

Kengele Children's Network (KCN) Beyond expectations

SPECIAL REPORT



A Partnership between Be Kids, Child Peace and the Children of Korogocho

Introduction:

Kengele Project has continued to evolve and achieving immeasurable result since its launch in September 2008, barely 2 years ago.

Designed with the main aim of promoting child participation for social change, the project deliberately chose to focus on the following key aspects for the social development of the children in Korogocho:

- ❖ Education
- ❖ Environment
- ❖ Health
- ❖ Peace and culture
- ❖ Security (child protection)
- ❖ Child Rights and responsibilities

Throughout the different Phases of the project, the project team and partners have endeavoured to address these key areas of concern, consulting and involving the children at every stage to achieve the best for the children and with their interest at heart.

We have seen results we did not even anticipate -- the project has yielded much more than we can imagine. It is benefiting more than 200 hundred children directly and many more indirectly.

This report focuses on a few selected achievements that may be humble but mean so much to the children, the community. It informs the power of a collective effort when such a constituent within a population, even children, take upon themselves to decide on their destiny.

Breaking the tradition:

Isaa Bukura and Gabriel Odinga of Kengele Children Network exemplifying greatness

Through the Kengele project, eight children from Korogocho have won scholarships at Shepherds junior school, a well endowed private school in a middle class community in Buru Buru Nairobi. To begin with, the school was not sure of the move to offer full sponsorships to slum kids who may be exposed to “so much” and may be a concern to such a private school. We managed to convince them to give it a start with 4 children/

We are pleased to say that out of the high discipline and sense of responsibility by the 4 children (thanks to the support and mentorship through the Kengele Program) and amazing academic performance despite their background and challenges that they face, the school’s management decided to add 4 more children from Kengele.

The 8 children have continued to do very well in school, to a point where the school itself now feels part of the Kenegle Program and are ready to support the children.

The following two children stand out as unbelievable achievements that no one would have thought of:

Issahq Bukura; Appointed the Shepherd's Junior School's Head Boy 2010-2011



After less than a year since he was admitted to the school on sponsorship, Issa was recently appointed as the school's head boy.

To be appointed as the head student in this school, the teachers and other students in upper classes, consider the Issa carries the following positive attributes:

- Discipline both in academics and inter personal
- Leadership and communication skills
- Sense of responsibility
- Tidiness and cleanliness

Due to stereotypical assumptions about children from slums such as Korogocho, it is almost unexpected to have them with all the above qualities. However, Issa has proved that his background is not an impediment and that he is as good like any other child.

Issa like the rest of the children consistent with the Kengele process has learnt so much in terms of leadership, discipline and other life/ social skills which Kengele promotes.

Among the responsibilities that he has as the school's head boy are:

- A link person between the student community and the school's management
- Ensuring some order among the students by addressing individual petty discipline concerns
- Working with other class monitors and the head girl to ensure that the students are comfortable and adhere to the expectations of the school's management office

Gabriel Odinga; Emerges position 3 in his first exam at Shepherd's junior school



From a public primary school faced with so much challenges affecting the quality of education, and from an extremely disadvantaged background, Gabriel was smart enough to emerge in position 3 out of 16 and with a total of 377 points out of a possible 500

The academic performance by Gabriel has proven beyond doubt that education is an equalizing factor between the haves and the have-nots in our society today. He went to a school that was expected to intimidate him with children from a totally different and privileged social-economic background, yet he conquered all the doubts and challenged some of the social theories used to qualify failures.

Gabriel has been taking the mentorship process offered through the Kengele program very seriously and he is always ready to learn from his colleagues and teachers. Although in class 5, Gabriel hopes to be an astronaut after his studies some day. He hopes to continue doing well in his studies and evidently shows this by utilizing the study centre in his village, Nyayo.



Telling our struggle to the Nation:

Fardosa Ali on a Kenya's National TV (Citizen TV)

In the July, the Kengele project was highlighted in a break fast show on national Citizen TV.

Fardosa Ali confidently faced the cameras and articulated the success story by the Kengele project and the impact it has had on her specifically, the other children and the general community in Korogocho.

In the 15 minutes interview , Fardosa attracted a national audience through her passion and pride in being a child from teh Korogocho Slum. She recognised Kengele as a process that believes in the ability of children to participate in their future and therefore gives children an opportunity to be part of the social development in their community.



File photo of Fardosa and other Kengele youth in a local community radio Koch fm during Kengele Phase II

“Fardosa you are my Hero I will name my expected daughter after you and I am your number one fan” some of the comments, the presenter of the show Jimmy who could not hide his high impression of Fardosa and also of the deflation of any stereotypical expectations he may have had .

When she first joined the Kenegle Program in 2008, Fardosa was a shy girl and would not speak confidently in public. By now, she is one of the leaders in this process at her village level. She can speak fluently, has an opinion about her society and where she wants to be. She hopes to be a surgeon after her studies, a dream she has consistently held since she joined the program.

“Children should not pride in the wealth of their parents; they should work hard to earn theirs” A comment by Fardosa during the TV show responding to her thoughts on studying and how they cope knowing that there are children from wealthy backgrounds to compete with.

Nahashon Mutahi leaves for Sweden for a two weeks exchange program



Through an opportunity that came to his school Nahashon was chosen to be among the 12 students from his school for an exchange visit to Sweden for 2 weeks from September 13th.

Although not a member of the journalism club in the school which was part of the criteria to get the 12, Nahashon was still an eligible candidate for this trip, due to his track record as a consistent editor of the Kengele magazine since the first edition in August 2009.

The exchange is between the Our Lady of Fatima secondary school and with Media gymnasia school in Sweden. The students will participate in different programs when there, to help the two sides understand each other, appreciate each other and respect each other despite their social, economic and racial back grounds.

Then in February 2011, twelve students from Sweden will visit Kenya and interact with their peers here on a number of programs. It is a great honour that one of the projects the students will work with once here, is the Kengele project in Korogocho.

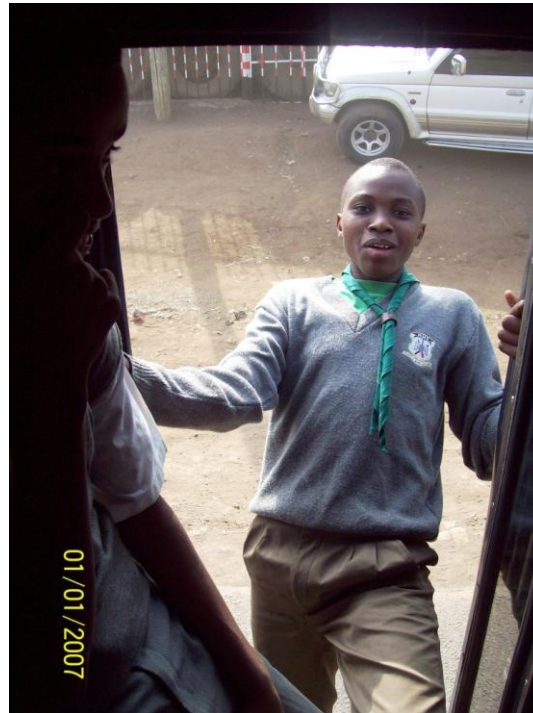
Sponsorship opportunities for Harun Thuo and Ralia Mohammed for the next academic year

Harun Thuo is 16 years of age and finished his primary education in 2009 but could not join secondary school in the following year due to lack of funds for the studies. He is 16 years of age and the first born in a family 4 children, with his second born brother also not able to join secondary school.

The mother is a casual labourer attending to odd jobs around the neighbourhood, while the father is currently sick after he was injured in the course of his duties as a security guard and was shot several times in his arm and on the chest.

Harun is at a critical age in which most of the youth from this community go to drugs and hard criminal activities and loose their lives on the same lines.

He has been one of the talented boys in Kengele and he has been committed to the process and to date he is a leader in his village's Kengele caucus.



Harun is willing to join secondary school in the coming year for 4 years before joining the University to study engineering a career he has been aspiring to have.

He has received the news of him getting sponsorship for his first year with so much joy knowing so well that this is the first step towards the achievement of his academic goals that he and other Kengele children believe is the bridge to the social and economic inequality in our country.

Ralia Mohammed is 17 years of age and a first born in a family of six siblings under the care of a single mother.

Ralia could not continue with her education after his uncle could not continue paying for her school fees due to financial constraints. She was in form two early this year and only went for one term (3 months) on and off.

Her mother has no job and her small scale business was temporarily affected by the expansion of the road in the slum. However she is hopeful to go back to the business soon.

Ralia faces major challenges both as a girl of her age in a slum community and as a girl from a Muslim community with Somali origin whose traditions and cultural practices has major effects to girl child and women.



Girls of her age are married off to men equal the age of their fathers, and are introduced to the life of a wife and a mother at such age. Knowing very well that this is what her mother went through and now in poverty, Ralia is keen to work hard, go to school and gain knowledge and be able to liberate her self from such harsh conditions she found her self in.

Since she received the good news on the sponsorship, she has been going to different schools to secure a position in the next academic year.

Both Ralia and Harun will need 20,000 shillings each for school fees only, in every year of their secondary education. Other things they might need will include a school uniform costing about 5,000 shillings for each one, and some basic stationery.

Through the arts children make we hope to establish an education fund that will see these two urgent and needy cases go through school.

Ralia and Harun appreciate extensively the gesture by the people of good will through Be Kids Australia Inc. For offering to support them through the next academic year and they promise to do their best in education, acknowledging that this is a rare opportunity that many would only wish to have.

The Children's Cinema

Recently the Kengele project received some film equipments from Be Kids Australia Inc. This forms part of the first ever Children's film club in the Korogocho community.

Information sharing and dissemination is a key element of the Kengele process, and the children have in the past been using different approaches to communicate to their peers and the community. Such ways have been through:

- Community radio Koch FM
- Community participatory Education theatre through puppets
- The Kengele Children's magazine
- Art and Craft
- Folk dance
- Photography

It is a major plus for the project to have the cinema equipment, which the children have and will be using to share as well as acquire information with. The project will continue to use the equipment during an academic review by showing an inspiration movie and during life skill training by showing an educative movie to the teenagers.

The project team together with the children have resolved to use the equipments in the following ways:

- As Information Education and Communication tool to the children and the community especially on issues affecting them
- As an entertainment tool to the Children as a way of mitigating pornography in some of the villages by showing entertaining videos on different villages in different days for free since it may play a double standard to ask for money from children
- As an income generating tool by hiring the equipments carefully, or in any other way as opportunities may present

This plan is to take effect after coming up with a schedule of the village to village Cinema and addressing other logistics of the appropriate venues per village, Electricity source in different venues, safety of the equipments in those venues and the videos to be shown per village. However from the first week of October 2010 this will be in effect



Progress on other Kengele programs:

The Kengele Magazine:

The fourth issue of the Kengele magazine was delayed a bit due to some inconsistency with the Children's editors, affected by other programs in the past month. However the editors have finished on the editing process and sorting more than 200 articles they had. The articles are currently with the designer and should be printed out in the first week of October.

The Arts

Kengele children in the art and craft club have embarked on some creative crafts since last month (August 2010) this is at the back ground of missing out to do the crafts as was intended during the first half of the year. The kind of crafts the children are doing is of recycling some metal cans to create crafts with image of an Angel, a boy and a girl. They do so by joining the pieces with a wire. The Hobby Craft classes will be resumed in the coming month of October 2010 targeting to learn and make some cards eyeing on the December festivities.

The Kisumu Ndogo study Centre

The study Centre is fully in use both by children from different villages. The Chair person of KPEDG Mr. Mango has done a formal application to the Kenya Power and Lighting Company, to have electricity installed at the centre. This may take approximately two months as now the process is with the company. However the Kisumu Ndogo village elder is yet to fulfil his promise of supporting the wiring of the centre.

The Shepherd's junior school has offered to support virtual learning program at the centre, by installing a program paid for, in some computers, for the children to study the current school syllabus on their own and even attempt questions after every topic and be able to mark for themselves.

We are exploring different means possible to get some second hand desk top computers to be used at the study centre for virtual learning.

Mentorship

Recently an organization called E mentoring Africa, expressed some interests to have the individual mentees who have gone through their program also volunteer to mentor some of the Kengele children. The mentees from Korogocho "graduated "on the 10th of September 2010 and they are yet to structure how to go about it. They hope to mentor the children on the following area; Leadership, patriotism, peace and tolerance. These topics together with entrepreneurship are the key aspects they were taken through the E mentoring process

However we are in communication with a local private University (The African Nazarene University) to seek possibility of having arrangements with the institution on some structural mentorship with them.

The Dancing Club

The Kengele Dancers participated in a local community competition and emerged number three. It is very encouraging to see the commitment by the energetic dancers and the talented skills they show case.

Although not yet confirmed there were indications from the competition that the children might perform in Tanzania, April of the coming year (2011). However we are careful with such arrangements until it is very clear on the logistics, safety of the Children, legitimacy of the competition and such other protocols for the best interest of the children.

Fahari dancing group (a local dancing group that has been practising some professional dancing in and out of the country, majorly in Europe and Asia) has been busy lately with their rehearsals, planning for a series of performances outside the country towards the end of the year. It has therefore not been easy for them to volunteer to train and rehearse with Kengele dancers as anticipated.

Sourcing for more sponsorships

Recently we followed up with some schools around Nairobi, which may have the potential to support a few different children from Kengele, acquire descent education by admitting them in their schools. As it is at the moment we still await for responses as we target to use different approaches to get the opportunities especially for the secondary school students.

Meanwhile we are in partnership with shepherds' junior school in planning for a major debate on education, and we are inviting the participation of different schools with an aim of attracting more schools to sponsor the children.
