

January Newsletter

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Dear Partners, Supporters and Friends,

January marks the beginning of the school year in Kenya, and it is typically a busy time. However, this year has been even more hectic than usual due to changes in the educational system and the demolition of the Maraguini slum, which is the nearest informal settlement to St. Catherine’s Primary School.

The recent changes to the educational system have caused significant disruption. Students are now delayed by a year in primary school, while senior secondary school has been shortened to just one year. Many parents struggle to understand the new grading system, which assigns grades based on three different pathways rather than a single grade. Most parents aspire for their children to attend the most prestigious schools, which are now overcrowded. As a result, many students remain out of school, hoping to gain admission to reputable boarding schools, often relying on donors for financial support when they cannot afford tuition. They tend to look down upon local day schools and continue to wait for opportunities at their preferred institutions. Private schools actively promote their students’ successes through newspapers, television, the internet, and radio as part of their marketing strategy. Additionally, the National Schools of Kenya, which accept the brightest students, receive substantial publicity. Consequently, primary school pupils and their parents believe that success is only achievable by attending these expensive schools.

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The demolition of Maraguini was an improvement over previous demolitions. Residents received ample notice to dismantle their structures and secure valuables. Many received 30,000 Ksh (€200) for relocation. Most moved to nearby villages in the Mukuru Informal sector to keep their children's education and their jobs intact. Although affordable housing was offered, many couldn't accept it due to financial constraints, including legal fees and rent.

I was away from MPC from January 20th to January 30th to attend the funeral of Sr Barbara, who had worked with us for over 32 years. It was a sorrowful farewell. I was grateful to meet her sister, Pauline, as well as her niece and grandnephew. Additionally, I was pleased to meet Sr Barbara's congregational leader, Sr Bernadette Holmes and other sisters, who were very kind to me during this difficult time. They made all the arrangements needed to close Sr Barbara's accounts. In a generous gesture, they decided to donate the funds in Kenya that were set aside for Sr Barbara's upkeep to the Mukuru Promotion Centre, ensuring that her care for the students of St Catherine's will continue. The Sisters of Mercy community in Bermondsey hosted me and covered all my travel and accommodation expenses in Whitby, where Sr Barbara died and was buried. I had the opportunity to meet some of the volunteers and donors who had supported Sr Barbara over the years, including Theresa and Owain Jones, John and Moira Burns, Paula Cullen, Adrienne Burke, and Rion and Chris Teegan, who travelled from Ireland and various parts of the UK to say their goodbyes. It was wonderful to see them again. I really missed Colette Foulkes, Sr Josephine, and the Sisters from Hull. Unfortunately, they were unable to make the journey due to severe weather conditions. While we rarely saw the sea because of the heavy rain and mist during our stay across the road, when the weather cleared, we discovered that Whitby is a very picturesque town with a lot of historical interest. I spent a few days in Bermondsey, where I found a source of rest and refreshment. I was happy to spend time with Sr Assumpta Walsh, who worked with us in Mukuru for several years. What memories we have of our years in Nairobi! Sr Patricia Bell and the community gave me a wonderful welcome and hospitality. I remember them with great gratitude. It was sad to leave them again.

As highlighted in the newsletter, work progressed smoothly during my absence, thanks to the dedicated efforts of MPC's management and staff. I would like to extend my gratitude to Caroline Cullen and Maria Farrell, who collaborated with Rosemary and Eric to deliver belated Christmas presents to the children of St. Catherine's. They also contributed in many other meaningful ways. Sister Barbara had planned this event for a long time and had set aside gifts for the occasion. It was fulfilling to see her plans come to fruition.

I am grateful to all of you. Your support allows us to continue confidently this year. Thank you for your assistance in enabling our services.

Sr Mary Killeen
Director

Archival Corner

This month in history MPC sponsored schools become separate entities in 1995.

Since the establishment of the MPC-sponsored Primary Schools, beginning with Mukuru Kayaaba Primary in 1985, additional schools were set up as branches of Kayaaba. These branch schools were managed by Sr. Mary Killeen, who served as the Head Teacher, with the assistance of deputies.

- Reuben Primary School (1991),
- Mukuru Central Primary School (1991),
- St. Catherine's Primary School (1992) and
- St. Elizabeth Primary School (1993).

In 1997, Mukuru Central was given to the Marianist Society, which renamed it Our Lady of Nazareth Primary School. In 2000, Reuben Primary School was handed over to the Australian Christian Brothers. The sixth and final primary school, St. Bakhita Primary, was established in 1996. At its peak, over 10,000 children were enrolled in one of the six primary schools established through MPC.

During this period, there was a significant increase in cases of land grabbing of public lands by well-connected cartels. In response, the MPC Management requested that the government take over the management of schools, while MPC would remain the founders and sponsors. Consequently, in January 1995, these MPC Schools became separate entities, with the government appointing Head Teachers in consultation with MPC Management. However, due to severe understaffing and a rising poverty rate among the residents of Mukuru Slums, MPC continued to hire additional teachers to improve the student-to-teacher ratio. They also employed other technical staff, including social workers, secretaries, cooks, and security personnel. Currently, over 6,000 children are enrolled in one of the four MPC-sponsored primary schools. Under the new Education Act of 2013, sponsors are given significant influence over school operations through the appointment of Head Teachers and the acknowledgment of their charisms in these operations.

Thanks to the support and generosity of our esteemed donors, these achievements have given tens of thousands of children hope for dignified lives where the sky is the limit.

E_{ducation}

P_{primary Schools}

St Bakhita, St Catherine's, St Elizabeth and Sancta Maria Kayaaba

The beginning of a new academic year brings many transitions. Some children are starting school for the first time, while others are returning for their second through sixth year. There are also new children arriving from rural areas, meeting new teachers, and participating in orientation activities designed to help them adjust to school routines for the year ahead.

This year has presented additional challenges as the Government continues to implement the new education system, which remains unclear to some parents. Admissions were conducted across all classes, ensuring that all children were smoothly integrated into the school community. However, enrollment in MPC-sponsored Junior Schools has declined, largely because feeder schools within informal settlements have been granted approval to establish their own Junior Schools.

Transitions were successfully completed in all grades, with children advancing to the next level, an important milestone in their academic journey. Grade 6 candidate classes held parent meetings, focusing primarily on the submission of birth certificates required for national examinations, as many families are still struggling to obtain these documents.

In addition, each school held an opening Mass to set a spiritual and communal tone for the term. Together, these activities, structured orientations, admissions, parent engagement, and spiritual gatherings demonstrate the school's commitment to continuity, preparedness, and the holistic development of every child at the start of the new academic year.



St Elizabeth and St Bakhita Primary School Opening Mass

For the first time, Form 2 is now equivalent to the new Grade 10. Parents in Mukuru slums faced various challenges during their children's transition to Grade 10, including high school fees and related expenses, difficulty navigating complex placement procedures, and understanding the available pathways for their children's future. This was partly because parents lacked guidance in selecting schools that matched their children's interests and career goals, and often consulted teachers only after making their decisions. They also needed to learn how to use the digital placement system to verify schools via resources provided by the Ministry, but many struggled due to inactivity. Several sponsors have stepped up to support bright and needy children in Mukuru schools. The table lists 34 students who have received sponsorship.

Primary Schools	Hatua	Rotary Club of Milimani	Individual Sponsors	Highway Secondary School
St Bakhita	2		3	2
St. Catherine	2	13	2	-
St. Elizabeth	2	-	4	-
Sancta Maria	2	-	2	-

Unfortunately, many students have not yet enrolled in Grade 10. Some parents say the schools their children attend are far from home; some mention financial difficulties; others cite low test scores; and some have not decided where to enrol their children. The table below shows the number of students already enrolled in Grade 10, along with the 308 students (37%) who are still unlikely to enrol.

Schools	Enrolled Grade 10 Students	Not yet in School	Total Year Capacity
St. Bakhita	98	50	148
St. Catherine	96	55	151
St. Elizabeth	230	114	344
Sancta Maria	112	89	201

The 2025 KPSEA Assessment Results for the 4 MPC-sponsored primary schools show that three schools met the expected performance standards, while one was approaching them. Overall, pupils across the schools performed at an average level, which, though not exceptional, was sufficient to allow all candidates to proceed to Grade 7. The transition to Grade 7 has occurred, but it has not been fully achieved at 100%, indicating that while progress has been made, there are still gaps to be addressed to ensure smooth pupil progression.

MPC Sponsored Primary School KPSEA 2025 Results

SCHOOL	EE1	EE2	ME1	ME2	AE1	AE2	BE1	BE2	X	Overall	Total No. of Pupils
St Bakhita	0	20	23	21	32	22	8	0	9	ME2	135
St. Catherine	0	18	31	27	39	33	18	0	2	ME2	168
St. Elizabeth	0	22	47	46	62	49	18	0	0	ME2	244
Sancta Maria	0	15	33	51	57	24	11	0	0	AE2	191
Total	0	75	134	145	190	128	55	0	11	ME2	738

The ongoing problem of teacher transfers without immediate replacements continues. Each MPC-sponsored school has lost one or two primary teachers, creating staffing shortages and increasing the workload for remaining staff. This shortage disrupts the balance of teaching duties, leading teachers to manage larger classes and more students than usual. The delay in replacements raises concerns about maintaining quality instruction and personalised support for children, especially in critical subjects like Math, English, and Kiswahili, which demand daily focus and have limited expertise. To mitigate the shortfall, some smaller classes, mainly in lower grades, were combined. While this eased some pressure, it did not fully resolve the staffing gap, as teachers are still adjusting to rising enrollment. This strategy has helped sustain teaching continuity and student engagement but underscores the need for better planning and stronger support systems to prevent learning disruptions. The situation underscores the urgent need for proactive teacher recruitment and retention efforts to ensure stability and consistency in primary education.

MPC Sponsored Primary and Junior Secondary Schools Teaching Changes for 2026

School	Primary Grade Transfers	Junior Secondary Transfers	Primary Grade Replacements	Junior Secondary Replacements	Primary Grades Sent
St Bakhita	1	3	0	0	0
St Catherine	2	5	0	0	0
St Elizabeth	3	3	0	0	0
Sancta Maria	3	4	0	0	0

The schools continue to enrol vulnerable children to ensure they receive quality education and stay safe at school. Many children transferred because their parents relocated to the village due to job losses and the demolition of Mariguini slums, which left many homeless and without a source of income.

Other schools within the slums were allowed to establish Junior schools, so children who would normally attend one of the 4 MPC sponsored primary schools chose to stay in their local schools. Some of these schools in the slum would not have the resources or infrastructure of the MPC-sponsored schools.

MPC Sponsored Primary School Enrolments for 2026			
School	Boys	Girls	Total
St Bakhita	565	500	1,065
St Catherine	691	686	1,377
St Elizabeth	1,129	1,096	2,225
Sancta Maria	680	690	1,370
Total	3,065	2,972	6,037

Before the big stampede of children running around on the dirt, the Nairobi County Government Constituency Development Fund (NCGCDF) fixed the cabros (pavers) at Sancta Maria Primary School.



Cabros at Sancta Maria Primary School



St Michael's Secondary School

The enrolments for the new academic year has been slow due to the poverty of the slum dwellers. The number by the end of January was 386 consisting of 190 boys and 195 girls. The numbers are also down because of the changes in the education system where Form 1s (Grade 8 are now attending the junior secondary classes in the primary school campuses. Senior secondary will consist of Grade 10 (Form 2), Grade 11 (Form 3) and Grade 12 (Form 4) that will complete the transition to the new education system by 2028.

The Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) exam results were released in January. St Michael's had one boy who achieved a B-, the top score for the school, with 4 girls scoring a C+, bringing the total to 6 students who have gained entrance to university courses. There were 15 students who just missed out on achieving entrance to university with the girls performing better than the boys. The average Mean score in 2025 for the girls was 4.23, which was 2.33 down from 2024, and the boys' average mean was 3.75, which was up a little, 0.15 from 2024. For 2026, St Michael's will continue to support our students, when and where possible, to help them reach their potential.

To start the year, Fr Paulinos led the school community in prayer during the Opening Mass for 2026.



The most significant change for the students was the transition from Form 2 to Grade 10 admissions. Students received some counselling towards the end of last year to assist them in their subject selection. They can choose a career pathway now and work towards that for Grade 12. As Kenya shifts from content-based to competency-based education, it requires planning for the STEM pathway that emphasises skills development, learner-centred instruction, continuous assessment, and career pathways. STEM education encompasses the study of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. It emphasises an interdisciplinary approach, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovative skills. STEM education prepares students for a variety of careers in high-demand fields, promoting technological advancements and scientific discoveries.

The students need to select the applicable subjects, such as sciences, technical or humanities-based subjects. The more career guidance provided, the more positive the students' outcomes. Currently, there are 77 students enrolled on Grade 10, which is well below its capacity of 200. Since Form 2 was transferred to the primary school campuses, several classrooms at St Michael's have been freed up, enabling more Grade 10s to enrol.



Grade 10 student being admitted

A bonus at the start of the school year was a donation of sports equipment from the South Africa Women's Association. Jacqui Franco, representing the South African Women's Association in Kenya (SAWA), a not-for-profit organisation of expatriates who volunteer to give back to charities in Kenya. A ceremony at the school saw student representatives express their gratitude and appreciation to the donors.



South African Women's Association donation



Sports equipment donation

The school received 15 soccer balls, 40 training cones, 4 netballs, a waterhouse, 4 basketballs, goalkeepers' gloves, an agility ladder, a soccer pump, 4 badminton racquets, 4 lawn tennis racquets, shuttlecocks, table tennis balls, a stopwatch and training bibs.

The British Airways crew members also donated sports uniforms to both boys and girls. Donating uniforms eases the financial burden on families who struggle to afford school uniforms, let alone additional items such as sports gear and boots.



Students show the new sports uniforms



Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre

Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre (OLMVTC) has recently begun operations and is experiencing a gradual increase in student enrolments as many young individuals consider which courses to pursue. By the end of January, the Centre proudly welcomed 109 students across its nine diverse vocational programs. Enrolments will continue throughout February and March, supported by marketing efforts such as church announcements, school career days, and word of mouth.

Bishop Wainaina also toured OLMVTC and was impressed by the training being conducted there. Fr Gabriel, who was accompanying the Bishop, informed MPC about the possibility of funds from the Italian Episcopal Conference for the construction of the extension to the catering building at OLMVTC.



Among these, the hospitality students had the exciting opportunity to participate in a hands-on site visit and orientation at the renowned St. Therese Vocational Training Centre, located in the upmarket suburb of Karen. This experience is designed to enhance their skills through practical training, paving the way for their professional development in the hospitality industry for cohort 2 students.

The other group of 27 hospitality students will start their internships at various hotels in Nairobi.

Hospitality Cohort 2 on Orientation Day

The other students also received individual orientations at the Centre, where they were warmly welcomed and introduced to the available programs. With a sense of excitement and anticipation in the air, they eagerly began their learning journeys for the year, diving into new subjects and activities designed to inspire, engage and give them hope.



Computer Class



Special Needs Class



Hair and beauty Class

MPC and KWAL have collaborated to allow hospitality students to complete part of their training at St. Therese's in Karen. A meeting was held to establish a shared understanding, and it was decided to adopt St. Therese's curriculum. The two institutions agreed to engage in inter-staff teaching, focusing on areas such as housekeeping and laundry, entrepreneurship, nutrition, and food science.



Meeting between KWAL, MPC and St. Therese's Vocational Centre

The key partner and sponsor of the INUA program is Heineken, which has recently acquired KWAL. Frank Ford, the Heiken representative, expressed his desire to meet with both partners to better understand MPC's involvement with St. Therese Vocational Training Centre. He welcomed the partnership and praised the direction taken to benefit the students, noting that St. Therese is a well-established institution with extensive experience in hospitality studies.

Transformations

Songa Mbele na Masomo Children's Centre

January 2026 marked a positive and promising start to the year for the Centre. The turnout at the beginning of the year was encouraging, reflecting increased commitment and engagement with its services. Seven new children were admitted to the Centre and 3 children were exited in January to commence new journeys in their learning, one child will attend Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre, one to St Bakhita Primary School to commence grade 3 and two children with severe disabilities will be absorbed into the community where their families will be supported through the family economic empowerment initiatives to enhance sustainability and long-term care. These transitions demonstrate the effectiveness of the Centre's preparatory and support programs. The remaining children participated in key program activities focused on assessments, admissions, therapy services, capacity building, community engagement, and learner welfare support.



Intermediate II Class

Speech, occupational, and physiotherapy services were provided consistently throughout the month for 102 children, including 6 new children, with 58 in physiotherapy, 18 in Speech, and 26 in occupational therapy. A significant number of children showed notable improvement in communication, mobility, and functional skills. However, due to the extended school holiday before reopening, some learners experienced a temporary regression. Continued therapy and close monitoring are expected to support their recovery and progress. The sessions for the month included 55 physiotherapy sessions, 21 Occupational sessions and 18 Speech sessions in January.

Achievers



Stanely Ochieng, a 9-year-old in the Intermediate 1 Class, is recovering from orthopaedic surgery. He underwent a tendon release on his left foot to improve movement and independence. Two months post-surgery, he began a structured physiotherapy program focused on pain relief, mobility restoration, and training.

Stanley Ochieng

Since acquiring bilateral hearing aids, Titiana has demonstrated significant progress in receptive language. Her expressive language has also improved. She can now identify and articulate common verbs and clothing items. She has also become familiar with vocabulary related to different environments such as the bathroom, kitchen and classroom. This marks a notable milestone in her communication journey. Some children regressed in January due to the absence of an Occupational Therapist, who left for a promotion. Not having the OT person meant that sensory integration sessions significantly affected attention, regulation, and participation for some children.



Titiana Irene with Tabitha, Speech therapist

The Centre maintained its focus on children's welfare by implementing support initiatives, including ongoing learning activities across all classes. Caregivers are vital to creating a continuous learning environment that provides the best for children. Teachers have started applying the new curriculum developed by the Ministry of Education for children with Special Needs. Additionally, 5 children in special boarding schools received educational materials and sponsorship to cover school fees, helping them remain enrolled.



Home visits are an important part of understanding our children's and families' needs. The social worker visited the homes of the 2 new children to support family engagement and to develop individualised planning. The Centre is the only one of its kind within a 4 km radius of Nairobi, and it is important that the Centre establishes whether the children seeking admission are indeed from Mukuru slums and to gauge the vulnerability level of the home. Demand for these services is high, and we need to ensure that low-income residents of the slums are not excluded.

Agatha Valentine and her mum on a home visit

The Centre frequently provides various forms of support to mothers and the community, who are usually more accessible during daylight hours. In January, it hosted a Father's Forum that brought together fathers, father figures, village elders, and local male leaders. The forum highlighted the vital role of male figures in aiding children with disabilities, encouraging shared responsibilities, inclusion, and the development of stronger family and community support networks.



Fathers' Forum

Financial independence is vital for everyone; however, for parents with children with disabilities, it is especially critical due to the additional care required. The Centre identifies projects that support parental financial independence and assesses their effectiveness for all involved. Recently, the Centre partnered with Identity Two Five Four (ID 254), based at the South B Shopping Centre, which focuses on marginalised groups, including women, girls, people with disabilities, refugees, and other vulnerable populations. ID 254 sponsored four parents from the Centre for full enrollment in a tailoring course, helping them achieve financial independence and eventually work from home.



A parent from the Centre at the tailoring class

Climate change and environmental issues are vital concerns for everyone. Children from the pre-vocational class with intellectual disabilities have established the “Green Club” at the Centre. Through simple, hands-on activities such as planting, watering, and harvesting, the children will learn about the environment while enhancing their fine motor skills, focus, confidence, and creativity. It is hoped that these skills will help them generate income from food production after leaving the Centre.



Green Club members and their first tomato harvest

The Centre appreciates the many visitors and donors who contribute items to support our activities and the families that we serve. We are especially thankful to the British Oxygen Company for donating school uniforms for 22 children, boosting their confidence and easing their parents' financial burden. Additionally, we received donations from Timsales Ltd and the Ashat Vaja family in London, including fresh produce, dried foods, and hygiene supplies.



Children with new uniforms

During the month, the Centre had 10 volunteers from the Rafa Institute of Caregiving, 3 from the United States International University, and 1 from Strathmore University, who assisted with various programs at the Centre.



Timsales Ltd



BA Crewmembers



Vaja Family



Bryan Omollo, physiotherapist, Bishop James, Helen HOD, and Sr Anne with Ramsey Kelly and Melvin Orangi.

We were pleased to welcome a special guest, Bishop James Maria Wainaina from the Diocese of Murang'a. Bishop James had heard many stories about Songa Mbele and was eager to visit the Centre himself. He was delighted to witness the amazing work being done each day at Songa for children with disabilities.



Sr Anne and Bishop James with Becky of Intermediate II Class

January is typically very busy as we begin the year, ensuring all children are settled into their assigned classes and that necessary resources are available from the outset to facilitate smooth operations throughout the month. Despite these activities, the Centre organised several capacity-building sessions for staff. DKA sponsored a one-day training session was held to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding structures, identify existing gaps, and develop an action plan to address these issues. The training took place in the multipurpose hall and was attended by DKA partner organisations, including MPC. The session was facilitated by Mercy Chege from the DKA Nairobi Office. At the same time, MPC led sessions on its Mission and Values, covering topics including the Sisters of Mercy's work, human resources management, communications, resource mobilisation, sustainability strategies, and strengthening leadership alignment and institutional capacity.



DKA conducts training for DKA partners in Nairobi at the MPC Head Office

Mary Immaculate Rehabilitation Centre

January marked the start of the new academic year and the recruitment program for the 2026 cohort. The sponsored boys who had attended St Teresia's Boarding School in Makueni County were transferred to St Peter and Paul Boarding School in Embu County due to fees and transportation costs. The 7 carpentry boys completed their Grade III carpentry course at the Mary Immaculate Centre and commenced their apprenticeships at Furniture International, Antiqua Furniture and Exotic Craft International. We are very grateful to these companies that have supported the Centre for a number of years by assisting the boys to continue their road to rehabilitation and future prospects. All the boys received the necessary items, sponsored by Irene Plunkett Family and Friends, to help them settle into the 'Step Out' rooms, where they can report to their apprenticeship workplaces.



A few of the carpentry boys pack to go to the Step-Out rooms.

Caroline Cullen and Maria Farrell from Whistle Ireland visited the Centre in January and hosted a celebratory lunch for the carpentry boys who were leaving to begin a new chapter in their lives.



Whistle with George Orenge and Elijah Bahati

The recruitment process involves several stages to ensure that the street boys genuinely want to participate in the transformation. Typically, it spans a few weeks to keep it realistic and positive. By January 16, 16 boys had accepted MIRC's invitation to rehabilitate themselves with its support.

The Whistle Foundation Ireland dedicates a significant portion of their time to the Rehabilitation Centre during their visits to Nairobi. On their latest trip, they took the opportunity to purchase vibrant new uniforms and sturdy shoes for the boys who are eager to attend St. Catherine's Primary School. This thoughtful gesture not only equips the children with the essentials for their education but also instils excitement and pride as they prepare to embark on their academic journeys.



Caroline and Maria with some of the Rehab boys

The Centre had the distinct honour of welcoming Bishop James Maria Wainaina from the Catholic Diocese of Murang'a. The Bishop expressed keen interest in exploring the Centre's programs and showed particular enthusiasm for the Centre's innovative digital learning initiatives, especially the use of ProFuturo tablets. Bishop James was eager to understand how these tablets are effectively integrated into the Centre's approach to remedial and accelerated learning, demonstrating a commitment to improving their educational experience. As a result of his interest, Bishop James sent Sr Mary Wanjiku from the Guardian Angels Learning Centre in Kerugoya, County Kirinyaga, to the Centre to engage in benchmarking activities focused on our innovative digital learning program. Sr Wanjiku worked closely with our teachers, exchanging insights and exploring best practices to boost educational outcomes for our students. The interaction provided a wonderful opportunity for professional growth and shared learning.

A well-wisher who wishes to stay anonymous sponsored the boys' lunch at the AP camp in Shauri Moyo to mark the New Year. Gemma, a crew member from British Airways, and her son, Simon, assisted in serving the drinks and lollies.



Donations of clothes



Gemma and Simon



Lunch

The Centre deeply appreciates the generous contributions from our local supporters, who, in January, consistently provide us with fresh provisions, a variety of refreshing sodas, essential clothing, and vital hygiene items. Their kindness and community spirit greatly enhance our ability to serve those in need.



Avocados donated by the Call Africa organisation for the children.



Suleiman donations, buns, fish and rice.



Watermelons from an anonymous farmer from Machakos County



Equity Group donation

Sponsorship Office

Schools reopened in January, and our primary focus was to ensure that all 268 sponsored students reported on time and were fully prepared to begin the academic year. During this period, the national examination results for KCSE and KPSEA were also released. We continued engaging our donors through visits, regular communication, and follow-up on sponsorship commitments for the year ahead.

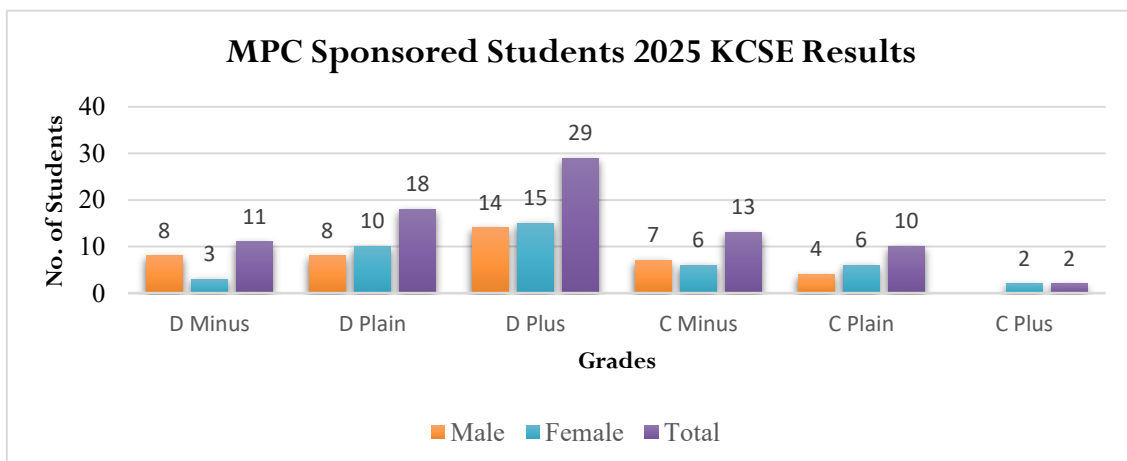


The Centre received a visit from Robert Kanake, a member of the Mukuru Alumni, who delivered a cheque for students sponsored by the Alumni. The visit provided an opportunity to briefly update him on the students' progress and express our appreciation for the continued support.

Robert Kanake of Mukuru Alumni

With schools reopening at all levels, the Sponsorship Office worked closely with students, parents, and school administrators to support a smooth transition into the new term. A key priority was the timely processing of school fees, particularly for students in Secondary Boarding Schools, to ensure they could report without delay. In addition, the Sponsorship Office facilitated the purchase of essential personal items required by schools, including uniforms, bedding, and basic learning materials. Providing these necessities helped students settle in comfortably and focus on their studies from the very start of the term.

The results of the 2025 KCSE exams revealed the fate of 83 sponsored students; 79 were from St. Michael's Secondary School, while 4 attended other secondary schools. The overall results highlighted the difficulties many students encountered but also demonstrated consistent effort by some students.



We were encouraged by the performance of two students who received C+ grades. Fridah Nyatich, a teenage mother with her one-month-old baby, sat her KCSE exams, as did Edith Awino. Both students, sponsored by MPC, have now qualified for university admission. Their success highlights the positive impact of ongoing support despite difficult circumstances. Additionally, the Grade 6 (KPSEA) results were released this month; however, the primary schools have not yet fully accessed or reviewed the results.



Fridah Nyatich



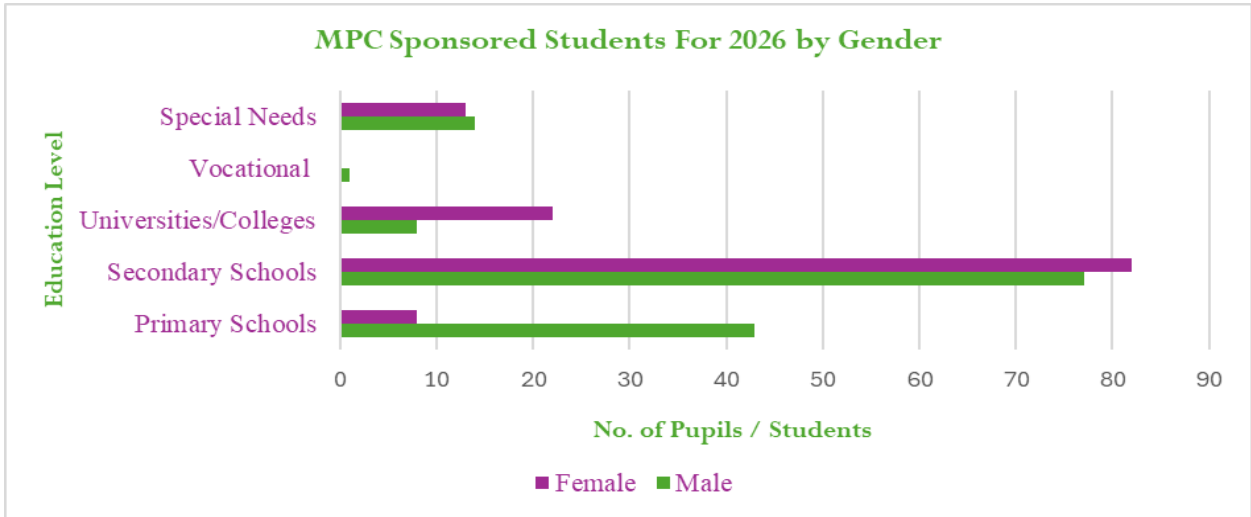
Edith Awino

We held a brief meeting with representatives from Equity Bank Kenya, Enterprise Road Branch, who sponsor 2 Form 3 boys. During the visit, the students had the opportunity to engage with a former Wings to Fly program beneficiary who shared his personal journey, the challenges he encountered during his school years, and how discipline, resilience, and commitment helped him improve his academic performance. He encouraged the boys to remain focused and work hard, reminding them that education can open many doors.

The session was highly motivating, particularly because he now works at Equity Bank and has overcome circumstances similar to those the boys are facing. Following the inspiring discussion, the bank representatives presented each student with a generous gift hamper containing essential hygiene items, further demonstrating the bank's commitment to their well-being and ongoing support.



Martin Muceeri and Duncan Owino with their gift hampers



While Whistle Foundation members were visiting St Catherine’s, they were struck by the condition of some pupils' uniforms, so they measured a few up and purchased new uniforms. The brown socks seemed to be a challenge; however, the funds were left so that when the brown socks arrive in the store, the children will have the complete outfit for the new school.



Some MPC sponsored St Elizabeth and St Catherine’s pupils received new school uniforms from Whistle Foundation, Ireland

Social & Health Services

Social Services

In January, the Social Services and Health Department outlined a strategic focus on enhancing operational agility and implementing early vulnerability-detection measures to ensure that crucial support for students continues despite the increasing socioeconomic challenges faced by many families. This month, a devastating fire broke out in the Kayaaba village, tragically consuming 15 households and displacing numerous families. In response, MPC sprang into action, providing emergency food relief to help stabilise the lives of 47 families affected, while our ongoing nutrition programs remained in place to foster long-term food security for over 117 households.



Whistle donated 100 food parcels to the fire victims in Kayaaba

To further enhance service delivery, we shifted student profiling to the initial stage of the admissions process. This proactive change allows us to swiftly identify at-risk students from the start, leading to a more tailored alignment of necessary interventions with individual needs. Additionally, our social workers have worked diligently to expand educational access for students by establishing connections to external scholarships through a diverse network of partners. This initiative effectively alleviates the financial burdens for many

families and significantly enhances student retention rates, ensuring that education remains an attainable goal for all.

Operational challenges mainly stem from low transition rates to higher grades, as many students stay at home due to unpaid school fees. In response, the Department has begun collecting data on children who have not yet enrolled in high school, totalling 119 profiles as of January.



Children receive clothes donations after the fire outbreaks

Land demolitions in the Mukuru area, particularly in Maraguini, have been carried out to facilitate the development of affordable housing and road widening. This has resulted in significant displacement and has disrupted the education of many students. The displacement, combined with financial barriers, has increased the demand for aid, as many families lost their possessions during the demolitions. The anguish of leaving home in the morning, only to return and find it in ruins, must be overwhelming. All their hard-earned belongings have been destroyed.



Maraguini buildings were demolished, impacting thousands of people

Child protection plays a crucial role within the Department, responsible for managing several high-priority cases related to student wellness and attendance. In January, there were 5 alleged abuse cases. These efforts included following up on cases, tracking missing students believed to have relocated to rural areas, and providing support to students facing various challenges. The Department also prioritised mental health, ensuring that students involved in critical health incidents received prompt medical intervention and consistent follow-up counselling. Ultimately, the 1,766 interventions during the month showcased a strong commitment to emergency response and risk management, ensuring that vulnerable learners are safeguarded and supported during difficult times.



Mentorship at St Bakhita Session



Sports uniform donations

Following up on the needs of the pupils at St Elizabeth identified dozens of children who did not have uniforms, shoes or resources for the year ahead.



St Elizabeth Primary Pupils receive new uniforms and school resources



Every year, Sr Barbara organised a Christmas party for the children at St. Catherine's Primary School, providing gifts for over 1,300 children. Sadly, Sr Barbara passed away on Christmas Eve while on a break in England, but her legacy of spreading love to children continues. In December, Noreen Walsh and Mary Richardson from the USA volunteered to wrap up all 1,300 presents, no mean feat. In January, members of the Whistle Foundation Ireland delivered the gifts to the children when they returned to school, a task that took 4 hours. Caroline Cullen and Maria Farrell prepared the lunch, which included sodas, biscuits, and a hot meal of meat, rice, and vegetables for the children as they received their gifts.



Maria hands out the biscuits



Caroline serves the lunches

M^{ary} Immaculate Clinic

We are pleased to welcome 2 new medical volunteers to MIC. First, we have Dr. Xavi Bernabeu, a Spanish pediatric consultant who will enhance our pediatric care and contribute to staff development through Continuing Medical Education (CME) sessions. Additionally, we welcome Anna Eichlberger, a nurse from Austria, whose contributions to maternal health will be invaluable.



Dr Xavi Bernabeu



Volunteer Nurse - Anna Eichlberger

January saw a significant increase in patient volumes due to issues such as poverty, displacement, and overcrowded living conditions in nearby slum communities. Despite these challenges, the clinic continued to operate fully and remains responsive, providing essential and life-saving services to the most vulnerable populations. With the ongoing support of our donors, partners, and well-wishers, the clinic has maintained its reputation as a trusted centre for accessible healthcare.

A total of 2,569 patients were treated, with a gender distribution of 62% female and 38% male. Among these, 1,367 were pediatric cases, accounting for 48% of the overall patient count for January. The clinic performed 1,436 laboratory tests, averaging 68 per day; 633 were for pediatric cases. Additionally, the Maternal and Child Health Services provided antenatal care to 256 mothers, immunised 115 children, and conducted 151 antenatal care (ANC) ultrasounds. January was marked by intense clinical activity.

The provision of free ultrasound services has significantly improved maternal healthcare. More women are consistently attending antenatal clinics, which has led to the early detection of pregnancy-related risks. Additionally, confidence in facility-based maternity care has increased—especially among mothers who previously avoided care due to cost.

Children made up nearly half of all patients seen during the month, many of whom presented with respiratory infections linked to overcrowding and poor living conditions. Free immunisations and laboratory services are essential for protecting children from preventable diseases while alleviating the financial burden on families living in poverty. Respiratory illnesses continue to be among the most common diagnoses. A growing concern

is the rise in suspected and confirmed cases of tuberculosis (TB), which is largely driven by congestion, poor ventilation, and delayed care-seeking behaviour. This trend underscores the urgent need for sustained diagnostic capacity, treatment adherence, and follow-up care.

The Ministry of Health (MOH) Sub-County recently held a Micro-Planning Meeting to update facility and sub-county maps, identify priority populations, and address barriers to service utilisation through targeted work plans. The Clinic's target population for 2026 includes:

- Children aged 0–5 years: 5,940
- Infants aged 0–11 months: 171
- Children aged 12–59 months: 570
- Children aged 18–24 months: 162
- Pregnant women: 201

A significant barrier identified during the planning discussions is the displacement of families due to government-led demolitions in key villages, including Mariguini. Many households have been forced to relocate further away from the Clinic. This displacement will impact poorer families, forcing them to walk longer distances, miss appointments, interrupt treatment for various diseases, particularly tuberculosis (TB), and delay antenatal care (ANC) visits. Displacement threatens continuity of care and places already vulnerable populations at even greater risk.



Micro-Planning Meeting

The Clinic is dedicated to enhancing the skills and knowledge of its practitioners, recognising that quality healthcare depends on their expertise and confidence. A key component of this commitment is prioritising Continuing Medical Education (CME) as part of professional development. By fostering ongoing learning, the Clinic ensures healthcare workers stay informed about the latest medical science advancements and best practices, ultimately improving patient care and outcomes. Recently, three theoretical CME sessions were held, which focused on key areas including Sepsis, Asthma Attack Management, and Dermatologic Conditions. These sessions emphasised clinical decision-making, early recognition of complications, and appropriate treatment, particularly for children, pregnant women, and other vulnerable patients. As staff knowledge grows, patient safety and overall outcomes improve significantly.

We are profoundly appreciative of the generous provision of a new generator at the start of this year from the Vicariate of Rome. The diocese also provided funding to repair the Clinic's roof, install solar power, and purchase medical equipment. Previously, frequent power outages had significantly disrupted our laboratory services, imaging capabilities, and emergency care, leading to delays and potential risks to patient safety. Our Clinic has made substantial investments in advanced medical equipment over the past couple of years, thanks to the Pablo Horstmann Foundation, but without a robust power system, we faced challenges in maintaining efficient operations.

With the reliable backup power source now in place, we can ensure that our services continue without interruption. This improvement will not only enhance patient turnaround times but also make diagnostic procedures and emergency care safer and more efficient than ever. This crucial investment directly elevates the quality of care we provide and plays a vital role in safeguarding lives. A new storage facility was constructed to keep the generator secure and prevent opportunists from gaining access.



Generator storage room



New generator

A nnouncements

Activities outside the Departments

The newsletter includes sections dedicated to each Department, summarising the events that occurred throughout the month. The Head Office supports these Departments in reaching their goals. Additionally, there are often other activities and events that take place that are not specifically listed under any Department.

- His Grace, Bishop James Maria Wainaina of the Catholic Diocese of Murang'a, visited to see the Works of Mercy initiatives that MPC has been implementing. During the visit, he toured MPC sites and met with the management team, headed by Sr Mary Killeen at the Head Office.



Bishop James
with Dinah, Sr
Mary, Sr Anne
and Mary, MPC
senior
management



Volunteers play a crucial role at MPC, and over the years, their contributions—both short-term and long-term—have significantly strengthened our efforts, bringing diverse expertise to our initiatives. Since its inception, MPC has established formal partnerships with overseas organisations and engaged with individuals informally to empower the Mukuru community.

One such partner, Brothers and Sisters in Need, an Austrian organisation, introduced MPC to a professional volunteering program. In 2025, MPC signed an agreement with International Voluntary Services Co. Ltd. to support the Voluntary Social and Peace Services Abroad (VSPSA) program. This initiative will facilitate placements for young volunteers from Austria. The program, promoted by the Republic of Austria, serves as a structured training scheme with several objectives, such as:

- To strengthen the intercultural and social competence of the volunteers
- To advance voluntary social engagement
- To familiarise volunteers with the work of the placement organisation
- To foster the personal development of the volunteers
- To extend or apply the volunteers' knowledge and develop their skills for social professions
- To develop the volunteers' sense of career orientation
- To contribute to the economic and social development of the host country

MPC began interviewing potential volunteers alongside Astrid Lehner from Brothers and Sisters in Need in January 2026 and will continue through February 2026. We enthusiastically welcome this initiative, which will provide more individuals with the opportunity to pursue their dreams and contribute to marginalised communities, thereby furthering the MPC mission of empowerment.

- A two-day workshop was conducted for Heads of Department (HODs) to enhance project planning, implementation, and oversight through teamwork and collaboration, facilitated by Sr Anne Itotia.



Sr Anne facilitates workshops for the MPC HODs



- The Makadara Clinic donated firewood to MPC to help prepare the meals across MPC sponsored schools.



Firewood donation

Mukuru Promotion Centre

Empowerment Step by Step

Ministry of the Sisters of Mercy

Journeying over 40 Years with the Mukuru Community



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Thank you for your continued support

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