



Dear Partners, Supporters and Friends,

The youth continued to organise anti-government protests during July. We were not badly or directly affected. Our staff who live at a distance could get to work as protests began later in the day but could not return home until the chaos stopped and traffic could again move. Because of the lateness of the hour when they returned home, many teachers did not turn up to work on planned protest days and encouraged children not to attend school. This disrupted school learning and attendance at clinics and vocational training. In the latter, internal exams were disrupted. We have great sympathy for parents searching for missing youth. Some have been found dead, while many others are still missing after the protests. Some were taken away by police or other security services and never seen again. Many were the hoped-for breadwinner of the family after the family had sacrificed heavily to send them to college.

We continue to enhance our staff's skills and knowledge through various training sessions and meetings. The Mercy Education office organized training sessions for our staff to ensure they understand our mission and values. Additionally, the Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya conducted training sessions for the heads of the Songa Mbele Department and the Rehabilitation Centre, increasing staff awareness of the government's plans and intentions for children's homes and special schools. These training sessions empowered the staff to comply with present and emerging legislation. Also, the Mercy International Association (MIA) agreed to empower Stellah, the sponsorship officer, in the 2023 cohort, Dinah, the Deputy Director, in the 2024 cohort, and soon Lucia, the Education Coordinator in the 2025 cohort, through the Mercy Emerging Leadership Fellowship program, focusing on mercy-based leadership.

Cheshire Disability Kenya and DKA Austria are working together to provide comprehensive training. Cheshire Disability Kenya is training Helen, the senior social worker at Songa Mbele, and the parents in managing special needs children, as well as helping them to begin or improve their businesses. DKA Austria is contributing to this effort by training various staff members in project management, IT, and resource mobilization. This collaborative approach unites us all in our mission to support special needs children and their families.

Inside

Education

Primary School Updates	3
Mercy Education Office	5 and 6
St Michael's Visitors	7
KWAL Excursion	9
Skills Sports Day	10

Transformations

Songa Mbele Updates	11
eRko Slovakia Visit	12
Big Improver	13
Rehabilitation Updates	14
Ceilie in the Park	15
Music Program	15
Vegetable Patch	16
Library Renovations	17
AOSK Workshop	19
Overseas Visitors	20
Donations	21
Sponsorship Updates	22

Social and Health

July Interventions	24
Clinic Updates	25
Donations	25

Announcements

MPC	26
-----------	----

Regular visits from Lucia and the eRko team greatly help our staff manage accounts and resources in Songa Mbele. The Irish Embassy supports the empowerment of some parents at the Rehabilitation Centre to help them support themselves and their children so that their boys can be integrated back home. The Clinic and VCT Centre staff also mentor our students in health matters, including AIDS prevention and other communicable diseases.

Other partners, such as Kenya Wine Agencies and Tamarind Group, also assist us in building the capacity of our catering training, as well as individuals who offer services and volunteers who work with our staff, sharing experiences and expertise. Strathmore College helps to mentor selected students, which enables them to do better in their final exams and gives scholarships to some for their third-level professional training in their university. Chantal of Fidel Goetz Foundation sponsors girls in third-level education, while Sr Deirdre Mullan and her group, Mercy Girl Effect Program, also sponsor some of our girls. We are very grateful to all. We could not fund this capacity building for students and staff with minimal resources. What we can do together is amazing. May God bless you for empowering staff to develop their ability and students to get education and training to live with dignity and help themselves, their families and the community.

Due to a large number of people wanting to sponsor and mentor only girls, girls are now outperforming boys in secondary education. A few years ago, only one-third of the students in secondary school were girls, while two-thirds were boys. Now, the numbers of girls and boys are more or less equal. However, we are concerned that boys are not receiving as much mentoring and support as girls. In many slums, boys and male youth are more vulnerable than girls. There are far more boys living on the streets than girls, and in slums, boys and youth are often victims of police violence or mob attacks when they are suspected of or involved in crime. Boys are also more susceptible to issues such as drug abuse, alcoholism, sex addiction, and imprisonment. Additionally, poor boys are victims of rape almost as frequently as poor girls. We believe ensuring equal sponsorship and mentoring opportunities for boys and girls is crucial.

I am cheered by the frequent sounds of music and of sports. It is wonderful to see primary, secondary, and vocational skills students and youth with disabilities all enjoying extracurricular activities. The activities in the Rehabilitation Centre also lifted my spirits. The increase in music, both voice and instruments, lifts the spirits. I am deeply grateful to Paula, Irene, Catherine, Vera, Theresa, Claire, Adrienne, Pauline, Kristina and Patsy for the significant improvement in many areas, including the library, the gardens, and pathways. Thanks again to Sinead Farrell and Ireland's National Symphony Orchestra for their invaluable contribution of instruments.

Who knows what a great difference learning to play an instrument with enjoyment will make in the lives of boys and other students from poor economic backgrounds interested in learning musical skills. I can already see improvements in pleasure, pride, and confidence. We face the challenge of transporting the donated instruments from Ireland to Kenya. If any of you are travelling to Kenya, please contact Paula Cullen on [cullen.paula8@gmail.com] so that you can carry one or more instruments in your luggage. Well done to those who contributed to making the library shelves and repairing and rehabilitating the rooms in rehab. The difference is huge.

When people like Victor Aaron return after many years, they are astonished by the development that has taken place. Congratulations to all of you on the positive changes. May we work together to impact significantly our almost 7,000 students and the community of Mukuru non-formal settlements.

Sr Mary Killeen
Director



E_{ducation}

P_{primary Schools}

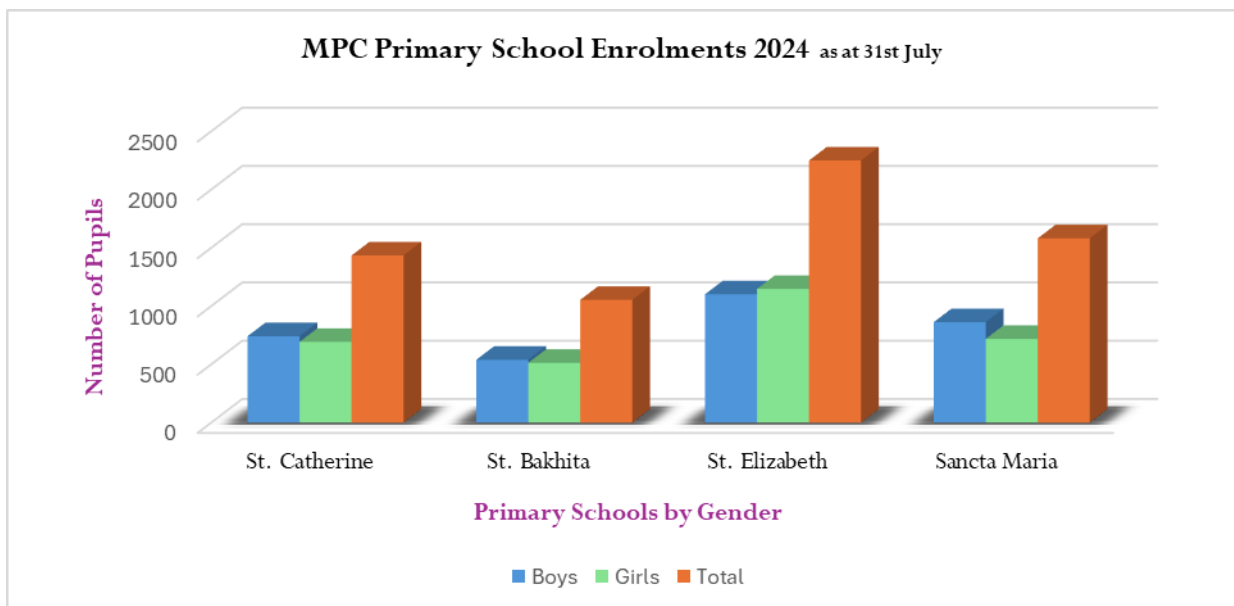
St Bakhita, St Catherine's, St Elizabeth and Sancta Maria Kayaaba

The MPC primary schools were lucky to have been in operation despite heavy protests by Kenyan youths against the government's response to inflation in the prices of essential commodities and the high cost of living. These protests led to many disruptions to businesses in the city, impacting an already fragile economy.

The Ministry of Education, through the Sub-county Director of Education's office, undertook a commendable initiative by conducting a school survey to establish the preparedness of the primary schools to host Grade 9 students in 2025. This is a challenge in all primary schools as there has never been a Grade 9 before; the equivalent would have been Form 2. The change would require an additional 3-5 classrooms per school. The pressing need for additional classrooms is evident, with 80% of the primary schools across the country requiring them. The government is actively planning on how these primary schools will accommodate the new grade and promised to erect the classrooms.

The end-of-term two assessments were successfully completed, marking a significant milestone in the academic year. The pupils then went on term 2 holidays and return on 26 August 2024.

The school enrolments at 6,321 remained steady in all schools even though the pupil teacher ratio remains above 50 pupils per class. The teachers are trying to ensure that the children comprehend the contents of each subject.



The pupils in Grade 3 and Grade 6 completed their CBC practical assessments during the term and the pupils will be eager to look at the KNEC website for their marks.

After a term of rigorous academics, our students had the opportunity to excel in other areas. The regional music and ball game activities were a chance for all primary schools to shine. Every team was striving to progress to the Nationals. We are proud to announce that St. Elizabeth's music team, through their dedication and hard work, not only outclassed their opponents but also secured a place at the national level. This prestigious event will be held in Eldoret in August at the National Music Festivals. The younger pupils at Sancta Maria donned on the ballerina outfits to perform at the Kenya National Theatre



St. Elizabeth music team practice for the nationals



Sancta Maria PP2 girls performing ballet at the Kenya National theatre.

MPC schools have a sacramental program for children, which prepares them for Baptism and the First Holy Communion. The children have 2 sessions per week with the parish catechist. Most of the children attend Mass with their parents on the weekends. A plan has been proposed for children who cannot attend with their parents to be enrolled through the schools.

St Bakhita Awards Day was held to acknowledge the best performing pupils. A group from Standard Chartered Bank visited St Bakhita and helped to plant trees on the riparian side of the school.



Awarding the best performing learners in the school.



Standard Chartered Bank Staff



Sancta Maria pupils conducting experiments on evaporation



St Bakhita Students cooking chapatis

The Junior Secondary students at Sancta Maria and St. Bakhita conducted various experiments as part of the practical components for some school subjects.

The Mercy Education Office organized a session with the Mercy Associated Schools: Our Lady of Mercy Primary, Secondary and Shauri Mayo, Huruma Girls, plus the 4 MPC primary schools and St Michael Secondary, Headteachers to explore and develop the schools' Mercy ethos and faith formation. The session provided strategies for the Headteachers to promote 'Mercy' as the school's charism. It was emphasized that other attributes of stewardship, compassion, Godliness, human dignity and excellence are to be the foundation for all interactions with staff, children and parents.



[Mr Samuel Nyaga, Mrs Virginia Kinuthia, Mr Eric Waweru, Mrs Lucia Njogu HoD MPC, Mrs Zephine Wanjohi, Mrs Monica Leshamtia, Sr Mary Kanyi Director Mercy Office, Mrs Virginia Kangethe, Fr Zachary Kamau, Mrs Grace Okomol and Mrs Consulate Maina].

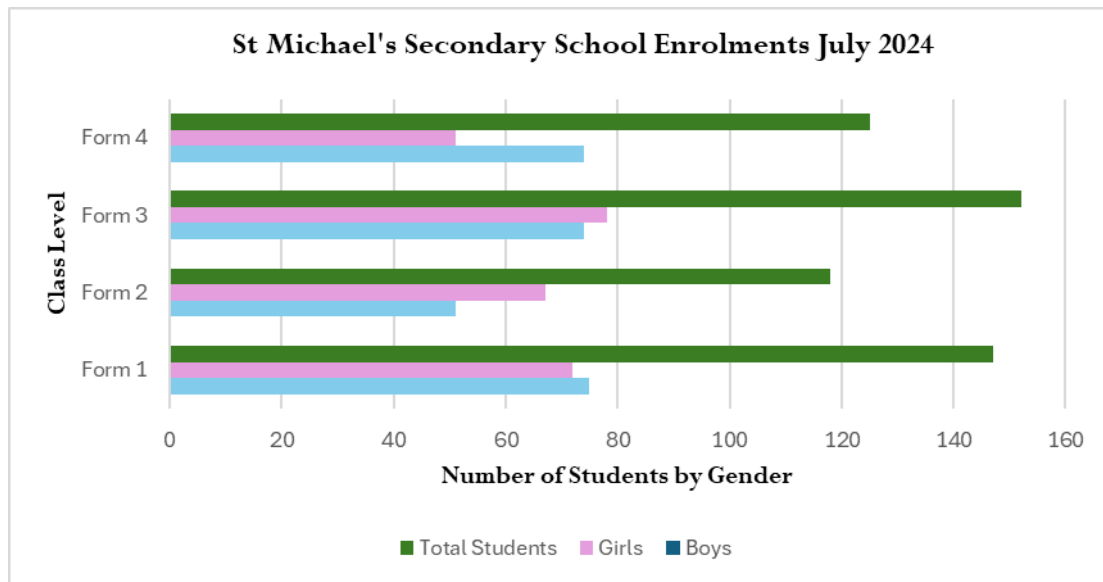
Mercy Associated Schools Headteachers at Mercy Education Office



MPC continued to feed its 6,321 pupils throughout the month and saw a reduced number of absentees. With the holiday break around the corner, and to ensure that children are not starving, the feeding program will take place three days per week, thanks to the generous support of Team Pankaj. A number of story and activity books were donated by 'Books First' publishers St Bakhita.

St Michael's Secondary School

St Michael's enrolment of 542 students have been busy completing their assessments, attending the Prefect's Symposium, Masses, visitors and other extra-curricular activities in July.



The best-performing subjects for the Form 4 students are CRE, Geography and Computer Studies. However, Chemistry and Maths need urgent attention, with the girls achieving a mean of 4.2 compared to the boys at 3.9 points. It is crucial for the Form 4 students to improve their scores in the final term if they want to gain entry into university.

The rest of the students also sat exams and the results will be released in August.

Father Paulinas presided over the school Mass, and his homily focused on the negative effects of jealousy and what students can do to challenge themselves. Fr Paulinas wished the staff and students a safe and happy time during the remaining part of the term and the holidays.

The Mercy Education Office held a student leadership symposium where students from other Mercy schools, filled with enthusiasm, came together to discuss the role of leadership, its benefits, and challenges. The event was held at the MPC multipurpose hall, and the students were eager to share their ideas, particularly in light of the recent youth demonstrations in the city.



Full house of student leaders at MPC



7/31/2024



Teachers address the Prefects



Practical stories and connection with the students positively influence St Michael's culture. In July, the motivational talk topic was 'Adolescent Life and Teen Relationships'. After the primary address, the students were placed into gender-specific groups and combined to ensure that both genders heard and appreciated a diverse range of perspectives. The facilitators for the day were Dinah Maina (MPC Deputy Director) - For both genders and then George Ochieng (Sum Child Foundation) - for boys; Victor Namulunga (Health Worker at Mary Immaculate Clinic) – Girls and Rose Nyangweso (Teacher at St. Michael) – Girls. The feedback from the students indicated that the format employed worked well, enlightening the audience about the benefits of such a diverse approach.



Mr. Ochieng, and Victor Namulunga present to the students

During the month, the school received two visits that brought a wave of hope and optimism: one from First Book Publishers, led by Mr Kareem Hasham, CEO, and the other from Strathmore University, led by Dr Vincent Ogutu, Vice Chancellor. Both organizations, with their generous donations of educational resources including books and laboratory equipment, have significantly enriched our school. Some of the books were shared with St. Bakhita School, spreading this hope and optimism further.



Dinah Maina presents to St Michael's Secondary students



St. Michael's students gave a warm welcome to the Book First Team



Students and teaching staff receive the Readers



Dr Ogutu addresses the students and presents the donations to Headteacher Mr Waweru and Sylvia Syambua, Form 4 student.

As a result of the many staff transfers, the Mercy Education Office organized a two-day transition familiarization meeting for Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers from the different Mercy schools. We were privileged to have Fr Zachary Ng'ang'a, a Passionist priest, who is a consultant in education management as the facilitator. The main agenda point was "How to become a good steward in Mercy schools".

Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre

The 271 vocational students continued their courses and completed examinations before the short-term break in August. The KWAL beneficiaries, accompanied by 3 staff members, had a unique learning experience during their visit to the factory. They gained insights into the manufacturing processes involved in producing alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages like Kibao, County, Kingfisher ciders, and Ribena, Lucozade and fresh juices. They were then separated into smaller gender groups to learn more about the value of ethnicity, stress management, and anxiety. All students had the opportunity to hear inspiring testimonies from workers. One particular worker shared her journey from a roadside bench to owning several restaurants within Nairobi, Meru, Embu, and Eldoret counties. She now presents motivational sessions for companies like KWAL.



Catering students at the KWAL factory



Catering students learn the process of manufacturing beverages



Mentorship session at KWAL



Students and the HoD at KWAL

KWAL has partnered with Kenchic, a poultry company, to sponsor a nationwide cooking competition called Master Cook. Contestants will be selected to participate, and OLMVTC catering students will assist the main contestants. They will also make up part of the audience to observe the competitions.

Teacher Debora, students Lilian, Erick, Alex, Helen and HOD Loice at the Master Cook competition



To maintain student fitness and relax a little after the examinations the Centre held a Sport Day where all the classes were able to participate in different sport activities such as football, volleyball, relays, sack race among many others. They were able to apply teamwork that allowed the students and staff to have fruitful day.



Students participating during the Sport Day.



The Hairdressing and Plumbing classes won the Women's and Men's 400m Relay. The Front Office and Welding and Fabrication classes won the Women's and Men's Bottle Fling. The Catering and Special Needs classes won the Women's and Men's sack races. Even though there were no trophies everyone had a fun time.



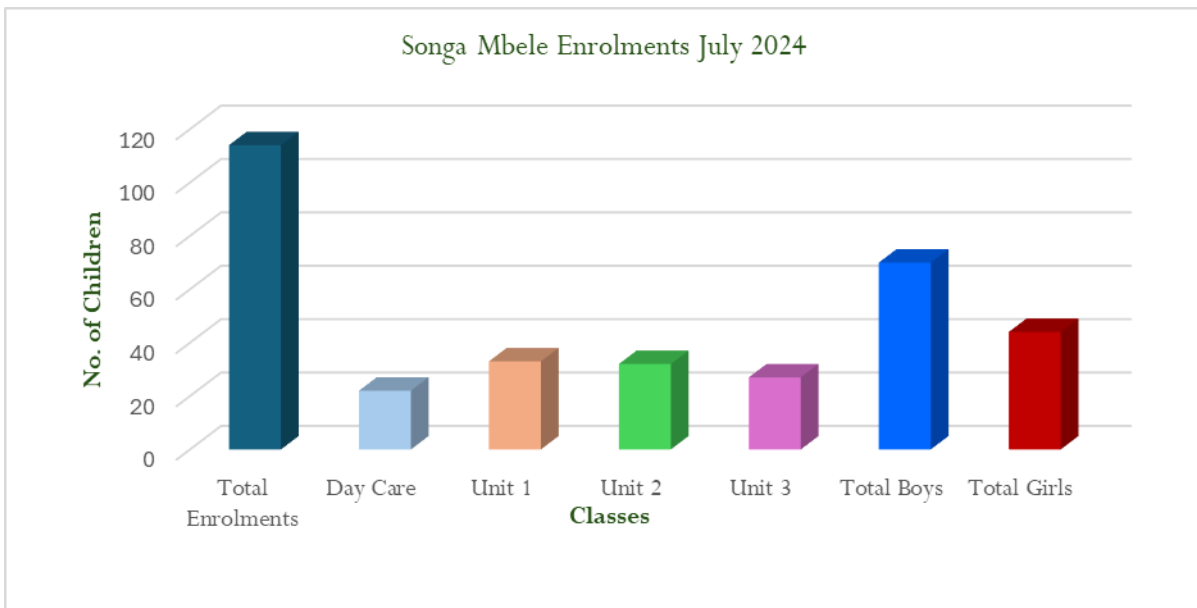
Donations were received from Rose Snedker of 'New Beginnings' initiative for the Skills courses.



Transformations

Songa Mbele na Masomo Children's Centre

Songa staff continued to attend to the children and kept connections with the families in matters to do with progress in education and therapy with 114 children at the Centre.



Since the classrooms are bright and spacious, the children take part in many extracurricular activities besides their academic education, such as singing, dancing, drawing, reading storybooks, watching television, and playing together with toys. It is a wonderful centre.

The children also enjoyed interpersonal communication sessions, which helped them build confidence and communicate respectfully with other children. Providing such programs can spark children's curiosity and desire to learn more about themselves and others.



In July, the Centre was graced by the visit of our long-time sponsors, eRko Slovakia. Karina Tothova, Miroscava Sitekova, Victoria Kelementova, and Lucia Jantosovicova toured the facility, witnessing firsthand the inspiring progress of the children. The eRko members' home visits, aimed at understanding the children's circumstances further underscored the positive impact of their visit on the children and staff that affirmed the future for the Centre.



eRko Team members with the speech therapist



Staff meeting with the eRko Team



eRko Team in the sensory room

Having access to the Mary Immaculate Clinic is a significant support for children, ensuring their health needs are met promptly. In July, 11 children were referred to the Clinic for treatment. Our social workers, with their unwavering dedication, followed up with the sick and absent children, conducting 8 home visits. Several donations were received at the Centre in July from food provisions, hygiene materials, stationery items, clothes and shoes from well-wishers. Over 28 families benefitted from the donations.

MPC is committed to empowering families at many levels through its different institutions. Through other agencies, it endeavours to facilitate workshops, mentorships, and training for the children, families, and staff. AOSK organized Songa staff sessions on the national care transitioning strategy and guidelines on care reforms and child welfare program guidelines. These sessions were facilitated by Mr Stanley Hari, the Director of the National Council of Children Services, a renowned expert in the field, to ensure the audience receives the most reliable and up-to-date information.

Cheshire Disability sponsored another training called 'STEPS' was offered to parents whose children have cerebral palsy.



Participants of Step Training



Under the Cheshire Disability sponsorship, 5 parents were supported to start businesses selling charcoal, githeri, and smokies as part of the inclusive livelihood program.

Volunteers play a vital role at the Centre by assisting with various children's activities. We sincerely thank them for their valuable contributions and unwavering support. Many of the parents at our Centre have also dedicated their time as volunteers, working together to create a better environment for the children. Parents and students from Our Lady of Mercy Secondary School from down the road joined the Centre in celebrating Mass and thanking God for the many blessings received this year given the difficulties with demolitions and rioting in the area.



Mass in the Dining Room



Fr Daniel Massart M.Afr

Ann Mueni from Unit 2, who has autism spectrum disorder, is this month's high achiever. Her journey, guided by continuous and dedicated therapy intervention, has led to significant progress. Ann can now play with toys independently, has achieved a partial attention span, concentrates for at least 5 minutes, has improved eye-hand coordination, follows simple instructions, and makes eye contact. Her progress in sensory integration activities to train concentration, eye-hand coordination, attention span, and eye contact is a testament to the power of therapy and the potential for growth. Well done Ann!



Ann Mueni

MPC Rehabilitation Centre

The variety and number of activities at the Centre made July an exciting month. The 66 boys and staff worked together to coordinate their efforts to accomplish these projects. The other 21 boys under the sponsorship program reported well. The boys' enthusiasm for learning and mastering the English language, both written and spoken, is truly inspiring and has made this month's learning experience so positive. To help accelerate the learning process, the boys were given English storybooks and watched cartoons and kids' programs in English. The management of the Centre, in collaboration with the staff, has implemented measures to ensure that all of the boys speak in English from Monday through Thursday. As a result, the boys' vocabulary and language have seen a noticeable improvement.



The boys' performed well on the end-of-term 2 exams has shown a significant improvement compared to last term. This positive trend is a testament to the boys' hard work and the effective teaching methods at the Centre. Most of them performed well on the tests, which was noted as they had been putting great effort in classwork and giving it first priority.

Skills Instructor, Charles addresses the boys on closing day as teachers Terry Ann and Jane organize the awards for top students.

The Centre counsellor holds 3 sessions per week to assist the boys in resolving personal concerns like identity crisis, anger management, self-esteem, and self-worth, among various other issues. The group sessions are employed to shed additional light on these topics and to discuss them. This has led to a significant reduction in bullying, a result that should encourage us all. The boys have also fostered brotherhood, encouraging them to interact amicably while caring for one another in the centre. Peer counselling is also a new methodology that has been very effective, hence making the bigger boys treat the young ones as brothers.



Group counselling session



Peer counselling - boys sharing their experiences with each other

The Centre's co-curricular activities are not just key, they are the cornerstone of the boys' physical, social, cultural, and emotional development. While the boys have had limited opportunities to play rugby at the

Centre, we are actively working to secure a new coach for them. This is a clear indication of our commitment to their physical development and ensures that they will soon be able to enjoy this sport as part of their co-curricular activities.

The music program at the Centre is not just thriving; it's flourishing. The boys' interest in music has grown significantly since the introduction of music lessons, facilitated by the appointment of a music teacher from St. Michael's sponsored by Paula Cullen and Friends. This initiative has not only made music popular at the Centre but also greatly contributed to the boys' personal and musical development. The boys have now been allocated into smaller groups based on their interests and musical ability.

The Centre is deeply grateful to Paula Cullen and Friends, whose support has advanced the successful music program. They identified the potential and spoke to friends and supporters in Ireland. To make things possible, they held a Ceile festival (*a traditional Irish social gathering*) in Dublin in aid of 'Music in Mukuru', organised by Bronagh Fitzgerald and supported by Ireland's National Symphony Orchestra.



Dinah, Catherine Nolan and Sinead Farrell outside Dublin's Concert Hall

Sinead Farrell's appeal on national radio for musical instruments was a resounding hit! Dozens of listeners sent different instruments, such as violin, piano, guitars, flute, drums, saxophones, cellos, keyboards, a harp, and numerous other items. The auditions by the music teacher at the Centre has improved the boys' focus during rehearsals.

As a token of their deep appreciation, the boys in the art workshop made bracelets for Dinah to present in person to the members of the orchestra. The group's immediate challenge now is to transport the instruments to Nairobi. If anyone is travelling to Nairobi soon, could you please get in contact with Paula Cullen on cullen.paula8@gmail.com.



Paula Cullen with some members of the National Symphony Orchestra



Paula Cullen, Minister Pippa Hackett, Sinead Farrell and Irene Plunkett.



Some of the new musical instruments donated by Paula Cullen and Friends



Boys enjoying music class as they learn how to play various types of instruments as well as singing



Some boys learning how to play violin at the EF Reuben Centre with the Ghetto Classics Band

The boys are not just working hard; they are also incredibly excited about the ASKEA Exhibition room. Their enthusiasm is palpable as they create paintings and beadwork that they hope to see displayed for sale in the gallery room. This anticipation has led to the art Centre's vibrant and competitive atmosphere.



The boys work on their art masterpieces.

Thanks to Teresa Heeran's generosity, all the Centre gardens have been fenced off, and lockable gates have been installed. These gates not only keep the sheep at bay but also ensure the security of our gardens, controlling movement in and out. This gives the vegetables ample space to grow with minimal disturbances, hopefully resulting in a bumper harvest.

The Centre has embarked on intensive agricultural operations to maximize crop production. We are thrilled to announce the planting of a diverse range of vegetables, including tomatoes, kale, spinach, and spider plants (saga). In addition, we will be cultivating arrowroots, pumpkins, Terere and Managu, offering a wide variety of fresh produce.



Jane guides the boys on weeding and mulching

The poultry farm continues to flourish. By the end of July, there were 30 chickens and counting. All the chickens have been vaccinated to prevent diseases. The rabbit program is also going well. There were 25 rabbits in July, and we hope to increase the number to 100 for sale.



Boys helping the rabbits to breast feed their newborns



Boys joyfully received the chicken and rabbit feeds to sustain the two projects.

The carpentry class, with their dedication and skills, has been instrumental in renovating and constructing new library shelves for the Booker Washington Library at the Centre, a project that has been jointly funded by Paula Cullen and Friends and Kristina Nwazota. The old shelves had reached their use-by date and could only hold the weight of a few books. The boys, with their wholehearted embrace of the project, have produced appealing and appropriate shelves that will last long and of course valuable carpentry skills.



Carpentry instructor, Charles, guiding the boys on the construction of the new library shelves



Library shelves



Finishing touches



The carpentry boys are also gaining valuable skills through different projects at the Centre, like fencing around the gardens to improve the aesthetics of the grounds.



Fencing project

A passionate gardener and teacher, Terry Ann, organized the boys to beautify a bland compound section with plants, transforming the area into a refreshing space. The boys enjoyed the activity as it helped them realize how important it is to protect and preserve our environment.



Refreshing space



The Association of Sisterhood of Kenya (AOSK) extended a special invitation to all rehabilitation centres to participate in two crucial workshops at Savelberg Retreat Centre. One was designed for centre administrators, and the other was for social workers. These workshops were paramount as they aim to educate the CCIs [*Charitable Children's Institutions*] about the government-supported shift from residential care to child welfare programs. They aim to educate the CCIs about this transition and guide us on registering the CCIs following the new government policy. The AOSK is committed to this cause and is ready to provide appropriate support to any Centre who may require extra assistance.



AOSK CCI Workshop

Sr Mary Killeen with AOSK-CCCK project coordinators, Sr Delphine Mukwana, Joseph Gitau, the NCCS Director and Mr Stanley Hari, and Mr Fred Matara Songa Mbele Coordinator.

In 2017, the Centre was donated ProFuturo tablets by Clare Chambers and Calary Parish, Ireland. The boys' education has made remarkable progress with them. Thanks to this initiative, the Centre was ranked second in Nairobi County for using tablets in the classroom. A further donation was given to the Centre by the regional manager, Michael Njeru of ProFuturo in Kenya in partnership with the American Towers for its exemplary adoption of ProFuturo technology in the learning process.



Regional Managers Profuturo Michael Njeru and the American Towers Polycarp Odhiambo presenting the donations.

The Centre was fortunate to receive visitors from the Czech Republic and Ireland who came to see the work that MPC is doing for the people of Mukuru slums. Among them was a famous Irish professional boxer, Gary "Spike" O'Sullivan who demonstrated a few moves for the boys.



Spike training the boys on some fundamentals boxing self-defense techniques



Originally from Kenya, Sarah migrated to the Czech Republic in the 1990s. She recently returned to the centre with her family to show them one of her first nursing placements at the Mary Immaculate Clinic.

The Centre is thankful to the generous donors who provide fresh provisions. Many parents are aware of how much a growing boy can eat. We thank Kristina Nwazota, Team Pankaj, and Action in Focus for this month's supplies.



We at MIRC sincerely thank all the well-wishers for their support, thoughtfulness, and kindness to the boys at the Centre. When you come to the Centre, you will see this heartfelt message designed by the boys, who are ready to greet you.



Message from the boys and staff at the Rehab Centre



Sponsorship Office

MPC has been reporting about the sponsored second chance program for ex-convicts for a while. In July, the volunteer program for ex-convicts was launched to provide meaningful employment opportunities. The program engages them in a variety of important casual jobs such as gardening, environmental maintenance, cleaning, and landscaping. This initiative serves a dual purpose: to build up the skills of the ex-convicts with potential employable work and reduce the risks of anti-social behaviours while also providing them with a source of income to support their families. Each person has been provided with the necessary tools to ensure the completion of these various jobs.



Second Chance Program Participants

The program has already begun to show positive results, with participants expressing profound gratitude for the opportunity to contribute positively to society. Thanks to the regular income earned through this initiative, the families of the volunteers have reported improved financial stability.

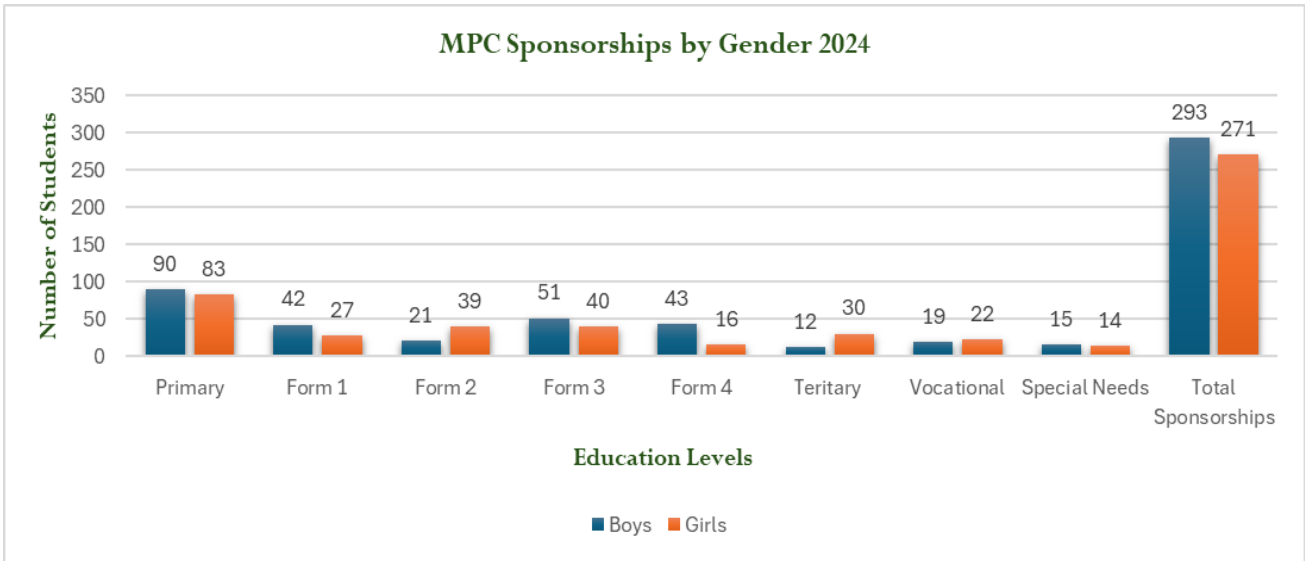


David Muriu shops for his art and painting materials

Recognizing the challenges faced by ex-convicts in restarting and maintaining businesses post-incarceration, we have implemented a business boost kit initiative. This program aims to support ex-convicts in revitalizing their businesses by providing essential tools, supplies, and mentorship. In July, 3 ex-convicts received business boost kits, including soap and detergent, charcoal for business for Priscilla Wanjiku, mirrors and grocery items for John Muteti, and art and painting tools for David Muriu. We aim to promote economic independence and reduce the likelihood of reoffending by empowering ex-convicts to rebuild and sustain their businesses.

In July, more student sponsorship interviews were conducted to determine the family backgrounds of needy Form Ones who have not yet paid school fees for 2024. Over 57 students were evaluated based on their financial circumstances and academic performances. Students were identified and offered sponsorships.





Thanks to generous sponsors, 564 student sponsorships cover tuition fees, learning materials, and sometimes uniforms and shoes. Mary Grace will commence her nursing course at Mater Misericordiae Hospital in Nairobi. The Spanish Friends donated a laptop to help her with her studies.



Mary Grace receives a laptop for her nursing course.

Over the next few months, the Sponsorship Office will seek fundraising opportunities to assist more students from Mukuru slums in achieving their educational aspirations.



Social & Health Services

Social Services

The month of July focused on enhancing efforts to support vulnerable families and children through services and programs offered at our various offices with over 2,100 interventions. The social workers continued to identify families in need, especially those previously affected by demolitions and floods. This identification process involves thorough assessments of the families' living conditions, income levels, and specific needs. Several of them are still waiting to be supported as soon as possible through nutritional support, clothing aid, bedding, and rent support, among others. The Amaranth clients carried out at the St. Catherine Office, support the sick and malnourished children with Amaranth flour to help improve their immunity, health and well-being.



A victim of the demolition receives food, clothes, mattress, and blankets for her family

The social workers at the MPC social offices continued visiting needy families to assess their needs and identified 398 needy students and 100 families in the month. Several families received business startup kits to help them support themselves. Cases of school absenteeism were also addressed, and most students returned to sit their end-term exams. The Child Protection Office followed up on alleged abuse cases, providing counselling for students, community clients, and staff to support their mental well-being. Additionally, social workers held mentorship sessions and skills training for primary and secondary school students. Needy girls were supported with sanitary towels before the second term break. The department is incredibly grateful for the donations received during the month, greatly assisting disadvantaged and vulnerable families and children.



KWES sponsored students From St Bakhita and St Catherine Primary Schools receive school uniforms and stationery items.

The clinic continued to serve the sick clients who sought the facility for medical treatment. The social office was pivotal in ensuring that the poorest clients received waivers, a testament to our commitment to providing healthcare to all. There were 317 children from MPC institutions referred for treatment, especially from St. Catherine's, which had the highest number. The social worker continued to do close follow-ups for the three children with cancer and the others who underwent treatment and are recovering at home. This ensures that they adhere to their medication, and those who must attend their monthly clinics do so without fail.

The Mary Immaculate Clinic has made significant progress over the years by providing affordable quality healthcare services with its “Open Door Approach” to the poor residents of Mukuru slums. In July, a total number of 1,962 patients, which included 1,633 outpatients and 329 clinic clients from our areas of service delivery, attended. A high prevalence of respiratory tract infections followed by gastrointestinal was noted; this could be attributed to the cold rainy weather and poor sanitation in the slums. The clinic conducted 839 laboratory tests, and Helicobacter pylori was a challenge in the age group 18-35 years at 43%, an increase from 38% in the previous month. We are actively giving health education concerning hygiene and sanitation, demonstrating our commitment to addressing prevalent health issues in the community.

The Clinic received a visit from the Starehe Sub-County Health Coordinators, who came for monthly supervision in the Prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT), addressing care and treatment. The healthcare providers mentored clinician staff on drug adherence, treatment failure, follow-up, immunizations, and documentation.



Nurse administering Polio vaccine

All the service delivery points did well in serving patients; the social worker made 5 home visits and 5 hospital visits and waived 72 needy cases, including those from the streets and the slums. Social Worker at Winfred Mbaika’s home who benefited from the donated diapers, she suffers from spinal cord injury after being involved in a road accident in 2010 that left her bedridden. She is currently undergoing physiotherapy sessions twice a week. Job Simba and his mother at home on a social worker follow-up after his surgery to correct his thoracic scoliosis.



Social worker on home visit

The Clinic is taking a proactive approach to enhance patient care. We are planning to increase health education sessions, particularly for breastfeeding mothers, to raise awareness of Tuberculosis. This initiative underscores our commitment to providing comprehensive care and ensuring our patients are well-informed about their health.



Job and his mother

In July, the clinic received vital medical donations from Tess and Cecilia D’Cruz and Sr. Barbara’s office, which will assist in treating patients. We are always grateful for donations, as they enable us to keep the nominal registration fee low.



Medical Supplies Donations



Announcements

Activities outside the Departments

- ✦ Scams have become a modern-day curse. Just a reminder to all supporters that MPC has a domain name, “**mercymukuru.co.ke**”, from which all official emails are sent. If you receive something claiming to be from MPC, please check the ending of the email address before responding. It is crucial to exercise caution, as it is not authentic if it does not have **mercymukuru.co.ke** ending.

- ✦ Sisters at Tangaza College, in collaboration with Missio Aachen, brought food parcels to distribute to needy families affected by demolitions and flooding as part of an ongoing safeguarding initiative.



- ✦ Delegation from Airtel visited Head Office to assess the playing fields before construction of a new surface can begin on the football, basketball and volleyball pitches.



Airtel staff, landscaping company staff and MPC management meet at Head Office soccer field

- ✦ An Irish volunteer from Cork who worked at St Catherine’s Primary School in 1990s returned for a visit. Victor was happy to see the development through the years.



Victor Aaron and group from Ireland