



THE KIBAGARE GOOD NEWS CENTRE
ST. MARTIN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our Newsletter

End Year | December 2019



Dear Donors, sponsors and all well-wishers,

As the year 2019 comes to an end, we as St. Martin's school are counting blessings. This is because throughout the year, you dear friends journeyed with us in every step we made through your generosity. Your donations, sponsorship enable us to continue offering services to the orphans and vulnerable children in the school.

We have been in a position to economically empower the parents and guardians of the children in our school. Alone we were handicapped but together we have succeeded (*Many hands make work light*). The contributions which each one of you made is highly appreciated. Our prayers is that God may bless you with more resources and bless your families abundantly

The performance of the school has continued to improve. I am proud to say that our teachers are very committed and dedicated to their work. The unfortunate thing which was experienced were six episodes of fire calamities that erupted in Kibagare slum since January to date. Most of our children were affected as their households went down in ashes. The school management was able to assist the families with food and clothes as they started over again. The school is closed and we expect to open back on 7th January 2020.

We wish you a blessed Christmas and a prosperous 2020 with God's Blessings

**Yours in service,
Sr. Emmah Karanja**





Photo: Aerial photo of Kibagare slums

BACKGROUND

Kibagare Good News Centre is a program for the poor and orphaned children from Kibagare slum and the surrounding slums of Nairobi Kenya. The Mission of the Kibagare Good News Centre, is to bear witness to the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ by providing for the welfare and development of the poor and orphaned children from the Kibagare village and the surrounding slums.

The Assumption Sisters of Nairobi run and managed Kibagare Good news Centre as religious sisters. We have dedicated our lives for the service of the underprivileged. The program was started by the Late Sr. Martin as a small project. She started by feeding 50 children from the slum who were destitute and were malnourished. The number of the destitute children continued to increase. This led her to start a home for them in poorly constructed structures. Sr. Martin was a very compassionate sister; she later brought babies, old women and men into the home. In these structures, she started a school which the children were able to get some education. As time went on she built a dispensary where all people living in the home and people from the Kibagare slum could access treatment.

In order to take care of the spiritual needs of the people living in the center, the Staff, the people from Kibagare and the surrounding slums, she employed a Catechist who taught catechism and prepared them for other sacraments.

The number of the older persons and children living in the center and those who were day scholars continued to increase and it was becoming difficult to provide for all. By the year 2008, Sr. Leah who was the director discontinued the boarding school, the older persons went back to their homes and those who had no homes were taken to other institutions that cater for the elderly people. In those early years the structures were made of mud, the paths and passages were not cemented so it was very difficult to walk on them especially during the rainy seasons.

During these initial years, the major donors were the kindermissionswerk and over the years their support has given a new face of the institution and has transformed the lives of the many people who pass through the institution. As time went by, we grew and got the support of friends and donors from near and far to help us in various ways.

We have seen God's hand through the support of our friends – may this good work continue and glorify His name.

Matthew 19:14

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."



An update on St. Martin's primary school

In the month of August, two of the girls in primary school participated in the National Football match. This was a big achievement for the school. In the month of October dates 28th, 29th and 30th the standard eight pupils sat for the National Examinations (Kenya Certificate of Primary Education). The results were released on the 18th of November. They have performed very well. They have done us proud. The first child had passed with **390 marks out of 500**. The performance of the rest of the children shows that it is continuously improving according to the assessment done in midterm and the end of term.



Photo: Class eight of 2019 after completing the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exams

Quotes from our teachers:

“Hard work and dedication truly pays off. We are proud to have seen this in our children”

“This was a lovely year – we are going to reap the harvest of hard work, determination and sacrifice”

“God will truly bless our children for the efforts they have put in their exams”

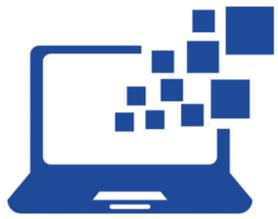


Photo of the teachers and staff of St. Martin's Kibagare primary school

The 2019 High school candidates sat for their Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations.

Results will be out in January 2020 and we look forward to great results





EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY & MODIFYING OUR LABS

The leap lab has been very influential to the lives of our children in terms of learning skills on Information Technology (IT). Children have learnt how to use computers from a very young age. They have different lessons according to their age and the level of their grades. Currently, Literacy learning is offered in the lab on daily basis. The administration thus saw it needful to improve the leap lab. Various renovations have been ongoing. This is meant to compliment the learning even as we work on getting additional equipment.

After the lab is complete, there will be introduction of Numeracy learning. Renovation entailed the expansion of the leap lab by demolition of the walls of the adjacent rooms so as to accommodate more students per session. The learning materials were sourced and installed into the computers by longhorn publishers. We look forward to hosting more children in these labs in the new school term.



Photo: The Leap Lab in use during the school term which could only accommodate up to 20 children per session

More children meant more space
>>>> see photos below that
show the expansion process



FEEDING PROGRAMME

We thank all our small and big local and international donors for the great work and determination to see the children get their daily bread. This has always been a challenge to us. The challenge of food is ever in the increase. We suppose it is due to the hard economic times and distress that many families are facing.

At St. Martin's school, 746 children are fed from Monday to Friday. 1300-1500 children fed on Saturdays continue looking upon us. This makes us always remain on toes as we continue searching for new avenues of food for the sake of the children. A constant regular supply of food is needed and especially at this time.

We are grateful to our supporters and continue to look to them to continue this program for our children



746 Children given breakfast & lunch from Monday to Friday

1,300 – 1,500 Children Fed on Saturdays in the last six months

A STORY OF CHANGE

MODESTA'S STORY: She is a wife and mother of three children i.e. 2 boys and 1 girl. Modesta completed high school and soon after got married. Her husband worked and lived in Nairobi but she stayed in their rural home engaged in farming. Her husband urged her to move to the city so that they could live as a family. She then started repairing clothes using a sewing machine that she bought.

“One day during a visit to St Martins School, accompanied by a friend, we got talking about savings. I encouraged her to join other women so that she could get mentored and have some extra income”, says Angela, our Economic Empowerment officer. She then joined Lady Hope voluntary savings group. During the group meetings she was trained on entrepreneurship, how to start small income generating activities like selling different liquid detergents like soap, disinfectant, bleaching detergent and fabric softener as well as record keeping. “I started selling as little as one litre now I have lots more and have a variety of soaps to sell,” she says.

Using the skills learnt, Modesta was able to save some money over time. She then borrowed money to expand her liquid detergent business. Her savings grew over time and she was able to keep good records on a daily basis. After some time, she took a second loan of Ksh. 30,000 (USD 300) to buy second hand house curtains for sale. She sells the detergents and house curtains and her business is doing well. Her source of income has increased and she has been linked to micro finance i.e. Equity bank and Waumini sacco which will enable her to access capital as well as other services.



Photo above: Modesta at her curtains shop as she attends to a customer; (below) liquid soap that she sells



>>>> Modesta is one among many caregivers who started a business with very little. But over time, they are enjoying extra income that has come from their businesses.



A STORY OF HOPE & TRANSFORMATION



HOPE RE-IGNITED: In Kibagare community, there are people who live in extreme poor conditions. Their houses are made of pieces of iron sheets. The area is densely populated and sanitation is poor. People in these areas suffer from sanitation related ailments time to time. This is due to the dumpy conditions in the place. Majority of the students at St. Martin's school come from such areas.

The school administration is not only concerned about sanitation within the compound but they also care about the places that these children will move to after school in the evening. The work of the community workers is to assess these households and figure out the most vulnerable that may need immediate intervention.

One of the households that we encountered is of a child named Fridah, aged ten and in grade 4. She is a very bright pupil and performs very well. In third term 2019, she was position one in her class with over 400 marks. She lives in the Kibagare slums with her mother and two sisters. One of the sisters is in the second year of high school. Fridah's mother is unemployed but previously used to sell vegetables where she earned little money to sustain the family



Photo above: Fridah's mum listens as she is taught by our staff on record keeping for her business;

She had to leave the job after she fell ill. Her illness was associated with stress making her psychologically sick. She suffered from breathing problems and backache problems. She struggled to raise the children since she was the only breadwinner of the family.

After she stopped working, the family was in a desperate state of life in terms of fulfilling their basic needs. The school administration, decided to check on the mother. The community workers in St. Martin primary school talked to her and advised seeking some work whose income would sustain the family. She decided to sell second hand clothes which need minimal capital to start. The Administrator provided her with capital to start the business. She was positive and started the business. She was taught how to keep records of her business. This would help her on evaluating whether she is making profits or losses.

The living conditions of the family were also in a pathetic state. The family had no furniture or any other type of proper beddings. In fact, they were sleeping on the floor. The Administrator paid attention to the case and decided to purchase some furniture and beddings to the family. Fridah's mum is very grateful and can now sleep in warm environment which is much safer especially for the children. She bought clothes that she would sell by hawking and also by displaying them in the nearby markets. Her business was at a good location at the market – and she has started making profits. Her dream is to save enough money to expand the business and therefore earn more income. She would love to support her family single handedly and grow.

Resilience has been defined as the ability to become strong, healthy or successful again after something bad happens; the ability to spring back. This is true for this family.



OUR COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECT

Our Community outreach project was started for the caregivers of the school children. Our aim was to empower these households so that they can be economically stable and self reliant. We have continued to bear fruit; from our previous newsletter, over three hundred (300) households have been recruited so far forming groups. The project started with mapping of 450 households, through the support of our staff who conducted home visits. They used a tool which had guiding questions to classify the households accordingly. This classification took place between August 2018 to October 2019. The analysis is as follows:



NO	Name of the village	Highly Vulnerable Households	Moderately Vulnerable Households	Least Vulnerable Households	Total number of Households
1	MUTHARO VILLAGE	13	45	11	70
2	GHETTO VILLAGE	34	61	8	103
3	KWA FRANCIS	20	33	6	59
4	GITOKA	19	50	7	76
	Overall Total	86	189	32	308

BRIEF SUMMARY:

This classification is able to administer some questions that will guide the rating of the household; with highly as the most vulnerable and in need of immediate support while as least is not as bad; the aim is to support the households so that they can move to the next category and graduate out of support.

Thereafter, we were able to offer sensitization to 150 parents who formed 10 groups that started meeting on a weekly basis. Due to the nature of their livelihoods, forming groups and saving together will make great achievements. They accepted to form groups as friends and neighbors. During their weekly meetings we were able to offer different intervention such as: training on poverty mind set, entrepreneurship, voluntary savings and loaning training, positive parenting training, succession planning, financial literacy, different types of income generating activities for example liquid soap making, disinfectant, sundrying of vegetables etc.

Through interventions, at the beginning of 2019 nine groups who were conducting merry go round groups, started voluntary savings and loaning among them. From the loans acquired in voluntary savings and loaning groups 68 parents i.e. 2 men, 66 female have been able to start small businesses for example of selling liquid detergents, second hand clothes, juice vendor, tailoring, food, kiosk, vegetable kiosk etc. From the small businesses the parents can be able to provide basic needs like food, clothing and rent to their entire household. This has led to households being economic empowered.

Info bite: A merry go round is when a group of people contribute a certain amount on a regular basis, often a week. Each time the monies are collected, the full amount is paid out to one of the members.

While a **voluntary savings and loaning** group is when members save any amount (not specified) which are shares, then lend the monies around the group which is paid back after an agreed duration with interest accrued.

Our Vision & Prayer for the Outreach Program is that our community of families will become self reliant and support others in return. With your support we do much more and go further.



THE TAILORING PROJECT



In the month of June, a tailoring project was started in St. Martin's Kibagare. The project entails a tailoring and bead making training. Priority was given to the parents of the children in St. Martin's primary school. Nine women started the training on tailoring and they are progressing well to date. The Administrator employed a full time trainer for this activity. The women have expressed their gratitude that they have started acquiring a skill that could have never gotten a chance to attain. They are no longer idle in the slum as they come time and again for these sessions.

The trainer, a lady by the name Dorcas says that they have made great strides in this and its mainly due to the fact that there are many opportunities alongside. The project has seen some of these women acquire income even before the end of the training. They have started making clothes and repairing them at their homes.

One of them is Naomi a parent who has trained in tailoring and has seen her life standard uplifted. When they sell the already made clothes they earn some money which will be divided in buying capital for the next materials. Other women have been given the task of making uniforms for pupils in the lower classes in the school. They will then be paid by the school administration. This will go a long way in ensuring food is on the table for these families as their caregivers bring in extra income.



Photos above: Caregivers as they make various items such as uniforms, aprons which will be sold; (Top) Some of the completed uniforms made in the month of November; these will be used in the new year by the Pre Primary one (PP1) class.



OUR COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECT FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS

In Kibagare slum, there is a lot of poverty. The outcome of the situation leads to a lot of promiscuity. Over time this has led to many HIV/AIDS infections. This has affected us as a school as we have orphans and vulnerable children. On the 15th of September 2019 to date we employed a community mentor mother who assists in awareness, identification, interventions, follow ups and referrals of people (and children) living with HIV/AIDS. The total number of people living with HIV who have been identified as from mid October to date in Kibagare slum are twenty. We have been able to form one support group with a total of 10 people living with HIV. The major aim of the support group is to allow the members to share experiences, coping strategies to reduce stigma and discrimination that comes with this illness.

We do follow up at the household level to support adherence (i.e. where one correctly follows medical advice), to make sure no hospital appointments are missed and no dose missed in order achieve 90;90;90 strategy. This is whereby the first 90 is of people living with HIV know their status, the second 90 is to make sure they have been put on care and treatment and the other 90 to make sure the viral load is suppressed.

THROUGH THE VOICE OF OUR MENTOR MOTHER

“During the household visits, I identified two people living with HIV who were bedridden,” says Everline, our community Mentor mother. When I was offering psychosocial support and adherence advice I realized the major problem in the household was food. They (persons) feared to take drugs on an empty stomach. St Martin’s administration gave them a food basket in order to sustain them. I’m glad to report that they are improving. We have also identified a total of 22 children living with HIV within the slum of Kibagare. We have formed one support group, they are able to understand what HIV/AIDS is, how its transmitted and how to manage themselves. We also take them through sessions on why they need to take their medication. My best moments are when the members are healthy in both body and mind. I am also keen on having one on one sessions with the adolescent boys and girls so that they are able to make the right decisions at all times.”

Testimonial by Everline, our Community Mentor Mother



Photo above: Everline during a home visit to a family under our care



Read more on the 90-90-90 strategy on the UNAIDS webpage

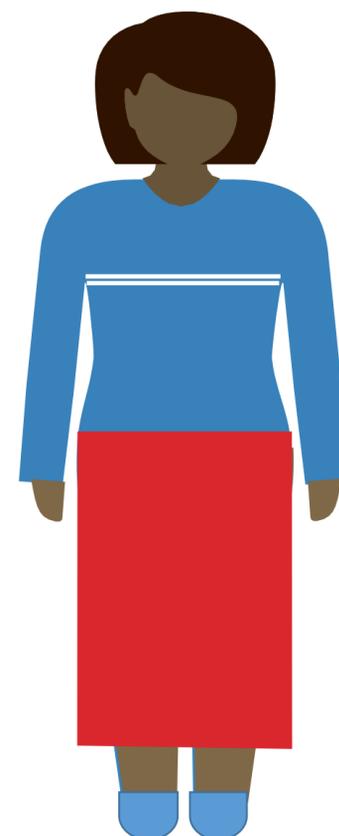
Summary of her Day to Day work:

A Community Mentor is a mother living with HIV, recruited and trained to work as a mentor within her community;

Does regular home visits & will have educational sessions with household on sanitation, nutrition, reproductive health;

Provide psychosocial support for children, adolescents and caregivers;

Is the link to the health facility for extended services where necessary;



VISITORS CORNER

This year we have been blessed with visitors.

We thank the Almighty God. This brings in an opportunity to interact with these visitors who are our the main supporters of this institution. This year, we have had several groups including Salesforce, Emark group, Frank group, Pracedo group, and S4G. These visitors came in the month of June. We have had a total of 36 visitors. The other group came in the month of September was the Frank group who were 19 in total.

We always have an organized schedule for them as we get to interact together. They visit the school and have time with the children, they get time to meet the children that they sponsor. Our children are always very happy when they get to meet them in person. Most of the communication to them is through letter writing and this time round when they meet them physically becomes one of the special moments for them. The visitors will then always visit the community outreach project where they also get a view of what we have been doing in the community. They also visit the households of these children and interact with their parents and guardians as they see the condition of the life in the slum. The coming of our visitors is a moment we really celebrate as we exchange a lot of ideas and we hope for more in the near future.

FRANK RECRUITMENT GROUP VISIT

We have been blessed this year with the introduction of a new partner, Frank recruitment group. Their involvement has been very significant and we take this opportunity to appreciate them for their support since the beginning of this year, special thanks to Georgina, Danielle and Nigel.

Frank Recruitment Group did their Employees Volunteering in the Month of September. The trip was a success and we are more than grateful for their Visit and the fact that they came, they saw and were encouraged by what we do. We had a successful sports day for the secondary school, organized by the Frank recruitment Employees. It was an inter house competition and the House that carried the day was Kenyatta house, this is a new concept that was embraced by the school and the students and we hope to continue doing more of the same (see photos). From the visit, we got 17 additional children sponsored. We are so grateful for this support ☺

PHOTOS OF THE VISIT



Highlights:



Photo above: Installation of the internet connectivity along with set up of the Camara learning studio

Some of the notable developments they have donated towards are:

>> **Internet connectivity enhancement** – five additional Internet access points have been added to the school network and this has greatly improved the access to Internet in the school

>> With the help of Camara.org, they contributed towards the creation of **the Library Discovery Center**, a platform for the Teachers in High school to be well versed on matters education and ,technology and also have a resource to rely on when in need of teaching resources.

The Camara Learning studio is an educational platform and a resource for the Girls in the high school. It covers topics on Mathematics and Physics and we do believe with its introduction will have seen an improvement in these subjects.

Mentorship Program

We recently started **the Mentoring program** for the High school girls were able to take them through topics such as: > CV Writing and Interview Skills, Social Media awareness, Outlook and Technology topics. This was positively received by the students and greatly appreciated and we look forward to doing more of the same in the coming year. The **secondary school Library** has been equipped with **25 Laptops** to help facilitate the Mentorship program and also the same will be used by the students while they are doing their research. **16 desktops** were also added to the teacher resource center to aid the teachers in research on educational content. See photo of the session >>



Scholarships for Girls



Photo above: Modester Ngima Mwangi at the African Leadership University in Rwanda

We launched **the University/ College Scholarship for Girls**. This year, through the help of some of our Volunteers and Donors we have managed to place 4 girls in Universities to pursue Courses in Various Fields. The four beneficiaries of the scholarships in 2019 are **(1) Modester Ngima Mwangi at African Leadership University in Rwanda doing Computer Science course;** **(2) Abigail Hada Studying at the University of Nairobi doing Public Relations and Media course;** **(3) Caroline Musomba at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa doing Community Development course;** & **(4) Jackline Ndunge at Cardinal Otunga Education Center doing Hotel Management.**

We wish them well and we look forward to hearing their success stories during this journey ☺☺





Thank You to our supporters, sponsors and donors for the donations you made to those in need

Christmas is a time for festivities and spreading love. We treasure you in our thoughts and prayers during this time. Merry Christmas to you and your dear ones

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...Til Next Time