



Mukuru Promotion Centre

JANUARY NEWSLETTER

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JOURNEYING 40 YEARS WITH THE MUKURU COMMUNITY

MPC DIRECTOR

Dear Partners, Supporters, Family and Friends,

Forty years ago, plans were underway to establish an informal school in Mukuru Kayaaba for out-of-school children in the Mukuru non-formal sector. The then Superior General of the Sisters of Mercy, Sister Cora Ferriter (RIP), tasked Sister Mary Killeen, the Headmistress of Our Lady of Mercy in Nairobi South B, with finding a plot of land within the slums to cater to out-of-school children wandering the streets.

The school was intended for older children, specifically those over ten who had missed their earlier schooling. Discussions occurred among the Sisters of Mercy, Our Lady Queen of Peace parish, Salesian Fathers, government officials, and representatives from the City of Nairobi. At that time, Our Lady of Mercy Primary School had already admitted 100 children, but integration was challenging due to the older age of the new students and their difficult home environments, which often consisted of temporary housing made from plastic and cardboard. Many had lost their books, uniforms, and shoes to theft, and frequent fires and floods exacerbated their situation by destroying their remaining possessions. Teachers faced difficulties balancing the needs of the settled children of South B and the newly admitted migrant children. The street children often asked the Sisters for help saving their younger siblings from the dangers of street life, and their parents formed delegations to seek assistance.

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Opinions varied on whether the Sisters of Mercy should get involved in Mukuru's informal sector. Some expressed concern about the perceived dangers and the risk of communicable diseases. Despite these challenges, the search for a plot of land continued as the Sisters and parishioners debated the issue. A plot of land was eventually secured, leading to the establishment of the first primary school sponsored by MPC at Kayaaba, with support from donors and the Sisters of Mercy. The school began with 200 children and four volunteer teachers. The rest, as they say, is history. In May, MPC will release a **Commemorative Book** to celebrate its **40th Anniversary** and honour the extraordinary **efforts of many individuals and corporations** and **NGOs** over the years.

At dawn, on New Year's Day, Sonia Maina, one of our Art students, was tragically killed in a road accident. She was walking on the road, in poor visibility, engaged in conversation with a companion, when she was struck by a truck. Sonia was a gifted artist who had been celebrating the New Year with her fellow artists. We mourn her passing and hold in our hearts the hope that she finds peace after a life that was, though short, filled with challenges.

We are pleased to welcome Mr **Joseph Ngari** as the new head teacher of St. Michael's Secondary School, which serves students from the informal settlements of Mukuru. Mr Ngari faces significant challenges as many students come from impoverished backgrounds. Over the past few years, we have encountered substantial difficulties due to fires and floods. Last year, our community dealt with floods and the demolition of students' homes by County of Nairobi officials and the Government of Kenya. This situation was traumatic for the affected students, who missed considerable time in school. At the same time, they worked to safeguard their possessions and secure resources to find alternative housing. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who generously offered support during this difficult time. We wish Mr. Ngari every success in his role, and he is being encouraged and supported by the school's patron, Bob Patterson.

We welcomed a new volunteer doctor to the clinic, **Dr Claudia Correll**, sponsored by the Pablo Horstman Foundation. Her expertise in paediatrics has already made a significant difference in our Clinic. We are very grateful to **Dr Ana Sendagorta** for her significant assistance in paediatric care and for all the improvements made. Additionally, we welcomed **Francesca Kaiser**, a self-sponsored nurse from Austria, and we also appreciate her help. **Mary Spiropoulos and John and Patsy Coughlan** visited MPC in January and they continue to work supporting our programs.

On January 10th, I attended the opening of the **Ruben Centre's 25th Jubilee year**. This centre, established in partnership with the Sisters of Mercy in the late 1980s, saw the opening of a primary school in 1991. Due to the challenges of managing six schools and various health centres in slum areas, the school and clinic were transferred to the Christian Brothers from the **Edmund Rice Foundation**. We are aware that the community are deeply grateful for the efforts of the Christian Brothers and the support of the Edmund Rice Foundation. We take great joy and comfort in witnessing the remarkable development the Brothers have achieved since 2000. We extend our congratulations to them and our thanks to all those who support their efforts. The children at Ruben Centre have access to primary education, while parents and children benefit from their excellent health services. Additionally, their community radio broadcasts from the Ruben Centre reach thousands of people in the surrounding slums.

We are grateful to **Rion Teegan** for securing safety belts for children’s wheelchairs at Songa, which will help prevent them from falling out.

The rehabilitation centre was bustling as many boys were preparing for school in St. Catherine’s and other boarding schools. We are excited to announce that new boys, previously living on the streets, have joined us and are settling in well. This growth is a testament to the positive impact of the collective efforts of our well-wishers and sponsors. We hope that the incredible opportunities provided by the generosity of **Kristina Nwazota** and her team from the World Bank, BA crewmember **Chrissie Brooks** and her friends, and **Paula Cullen** and her team will benefit these boys and improve their chances of academic success.

In addition, we welcomed Judith Kelly and her team from **Scratch Films** in Ireland, who are working on a documentary about the last Irish missionary. The documentary is slated to air on RTE in 2025. The film crew visited Songa Mbele na Masomo, the clinic, the rehabilitation centre, the head office, and the vocational training centre. They also walked through the Masai and Kayaaba informal settlements. Unfortunately, they could not visit the other centres due to time constraints.

As you delve into this newsletter, you will discover various meaningful activities that have unfolded in our centres, each contributing to a profound change in the lives of many individual. This year marks a significant milestone—our fortieth year of dedicated service to the Mukuru Community. For this special year we will share some snippets of history from Kenya’s National archives and our own, as some Kenyans would say, “*Kumbukumbu la Mukuru*”, taking a walk down memory lane.

We reflect on this 40 year journey with heartfelt gratitude to our God of Compassion, whose unwavering blessings empower the Mukuru Promotion Centre (MPC) to extend its reach and support to the most vulnerable in the Mukuru settlement. Through our efforts, we strive **to bring hope** and uplift those facing daily challenges, fostering a spirit of community and resilience made possible through your generosity.

Asanteni Sana, for creating the **possibilities for change**.

Sr Mary Killeen
Director

Archival Corner

“Leo Katika Historia – Today in History”



The World Food Programme (WFP), a branch of the United Nations dedicated to food assistance, is the largest humanitarian organisation focused on combating hunger globally. Since its founding in 1961, the WFP has remained a beacon of hope for those affected by food insecurity, conflict, natural disasters, and other crises. The organisation's steadfast commitment ensures that everyone, especially the most vulnerable populations, has access to sufficient nutritious food.

In 2004, 3 million people in Kenya urgently needed relief aid due to a drought lasting eight months, from August 2004 to March 2005. To make matters worse, the long rains in April 2005 were significantly below normal, and the subsequent short rains failed entirely. This left the entire country, including residents of the Mukuru Slums, in a dire situation regarding food relief. In December 2005, President Mwai Kibaki declared another "national catastrophe."

In response, the World Food Programme launched a large-scale emergency food relief operation in Kenya. This significant intervention provided much-needed assistance to the parents and guardians of MPC School students, allowing them to continue their education without interruption.

The intervention prompted the management of MPC to recognise the importance of protecting students from natural disasters, ensuring that external factors do not force them to drop out of school, particularly due to hunger. As part of our commitment to the well-being of children from the Mukuru Slums in Nairobi, MPC has prioritised a school feeding program. Unfortunately, the World Food Programme (WFP) was discontinued nationally in 2016.

Despite not knowing how MPC would fund the feeding program, it continued to provide meals to over 6,000 children daily, even during school holidays. Fortunately, with the support of various donors and partners, including Team Pankaj, the children in the MPC learning institutions receive one meal each day.

Social and Health Services

Activities For January

With schools reopening and a new group of Grade 9 pupils entering primary schools, January was a busy month for everyone at the Social and Health Department. The Social Offices redistributed large donations to MPC primary schools based on their population sizes. Among these donations was a generous contribution of over 9,000 A5 exercise books from Karatasi, a leading Kenyan stationery manufacturer. These books will greatly aid our pupils' academic development.



St Catherine’s Pupils with their exercises books

Additionally, we received a substantial donation from the Whistle Foundation in Ireland, which included over 20 suitcases filled with clothing items such as sports jerseys, footwear, and uniforms. These clothes will provide essential warmth and comfort to our students.



Whistle Foundation, Donations

The Social Offices were busy preparing the profiles for the first assessments of the new Grade 9 cohort in primary schools. At the beginning of each term, the social workers were kept busy ensuring that the needs of vulnerable students were met. These dire needs include sanitary pads for girls, underwear, and general clothing, including uniforms. The teen mothers at St Michael's received follow up and baby parcels.



Teenage mothers with their gifts



St Bakhita Pupils

Nutritional support was distributed to sickly children (aged 0-17) and pregnant and postnatal (+3 months) mothers at St. Catherine's Social Office under the supervision of Sr Barbara Dooley. The school lunch program, a crucial service that we are committed to providing, resumed smoothly, and all school children received a meal. We are grateful to Team Pankaj who supply the food for the lunches. This is the only meal of the day for about a third of the school enrolments, underscoring the importance of this program to the welfare of our students.



St Bakhita Parent received food and clothes

No one is safe from climate change. The last week of January saw torrential rains, which led to significant flooding in some areas. In response, we provided immediate support to affected families, including food and clothing assistance. Additionally, we continued to offer our usual "walk-in" client support services. We are deeply grateful to our partners, donors, and all those of goodwill who have wholeheartedly enabled us to assist the most vulnerable people in Mukuru. Your support is invaluable, and we could not accomplish this without you.

Mary Immaculate Clinic

Activities For January

As of January 2025, the statistics reveal a substantial increase in medical services, especially for children, a testament to the progress of our partnership with the Pablo Horstmann Foundation announced late in 2024. The progress at the Clinic in January was significant with both the medical and social services making strides in supporting patients. The introduction of key equipment, the addition of the paediatric doctor, and the enhancements in social support have set the stage for even better healthcare delivery and patient satisfaction.

The start of the year saw an increase in patient workload, marking a significant change from December. This surge is likely due to patients returning from holidays in the village and the opening of schools, which brought a higher number of children and families seeking medical attention. However, this also led to an increase in illnesses like malaria and diarrhoea, which were particularly prevalent in the paediatric population. In January, the Clinic treated 2,233 patients, with over 51% from the paediatric unit with 1,160 patients. The gender ratio was 60% female and 40% male. The laboratory technician was busy with an average of 70 tests conducted (1,324), and 43% of them were for children (566). In the Mother and Child Unit, 134 babies were immunized, and 117 mothers attended the ANC clinic.

The Clinic welcomed our first paediatric doctor, Dr Claudia Correll, sponsored by the Pablo Horstmann Foundation, in the Mother and Child Unit. This addition has been significant not only for the paediatric patients but also for the medical staff, who benefit from Continuous Medical Education (CME). Some of the CME sessions were PAT (Paediatric Assessment Triangle), TB Paediatric Protocols and Respiratory pathology. The doctor's expertise has enhanced staff capacity in coding paediatric cases and differentiating emergencies from non-emergencies. The Clinic also welcomed onboard a volunteer nurse, Benea Opot, who has been instrumental in providing quality care for outpatients, dressings together with triaging services. Benea has been particularly effective in putting mother and child at ease during the consultation. We are also thankful that our two volunteer Doctors are back, Dr Jana Popovoa and Dr Nina Raguel, they greatly support special clinics and Comprehensive Care patients.



Dr Claudia examines a child

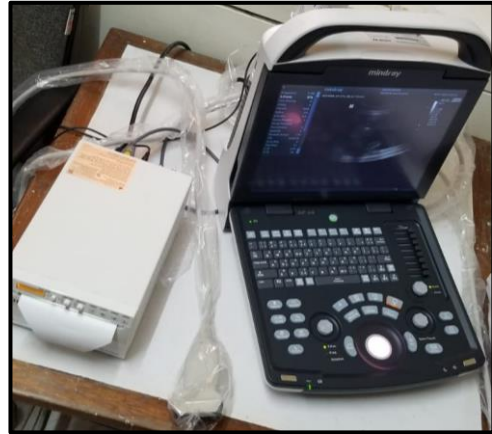
Dr Claudia delivers a CME session to staff



The newly acquired ultrasound machine has significantly impacted the community by offering inclusive services. It has eliminated the need for pregnant mothers to be referred to nearby hospitals for scans. To date, 86 mothers have been successfully scanned, and many have discovered the gender of their babies, allowing them to prepare in advance. The service is free of charge for all antenatal care (ANC) mothers from all Mukuru slum villages, ensuring that no one is left behind.



Sonographer, Lucy Muthengi performs scans on an expectant mother



New ultrasound machine donated by Pablo Horstmann Foundation

The Social Office continues distributing sanitary towels and diapers to needy postnatal mothers and those near delivery thanks to the Pablo Horstmann Foundation. This initiative has been particularly impactful, especially for young mothers who, due to financial constraints, often struggle to afford such essentials, particularly after delivery due to heavy flow. The provision of diapers has also improved the situation for mothers bringing babies to the Child Welfare Clinic (CWC), as many previously arrived without anything to change if their babies soiled themselves. Thanks to the donor's support, these mothers now have diapers and sanitary towels for emergencies.



Moreover, the Social Office has played a crucial role in supporting mothers in need. They have referred 10 mothers to the social welfare Clinic for further support, including food, clothing for their babies, and other necessary items.

A young pregnant mother who arrived at the Clinic with her grandmother realized she was close to delivery and was promptly supplied with diapers and sanitary towels. This program has dramatically enhanced the Clinic's ability to manage these cases. Equally, 12 malnourished paediatric cases were referred to the Nutrition office for further management and follow-up.

The installation of an oxygen concentrator in the Clinic's observation room has significantly improved service delivery. This new piece of equipment, by allowing the Clinic to provide better care to critical patients with low oxygen levels, has made a tangible difference in the Clinic's operations. The addition of a second nebulizer, donated by Sr Barbara Dooley, has also helped improve emergency care.



Oxygen concentrator donated by Pablo Horstmann Foundation

Primary Schools

Activities For January

The 4 MPC-sponsored Primary Schools celebrated their Opening Mass in January, marking the beginning of a new academic year. This special ceremony was attended by pupils, teachers, and parents, who gathered to welcome back the pupils. During the Mass, the community came together in prayer, seeking blessings for a successful and enriching year ahead, filled with learning and growth. The event set a positive tone for the months to come, fostering a sense of unity and purpose among everyone involved.

In January, schools across the country meticulously registered students for various assessments leading up to the final grade evaluations: the 2025 Kenya Primary School Education Assessment (KPSEA), the Kenya Junior Education Assessment (KJSEA), and the Kenya Early Years Assessments (KEYA). These assessments are vital in shaping the future of the education system and assisting pupils in entering secondary school. Primary schools which now have Early Childhood classes, Primary section and Junior Secondary, are now being named as Comprehensive Schools.

The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) has deployed primary school teachers to Junior Secondary (JS) to address the teacher shortage. This deployment aims to enhance the quality of education and provide a better learning experience for students. It is part of the government's wider strategy to effectively implement the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) and Competency-Based Assessments (CBA).

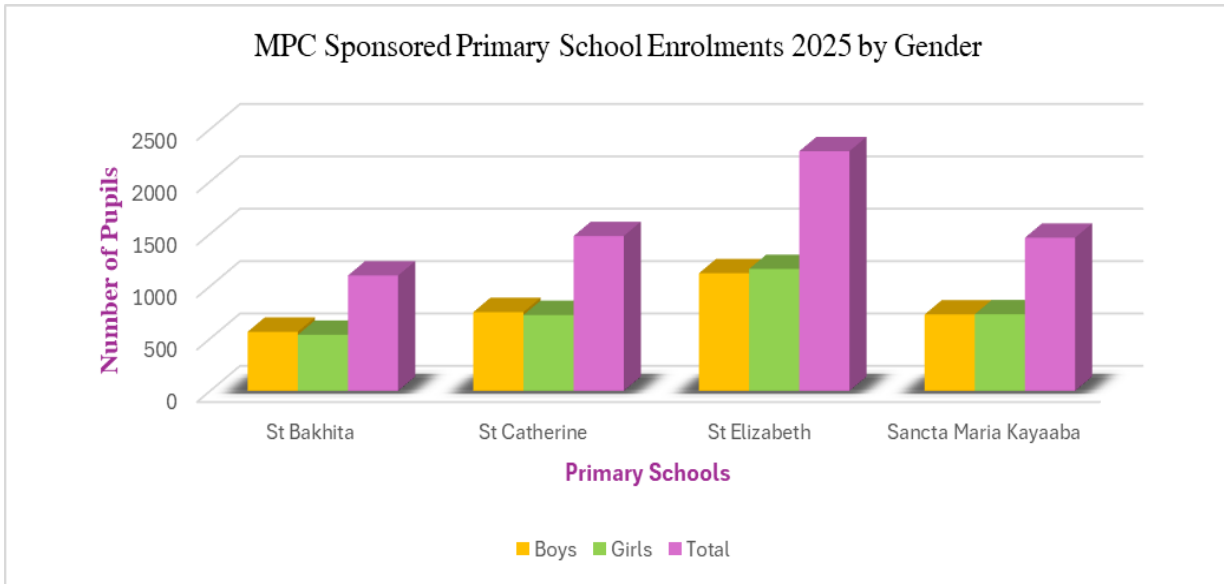


JS students conducting an experiment during a parent meeting

The TSC has prioritized retooling programs to prepare teachers for teaching JS subjects under the CBC. These sessions will equip teachers with CBC methodologies for use in the classroom. Additionally, the program will promote innovative teaching techniques that align with JS subjects. Each MPC-sponsored school received 3 JS teachers for its Grade 9 classes. The MPC sponsored schools still have a teacher shortage as no replacement teachers were sent to cover the transferred ones.

The Government has announced ambitious plans to construct 2,600 laboratories in secondary schools beginning January 2025 as part of preparations for the transition of pioneer Senior School students under the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) Learning. This forward-thinking initiative is a significant step towards enhancing the quality of education. The Ministry of Education has also released the 2025 school opening dates to help parents, teachers, and students plan for the new academic year. Slow reporting by students was noted as the majority were stuck upcountry due to a lack of bus fare back to the city.

By week 3 of January, 99% of the 6,337 students had reported, and the 1% had either transferred to another school or were untraceable.



The parent meetings took place in schools to strategize the year's activities and set academic goals for students and teachers.



St Michael's Parent Meeting

Despite the Government's unwavering commitment and readiness to fulfill its obligations, and the allocation of funds for the construction of classrooms in Primary schools where Junior Secondary School (JSS) is domiciled, the reality is that only a few schools have received funding for these classrooms. Schools with classroom scarcity were advised to use any available space in the schools before the government act. Sancta Maria Primary students were forced to merge Grade 1 into 2 classes and the Early Childhood Education classes into 2 classes to create space for Grade 9s. This certainly will impact the learning environment significantly due to the immense number of classes experiencing ratios of 1:54. The KPSEA examinations, which occurred from October 28 to October 30, 2024, involved 1,313,913 Grade 6 learners across Kenya's 35,573 centres. The assessment is part of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). It aims to evaluate students' core competencies and values at the upper primary level.

School	School Score	National score	Rubric	Performance Level
St. Bakhita	57.45	57.42	ME	Meets Expectation
St. Catherine	56.61	57.42	AE	Approaching Expectation
St. Elizabeth	57.54	57.42	ME	Meets Expectation
Sancta Maria Kayaaba	55.56	57.42	AE	Approaching Expectation

The Grade 6 Assessments (KPSEA) were released mid-month after a long wait. These assessments align with the CBC curriculum and are 40% of the pupil's work in class. The 60% will be distributed as follows: Grade 3 assessments 20 marks, Grade 4 assessments 20 marks and Grade 5 assessments 20 marks. The assessments are based on four performance levels: **BE** Below Expectations, **AE** Approaching Expectations, **ME** Meeting Expectations and **EE** Exceeding Expectations. The national mark for Grade 6 assessment 2024 was 57.42%. St. Bakhita and St Elizabeth met the set expectations (ME), while St. Catherine and Sancta Maria Kayaaba were approaching expectations (AE).

Below is a more detailed analysis of the results per school. While nearly 49% of the pupils across the primary schools are doing well, and 34% are on the right track, it's crucial to note that almost 17% need further support to achieve approaching exceptions with the competency-based curriculum. Over a third of St Bakhita pupils are doing extremely well. However, St Elizabeth Primary is facing unique challenges, with nearly 25% of its pupils below expectations, which could be a result of its high teacher-pupil ratio.

Primary School	EE	EE % Exceeding	ME	ME % Meeting	AE	AE % Approaching	BE	BE % Below	Total Pupils
St. Bakhita	52	34.2%	37	24.3	49	32.2%	14	9.1%	152
St. Catherine	33	18.1%	58	31.8%	71	39.0%	20	11.1%	182
St. Elizabeth	47	18.2%	64	24.9%	83	32.2%	63	24.5 %	257
Sancta Maria Kayaaba	35	18.5%	56	29.6%	64	33.8%	34	17.9 %	189
Total Candidates	167	21.4 Avg.	215	27.5 Avg.	267	34.2 Avg.	131	16.8 Avg.	780

The Catholic Archdiocese of Nairobi hosted a Student Council Symposium for all Catholic schools, focusing on "Leading with Dignity" at Mangu High School. This event provided a unique learning opportunity. Each school sent 10 student representatives to engage in insightful discussions and acquire valuable knowledge that they can apply in their schools. A follow-up symposium is scheduled for April to further enhance their learning experience.



Sancta Maria Kayaaba Mukuru JS Students at the Symposium



St Bakhita JS Students at the Symposium

St Michael's Secondary School

Activities For January

St. Michael's Secondary School provides a safe and supportive learning environment for over 500 of the most vulnerable children from the Mukuru slum, empowering them to transform their communities' futures. We welcomed back 440 students from Forms 2 to 4. This year there are no Form 1 students to transit to Senior Secondary Schools due to Grade 9 being domiciled in Primary Schools.

In January, the Form 4 students received significant attention as they started their final year at the school, an important opportunity for them to improve their performance before the KSCE examinations in November. The new Principal, Mr. Joseph Ngari, organized a meeting with parents to discuss the Academic Clinics that will provide personalized academic support. These clinics aim to foster stronger collaboration between home and school, inform parents about the challenges their children may face during their last year, and develop strategies for guidance.

The Academic Clinic includes one-on-one sessions for each student-parent pair and a group discussion that encouraged exchanging ideas and approaches. The format was interactive, allowing for direct feedback and conversation. Teachers promised to offer additional support, including remedial lessons. At the same time, students were encouraged to remain disciplined and focused on their studies. Furthermore, the school administration agreed to enhance career guidance and mentorship programs in school.



Sr Mary and Mr Ngari address Form 4 Students and Parents



Denis Oduor (2016), part of the MPC Alumni, shared his experience as a former student at St Michael's. Denis is now a microbiologist working at Kenya Medical Practitioners Pharmacists Union (KMPU) and secured a master's scholarship to study in South Africa. This initiative was designed to inspire our students by sharing alumni's experiences, challenges and success stories, encouraging them to pursue their academic and personal goals with renewed energy. His presentation was a resounding success, evidenced by the students' enthusiastic participation and overwhelmingly positive feedback, which made us all proud of our alumni's achievements.



Denis Oduor

Beatrice Wangui and Veronica Mwanzia from the English Press visited St. Michael's Secondary School to present a cheque to sponsors 5 students. The Head Girl, MacCleaveus Awour, delivered a vote of thanks, acknowledging the significant contribution of the English Press.

Mrs Wangui expressed satisfaction with the sponsorship's current outcomes and showed a strong interest in extending their support. The visit from the English Press was highly productive and has opened new opportunities to enhance the impact of sponsorship.



English Press's Beatrice Wangui presents the cheque to principal, Mr Ngari.



MacCleaveus Awour, School President, gave the vote of thanks on behalf of the sponsored students.

St. Michael's hosted a friendly soccer match against Warabu FC from Reuben Slum. The goal was to assess our team's preparedness and identify areas for improvement. Despite a spirited effort from our players, Warabu FC won the match with a score of 6-3. Although we faced a loss, the game offered valuable learning opportunities for our players. The sports department is dedicated to strengthening the team and ensuring improved performance in future games.



Soccer Friendly

The **Macheo program**, a partnership between Strathmore University and MPC's St. Michael's, has been running for over a decade and begins its recruitment process at the start of each year. The program aims to identify academically deserving yet disadvantaged students. Each year, Form 2 students are interviewed and take exams in English and Mathematics to evaluate their abilities.

Current Form 3 and Form 4 Macheo students at St. Michael's share their experiences to inspire new applicants to seize this opportunity. In the latest recruitment cycle, 20 students applied for the sponsorship program in Form 2, and 10 were shortlisted for further evaluation. The success of Macheo students in the KCSE examinations highlights the program's commitment to academic excellence.



Form 2 two students sit the Macheo exams

Strathmore University sponsors a program focused on environmental awareness. The pollution and ecological damage surrounding St. Michael's School provide an ideal backdrop for raising awareness and initiating a school Environmental Club. A team of five trainers from Strathmore University conducted training on environmental sustainability. They were joined by the Principal, Deputy Principal, and the Environmental Club Patron, Mr. Munyaka. The club members participated in group activities to discuss solutions to various environmental issues and presented their findings. The facilitators from Strathmore University expressed their willingness to support the school's Environmental Club in the future.



Training of environmental club members at MPC hall by Strathmore University students

St. Michael's has launched a new incentive program for students. During Monday and Friday assemblies, students who have performed well in class will receive small rewards to keep them inspired and motivated in areas where they excel, helping to maintain a positive spirit. For example, students excelling in subject areas are recognized in assembly to encourage growth.



Form 3 and Form 4 Students receive their Incentive Award

Father Paulinhos, accompanied by Brother Alphonse, led a heartfelt Opening school Mass that brought together all students and staff in a warm and welcoming atmosphere. The multipurpose hall was filled with a sense of community as Father Paulinhos spoke to the students, offering words of encouragement and inspiration to help them navigate the challenges that lay ahead. He emphasized the importance of perseverance and resilience, reminding everyone that difficult times are a part of the learning journey. As the school year unfolds over the next 10 months, he urged all students to dedicate themselves to their studies and to listen attentively to their teachers and staff, fostering a spirit of growth and collaboration within the school.



Opening School Mass with Fr Paulinhos



St Michael's Secondary Students

Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre

Activities For January

OLMVTC's admission intake for new students began in the first week of January, with staff preparing the scheduled courses to start later in the month. However, the new enrolments were slower than expected, largely due to the delay in the Ministry of Education KCSE results, which were not released until the end of the month. As a result, the Centre operated at around 40% capacity, with 65% of the intake being women. The Centre's orientation for students, held at the end of January, was a success, effectively communicating the Centre's expectations, rules, and regulations to the new students.



OLMVTC Orientation Day

The two courses with large enrolments are Computer Packages and Hospitality. The Food and Beverage class has taken a brighter step in skilling up thanks to KWAL's support in collaboration with Kibondeni College. This came as a need to expose our students to potential job opportunities through industrial attachment and other connections in the hospitality industry. Kibondeni's



experience and connectivity in the industry have been respected and trusted over many years. The 2025 Kibondeni College cohort will undergo the 9-month course to complete the extra Craft 2 and Housekeeping and Laundry for KNEC and NITA examinations that will provide extra credentials for their curriculum vitae.

Food and Beverage students at Kibondeni College

The 3-month industrial attachment commenced for some 2024 graduates in hairdressing & beauty, and garment making.

Let us take you on a tour of Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre



Popular Computer Packages Class



Students and Staff



Hairdressing practicals



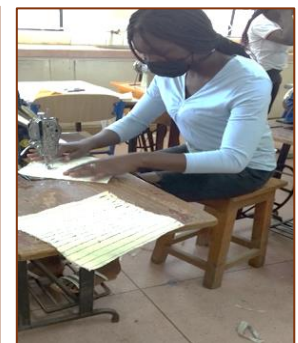
Welding



Dressmaking practice on papers



Embroidery for Special Class



Life Skills

Jigsaw puzzles



Songa Mbele na Masomo Children's Centre

Activities For January

As the new year commences, we are reminded of the unwavering support from our donors and well-wishers, which is instrumental in our mission to help children living with disabilities and their families. Despite a slight dip in enrolments and the absence of 5 children after the holiday break, we are pleased to report 6 new admissions. Currently, the Centre is home to 102 children, distributed across 4 varying ability units, with a 63:37 ratio towards the boys. A few of the children have been transitioned to other institutions for further development, a testament to our adaptability and commitment to each child's unique needs.

The most populated units at the Centre are Unit 1 and Unit 3, each housing 30 children. The Daycare unit is specifically designed to support children with profound disabilities, providing specialized care and resources tailored to their unique needs. Unit 1 serves children diagnosed with autism, catering to a wide range of severity levels and various categories within the autism spectrum, ensuring that each child's requirements are met. Unit 2 focuses on children with multiple disabilities, offering a comprehensive approach to support their complex needs. In contrast, Unit 3 is designed for the most capable children at the Centre, providing opportunities for growth and development in a more independent environment. Each unit plays a crucial role in creating an inclusive atmosphere tailored to the children's diverse abilities. The most populous units are Unit 1 and Unit 3, each having 30 children. The Daycare unit serves the most profoundly disabled children, while Unit 1 accommodates children with varying severity and categories of autism. Unit 2 is designated for children with multiple disabilities, and Unit 3 is dedicated to the most capable group at the Centre.



Rosca Khavengi enjoys her classes



Home visit in Kayaaba

The Centre conducted its usual regime of classwork, therapies and meetings in January. We are fortunate to receive 14 interns from tertiary learning institutions to do their placements at the Centre that enables more one-on-one attention to the children. The social workers home visits were very important in January to identify the 5 absent children and conduct follow-up meetings with the families.

Some of the children absent from the Centre were found suffering from measles or the common cold and were referred for treatment at the Clinic. Other children had family dilemmas like relocating upcountry due to the cost of living in Nairobi City. One mother had a newborn child, and the father was away trying to find casual work. Others had no means to return to Nairobi and remained upcountry but were expected back soon.

In January, the Centre welcomed Scratch Films, Dublin and their enthusiastic crewmembers. They were on location to work on their documentary, "The Last Missionaries in Kenya," and were eager to explore the various MPC projects. Their visit provided them with a unique opportunity to gain insights into the impactful work being done in the region, shedding light on the significant stories of those overseas missionaries



Scratch Films Dublin team at Songa's Unit class

The Centre gratefully accepted a generous array of donations from donors and well-wishers. These contributions included essential food provisions, a variety of stationery supplies, warm clothing, sturdy shoes, and bicycles, all aimed at supporting those in need and enhancing their daily lives.



Catholic Women Association Central Deanery, Nairobi



Wheelchairs donated by Healthcare Direct



Children in classes



Maria and Patrick Farrell from Whistle Foundation, Ireland purchased specialised wheelchairs from APDK for children with cerebral palsy in the Daycare Unit.

Significant improvements have been observed in several children who have engaged in various therapeutic sessions, including speech, occupational, and physiotherapy. Throughout January, 378 physiotherapy sessions were conducted, offering valuable support to 65 children from Daycare, Unit 1, and Unit 2. Notably, the children in Unit 2 benefited the most from speech therapy, receiving 73 out of the 109 sessions provided, which accounts for an impressive 67% of the total. These sessions have played a crucial role in enhancing the children’s developmental progress and overall well-being.

Songa’s high achiever for January is an inspiring 4-year-old named Mercy Joyce. She has been spina bifida and was also diagnosed with hydrocephalus, which is managed with a shunt. In the classroom, Mercy primarily navigates her surroundings by crawling on her knees, showcasing her determination and resilience. Thanks to her dedicated therapy sessions aimed at enhancing her independence, she has made remarkable strides in her physical abilities. Mercy can now effortlessly shift from the ground to a chair and back again, allowing her to sit and stand with newfound confidence. Recently, she has also begun therapy focused on using a walker. Remarkably, she has already travelled a distance of 10 meters, taking only a few breaks along the way. With each step she takes, her core strength and balance continue to improve, highlighting her incredible progress. We are immensely proud of all that she has accomplished, celebrating every small victory on her journey toward greater independence.



Mercy Joyce



Mary Immaculate Rehabilitation Centre

Activities For January

The Centre welcomed the New Year with joy and quiet confidence in the opportunities that 2025 holds. We are pleased to announce that the recruitment of new boys was successfully completed. Those who finished their rehabilitation in 2024 transitioned back home or into boarding school based on their circumstances. Several boys who successfully completed the Grade III carpentry course moved into their own homes, receiving generous support from Kristina Nwazota to help them establish a strong, independent foundation.

In January, the Centre reintegrated 31 boys; 19 boys were excited to be placed in boarding schools, which allowed them to continue their education and reduced the risk of falling back into street life. Six boys returned to their families after an assessment deemed them suitable for reintegration. The remaining six boys received rent assistance during their three-month industrial attachment. The Centre's commitment to these boys is unwavering, as we continue to actively follow up with the 36 boys from 2022 to 2024 who have completed the residential program and remain in the sponsorship program. The parents and guardians were fully involved in the re-integration process and expressed deep appreciation to the Centre for weaning their sons from street life.



Brighton Njuguna with his Margaret Mwangi



Ramadhan Ali with his Galgalo Wario

The generous support from Chrissie Brooks BA crewmember and her team, Kristina Nwazota World Bank Fund and Paula Cullen and her team enabled 7 boys to enrol at St. Peter and Paul Secondary School in Embu County, and 12 boys at St. Teresia in Makueni County. All 19 boys have successfully completed their rehabilitation, which is a significant milestone in their journey, and are now prepared to continue their education. The group determined that boarding school would be the best option for them, as it reduces the risk of relapsing and returning to street life.



St Teresia Kilungu Academy, Makueni County



St Peter and Paul School, Emu County

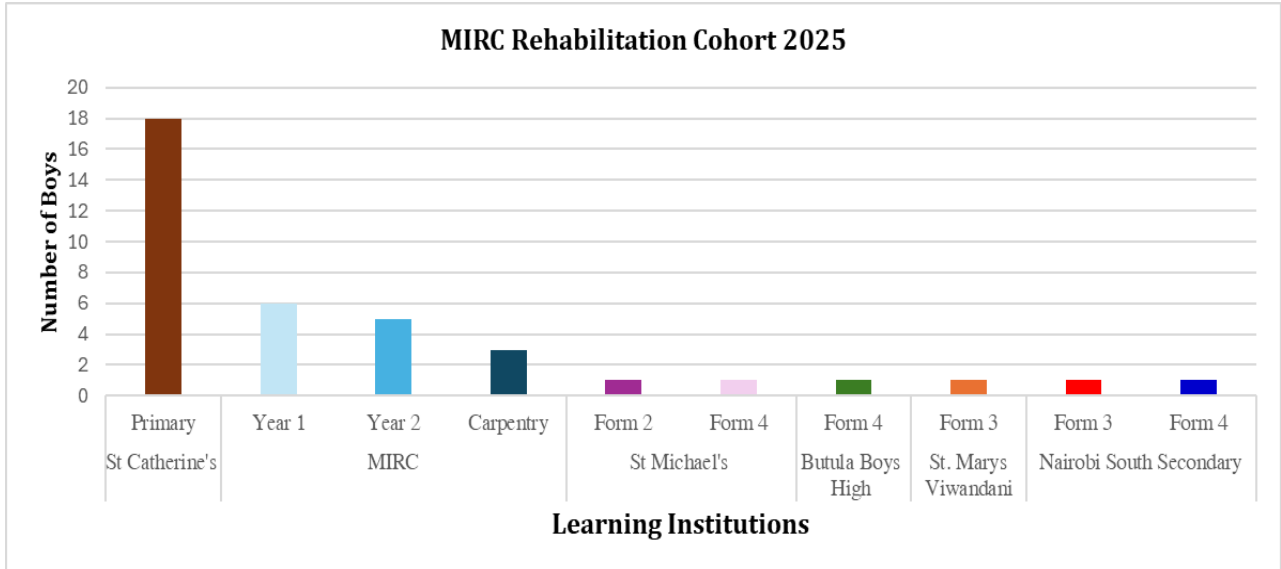
The boy's necessary luggage

The recruitment program, supported by the MPC Social Office and local agencies, successfully identified and admitted 8 boys from the Black Army Base in Pipeline, 7 boys from Muthurwa Market, and 5 walk-ins. However, within the first few weeks, 5 boys returned to the streets. Recruitment will continue until the end of February to ensure that the Centre reaches close to its capacity of 65 boys. So far, the Centre is at 60% capacity. Additionally, the Centre has received referrals from other organizations, including Napenda Kuishi and Boma Rescue Centres.



Caroline Cullen with the new recruits and helping out with the haircuts

In 2025, a new cohort of 38 boys were assessed and assigned to different classes based on their academic abilities. These placements are determined through tests that evaluate their previous knowledge and identify the best ways to help them get back on track with their studies.



The new cohort has completed their orientation at the Centre. They have been introduced to their opportunities, the responsibilities they must take seriously, and the efforts required to support their rehabilitation journey toward a better life. This is not a passive process; the boys actively shape their futures.

The Centre is a beacon of hope for all boys who want to maximise their opportunities. They have been informed about the year-round projects available at the Centre, which offer many achievements for those willing to embrace them. Under the supervision of the carpentry instructor, they learn carpentry skills to the extent that they can build their own bunk beds, providing them with a solid chance for industrial placement.



Carpentry class made double decker beds



Connecting with technology using Profuturo tablets

Personal and communal reflection is essential in the rehabilitation process. The counsellors actively engage with the new boys in the Centre's routine. The team assesses their social and emotional needs, offering both individual and group counselling sessions. The feedback from the boys has been overwhelmingly positive. Many have expressed a desire to share the trauma they carry, and some



have even requested assistance in gaining acceptance back into their families. Extra counselling sessions were conducted for the boys going to new boarding schools and those preparing for industrial attachments. These sessions provided the boys with insights into what to expect, helping to prepare them for the next phase of their lives.

Group session for those preparing for new boarding schools.

The extracurricular activities at the Centre are a rich array of choices, and each year, thanks to generous donors, the list of options expands. The boys have a wide range of options to choose from, and we strongly encourage them to participate in activities that pique their interest. These include rugby, soccer, music, art, acrobatics, gardening, poultry and rabbit farming, and the environmental club.

During the quiet month of January, Coach Benter dedicated her time to discovering the unique talents of the new cohort, assessing their potential, and preparing them for the season ahead. Her personalised approach ensures that each student's abilities are recognized and nurtured.



New uniforms for football from Queens Park Rangers Club



U12 Soccer Team



As the new year dawns, the music teacher, Collins, eagerly prepares to welcome a fresh group of eager recruits into the enchanting world of music. The classroom is filled with anticipation, vibrant with colourful instruments waiting to be played. The new students, excited and curious, waste no time in joining the class and picking up various instruments. Laughter and the vibrant sounds of melodies fill the air, fostering a sense of community as they begin their journey of exploring and creating music together. The music project is funded by National Symphony Orchestra, Galway City Council, Third World Fund.

Class begins learning the basics of music

The art class provides a vibrant space for the boys to express their creativity. Under Samuel, their art instructor, they have mastered the fundamentals of art and begun to explore their individual talents. Some boys have developed a passion for beadwork, skillfully creating intricate designs with colourful beads. The enthusiastic atmosphere encourages them to fully engage in their projects while appreciating the resources available to enhance their artistic skills.



Art Class

The garden, a realm of potential, is in constant motion. The new boys have swiftly prepared the soil, foreseeing the upcoming rainy season in March. They are currently planting kale and spinach, while eagerly awaiting the maturation of the nursery tomato seedlings for transplantation into the main field. Their work is crucial, and we are hopeful that their efforts will result in a bountiful harvest.



Boys in the Shamba (garden) transplanting from the seedbed.

The chicken and rabbit projects have been temporarily moved to the gym area to protect them against predators and theft. We appreciate Teresa Heeran's funding to build a secure habitat that will allow the animals to thrive in a safer environment.

The Centre is fortunate to receive a diverse range of visitors who provide different levels of support. In January, Chrissie Brooks and her team members, Millie, Tabs, and Carlea, spent two weeks with the new boys. They actively engaged the boys in various activities and special treats like chicken and chips, dinner, and ice cream. Chrissie played a significant role in preparing the boys for boarding school by purchasing essential supplies required for admission and visiting St Teresia's School in Makueni County.



Millie, Carlea and Chrissie with some of the boys Ice cream treat



Sponsorship Office

Activities For January

We congratulate the top four sponsored students from St. Michael's Secondary School who completed their KCSE and will start university in February. The three boys and one girl expressed their deep gratitude to their sponsors, acknowledging that their success, achieving such high scores, would not have been possible without their support. A special commendation goes to Brian, who



scored the highest B-. He was followed by Fidel and Samuel, who both also scored B-, and Emma, who earned a C+. The students are about to receive offers from universities. Samuel hopes to study Computer Engineering, Emma prefers Accounting, and Fidel and Brian want to be accepted into Business Information Technology. We wish them well and hope they received their preferences.

Samuel Barasa, Emma Waceke, Fidel Omondi and Brian Amutavi.

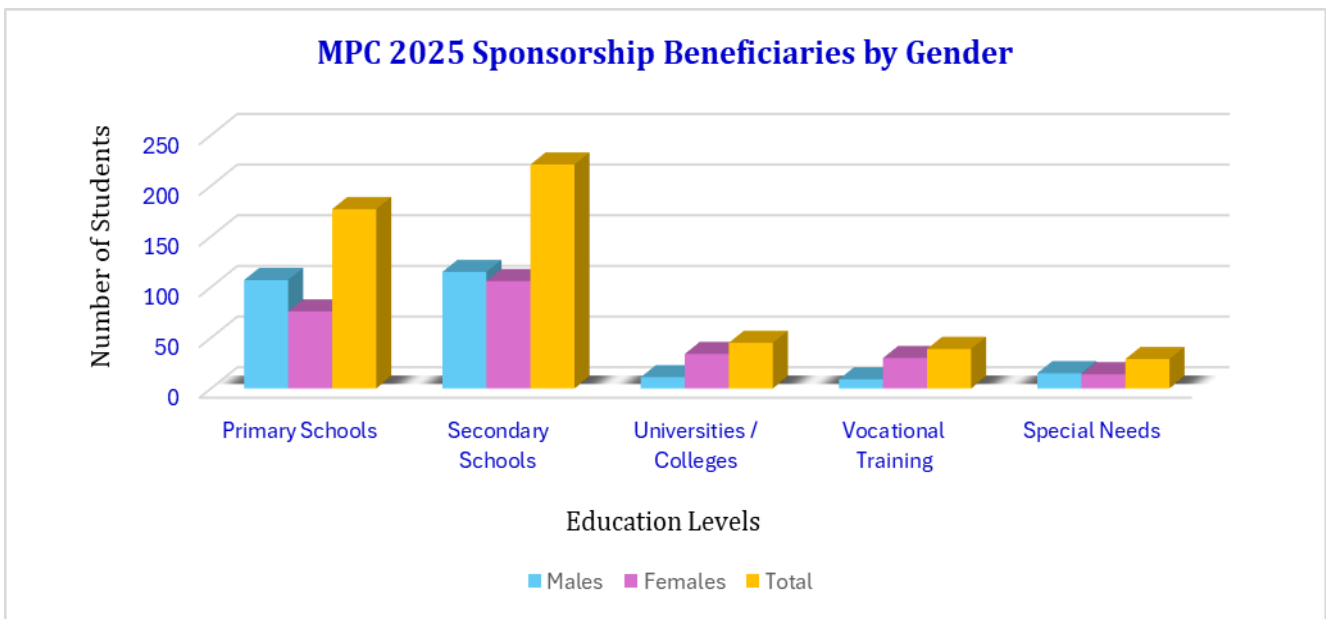
MPC received several visits from some of our local corporate sponsors in January, and we are deeply grateful for their continued support. Representatives from English Press, Equity Bank, Airtel Kenya, Ola Energy Kenya, and Sentimental Energy had the opportunity to meet the students they have been sponsoring, many of whom have made significant academic progress. These students, who come from disadvantaged backgrounds, have been able to access quality education thanks to the sponsors' contributions. The sponsors were provided with updates on the students' academic achievements, especially those who sat for their KCSE exams, which further reinforced the importance of their support.



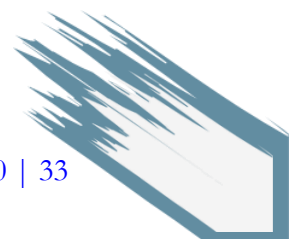
Beatrice Wangui, English Press with Mr Ngari, Principal, St. Michael's Secondary School together with the students.

January is always a busy month as it's the start of the academic year, and all learning institutions expect all the administrative paperwork, including student registrations, financial planning, and curriculum updates, to be completed before the commencement of the school year. Term One started on 6th January, which made the process a little hectic with processing school fees, engaging with donors, and ensuring that students were prepared to return to school.

The 2025 sponsorship, a testament to our collective efforts, has already made a significant impact. With 511 beneficiaries, including those in primary schools (34.5%), secondary schools (43.2%), tertiary institutions (9%), vocational training (8%), and special needs (6%), our contributions have directly influenced the educational journey of these individuals.



As we welcome the month of February, our commitment to supporting students in need at Mukuru Promotion Centre's educational institutions remains constant. We strive to provide the essential resources and encouragement these young learners require to excel in their studies and reach their full potential. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to all our generous donors and partners whose steadfast support and belief in MPC's empowerment mission make this vital work possible. Your contributions truly make a difference in these students' lives and futures.



Announcements

Activities Outside the Department

While the various departments of MPC provide an overview of the month's events, the Head Office works behind the scenes to facilitate many activities that support and align with departmental objectives and targets. January is typically a busy month, characterized by submitting end-of-year reports to our donors, preparing for the audit, and creating the Annual Report 2024, which will highlight our achievements and challenges. Amid all these activities, there are also other events and developments to note. Below are some additional updates.

46 A film crew from Dublin, Scratch Films, visited the HO and other MPC Departments for a documentary titled "The Last Missionaries of Kenya," featuring Sr. Mary Killeen.



Education Coordinator, Luciah Njogu interviewed by Scratch Films

46 Reinhard Krall's nephew, David and his friend Anthony from Austria spent time at MPC during the month.



Last mabati structure at Head Office

46 Lots of hands on the deck were needed to clear out and finally demolish the temporary storeroom that was necessary during the construction of St Bakhita and St Michael's permanent buildings in 2017. This was the last of the mabati structures within the head office compound.



Heads of MPC Departments 2025

40 The Heads of the 8 Departments convened at the Head Office for their inaugural meeting of 2025, marking the beginning of their regular fortnightly sessions. This year is particularly significant as MPC celebrates its 40th anniversary. This milestone invites discussions on how each department can contribute to making the celebrations memorable and worthwhile.

40 A donation was made from KWAL through MPC to Missionaries of Africa. Sr Mary presented Fr Daniel with the gift of altar wine.



Fr Daniel Bin Masert receives donation from Sr. Mary



Mukuru Promotion Centre

Empowerment Step by Step
Ministry of the Sisters of Mercy

40 Years Anniversary

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Thank you for your continued support

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