was great to see.

Some local industries continue to help the Schools and other Departments. We really appreciate the gift of computers to Sancta Maria Mukuru Kayaaba Primary School from East Africa Packing Industries. It was strange to have such a short school holiday in December. Due to CoVid19 school closures time had to be made up so the long holidays will be in March/April after the final exams. The students in our Vocational Training Centre are preparing for their final exams and finishing their practicals by April 2022. Normally they would finish in December. Most will then do internship with different companies and hopefully be employed. We pray that the tourists return and hotels and lodges open so that our graduates get employment in the hospitality industry. It is great to meet the past graduates in their places of work.

Songa Mbele na Masomo Centre continues to work with children who have various disabilities. Special Education in Kenya is still in the early stages of development for dealing with children with some disabilities while the training for children who are deaf and blind is more developed. The Special Education Professionals (SEP) did help in developing the capacity of staff. Much more needs to be done to improve the standard of teaching and teacher/child interaction. We are grateful to those who donated food, textbooks and other requirements during December.

The boys in the Rehabilitation Centre long to have what they see other children having. A few months ago, it was the season for cycling. All of the children in the middle class estates from toddlers upwards were cycling around the estates. The boys continuously asked for a bicycle. Fortunately for them, Paula Cullen and her group bought a variety of sizes of the longed for bicycles and there was great joy and shouts of triumph as boys learned to ride. There was shock and sorrow when the old rabbit ate the newly acquired rabbit. Most shocked of all, was Karin, the volunteer, who had purchased the rabbit and put it into the pen. A lesson was learned by all, that animals, like people, take time to adjust to a newcomer, who needs to be introduced slowly so that the newcomer is not seen as a threat. The students appreciated very much the revision books and feel they will pass better because of having them. Paula, Adrienne, Vera, Catherine and Irene together with their friends and supporters donated goods and clothes to the sponsorship offices for students in difficulty. We are most grateful to them and to all of you who enable us to continue to empower children of Mukuru move out of poverty through education and training.

May God bless and protect you and fill you with you.

Sr Mary Killeen  
*Director*

## Education



*Grade 3 pupils perform a cultural dance*

December was made colourful by the cultural activities held in schools as a requirement of the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC). The Grade 3 pupils showcased foods and dances from different tribes guided by their teachers.

The necessary Term 2 Assessments and Examinations were completed and some improvements were noted for some pupils compared to Term 1. The schools are still challenged by the inequitable teacher pupil ratio and more teachers were transferred without replacements.

Sancta Maria Primary received 5 laptops and 4 desktops from East Africa Packing Industries to support the digital literacy component in the CBC. The size of most classes at Sancta Maria Primary is around 50 -60 pupils. The IT donation helps to expose the pupils to computers and assists them to complete the assessment which is based on computers but it is a constant struggle to achieve a balance between the needs and demands of the CBC. Clearly more teaching resources and learning materials for the new curriculum are still required in the 4 MPC primary schools. However, it is a start and we are grateful to East Africa Packing Industries.



*Donated laptops for Sancta Maria Kayaaba*

The primary schools will break for Christmas on 23rd December and resume on 3rd January 2022 for Term 3, 2021 of the academic year.

## St Michael's Secondary School

The end of Term 2 for the students was met with examinations for over 440 students at St Michael's. The in-between times were filled with learning activities, sporting competitions and cultural celebrations. The month commenced with a Mass with hopes and prayers that the term will be a good one for all students and staff.



The sports day was held during the month and many students enjoyed the freedom of being outside, watching and cheering on their sides.

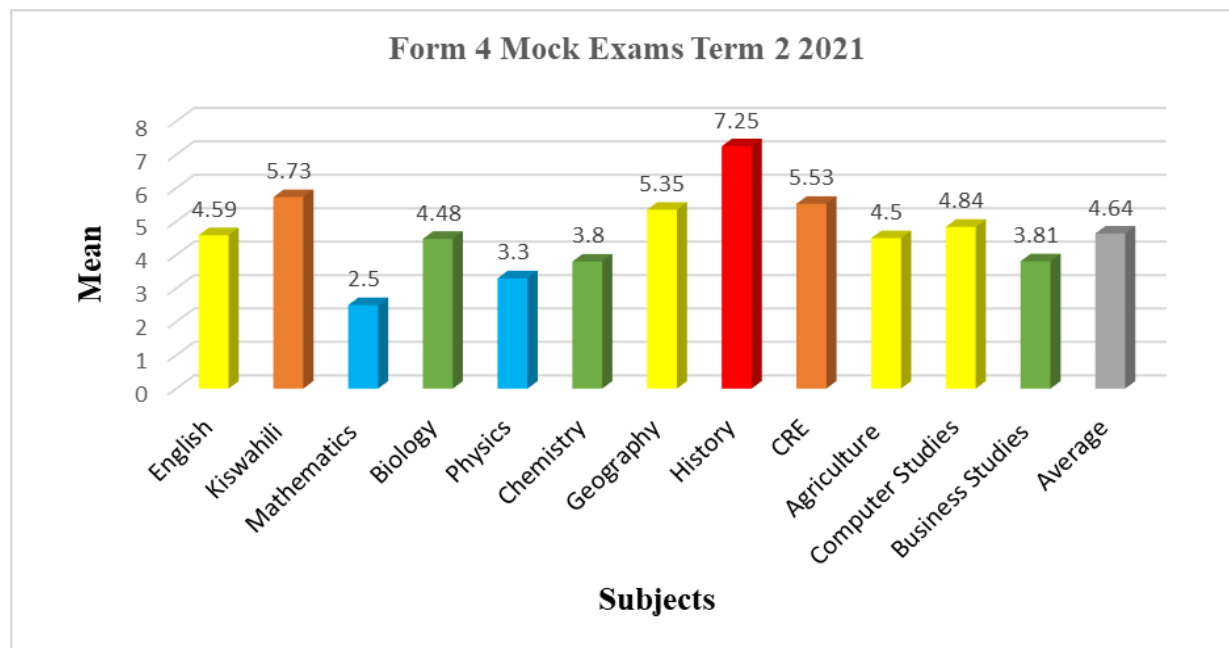


*The boys' soccer team pose for a photograph before the battle*

When the students return in January that will signal the beginning of Term 3 and the last term for the Form 4 students. The other students have quite a few more lessons to cover before they complete their secondary education. Next year will be the last year of the staggered terms due to the CoVid19 Pandemic.

There are always challenges for families living in the slums. There were 2 fire outbreaks and flooding during the month. Thankfully MPC was able to help 12 students with new uniforms, sanitary towels and nutritional support. Another 15 students received medical care for various illnesses and 6 others were referred to other medical facilities.

The mentorship program continued and 10 female students were connected with their mentors. The mentors are professional women from different professional sectors volunteering to assist the girls in developing skills to help them achieve their life goals.



*Red = C+    Orange = C    Yellow = C-    Green = D+    Blue = D*

The results from the Form 4 classes are sitting on an average of C-. The best performing subject is History graded at C+. The staff and students are aware that they will need at least a C+ average to gain entrance into university. They will have one more term to try and raise their grades.

## Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre

December was dominated by final and end term examinations. The regular students commenced their exams first, followed by the short-term computer course students. Although the students were happy to finish many of them expressed their fear of the unknown. Many of them were very grateful for the fruitful stay and quality training they received. We wish all the students a prosperous life. In the midst of examinations, the Catering students were busy preparing lunch and tea for various groups. The process of figuring out what food to serve, the quantity and how to prepare food can make things stressful. Often times great food can help make an event more memorable. We are grateful to the Catering class for the readiness and teamwork they have shown this year.



*Outgoing Computer students*



*Catering students prepare lunch for guests*



*Hairdressing exams in progress*

Often MPC receives University students who carry out a placement for a few months. A student from the Technical University of Kenya (TUK), Sharon spoke these words at the completion of her social worker internship: ‘Education is not a luxury, but a basic need in contemporary life. Thanks to MPC for providing a conducive place where the slum population can learn and achieve their lifetime goals’. Sharon’s experience at MPC has impacted her life in a positive manner after a good interaction with the students particularly with Martin and his elder brother, Raphael. Martin is doing his secondary education and is also training to be a Deejay while Raphael completed a course in Computer Packages. Sharon conveyed that the 2 brothers, Martin and Raphael helped her realize her passion for social work through home visits, follow-ups and awareness of the poor. We are grateful to the many interns and thank them for their energy and skills to help the needy and our students.



*Sharon (black top) receives clothes ready for distribution*



*Martin learns how to mix music*

## Social Services

During the month over 1,200 residents were assisted in various ways as a result of the Social and Health Services Department. Over 78% of the outreach support is carried out through the education institutions which is understandable since these institutions account for more than 6,500 students and their families. Without overseas funding MPC would not be able to develop the means to assist the residents of Mukuru. Most agencies do not provide funding for salaries but MPC is very grateful to the ongoing support from DKA Austria and eRko Slovakia who help to sustain the outreach to the marginalized.

Mukuru Promotion Centre											
Social and Health Services Statistics											
For the Month of December 2021											
NO	Case type / Activities	Education						Health	Welfare		Total
		St Bakhita	Sancta Maria Kayaaba	St Elizabeth	St Catherine	St Michael's Secondary	Vocational Training Centre SKILLS	MPC Clinic	Songa Mbele na Masomo	MPC Rehabilitation Centre	
1	Abuse Cases	1	1	1	-	1		-	-	-	4
2	Amaranth Clients	-	-	-	75	-		-	-	-	75
3	Behavior and Discipline Cases	-	3	5	-	7		-	-	10	25
4	Counseling and Guidance sessions	2	2	1	4	5		-	-	5	19
5	CoVid19 Hygiene Material Resources	-	-	-	11	-		-	-	-	11
6	Donations Issued	-	-	2	22	12		-	5	1	42
7	Donations Received	-	-	-	4	-		-	-	13	17
8	Fire and Floods Disaster assistance	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	4
9	Food Distribution	34	-	-	176	-		-	-	-	210
10	Home Visits	9	17	3	2	4		3	2	-	40
11	Hospital Visits	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
12	Malnourished Babies	-	-	-	17	-		-	-	-	17
13	Medical Cases	6	21	5	48	15	2	115	6	14	232
14	Meetings and Trainings	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	5	4	12
15	Mentorship Sessions	-	-	1	-	1		-	-	-	2
16	Mobilization of Resources	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
17	Needy Families Support (Community)	-	2	2	27	2	6	-	-	-	39
18	Needy Primary and Secondary Students	3	10	-	3	2		-	-	-	18
19	Networking	-	3	-	3	-		2	-	1	9
20	New Admissions to MPC Institutions	-	-	5	-	-		-	1	2	8
21	New Teenage Pregnancies cases	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
22	Nutritional Support	10	-	1	36	2		-	-	-	49
23	Pregnancy Support Packages	4	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	4
24	Provision of Sanitary Towels	3	-	12	-	8		-	-	-	23
25	Referrals	7	3	3	2	12	2	3	-	-	32
26	Safeguarding Follow Ups	-	1	1	-	-		-	-	4	6
27	School Absenteeism/Truancy	36	42	50	29	21		-	-	-	178
28	School Profiles	21	11	-	3	31	1	-	-	-	67
29	School Visits	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	1	1
30	Songa Mbele Therapy Sessions	-	-	-	-	-		-	58	-	58
31	Sponsorship Follow-ups	20	-	-	5	5	1	-	-	7	38
32	Uniform Aid	-	3	1	2	2		-	-	-	8
	<b>Totals</b>	156	119	94	469	130	17	124	77	62	1,248

The other significant activity during December was the ongoing construction of the disabled friendly toilets at St Elizabeth's, St. Catherine's and Sancta Maria Kayaaba Primary Schools sponsored by Cheshire Disability Kenya. This will be a great addition for the physically disabled pupils at the schools and reduce discrimination.



## Health Services

It is with gratitude the Clinic reaches the end of another year serving the very sick residents of Mukuru. We hope that 2022 will be kinder and that the pandemic will cease. In December the Clinic treated over 1,000 patients. The Sub-County TB Coordinator visited the Clinic to follow-up on the TB Management Survey. The Ministry of Health (MoH) has created a new mobile App [‘T-Bu lite] to assist in TB patient management. The App will enhance the efficiency of patient care and contact tracing. When a patient is diagnosed with TB ensuring that the patient maintains the regular medications and check-ups is very important. It will also improve the record keeping and reporting. Training was provided by the MoH so that the nurses are kept up to date with the latest guidelines and healthcare in Kenya.



MPC Clinic nurse receives her certificate after completing the Multidrug resistance tuberculosis training program.

Adrienne presents donated medical items by Irene Plunkett and friends to Mary Bushell at the Clinic.



To complete the year the Clinic treated 1,093 patients, conducted 481 laboratory tests, carried out 86 child immunizations and attended to 33 pregnant mothers in December.

### Patients Treated in December 2021

Category	Gender	0-5 Yrs	6-12 Yrs	13-17 Yrs	18-35 Yrs	36-49 Yrs	50-64 Yrs	Above 64 Yrs	Total
New cases	Female	85	40	25	158	53	18	1	380
	Male	43	27	23	71	34	17	1	216
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>128</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>596</b>
Revisits	Female	110	22	11	96	43	24	4	310
	Male	66	20	27	33	12	20	9	187
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>176</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>497</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>304</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1,093</b>
Percentage	<i>Female</i>	<i>64.14</i>	<i>56.88</i>	<i>41.86</i>	<i>70.95</i>	<i>67.1</i>	<i>53.16</i>	<i>33.33</i>	<i>63.13</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>35.86</i>	<i>43.12</i>	<i>58.14</i>	<i>29.05</i>	<i>32.39</i>	<i>46.84</i>	<i>66.67</i>	<i>36.87</i>

### Most Common Ailments Treated in December

Diagnoses	0-5 Yrs	6-12 Yrs	13-17 Yrs	18-35 Yrs	36-49 Yrs	50-64 Yrs	Above 64 Yrs	Total
Respiratory Tract Infections	127	34	22	100	34	15	3	335
Gastroenteritis	20	14	5	23	11	7	1	81
Urinary tract infections	1	3	5	35	11	2	0	58
Musculoskeletal	-	-	-	13	10	21	3	47
Soft Tissue Injuries	1	2	11	13	11	5	-	43
Febrile Illness	14	10	13	26	27	4	1	95
Diabetes / Hypertension	-	-	-	5	9	8	2	24
Gastritis	3	4	7	46	12	9	2	83
Other diseases	68	40	22	86	12	4	3	234
<b>Total</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1,000</b>

### The Laboratory Tests For December

	Type	Cases		Type	Cases
1	Malaria	114	11	Rheumatoid Factor	6
2	Urinalysis	100	12	Vdrl / Syphilis	5
3	Stool Analysis	98	13	Liver Function Test	2
4	Haemoglobin Levels	50	14	Brucella Antigen Test	2
5	Random Blood Sugar	23	15	Blood Grouping	2
6	High Vaginal Swabs	19	16	Hepatitis B	2
7	Salmonella Antigen	17	17	Urine Culture	1
8	Helicobacter Pylori	16	18	Urea Electrolytes and Creatinine	1
9	Pregnancy Tests	12	19	Calcium Levels	1
10	Antenatal Profile Tests	10			
	<b>Total</b>				<b>481</b>

Average 31 tests per day

### **Songa Mbele na Masomo**

Besides the classwork, children have been eating a balanced diet including fruits three times in a week to boost their immunity. The teachers engaged the 84 children well in various activities according to their needs. The Day Care Unit children have multiple disabilities and learn to do the daily living activities such as feeding, toileting along with learning nursery rhythms, singing and strengthening exercises. The Unit 1 children have less severity of disabilities and are able to concentrate for longer periods. Much work is spent on developing their fine motor skills. The Unit 2 children do more literacy and numeracy exercises to identify their learning difficulties. The Unit 3 children have milder disabilities and are able to read, write and do simple sums. To achieve improvement on all levels the Centre has many staff to assist the children to reach their milestones. The therapists, social workers, caregivers and volunteers all contribute to the overall plans for each child. To have the support of parents is an important ingredient to the successful programs. The children are only at the Centre from 8am – 4pm each weekday but the parents need to maintain the various exercises for their children at home. Last year there were a number of children who were not able to sit up in a chair, able to walk, write their name or talk however, with the constant activities and exercises we saw many children achieve these milestones because of the multifaceted approach to therapy.

The on-going therapy sessions are pivotal to the overall improvements of the children. The purpose of the sessions are to relax muscles, improve blood circulation, coordination, reduce joint stiffness, increase weight bearing capacity, endurance and sensory integration. Each child receives up to 3 sessions per week with the therapist on top of what they do at home with parents.

During the month the Centre received many donations just before the Christmas break. The Sisters of Mercy Provincial Office staff provided Christmas gifts; Rotary Club Magharidi donated CBC Grade 4 to Grade 8 revision books; food provisions and clothes were shared with the parents for Christmas.

The staff also had the opportunity to part take in professional development training sessions on Specific Learning Disabilities Intervention Strategies and Learning Materials for Children with Disabilities from the Special Education Professionals (SEP). The strategies focused on the different types of admission and if the child has the capacity; medical referrals for further assessments; and creating individual education plans. The Centre has also provided on-going sign language workshops for the deaf throughout the year for a number of years now. The Kenya Sign Language training is offered to all children, parents, staff and community members several times a year. Parents particularly find the KSL workshops an effective way to understand and communicate better with their children.

The Centre will be closed from 17th December until 10th January 2022.

## MPC Rehabilitation Centre

While many of the other MPC Departments were winding down or closed, the Rehabilitation Centre remained very active with many programs continuing. Eight of the boys were preparing to transit from the Centre to independent living. A number of boys were busy preparing for and sitting exams while others were involved in the extensive sporting program.



*Vera and Joseph test out the train set.*

At the Centre there is a host of outdoor and indoor games that the boys can engage in such as rugby, soccer, basketball, cards, play station, table tennis and scrabble. Phew! The participation levels for the artistic activities of drawing, bead, bracelet and candle making are also very spirited.

One program, the everyday chores, is not as keenly observed as the games, but were carried out all the same. Well done to the boys.



*St Catherine's Primary sponsored boys receive their new shoes and uniforms with Paula, Adrienne and Vera*

Thanks to Catherine Nolan and Friends who donated the next term's art materials for the boys.



*Samuel the art instructor receiving the art supplies.*



*Stephen takes care of the rabbit in the early days*

*Simon, the winner of the art competition, receives his prize following the trip to the Mara Lodge excursion.*



Given that it was the Christmas season, Adrienne Keely and friends were very generous and donated a number of bicycles. Not such an unusual donation after the request was made so that the boys could learn how to ride a bike with a view to secure a job as a 'bicycle courier' after transiting from the Centre. If you know the craziness of the traffic in Nairobi you will understand how practical this gift is and provide a source of income for them. Thank you to Paula Cullen and her group.



The boys eventually managed to have a ride around the compound after Adrienne, Vera and Paula had a break for lunch.



The boys patiently lined up to have a ride on the new bicycles kindly donated by Adrienne Keeley and Friends.



Happy boys with their Christmas gifts, sponsored by Leinster Rugby and Blackrock College RFC.



One thing that makes school that more enjoyable is to have new uniforms and new shoes. As you can see the boys were delighted.

And footy boots will make for a more competitive team.



*Vera shows the footy boots that were donated by friends in Ireland.*



On top of the normal activities during the month the Centre received some special guests, Opera singer Breanna Stillman, and musician Kartini Saharto-Martin conducted sessions with the boys.

It is an understatement to say that the boys were mesmerized by the performance and provided a little of their own talents to the guests.

## Sponsorship

As we approached the end of year, the major concern was on students' academic performance, especially the Form 4 students, as they complete their final year of secondary school. The revision books do assist the students but the CoVid19 Pandemic has just knocked around the daily routines of so many students in the country. We are grateful to have received funds to purchase revision books for the students.



*Left: Rosemary Arogo and Jacob Mwituu with Stellah, Sponsorship Officer.*



*Right: James Kamau (Mangu High)*

The MPC Sponsorship Database has gone live on the MPC website and all the donors can easily access their beneficiaries' information and reports. Sponsors can now go to the website and log on and view the updated reports, receipts and letters of their student/s. If you wish to write an email to your sponsored student the facility is there. Once received, Stellah will ensure that the students receive them. December marks the end of term 2 in the 2021 academic year and the students are currently sitting for their End-of-Term exams.

Paula, Adrienne and Vera visited the Sponsorship Office and donated revision books among many other donations in kind. We are grateful for their continued support with the boys at the Rehabilitation Centre. As a graduation present, Joshua Atandi and Peter Kamau, two former Rehabilitation boys who were sponsored to complete their Grade II carpentry course, were gifted mobile phones to help them communicate with prospective employers.



*Vera, Paula and Adrienne with Stellah at the Office.*



*Peter Kamau receives a phone.*

## Announcements

- By the end of December, 4,171,581 CoVid19 vaccines had been administered across the country but only 1,045,918 people have received both doses. The population of Kenya is approximately 50 million. The Government is working towards vaccinating a targeted population of 27,246,033. There is very little reporting in the daily newspapers about the CoVid19 pandemic.
- The British Airways Hostesses Crew delivered lots of donated goods for distribution over the Christmas break.
- The Girls mentorship program at St Michael's Secondary School continues to progress.
- The sponsored campaign to raise awareness about violence against women and children by Voices of Faith continued for two weeks.
- After a very unpredictable year MPC staff will break for Christmas holidays from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan 2022 while Rehabilitation Centre will remain open.

**We wish you our partners, supporters and friends a very blessed  
Christmas and a safe New Year.**

**With your help, we will deliver more news in 2022!**



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