



Mukuru Promotion Centre

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

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JOURNEYING 40 YEARS WITH THE MUKURU COMMUNITY

MPC DIRECTOR

Dear Partners, Supporters, Family and Friends,

In Kenya, December marks the end of both the financial and school years. It is an anxious month as both primary and secondary students await the results of their assessments and exams. For the Head Office, it is a busy time as we try to get financial accounts from all departments and donor reports completed. This December was traumatic, as there were major fires in Mukuru Kayaba and planned evictions in Mariguini slum, next to Mater Hospital and across the road from St Catherine’s Primary School.

Fires and evictions change people's lives and living conditions. Soon after the fire, the residents rebuilt their shacks. It will take time to rebuild their possessions. Most have lost household goods, beds, mattresses, and other items, which can all be replaced. Their documents are difficult to replace and require time, effort, and cost. In an emergency, MPC tries to assist with bedding, mattresses, and a change of clothes. Before she went on leave on 17th November, Sr Barbara had prepared items for fire victims and food parcels for those affected by HIV, TB, and extreme poverty. These were distributed by the staff in St Catherine’s social office.

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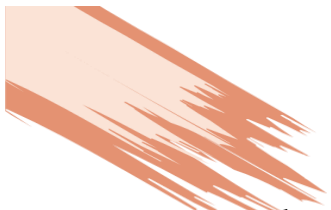
She had also collected a small present for each of the 1,300 pupils, which needed to be wrapped.

We welcomed two visitors in December, Noreen Walsh and her cousin Mary Richardson. They were roped in to wrap the presents for St Catherine's pupils, which will be distributed in January. Noreen and Mary also met with the beneficiaries of their help, including young people who had been rehabilitated from alcoholism and some Mukuru residents with prison experience who needed to rebuild their lives. While many donors want to sponsor bright, promising students, Noreen Walsh wants to give a second chance to those who have fallen by the wayside or may do so. Mukuru residents can be arrested for not having a licence to hawk goods, stealing a mobile phone, drunkenness and disorderly behaviour, assault and loitering. The alleged assault often involves a woman who fights off a sexual predator, calls the police and is then accused of assault. They are usually charged and fined. The fines are unaffordable for them, so they go to prison for terms ranging from 3 months to 10 years. The prisons are full of the poor.

It is sad to see Christmas hampers, as a few years ago people did not need food support. The fires and evictions have pushed many from poverty into destitution and malnutrition. We have come across children who cannot walk due to rickets, and others who miss milestones and have stunted growth due to hunger. People are very grateful for the support.

The work in the clinic continues, and we are very grateful to all those who contribute to this work. We are concerned about the number of very young mothers presenting at Songa Mbele with children who have cerebral palsy. Some of these women lacked the support needed during birth due to doctors' strikes and the malfunction of the new public insurance. The clinic, through its maternal programme, is addressing this by providing prenatal checks and the support and treatment needed for those with pregnancy challenges.

Our secondary school faced many challenges during the year. Forty boys were frequently absent due to a government program for youth to help relieve poverty. They were paid to clean slum villages, rivers, and roads, so they absented themselves from school to benefit from that money. Their frequent absences will affect their performance and the school's performance. We have cases of boys and girls who are the main breadwinners for the family, as both parents have died. There are also students whose single mother has gone upcountry, leaving them without food and unsure when she will return. Others have parents who are alcoholics or drug addicts. They struggle with their education. We try to retain them, as the secondary certificate is necessary for further education and often for employment. We will follow up on absenteeism with the local authorities, hoping to improve the situation. The results of primary school

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assessments have been released. There seems to be a lot of confusion about the results and admission to senior secondary school. The system is new and was not adequately prepared for. Corruption is very high. Many parents are competing for places in the top schools. The danger is that those who can pay the most get the places, and the poor are blocked. The vocational training exams took place. The exam materials are very costly. People of low income could not afford them without support. Thanks to those who support our vocational programs, which help youth gain skills and employment.

I met with Richard and Nancy Noble, who support St Mary's Viwandani, a secondary school we assisted for years, which takes pupils from Lunga Lunga and Kingston Mukuru villages. We are happy the school continues. It was closed during COVID-19 and is operational through the support of Richard and Nancy and their family foundation. Richard and Nancy are concerned about the school's future but are happy to manage and fund it for now. It is wonderful that, through them, primary school leavers have the opportunity to continue their education.

We had a volunteer from France, Juliet, a physiotherapist who worked in Songa Mbele for about 2 years. She was a skilled, hardworking woman who transformed the lives of many children. She left in November to return home. She is badly missed. It is not easy to recruit skilled, dedicated physiotherapists, speech therapists and occupational therapists to work with children from very poor backgrounds. Those who are very good prefer to work with private patients who can pay well for their services. Those applying for jobs are mostly young and inexperienced. This is one of our challenges: how to find competent therapists and afford them. We have the same challenge in rehab: finding experienced workers who are interested in the boys from the streets. It is a challenge we struggle with and will continue to do so.

Sr Barbara Dooley, who worked with us at St Catherine's social office from 1993, passed away peacefully on Christmas Eve. Many of her clients came to console us. They all asked, "Who will replace her?" This is the big question now.

May you all have a joyful, peaceful Christmas.

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

Sr Mary Killeen
Director



Archival Corner

“Leo Katika Historia – Today in History”



Forced Evictions at Mukuru Kwa Njenga, December 2021

As people celebrated the festive season following the reduction of the CoVid19 pandemic's impact, high food prices and the elevated cost of living due to prolonged drought continued to affect many. During this time, a private developer, assisted by police officers, began demolishing the majority of Mukuru Kwa Njenga slum, which shelters hundreds of thousands of Nairobi's subsistence income earners.

The mass demolition campaign had started a few weeks earlier, but tensions escalated on December 27, 2021. On this day, during the Christmas holiday period, police clashed with residents as they moved to clear the area and demarcate the land, which intensified the humanitarian crisis for families already impacted by the ongoing demolitions. The demolitions destroyed at least 13,000 homes, along with businesses and schools. These actions displaced approximately 76,000 people.

As a result, the evictions made many families homeless and forced them to live in sprawling tent settlements on the rubble of their former homes. Reports described a dire humanitarian situation, with residents crowding into internally displaced persons (IDP) camps.

During the unrest on December 27, police fatally shot two residents, while live bullets and tear gas injured several others. Humanitarian aid organisations struggled to assist the displaced.

As one of the catchment areas of Mukuru Promotion Centre, some of the victims were either students at our schools, former students, or relatives of our students. With the support of our generous donors and partners, MPC, through its Social Services Department, provided food, clothing, and other essentials to the victims to help them start over.

Sr Barbara (Mary Eleanor) Dooley RSM

1st February 1942 – 24th December 2025

In the early hours of Christmas Day, we received the sad news that Sr Barbara Dooley had returned to God after her battle with cancer. A truly good and faithful servant, her life was marked by quiet dedication, unwavering compassion, and deep mercy.

An Irish native, Sr Barbara entered the Sisters of Mercy Institute in England, where she ministered for many years, first as a teacher and later as a nurse, in England and Guernsey. In 1993, she journeyed to Nairobi, Kenya, and after a short time, met Sr Mary Killeen, who invited her to Mukuru Promotion Centre. From that moment, Sr Barbara's heart became firmly rooted in the Mukuru community. She began assisting marginalised children and later worked with the social workers, eventually coordinating the St. Catherine's Social Office, a role she faithfully carried out for three decades.



During those years, Sr Barbara bore witness to immense human suffering: crushing poverty, tribal discrimination, the devastation of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which claimed tens of thousands of lives and left countless children orphaned, political instability and violent clashes of 2007 that displaced vast numbers of people in search of a safe place to live, and, more recently, the CoVid-19 Pandemic, which erased decades of educational progress, government sanctioned demolitions and mass

evictions. Yet through every crisis, her response remained constant. No matter the circumstances, the poor, the sick, and the destitute knew they could come to St. Catherine's Social Office and be met with respect, warmth, dignity, and care, never turned away.



Sr Barbara was a woman of mercy in the truest sense: quiet, unassuming, and thoroughly focused on the needs of the poor. Over the years, thousands experienced her kindness and practical compassion, especially mothers struggling to care for their children and the malnourished babies. Her Amaranth initiative strengthened the health and immunity of countless women, enabling them to better nurture their families.



In the last decade of her life, Sr Barbara carried her own serious illnesses with remarkable courage and grace. Many would have chosen to retire amid such challenges, yet she continued her outreach, coming to the social office each day, working for 4 hours, determined that no one be left abandoned in their need. Whether providing clothes, food parcels, immunity boosters, teenage pregnancy care kits, mattresses and bedding after fires, or household

items after floods, she responded with tireless commitment. She kept a watchful, caring eye on the primary pupils, particularly those sponsored through the MPC sponsorship program. Every year, she lovingly organised a Christmas party, with the help of her staff, and wrapped approximately 1,300 presents so that every child at St Catherine's would feel remembered and cherished.



For over 30 years, we at MPC were deeply blessed by Sr Barbara's presence, and her steadfast love sustained the Mukuru community through times of great hardship. Her legacy is not written in words, but in lives uplifted, burdens eased, and hope restored. All the work Sr Barbara carried out at Mukuru was made possible by the generosity of many donors and friends, including her own community of Sisters of Mercy Institute, England.



May the God of Mercy, whom she served with such total and selfless devotion, now welcome her into eternal rest. May perpetual light shine upon her, and may her gentle spirit continue to inspire us.



Social and Health Services

Activities In December

With learning institutions closed for the long school holiday break, social workers redirected their efforts to assisting victims of three devastating fires in Lengo, Kingston, and Uchumi villages within Mukuru. These incidents left many families without belongings or means of livelihood. Our team provided targeted support to affected families based on their specific needs, with food and clothing assistance being the most common requests after the tragedies. As a result of our interventions, affected families received immediate relief and began their recovery. December interventions were distributed as follows: 73% to education, 23% to health, and 4% to social transformation across the three main disciplines, strengthening our commitment to holistic support.



Children who were affected by fire in the Lengo area are receiving blankets from the Sancta Maria Social Office

December proved to be a hectic month for nutritional support. Our team worked closely with 53 Amaranth clients, among them 22 severely malnourished babies who required immediate intervention. The distribution of 280 food parcels was carefully organised to ensure that the most impacted families received essential staples, fresh produce, and protein-rich foods to restore their strength and health. Social workers also extended assistance to 23 families facing acute hardship and 152 vulnerable children, many of whom had lost parents or guardians during the fires or to ongoing health challenges. During community outreach, 60 additional families were identified as needing urgent nutritional aid, highlighting the widespread impact of recent events.



Fire victims' clients are receiving clothing support, bedding, and utensils.



A malnourished patient received RUTF (ready-to-use therapeutic food) from the nutritionist. It is a nutrient-dense paste used to treat severe acute malnutrition in children and young adults.

A special highlight was the partnership with Caroline Cullen’s Whistle Foundation, whose generous donation of 254 Christmas hampers brought joy and relief to families who might otherwise have gone without. The hampers, filled with festive treats and practical supplies, allowed even the most marginalised households to partake in the holiday spirit. Throughout the month, nutritional support remained at the forefront of our mission. We are grateful to Pablo Horstmann, who has agreed to take over the Amaranth project, ensuring the monthly supply of basic food provisions, fruit, and the amaranth porridge flour initiated by Sr Barbara Dooley over 20 years ago. After six months of use, the results of this product have been remarkable: children with haemophilia and sickle cell disease are now running around, standing with straight legs, and attending school more regularly. Children with cancer and HIV show signs of strength and improvement. The parents are thrilled with these outcomes.

Social workers visited homes, offered dietary guidance, and closely monitored the well-being of chronically or terminally ill children, ensuring that no one was left behind during this challenging season.



Whistle Foundation Christmas Hampers

December also presented a valuable window to conduct in-depth follow-ups on medical referrals and student sponsorships.



Social workers at Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre diligently tracked each case, visiting local hospitals and clinics to check on the progress of referred patients. They coordinated with healthcare providers to ensure that children and adults received timely treatment, medications, and ongoing support. For sponsored students, the team met with school administrators, reviewed attendance records, and spoke with families to identify any barriers to continued education, providing encouragement and practical solutions where needed. This hands-on approach helped reinforce a strong safety net for the community’s most vulnerable individuals.

Christmas Parcels

As the year draws to a close, we reflect with deep gratitude on the unwavering generosity of our donors and partners. Your steadfast support enabled us to bring comfort, sustenance, and renewed hope to hundreds of families facing some of the most difficult moments of their lives. Each act of kindness, whether through financial contributions, donations of goods, or volunteering, played a vital role in uplifting our community. Together, we have sown seeds of resilience and optimism, lighting the path toward a brighter future for all.

Noreen Walsh and Mary Richardson from the United States of America have visited MPC several times over the last 10 years and initiated St Michael’s Reset Program for MPC, a program for formerly incarcerated persons. Noreen and Mary were invited to meet with a few beneficiaries in December. They walked through the slum and met many beneficiaries who had received business start-up support.



Noreen and Mary with some beneficiaries of MPC’s St Michael’s Reset Program

To provide ongoing support, 30 to 35 formerly incarcerated individuals meet monthly with Agnes, the social worker. The group discusses their hopes and challenges and offers mutual support. The women visited three sponsored projects: two men established a pig farm, two women run fresh fruit kiosks, and another woman operates a hot food kiosk. All are thriving, and one has notably expanded beyond her small original space.



The two men who established a pig farm with their grant are succeeding and are very proud of what they have accomplished. Noreen was delighted that they called themselves farmers.



Patrick Nzau, Noreen and Yusef Kinyua

One of the Pig Farms

Artist David Safari has transformed his life through the program. Besides painting, he now also counsels young people about the dangers of drugs and alcohol.



David and Noreen



During their free time, Noreen and Mary R. assisted in wrapping more than 1,000 Christmas gifts for the children at St. Catherine's Social Office, which Sr. Barbara typically manages. However, since Sr. Barbara was in England on her break, the two women enlisted some help.



Phew! 600 completed!

Another 400+ to go, boys.

Mary and Noreen bought 4 sewing machines: two industrial models for MPC and two non-electric pedal-powered ones. These will be distributed to people released from prison to help them earn a livelihood in the Mukuru Slums.



Test driving the new machines



Pedal Power



Home



A few beneficiaries invited Noreen and Mary over for tea. The walls are made of plastic sheeting, giving the home a humble yet welcoming feel. She even has a bed, which is wonderful news.

Mary Immaculate Clinic

Activities In December

December marked a meaningful close to the Clinic's year. At a time when many families in the slum struggle with rising living costs, food insecurity, and limited access to healthcare, the clinic remained open, responsive, and dependable. With continued support from donors, partners, management, and people of goodwill, we sustained free medical services, enabling families to seek care without fear of cost or exclusion. Even though we closed for the Christmas-New Year holiday period, the Clinic recorded high patient turnout throughout the month, confirming the continued need for accessible healthcare within the community.

- Total patients registered: 1,745
- Female patients: 62%
- Male patients: 38%

Children continued to account for a large share of clinic visits, reflecting both their vulnerability and the trust caregivers place in the Clinic.

- Total paediatric patients: 805
- Proportion of paediatric visits: 46%
- Babies immunised: 91

Each immunisation represents protection against preventable disease and a step toward reducing avoidable child illness in the community.



Health talk by Community Health Promoter, Carol

Maternal health remained a key focus during the month.

- Pregnant mothers attended: 192
- Ultrasound scans performed: 117

The availability of free ultrasound services has continued to bridge a major gap for expectant mothers who would otherwise miss critical pregnancy assessments. These services have supported early detection of complications, accurate monitoring of foetal development, and informed decision-making during pregnancy.

Laboratory services remained central to clinical care in December, with 964 laboratory tests conducted, including 283 paediatric cases. The addition of a new immunoassay machine significantly strengthened diagnostic capacity. The machine enables testing for CRP, which supports early identification of infection and inflammation, and for HbA1c, which assists in long-term monitoring and management of diabetes. These capabilities reduce diagnostic delays, improve treatment accuracy, and lower the need for referrals to external laboratories, which many patients cannot afford.



Immunoassay analyser machine

Community outreaches led by the paediatric team were conducted during the month. These outreaches brought services directly into the slum, reaching families who often delay care until illness becomes severe.

- Early screening helped identify health concerns before complications developed
- Health education improved caregiver awareness and decision-making
- Referrals ensured continuity of care for children needing further treatment

While the outreaches faced logistical and environmental challenges, the benefits were clear. Early screening in the slums reduces preventable hospital admissions, lowers long-term treatment costs, and saves lives by acting before conditions worsen.

Stories from the Maternal Clinic



Lydia Butem's twins (Jane and Janet) and her elder daughter

Lydia's story captures the impact of Pablo Horstmann's donor-supported care. She is a mother who first visited the Clinic in her 4th month of pregnancy. At the maternal Clinic, she received free antenatal care and an ultrasound. The scan revealed that she was carrying twins. The scan's accuracy enabled her to plan early, prepare emotionally and financially, and attend the clinic consistently. Lydia shared that without the free services, she would not have been able to afford Clinic visits or an ultrasound. Later in her pregnancy, she faced food insecurity. Through a referral to the Clinic's social office, she received food support and Pampers for her twins. Today, despite ongoing life challenges, she describes the Clinic services as top-notch and says the burden of healthcare is no longer a source of fear for her family. She concluded with a heartfelt prayer, asking God to bless the donors who made her journey possible. The twins are healthy and full of life.

Clinic staff continued to demonstrate strong commitment throughout the month. High patient volumes were managed with care, patience, and professionalism. Many staff members went beyond their assigned duties without complaint, driven by a shared responsibility to serve with compassion and integrity. As demand for services grows, so does the importance of recognising and supporting this dedicated workforce.

The Continuous Medical Education sessions continued to strengthen staff skills and clinical knowledge. During the month, paediatric doctor Marta's tenure ended. The clinic remains deeply grateful for her mentorship and guidance, as well as for the lasting impact of the knowledge she shared with the team. Such collaborations strengthen service quality and reinforce shared goals in maternal and child health.



Dr Marta with the clinic staff on the last simulation session

In December, the clinic prioritised sessions to deepen both knowledge and hands-on skills in critical clinical domains. The team conducted an in-depth review of paediatric burns. They explored burn grading and detailed protocols for managing both minor and severe cases with the clinic's available resources. Pharmacological expertise was advanced through a comprehensive session on metronidazole. In this session, staff examined the prodrug mechanism of action, discussed a range of clinical indications, and reviewed key safety considerations, including potential side effects. Sickle cell disease featured prominently. Staff explored its definition, local prevalence, diagnostic challenges, and evidence-based strategies for managing acute crises and chronic complications. A simulation of cardiogenic shock further enriched practical training. This exercise included basic paediatric CPR, the correct administration of adrenaline, and nuanced approaches to identifying various causes of respiratory distress. Collectively, these dynamic learning opportunities enhanced staff confidence, sharpened clinical judgment, and boosted the team's readiness to respond to both routine and emergency scenarios.

Throughout the month, the Ministry of Health provided ongoing supervision and technical support. This fostered a collaborative environment that elevated service delivery. Notable achievements included robust performance in TB services and comprehensive immunisation coverage. The clinic also saw improvements in maternal health outcomes and diligent disease surveillance and screening. These positive results highlight the effectiveness of coordinated efforts and strict adherence to national health standards. This ensures high-quality care for the community.

December marked a powerful close to the year. The Clinic is now poised for further progress as it enters the New Year. We extend heartfelt gratitude to every donor, supporter, and partner for your unwavering generosity, encouragement, and trust over the past year. Your selfless contributions kept our doors open, transformed obstacles into opportunities, and turned anxiety into reassurance. Because of you, the Clinic stayed accessible and remained a beacon of hope for families living on the margins.

Together, we can continue to make a profound difference for those who cannot afford to be left behind.

Primary Schools

Activities In December

Although schools were closed for the holiday break, the feeding program continued until December 19th to ensure consistent nutritional support for students, especially those from vulnerable households. Meals were distributed at schools according to coordinated schedules to ensure safety and accessibility. This effort helped maintain children’s well-being during the break and demonstrated the school's ongoing commitment to supporting learners outside the classroom.

The Ministry of Education has announced the results of the 2025 Kenya Junior School Education Assessment (KJSEA), marking the first cohort of Competency-Based Education (CBE) students moving from Junior to Senior School. The assessments, held from October 27 to November 3, aimed to gauge this group's readiness for their transition to senior secondary school in January 2026. Among the 1,130,459 learners who took the exam, 578,630 were male, and 551,829 were female. The results showed that female students generally performed better than their male counterparts nationwide.

The Competency-Based Education (CBE) system does not assign overall scores like average grades or school rankings, as CBE emphasises developing each student's unique potential rather than comparing or ranking them. In this system, each subject is assessed separately, and pupils' progress is reported through performance levels (P.L.: exceeding, meeting, achieving, or below expectations) rather than cumulative scores.

The assessment used both summative and formative evaluation methods throughout junior school, comprising 20% for grade 7, 20% for grade 8, and 60% for grade 9. These were reported on a scale of 1 to 8, with 8 representing the highest level (*Exceeding Expectations 1*) and 1 the lowest (*Below Expectations 2*). Candidates who sat the assessment will be placed in one of the three designated Senior School pathways: Arts & Sports Science, Social Sciences, or STEM.

KJSEA Performance Per School											
Primary School	EE1	EE2	ME1	ME2	AE1	AE2	BE1	BE2	X	OVERALL	TOTAL
Sancta Maria Kayaaba	0	8	35	67	52	33	5	0	1	ME2	200
St Elizabeth	0	15	54	103	101	55	16	0	5	ME2	344
St Bakhita	0	17	27	52	35	11	0	1	5	ME2	148
St Catherine	1	6	35	38	43	21	7	0	2	ME2	151
Total	1	46	151	260	231	120	28	1	13	ME2	843

Among the four MPC primary schools, 54% of pupils are performing well, 42% are close to expectations, and 4% are below expectations.

St Michael's Secondary School

Activities In December

A quiet calm settled over the grounds of St Michael's Secondary School in December. The once lively corridors and classrooms, recently bustling with the sounds of final examinations, now echoed with anticipation as students awaited the Ministry of Education's results. The student's sense of accomplishment, mixed with nervous excitement, marked the end of a demanding academic year, during which many external factors impacted the learning environment. As the campus emptied, teachers and staff embraced a well-deserved respite, preparing to return refreshed for the new academic year beginning on 6th January 2026.

Progression to one's preferred secondary school is never assured. For Grade 9 students completing Junior Secondary in primary schools, the next step hinges on an official Invitation Letter, typically released by the secondary school, only after the Ministry of Education's results are announced. This process, filled with both hope and uncertainty, shapes each student's future. St Michael's played a pivotal role this year by issuing over 600 invitation letters to students from 4 MPC primary schools: St Bakhita, St Catherine, St Elizabeth, and Sancta Maria, offering them the chance to further their education. For many of the poor, the annual fee of 25,000 khs (€165) is beyond them. The MPC Sponsorship program provides a lifeline, especially to the gifted students.

A highlight of the month arrived with the generous donation of laboratory equipment from the South African Women's Association (SAWA), received by Mr Charles Ngare, the school's Principal. The shiny new microscopes, precision glassware, Bunsen burners, and essential safety gear promise to transform practical science lessons into immersive, hands-on experiences. With these resources, students will no longer just read about experiments; they will observe and discover firsthand. Careful procedures for storage and management have been established to ensure these valuable resources remain available for years to come. The heartfelt appreciation of St Michael's Secondary School goes out to the South African Women's Association, whose thoughtful support will leave a lasting legacy in science education.

After a break-in at the school last month that resulted in several computers being stolen, a decision was made to upgrade and install more CCTV cameras.



Mr Ngare with SMSS staff unpacking the donated resources



Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre

Activities In December

Most activities at OLMVTC this period centred on completing both external and internal industrial examinations. Specifically, for the NITA courses (National Industry Training Authority), 105 students sat for Grade III exams in Catering, Garment Making, Hairdressing, Plumbing and Masonry, Welding and Fabrication, Art and Craft, and Housekeeping and Laundry. In addition, the KNEC courses (Kenya National Examination Council) focused on Food and Beverage at various levels, with 51 students taking these exams. Furthermore, internal assessments covered 22 students in Special Needs, Deejaying, and Computer Studies. Notably, some courses, such as Food and Beverage or Catering, may involve examinations from both NITA and KNEC, offering students broader certification opportunities.

During the examination period, we were especially mindful of the unique challenges some students faced. For example, one student endured the pain of losing her father in a tragic hit-and-run accident. Additionally, two other candidates demonstrated remarkable resilience by completing their exams while caring for their newborn infants, just a week old.

Following these assessments, a productive partner meeting was held to discuss the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) currently being drafted by KWAL. Through this initiative, the new program will bring together MPC, Kenya Wine Agency, Tamarind Hotel, and St Teresa's in Karen. For the program, St Teresa's Centre will develop and provide the curriculum. At the same time, students will complete their attachments at Tamarind Hotel and continue gaining hands-on experience through the apprenticeship program.

National Industry Training Authority Examinations



Hairdressing



Garment Making



Plumbing



Masonry



Art and Craft

Kenya National Examination Council



Catering and Hospitality

MPC Internal Examinations



Computer Studies



Special Needs class

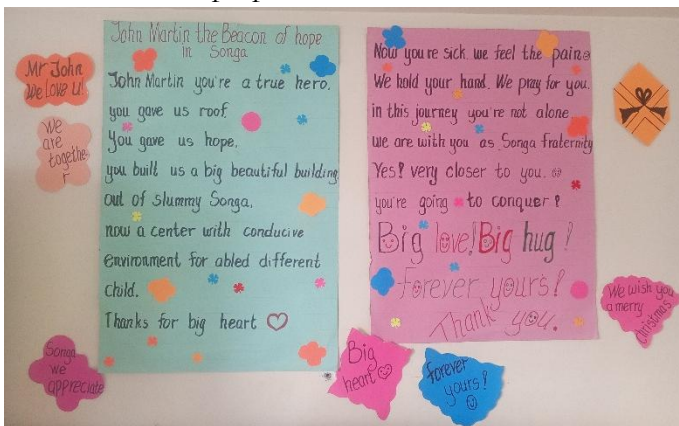


Deejaying

Songa Mbele na Masomo Children's Centre Activities In December

December 2025 at Songa Centre was brief but productive. The Centre closed on 11th December for the holidays while prioritising uninterrupted learning, therapy, and developmental support. Enrolment remained steady at 107 learners (68 boys, 39 girls). Students participated in stage-based lessons, therapy, games, and life-skills training, with consistent routines to maintain engagement and developmental progress. Teachers, caregivers, and volunteers collaborated closely to ensure every learner was supported and active throughout the shortened term.

Students in the pre-vocational class participated in mat-making, basket-weaving, and poetry, allowing them to explore their creativity and develop valuable hands-on skills. In recognition of John and Ciara McCarrick's support for the Songa Mbele Children's Centre, the class dedicated a special poem to them. These activities prepared students for the transition to the vocational Centre, where they will build independence, self-reliance, and social inclusion.



Poem to John McCarrick

During the reporting period, Songa Mbele Centre enhanced staff skills and institutional coordination through targeted training, meetings, and spiritual activities. All staff attended a two-day session on the new Special Needs Education (SNE) Curriculum, focusing mainly on teacher retooling, led by Mr Stephen Mwaura, a Curriculum Support Officer from Inclusive Education at Uplands Institute of Professional Education.



Special Needs Retooling Program



The training covered Individualised Education Plans, stage-based curricula, children’s assessments, creating an inclusive learning environment, developing schemes of work, and using ICT tools within an inclusive setup. It improved staff understanding of inclusive teaching methods, enhanced curriculum planning, and strengthened their ability to customise instruction to meet diverse learner needs in accordance with national curriculum reforms.

Training session

Additionally, a social worker participated in specialised training focused on child safeguarding and on the history, mission, core values, charisma, and ethos of the Sisters of Mercy. The social workers reviewed their activities, successes, and challenges from the year. Songa Mbele staff specifically pointed out absenteeism as an issue, mainly caused by illness among children or their parents/carers, which prevents children from attending the Centre. Such training will help the Centre strengthen child protection systems, raise awareness of children’s rights and well-being, and promote values-based service delivery aligned with the Sisters of Mercy's core values of compassion, respect, integrity, and a God-Centered community.

A parents’ meeting was organised to reflect on children’s achievements, challenges, and overall progress. During the session, parents discussed their children’s learning, therapeutic and social development, and the developmental milestones they have reached. They also discussed collaboration among parents, caregivers, teachers, and the Centre to support children’s growth, as well as plans and expectations for the upcoming academic year. Parents were encouraged to continue working closely with teachers and caregivers to reinforce learning, therapy goals, life skills, and home programs. These efforts aim to promote a shared commitment to the children's holistic development and well-being. The meeting also served as a platform for feedback and for improving service delivery and programs.



Parents’ Meeting

Ramon Tanda, with his father and teacher Doris, receives his prize for his efforts during the year.



The therapy sessions conducted over 9 working days in December focused on maintenance, review and transition. The total number of therapy clients is now 78, 53 for physiotherapy, 25 for occupational therapy and 37 for speech therapy. Children who demonstrated progress in various areas were honoured during a prize-giving ceremony held on the same day, with parents in attendance. This event aimed to motivate learners by recognising effort and improvement rather than fostering competition. The Centre management also thanked parents for their ongoing trust, support, and active participation throughout the year. Before the Centre closed for the break, Fr Dan from Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in South B led the Thanksgiving Mass, which was attended by students, teachers, and some parents. Father Dan shared reflections on the significance of thankfulness and gratitude.



Thanksgiving Mass

Mary Immaculate Rehabilitation Centre

Activities In December

After 12 months of residential rehabilitation, the 2025 cohort of 59 boys graduated from the Centre. Many contributors, both local and international, have played a vital role in the boys' development. The program has a 75% success rate. Most boys are expected to return to their families following the rehabilitative process. Some will pursue trades like carpentry through apprenticeships or find jobs in the Industrial Area. Meanwhile, academically promising students will hopefully continue their education once sponsors are found.

The Graduation event was a mix of emotions as some boys were reintegrated with their families. Their parents and guardians were delighted to see the boys reformed and hopeful that they would perform well in their exams, even after completing the rehabilitation program. Fr. Dan presided at the Graduation Mass at the Centre on 17th December 2025.



Graduation Ceremony

The figures at the Centre showed slight variations: 11 students went home for Graduation, 5 returned to their families for the Christmas holiday, and 18 are awaiting pickup by their parents or guardians after completing the 12-month residential program.

Following the release of the Grade 9 results, there were joyful celebrations as the boys performed well and looked forward to joining senior secondary school. The carpentry class completed their final NITA exams and is awaiting results scheduled for February 2026. It is hoped that all carpentry students will have started interning at various companies by the end of January. A big thank you to Vera Smith and Adrienne Burke for donating the graduation tool kits. The 'Step Down' program for carpentry graduates, sponsored by Paul Pardy (RIP), Catherine Nolan initially and then by Paul and Siobhan Scott from Ireland, offers an opportunity to live independently for the 3 months of their industrial apprenticeship with all essential services like water, rent, and utilities fully covered. This support allows graduates to focus on achieving a full carpentry qualification. It's a great program that lets them focus on their trade and live stress-free.



Carpentry Class after Graduation

During the holiday, the boys engaged in a range of enriching activities—counselling, sports like football and rugby, and creative classes in music and art. These programs focus on building moral discipline, work ethic, and consistency. A highlight was when 15 boys, sponsored by Paula Cullen and her team, travelled to Mombasa in December to compete in a football tournament, where they excelled in the round-robin competition and reached the semi-final, only to be defeated 1-0.



MIRC Soccer Team in Mombasa

Beyond recreation, the Centre introduced practical skills through farming and raising animals. Many boys enjoyed these tasks and plan to use them at home after rehabilitation, to support their families or generate income. The key milestones this year included the graduation of boys who completed carpentry exams and the successful reintegration of several boys with their families following safety checks. Gratitude to God and the Centre’s supporters remains central, as their help has enabled these opportunities.

The music teacher has kept engaging the boys in playing the violin and keyboard. They demonstrated their musical skills at the graduation ceremony, attended by all the boys, visitors, and parents. Several boys also expressed their intention to pursue music even after graduating from the program.



Practise for the Graduation Ceremony

A big thank you to Paula Cullen and her team for their financial support of the music program through instruments, materials, and the teacher’s salary. Music has added another discipline that helps foster the boys' overall talent development.

The boys also play rugby and are eager to continue improving their tackling techniques. During training, noticeable progress has been made, and their coach is committed to helping them excel. The goal is to keep developing and eventually compete in friendly matches against other teams.



Boys warming up for Rugby training



The Art classes have been exploring different techniques in beadwork and painting. The boys are encouraged to keep practising, as these skills could help them create income-generating activities (IGAs) after completing the program. We appreciate Paula Cullen, her team, and Brothers and Sisters in Need for helping foster more creativity at the Centre.

Art Class

Taking responsibility for living things adds character to any person. Ensuring the vegetable garden is well maintained, caring for and feeding the chickens and rabbits, broadens the boys' sense of accountability at the Centre. The boys have participated in farm work as part of the program. Some of them, being from upcountry, have embraced farming and are also guiding others with staff support. Additionally, they are receiving training in Agribusiness, which will help them earn income when they return to their families. We sincerely thank Brothers and Sisters in Need for their support throughout the year. The boys have greatly enjoyed the program, which includes daily feedings. To ensure everyone has a chance to participate in caregiving, a rotational duty system has been implemented.



We were fortunate to have visitors from Old House Resort, including Benson, a trained boxer who taught the boys boxing skills they enjoyed and wanted to learn more about.

Benson and some of the boys

As Christmas nears, we thank many local and international supporters who help make the boys' celebration memorable. We often welcome British Airways crew members during the holiday, who spend several hours with the boys singing and dancing on the big day. Special thanks to Frank Cullen for always providing a “goat or two” for the boys at Christmas. Nyama Choma, or roast goat, is a national dish and is highly enjoyed by both the boys and staff. Many thanks to Paula Cullen and her team for sponsoring the Christmas party with sumptuous food, sodas and face painting.

Christmas Party at the Rehabilitation



Noreen Walsh and Mary Richardson from the USA visited the Centre multiple times, including on Christmas Day, to listen to their carol singing, watch the games and celebrate the spirit of Christmas with them.



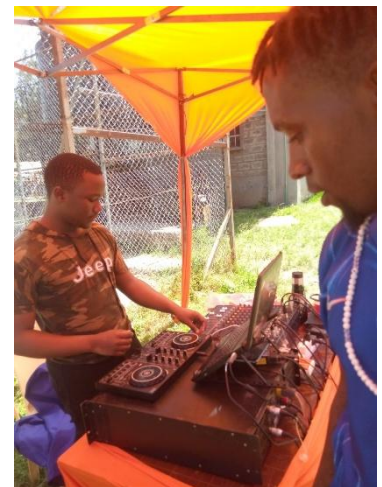
Christmas lunch



St Stephen's Day



The Whistle Foundation sponsored St Stephen's Day with a bouncy castle, games and music. The vocational students provided the DJs and the music for the afternoon.



Thanks to the numerous donors in 2025 who provided fresh provisions and resources, supported special projects and sporting events, and sponsored activities throughout the year.



Asanteni sana

Sponsorship Office

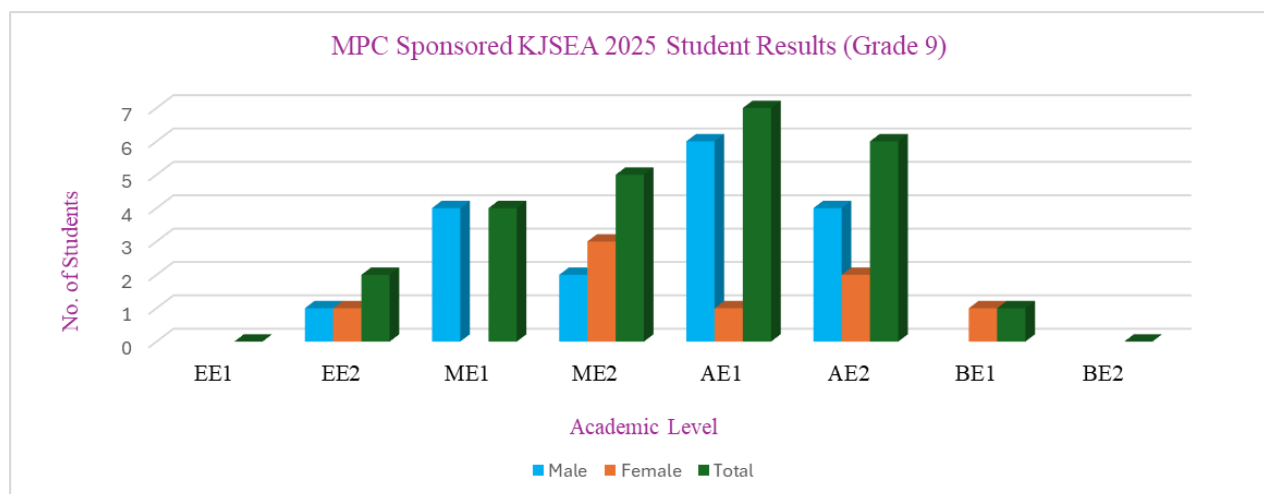
Activities In December

In 2025, the sponsorship program supported a total of 859 students, of whom 48% were male and 52% were female. All received financial and moral backing throughout the year, helping them stay in school despite challenging economic conditions. This assistance significantly lowered absenteeism and dropout rates, particularly among students from highly vulnerable households in the Mukuru community.

One key activity in December was to ensure that all academic reports for Term 3 sponsored students were shared with our donors. The Sponsorship office successfully distributed the students' academic report forms and appreciation letters for the year's end. These letters allowed students to thank donors directly for their support of their education and personal development.

December offered a chance to intentionally connect with donors beyond formal academic updates. Appreciation notes were sent to thank our partners for their steady support during the year. In the same messages, we also asked for ongoing and increased support for the 2026 academic year. These contacts were vital for strengthening relationships and keeping donors informed and engaged in the students they support's journey.

The Kenya Junior School Education Assessment (KJSEA) results were released. MPC had 25 sponsored Grade 9 students who sat the national assessment, with 44% exceeding expectations and meeting expectations. We are pleased to report that all these students completed the examination and are expected to proceed to Grade 10 at Senior Secondary School in 2026. This milestone reflects the positive impact of timely sponsorship support at the junior secondary level.



The month also saw a notable academic achievement at the tertiary level. One sponsored student, sponsored by Sr Deirdre Mullan, graduated successfully with a Diploma in Social Work from Moi University, earning a distinction. By 2025, 12 graduates will enter the workforce: 8 from the Fidel Goetz Foundation program, 3 from the Sr Deirdre Mullan and 1 supported by the Friends of Sr Mary Killeen. Offering these opportunities highlights the long-term benefits of continuous sponsorship from primary school through higher education and encourages younger students to aim for further studies.



Damaris Mueni graduated from Moi University Main campus with a diploma in Social Work and Community Development.

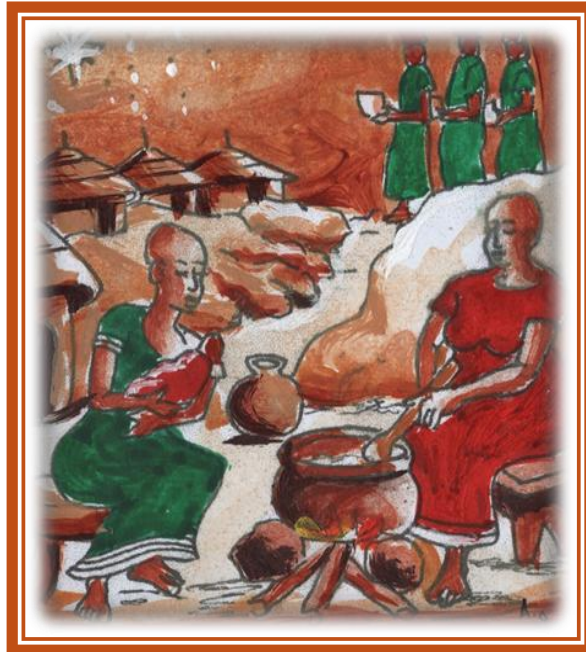
Damaris Mueni

A former MPC beneficiary and alumnus from Slovakia, Benson Alumbasi, visited MPC. Benson was rescued from the streets and spent a few years in King Baudouin’s Home. MPC sponsored his primary and secondary schooling. He then enrolled in the Public Health Diploma course set up by Professor Krcmery at the Mary Immaculate Clinic in the 1990s. Benson completed the course, married and went to Slovakia with his wife. Benson continued with his studies, completing a Master's degree and eventually finishing his doctorate. He shared his inspiring life and career journey with students. He lives in Slovakia with his wife and children. He coached the students’ football team and discussed ways to connect the Centre with other alumni to grow and strengthen the alumni network. Plans were also made to reunite the wider alumni group in the future, enabling them to engage directly with current beneficiaries through mentorship and shared experiences.



Benson Alumbasi with some St. Bakhita students

Blessed Christmas



Artwork by disadvantaged youth at MPC.
The Christmas scene depicts Kenyan heritage, landscape, culture and people.

We want to express our heartfelt gratitude to each of you for demonstrating your compassion by supporting MPC's services.

Thanks to your support, MPC marked 40 years of love, care, and mercy to the Mukuru community in 2025. Your contributions have been vital to our journey.

On behalf of the MPC staff,
May our love deepen and our joy increase as we enter the stable of the Christ Child.
May we feel true Love and Peace this Christmas and into the New Year.
May the New Year 2026 bring you happiness, good health, and success.

Sr Mary Killeen

MPC Head Office will close for Christmas on Tuesday, 23rd December and reopen on Monday, 4th January 2026.

The Rehabilitation Centre will remain open throughout the Christmas-New Year holidays.



Announcements

December Activities Outside the Departments

While the various departments of MPC provide an overview of the month's events, the Head Office operates behind the scenes to support and coordinate activities that align with departmental objectives and targets.

Alongside these activities, there are other significant events and developments to consider. This month, the MPC Head Office remained committed to supporting its programmes and the Mukuru community, despite ongoing challenges such as rising living costs and national unrest. The team worked hard to ensure uninterrupted operations and deliver essential services to those in need.

- 46 We would like to bring to your attention that after 5 years, Absa Bank, Kenya, have advised MPC that donations through its website's platform will incur a **2.8% charge**, effective immediately. MPC has checked with various banks and found that Diamond Trust Bank, Kenya, does not charge a fee for using money transfer services like Remittly and Western Union. Management is currently making some changes, and we will inform you once these are implemented. We apologise for any inconvenience, and we are incredibly grateful for your generosity.

- 46 The Head Office closure for Christmas will be between 23rd December 2025 to 4th January 2026 inclusive.

- 46 The Mary Immaculate Rehabilitation Centre will remain open across the Christmas holiday break.

- 46 Sr Barbara Dooley's requiem Mass will be held in Whitby, United Kingdom, on Tuesday, 27th January 2026 at 11.00am.



Mukuru Promotion Centre

Empowerment Step by Step

Ministry of the Sisters of Mercy

40 Years Anniversary

www.mercymukuru.co.ke

Thank you for your continued support

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