

Dear Partners, Supporters and Friends

November was an extraordinary month, and we had many overseas group visitors and individuals, both new and not-so-new. DKA Austria representatives conducting their monitoring and evaluation visit. Luiggi and other Austrians from the Lintz diocese visited the Centre to see the programs firsthand so that they could return to Austria to raise awareness of the work in the Lintz diocese. Paula Cullen and her group were extremely busy conducting lots of activities, especially at the Rehabilitation Centre. Chrissie Brooks and her group from England also visited the project and conducted many sporting activities and training.

We were delighted to host and receive our new Spanish partners, the Pablo Hortsmann Foundation. They will greatly assist us in the Clinic with pediatric services, bringing in their expertise and resources. Noticeably, there has been an increase in the number of patients attending the Clinic due to the increase in hunger and poverty as a result of economic pressures. We are in an in-between time as the government's National Insurance Fund failed, and the new system is not yet operational; hence, more sick people are coming to the Clinic. The physical space at the Clinic is now adorned with very colourful and friendly Kenyan animals to make the place a happy space for the children as they are treated by the pediatricians.

We had tree-planting days at St Catherine and Songa Mbele, which assisted us in reaching the Centre's environmental goals. These activities not only contribute to the local ecosystem but also instill a sense of environmental responsibility in our community. We are grateful to the donors who supported these initiatives.

Inside

Education

Grade 9 Classrooms	4
Holiday Feeding Program	4, 25
DKA M&E Visit	5, 8, 31
Tree Planting	5
KCSE Exams	6
Secondary School Gathering	6
Skills Exams	7

Transformations

Songa Updates	9
Songa Centre Registration	10
Tree Gifts	10
Visitors and Donations	11
Rehab Visitors	12, 14, 19
Pro Futuro Upgrades	13
Exam Preparations	13
Music and Art Programs	15
Farming Updates	16
Staff Training Days	17
Home Visits	17
Excursions	17, 18
Donations	19
Baptisms	20
Sponsorship Updates	21

Social and Health

Start Ups for Parents	23
Nutritional Support	24, 29
Health Talks for Teenage Mothers	25
Pablo Horstmann Foundation	26

Announcements

MPC	30
New MPC Trustees	30

Many examination bodies (KCSE, KNEC, NITA, KSPEA) continued throughout November for the Form 4 students at St Michael's secondary, Vocational training, and primary pupils. For the Form 4s, it was their last time in secondary school. We hope they prepared well; the examinations will determine their options in January. While the schools are closed, new classrooms will be built where possible, and we are not sure yet what will happen to Grade 9 classes that won't be completed in time. The vocational training program continues to strengthen, exploring new pathways for the students.

The holiday feeding program is a crucial initiative that nourishes impoverished families during a time when resources are particularly scarce. We are glad that MPC can offer something, even though it is nowhere near enough. This program not only provides essential nutrition but also alleviates some of the financial burden on these families during the holiday season.

We are continually inspired by the generosity of our supporters. Throughout November, we witnessed numerous instances of vulnerable children and families receiving assistance, thanks to your support. It is heartening to see parents receiving business start-ups, a testament to the long-term impact of our work.

Since 2000, an MPC board has been in place under the Registered Trustees of the Sisters of Mercy. While still under the Sisters of Mercy's ownership, the new MPC registered Trust will provide a separate legal framework and safeguard for managing, governing for specific purposes, ensuring continuity and stability, securing tax exemptions, and allocating more resources towards its mission.

There is plenty to read and enjoy in this month's edition of the MPC newsletter. As we approach the Season of Advent, I share this Advent prayer with you written by one of our long-term supporters.

God Bless

Sr Mary Killeen
Director

Advent

Advent means 'coming'. It is a time of 'waiting'.

Yes, God, we wait with expectancy for the feast of Christmas when we celebrate the coming of your Son, Jesus, as an infant.

During this waiting time we live in hope that,
as we prepare for this beautiful feast,
our longing for a better world
where people live in peace and harmony deepens.

During Advent God, you teach us patience and the ability to wait.

Your grace is abundant now as we
try to heal hurts we have caused.

As couples move to forgive each other,
as children say 'sorry' to family members and
as our hearts expand in love towards those in need.

Your gifts of healing and forgiveness
are so freeing as burdens, worries,
anxieties and unkind thoughts are erased.

We are grateful God, for this special Advent season.

Help us to enter deeply into this
Spiritual and grace-filled opportunity.

Sr Maureen Mohen RSM



E_{ducation}

P_{primary Schools}

The primary schools are now closed until January 2025. The primary school headteachers attended the annual National Headteachers Conference at Mombasa for 4 days. The most discussed agenda item is the Junior Secondary School Grade 9 intakes and classrooms, where the government promised to have completed all the required classrooms countrywide before January 2025. The government also promised to release 6,000 deployment letters for P1 teachers to Junior schools and hire 15,000 P1 teachers to fill the vacant Primary school shortage. The Headteachers are hopeful and waiting on physical confirmation.

The government has initiated the Grade 9 classroom construction project in most parts of the Country, with St. Elizabeth being one of the first to benefit. The construction, which began in

October and is expected to be completed by December, is a significant step towards improving the learning environment for our pupils. Each school has been allocated 4 million KHS (€30,000) towards this project. The new classrooms will not only ease the congestion of pupils in the school, which is the most highly populated among the 4MPC primary schools, but also provide a more comfortable and conducive space for learning. Construction of the other three primary schools has yet to commence.



Grade 9 construction classes going

As with every holiday break, MPC's feeding program, a lifeline for many, occurs in all primary schools. The children go to the schools near their home area to receive meals. The number of destitute families in the slums accounts for over 30% of the children who attend one of the four primary schools. The primary schools, through the MPC's feeding program, serve as a lifeline for these families, ensuring they are not hungry all day, and many bring some of the food to the rest of the families. All share whatever little is received from the school and a little portion for dinner. This keeps children well-nourished and healthy during the school holidays.



St Elizabeth and holiday feeding program in schools



MPC Staff and DKA Representatives

In November, we welcomed visitors from DKA Austria, Ute Mayrhofer and Nicole Wyszecski as they carried out their monitoring and evaluation program. Our visitors interacted with pupils, teachers, and parents to gain a greater understanding of the roles at MPC. The support given by DKA remains a very special contribution to MPC since it has improved the teacher-pupil ratio in schools for many years by sponsoring teachers.



Nicole addresses some of the primary pupils



DKA visitors interact with teachers and pupils



Watering begins

Davis and Shirliff water drilling company planted 100 trees along the fence at St. Catherine Primary School in an environmental program. These trees, in addition to beautifying the school, will also contribute to a healthier environment by absorbing carbon dioxide, providing oxygen, and reducing the school's carbon footprint. They will also provide some shade against the hot sun for children, enhancing their comfort during outdoor activities.

St Michael's Secondary School

In 2024, the enrolments at St Michael's Secondary School reached 554, with an overall gender ratio of 51:49, a significant statistic that underscores our commitment to education in the informal settlements. Having so many students able to complete their secondary education has been a wonderful achievement, enabling 125 Form 4 candidates to sit the KCSE (Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education) examinations during November with a 60:40 gender. As a school, we are hopeful and optimistic that the Class of 2024 will register good performances.



Students are searched before they enter exam room



Students after the Physics practical exam (last Exam of 2024) and their teachers



Sr Mary Kanyi, Mercy Education Director for the Sisters of Mercy, organized a gathering for the Class of 2024 at the Marist University, a day filled with nostalgia and anticipation. The event, which also included students from Kingstone and St Martin de Porres, was a poignant reminder of the journey that lies ahead. The guest speakers, with their insightful talks, prepared the students for the challenges and opportunities that await them. The day ended with the customary cutting of a Christmas cake, a tradition that symbolizes the end of a chapter and the beginning of a new one. Students from the 3 schools, filled with a sense of nostalgia, interacted and socialized, making the occasion truly memorable.



Cake cutting



Participants



Sr. Kanyi addresses the students

Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre

The Centre is winding down as formal classes have ceased, and we are proud to announce that 197 dedicated students are preparing for their examinations in Front Office, Tailoring, Dressmaking, Welding, Hairdressing, Beauty, Plumbing, Masonry, Paint and Decorating, Catering, and Craft. The two examining bodies are the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) and the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA), with 40 and 157 students, respectively, sitting the examination in the different authorities.

As part of their vocational training, some catering students were privileged to visit Kibondeni College, courtesy of KWAL. This unique opportunity not only broadened their understanding of hospitality but also introduced them to the next-level module of hospitality, a crucial step towards KNEC accreditation, a highly respected industry credential.

The catering students, as part of a public relations exercise, took the initiative to serve tea at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, sensitizing the community to OLMVTC. Their efforts were a testament to their practical skills, which they have honed before the examinations.



Gel polish Application on nails



Door fabrication



The Special Education class designed and crochet Small Teddy Bears

Revision for Front Office Class



Visitors, friends and neighbours of Luggi Frauenberger from DKA Internship Program enjoy the hospitality of the Catering Students



Transformations

Songa Mbele na Masomo Children's Centre

The programs and activities for the children at Songa continued in November. Over 75% of the children attended physiotherapy, and 58% attended speech therapy in the month. The number of children with 5 or more sessions was 12% and 10%, respectively.

Parent involvement at the Centre is not just increasing, it's making a significant impact. The Centre advocates for parents to actively participate in their children's development, and we're seeing the results. One strategy that helps the parents be more involved is to make them financially independent by establishing income-generating activities for them. Other parents volunteer to help out in the kitchen, grounds, or classrooms. Parents are also welcome to attend meetings to raise concerns about matters affecting their children, and their active participation is something we can all be proud of.

Generally, university interns and work placements play a crucial role in the Centre's mission. They enable us to provide individualized attention to the children who require it, and their short-term placements are not just about learning, but about making a real difference. In November, the Centre had 7 interns providing daily living support to the children, and their dedication gives us hope for the future.



Training for relatives and community members

The social workers held a crucial training session in November. It was not just for siblings, families, and neighbours, but for all of us. It helped us understand children living with disabilities better, and it's a step towards a more inclusive and informed community.

The older children at the Centre participate in a mentorship program that prepares them to exit to the Skills Centre, where they will learn new skills to become more self-sufficient and independent.



On-going mentorship sessions

The Centre's registration is progressing well. The Nairobi County Public Health Officer visited and was taken on a tour of the facilities. A copy of the Ministry of Health report was also submitted to the Ministry of Education for formal registration. We hope that by early 2025, the Centre will be formally recognized by the government. The children will be recorded in the National Education Management Information System (NEMIS), which provides all children with an education number to be used throughout their lives.

The Centre has been holding catechism classes for children and their parents. The catechists from Our Lady Queen of Peace, Parish, South B visited the Centre.



Catechism class children from Our Lady Queen of Peace



John, Sr Mary and MVC Charles

The Centre welcomed overseas and local visitors to the Centre in November. John McCarrick Jr last visited the Centre in 2023. The visitors gave generous donations of food provisions, learning materials and clothes for the children. Two representatives from DKA Austria conducted their monitoring and evaluation visit in November.

A tree planting initiative led by Chief Mulinge from nearby Hazina village and his assistant took place in Songa Mbele to further beautify the grounds. The Chief emphasized the critical importance of environmental conservation and provided 16 seedlings.



Chief Mulinge, his assistant plant the seedlings

Donations are always welcomed at Songa Mbele as many parents struggle to provide for their children in the slums. We are grateful for people's generosity.



TACTP Group (Touch A Child Through Play)

Some of the items delivered by well-wishers

James Obango is a 7-year-old boy who has been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Over the past month, he has shown significant improvement. His initial challenges included hyperactivity, a lack of attention span, difficulties with concentration and eye-hand coordination, an inability to follow instructions or play with toys, and unclear speech. Through continuous therapeutic intervention and a structured home training program, James has made remarkable progress. He can now play with toys independently and has achieved a partial attention span, allowing him to concentrate and sit through the entirety of various activities. Additionally, his hyperactivity has decreased.

James's speech has also improved; he can now communicate his needs, such as when he wants to go to therapy, use the toilet, or go to the dining hall. He is beginning to recognize some of his classmates' names and can partially identify colours, match pictures, and use scissors.

In terms of daily activities, James can take off his shoes and socks independently, though he still requires assistance when putting them on. Sensory integration and fine motor activities have contributed to his ability to concentrate and have also enhanced his eye-hand coordination, attention span, and eye contact.

Overall, well done, James! Keep up the great work!



James Obango

MPC Rehabilitation Centre

The Centre was bursting with activity in November, with three groups of donors, Paula Cullen, Chrissie Brooks and Kristina Nwazota, giving generously of their time, resources, and affection. The staff held essential discussions about the boys' care regarding sponsorship, reintegration with their families, and continuing their education. Several home visits were conducted to determine the family's circumstances, which helped us make informed decisions such as identifying specific needs for each family and planning for the boys' reintegration.

The number of boys residing at the Centre is 64, with a further 20 boys who have been exited but are under the MPC sponsorship program, which provides continued support for their education and well-being. The accelerated learning class has 24 pupils, St Catherine Primary has 26 pupils, carpentry has 7 students, and 7 are in secondary classes.

The overseas visitors had the opportunity to assess the boys' English proficiency, and the results were inspiring. While some boys faced challenges, many showed significant improvement. It was a delightful experience to see them reach a level where they could interact with their donors during play and interactive sessions.

Paula Cullen and her team's commitment to the boys' education was unwavering. In addition to teaching arithmetic and English and solving puzzles, they provided remedial lessons to groups of boys. The boys were exposed to various learning resources and diligently worked on their weak areas, ensuring their progress.



Catherine Nolan and Irene Plunkett at the remedial classes for the boys

Chrissie Brooks and her Team bought books, pencils, pens, printing paper, whiteboard markers, padlocks, and masking tapes to help the boys with their schoolwork. The British Airways crewmembers visited us and delivered storybooks and colouring books.

The teachers also maintained the boys' academic discipline using Profoturo tablets to organize and conduct classes. The boys not only adapted well to these tablets but also enjoyed using them, finding them more engaging than traditional

textbooks. Keeping up to date is very necessary for the teachers and they too received further training from Lawrence Maingi, Pro Futuro coach. Pro Futuro have kindly upgraded the original tablets sponsored by Calary Church, Co. Wicklow.



Mr Lawrence Maingi, training the staff



Students enjoying learning using the tablets



Carpentry boys preparing for NITA exams

The carpentry students have been making final preparations for the crucial NITA exams, which are scheduled for the first week of December 2024. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Adrienne Burke and Vera Smith from the Paula Cullen group, who have continued to support the carpentry course and boys by purchasing materials throughout the year.

Before transitioning to high school, the boys received intensive counselling to prepare them for reintegration. It is common for the boys to feel anxious about leaving the Centre at the end of the program. With many years of experience, the Centre's counselling staff equip them with the tools to navigate the shift from residential life to independent living or returning home to their families.

Additionally, the boys' parents participated in reintegration sessions to better understand the various scenarios they might encounter. These sessions aimed to help repair any fractured relationships and provide guidance on positive parenting techniques. Parents also addressed their concerns about their children's ability to comprehensively reform and how to maintain a harmonious living environment with them.



Group counselling sessions with Mr John Ogicho

Apart from the intellectual and psychological elements of the Centre, a more fun dimension is all the sporting and extracurricular activities.

Dan Edwards, coach of Queens Park Rangers, conducted his second soccer camp at the Centre. The boys were not just taught various soccer skills and techniques, but they also showed significant growth, expanding their prior knowledge. This time, they even participated in tournaments at Police Band, where they faced teams from South B-Stars and FISA Academy and won two games while drawing one under coach Dan. After being greatly impressed, Coach Dan pledged to return with his son for MIRC Soccer Camp Edition 3 in January 2025. The boys' growth and learning were evident, and they were thankful for the abundance of jerseys, athletic wear, boots, and other Queens Park Rangers Football Club items that Team Chrissie Brooks and Coach Dan donated to the Centre.

Team Chrissie, along with the boys, organized a surprise birthday celebration for Carlea, one of the crew members. The celebration concluded with the boys indulging in a large amount of cake and candy. After the boys won their two league games, Coach Dan treated them to some chicken and chips, and soft drinks.



Dan sorting out the sports gear



Dan, Erick Wenyene and Chrissie received his medal



Milton Otieno, Simon Macharia, Christopher Muiruri with Chrissie

Coach Benter has been working hard this month to ensure that the boys don't miss any of the FKF league games held in the South B area. This commitment keeps the boys practising consistently and helps them perform at their best during competitions. As a result, they have successfully maintained their third-place ranking in the league.



Dan, Joseph Mwangi and Chrissie as they issue medals to the boys



Tobias helps to sort out the jerseys ahead of the football camp



Some of the boys with their B.A family



Irene and Paula hand over musical instruments to Mr Collins, music teacher.

We welcomed Mr Collins, the new music teacher for the Centre, who received a diverse collection of musical instruments such as recorders, clarinets, violins and keyboards from Paula Cullen and her team. The boys were thrilled at the prospect of such a wide range of instruments to choose from, sparking their interest in the expanded music program. The Centre has added more music lessons during the holidays with the new collection of instruments, so more boys can choose from the different instruments to learn.



Benjamin Goodhope



Gibson Chege



Evans Otieno



Kelvin Michuka and Samuel Kinuthia



Samuel and the boys receive the art materials

The Art class was particularly productive this month, with the students creating candles for the festive season and crafting bracelets for the donors. Their most significant achievement was the completion of their paintings, which will be exhibited at an auction in the United Kingdom organised by Chrissie Brooks. The students' contributions are not just paintings, but a testament to their creativity and hard work.



Stephen Macharia



Benjamin Otieno



Chrissie and the BA crewmembers in the art room



The abundant and steady rains in November have been a boon for our market gardens. They have helped irrigate the land, making it possible to harvest thriving vegetables and plan for a new crop. Using the drip irrigation technique, which Mr Maina, a Centre friend, taught the boys, we grew more veggies this month. We are now looking forward to planting tomatoes in December with the same optimism that the November rains have instilled in us.

Charles Ndirangu carpentry instructor trains the boys on drip irrigation farming

Despite our challenges this month, our team's dedication to the project's success remains spirited. The mongoose invasion, despite our best efforts to secure the house, has presented significant obstacles. In this month alone, 9 rabbits were killed by the mongoose, and 3 died naturally. Project sponsor, Teresa Heeran from Paula Cullen's group and Teddy Strand, are working on a new design to ensure the safety of both the rabbit and chicken projects. We are confident they will produce a secure home for the chickens and bunnies, free from theft and predators.

Thanks to Fidel Castro's diligent efforts, the boy who has taken on the project as his own and makes sure that everything is in order—including feeds, vaccinations, egg production, and health—the chicken project has been doing incredibly well. His attention to detail has caused the number of chickens to soar to 54. Sadly, burglars came into the Centre and stole 9 fully grown chickens; this was a major setback because the boys were looking forward to consuming 7 for Christmas and selling about 15.

The staff must be constantly updated on changes and best practices for charitable institutions as regulated by the Kenya Government. In November, the Centre hosted a session for staff, sponsored by [who??], and facilitated by Wezicare's lead consultant, Davis Nyakundi. The agenda included care improvements, reforms, compliance, and effective communications for charity institutions, all of which are aimed at making a positive impact on our operations and the lives we touch.



Staff Capacity Training Day

As part of our after-care plan, two staff members, teachers Jane and Sr Teresia, went to Karai Children's Home to follow up on all 10 boys who had been transferred there and to see if they were interested in taking in additional boys from our program who did not have an exit plan.

We learnt this was not feasible because care reforms prioritised supporting the children at home. They discovered that the boys were doing exceptionally well, were told they were the most well-behaved in the facility and had excellent academic performance.



OCSEA Short Course

Faith Chebari, the Children Protection Officer in Starehe's Directorate of Children Services, invited 15 boys to participate in a short course on 'Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse' (OCSEA) held at the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD). The boys not only gained much knowledge but were also eager to share what they had learned with the other boys at the Centre. This willingness to share their knowledge demonstrates the success of the course and encourages further engagement.

Parents were invited to a Parent's Day meeting at the Centre to learn about their son's transformation and academic journey. They were also encouraged to participate in a counselling session and provided resources on effective parenting.



John, counsellor, addressing the parents



Charles Ngitungo with his mum and siblings



Kelvin with Kama Itakuaje



Sylvester Kamboi during parent day

Paula Cullen and her Group's visits to the Centre always bring a surge of excitement. They bring with them a wealth of care, smiles, energy, and surprises, including the much-anticipated swimming excursion at Stedmak Gardens. The boys' infectious enthusiasm, regardless of the weather, is a powerful motivator for all of us, reminding us of the positive impact we can have on their lives.



Entrance to the Heated Pool

Good lines are important



Enjoying swimming in the heated pool



After all that energy... its time for lunch

After the two-week visit, the excitement concluded with a tasty dinner consisting of chicken, chips, soda, apples, and sweets. Paula Cullen, Irene Plunkett, Catherine Nolan, Vera Smith and Teresa Heeran's next trip will be in April 2025. Thank you for the tremendous joy you bring the boys.

The 12-month residential program caters for the boys while at the Centre. After 12 months, sponsors continue to assist the boys with their education. Thanks to combined efforts, at least 14 boys will successfully start boarding primary school in January 2025. With the 3 groups that visited the Centre this month, Paula Cullen, Chrissie Brooks and Kristina Nwazota, each group added more boys to their sponsorship list, especially those about to be reintegrated. A suggestion was made for the carpentry boys who had nowhere safe to return to that a house be rented while they wait for their NITA exam results. The boys would be fully supported until they began work and divided the living expenses.



Sponsorship meeting in attendance Team Chrissie, Team Paula and Team Auntie K

Catherine Nolan presented the boys attending St. Catherine's Primary School with new uniforms from Gaelscoil Eoghain Ui Thuairisc, School Co. Carlow, Ireland while St Gerard's Bray Co. Wicklow donated the Rehabilitation boys with new uniforms including tracksuits. Multi metals in Co. Wicklow, Ireland sponsored the boys shoes to replace the worn out ones.



Looking sharp in their tracksuits



Isaac Obama, Gibson Chege, Daniel Kinyuia, and Brighton Njuguna received new shoes from Multi Metals



Teresa and John Irungu

The dire economic situation in the slums worsened over the year, particularly after the floods, demolitions, and evictions. In response to this, Paula Cullen's group played their part in bringing some relief by donating food packages to the most vulnerable families living in these slums. Catherine Nolan, Irene Plunkett, Teddy Strand, Teresa Heeran and Paula Cullen distributed 66 food packages to vulnerable Clinic patients.



Paula Cullen Team



Teddy, Catherine and Teresa



A young mother and daughter with Irene

After 10 months of catechism and instruction at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, South B, 21 boys from the Centre were baptized into the Christian faith. This transformational journey, supported by the parish community and Paula Cullen's group, saw the boys not only embrace a new faith but also a new look, as they were provided with new trousers, shirts, and shoes, making them look amazing for the occasion.



The newly baptized



Visitors and Boys together



Fr Binu baptized as Maurice and Stephen stood as Godparents



Sponsorship Office

November has been a month of reflection, progress, and continued measures to support children from Mukuru slums in their desire for education. The success of our sponsorship program is a testament to the collective commitment of our donors and staff, who work together to empower students.

Many term 3 school reports and gratitude letters were scanned and uploaded to the database to inform the sponsors of their student's academic results. The letters have been overwhelmingly positive, underscoring their sponsors' significant and transformative impact on their students' educational journey. Appreciative of their support for many years, we hand-delivered the letters and reports to our long-time local sponsors, Raja Trust Foundation. The meeting provided the opportunity to present next year's candidates for sponsorship. They also donated food provisions to the St Catherine's social office to vulnerable families in Fuata Nyayo village.

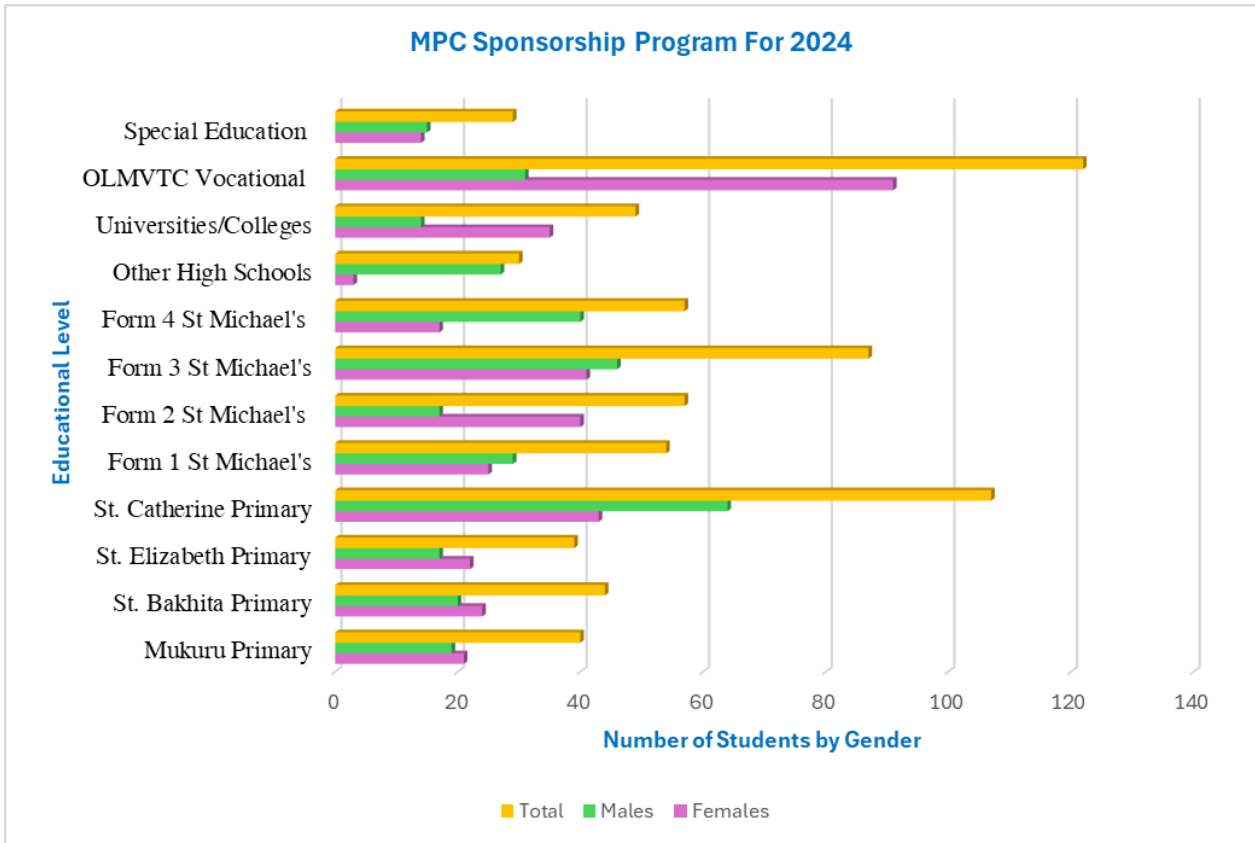


Raja Foundation Donations

We were fortunate to have three key donors visit the Centre around the same time to discuss funding strategies and explore new ways to enhance the quality of educational resources and long-term sustainability: Paula Cullen and her team, Chrissie Brooks and BA crewmembers, and Kristina from the World Bank, who support many of the boys at the Rehabilitation Centre. The donors expressed their continued commitment to the program, which is looking to add funding for university and vocational training students.

Over 60 sponsored **Form 4** students completed their Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) exams. The results of these exams will determine where they will transit to, university or vocational training. Meanwhile, 13 Grade 6 primary school-sponsored pupils participated in the Kenya Primary School Education Assessment (KPSEA). The office endeavoured to support and encourage the students throughout this crucial period, ensuring they had all the necessary resources and guidance to perform their best.

In the 2024 academic year, over 710 students received sponsorship: 230 in primary schools, 285 in secondary schools, 122 in vocational skills programs, 49 at universities, and 29 in special education institutions. It is wonderful to see so many children getting the opportunity to excel and advance in their education. We strive for a gender-inclusive approach, although achieving it can sometimes be challenging for various reasons. Nonetheless, the figures indicate a certain level of inclusivity.





Social & Health Services

Social Services

Since schools were on holiday, minimal school-related activities took place. Rather, the focus was on supporting needy clients who visited the offices to seek services. Most of the needs addressed were nutritional support and clothing aid, among others. Throughout the month, the social workers have been setting up small businesses for the needy families that were affected by floods and the state demolitions that happened. The families were selected based on their level of need and the potential for the business to be sustainable.

These families received start-up kits for businesses of their choice, and each social worker was tasked to guide and help them set up the business. The aim of the business start-ups is to provide these families with at least a reliable source of income to help them fend for their families. They were also supported with a month's house rent and household items. Importantly, the social workers will be doing progressive follow-ups to ensure that the businesses are still operational and know whether any challenges need to be addressed, providing ongoing support and reassurance.



St. Catherine's Primary School parent



St Bakhita Primary School parent

All parents were victims of floods and demolitions were assisted with business start-ups.



Songa Mbele parent

Nutritional support was also provided, with a focus mainly on sick patients in the Amaranth program and children under 17 years of age in the malnourished program. The program at St. Catherine benefitted a significant number of children, with 100 children enrolled in it. These children include those already in the malnourished babies' program, the sick children in our schools, and a majority from the community. The department also supported the needy walk-in clients who came to seek food aid with a package each.



Families of the children in the malnourished program receive food parcels from St. Catherine social office



Sick Parents receive food parcels

In November, all social workers and Department heads received training facilitated by the National Child Help Line Kenya. The Safeguarding officer played a pivotal role in organizing the capacity-building on Performance Management and the Children's Act 2022, demonstrating their commitment to our collective growth.



These trainings are vital in ensuring staff understand their roles well, empowering them to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in their jobs. The office also ensured that the group counselling sessions in the different offices and individual counselling sessions for students and clients took place.

Social workers during their training on the Children Act 2022 by a team from Child line Kenya

The situation was similar at various MPC sites in November: when schools are closed, many children do not have enough food. During the holidays, meals are provided for hungry children three times a week. We are grateful to Team Pankaj for subsidizing these meals.

St Catherine's Primary School cook hands out meals



The social worker conducted close follow-ups with children who have chronic and terminal illnesses, as well as those receiving treatment at other hospitals. The office also supported community members in need through the waiver program, helping them

access medical care. Three children with cancer are being closely monitored. One of them is scheduled to receive a prosthetic leg next year. Another recently completed her second round of chemotherapy and has her next appointment in January. Sadly, the third child's cancer has metastasized to the bone, as revealed by CT scans after his second round of chemotherapy.

MPC remains committed to supporting teenage mothers. Through the Department, gynecologist Dr Sarah Mutua from Mbagathi Hospital was invited to speak on reproductive health issues.

Gynecologist, Dr Sarah Mutua from Mbagathi Hospital addresses the teenage mothers.



M^{PC} Clinic

The Clinic treated **1,549 patients**, with **656 pediatric patients** served through the Mother and Child Unit (MCU). Female patients accounted for **61%** of visits, surpassing male patients at **31%**, reflecting a decline in male patient turnout compared to October. A total of **869 laboratory tests** were conducted, of which **276** were for children. Respiratory illnesses continued to dominate diagnoses, attributed to the challenging living conditions in the slum environment, exacerbating health risks. The Antenatal Care (ANC) Clinic provided services to **90 women**, while the Child Welfare Clinic (CWC) immunized **109 children**, showcasing efforts toward improving maternal and child health outcomes.



Pediatrician assessing the baby's weight

A significant milestone was achieved with the grand opening of the Mother and Child Unit, supported by the **Pablo Horstmann Foundation**. The unit was transformed into a child-friendly space with fresh paint and delightful animal-themed drawings, creating a welcoming and comforting environment for children and mothers, as demonstrated by the beautiful, comfortable gaze of the baby above





The Clinic welcomed a donor delegation from Spain of the **Pablo Horstmann Foundation**, culminating in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to strengthen its partnership with Mukuru Promotion Centre. This collaboration aims to enhance maternal and pediatric services, ensuring free healthcare access for Mukuru slum dwellers. By alleviating the financial burden of treatment, families can redirect their limited resources toward food and other basic necessities, promoting healthier children and communities. This initiative brings hope and optimism for a brighter, healthier future for the Mukuru community.



Dr. Anna Sendagorta and MPC Director Sr. Mary Killeen



PHF Team at the Official Grand Opening



MoU signing Pablo Horstmann Foundation and MPC (Mercedes Hernando, Dr. Anna Sendagorta and Sr. Mary Killeen)

The Clinic received generous food donations from Paula Cullen's Group, which benefited 66 families. This donation was especially impactful for breastfeeding mothers, who received knitted sweaters and hats for their babies. Additionally, patients in specialized clinics for diabetes and hypertension also benefited, addressing the increasing demand for food assistance.



Teddy Strand and Teresa Heeran distribute the food parcels to vulnerable families at the Clinic

Fees for 133 patients were waived, and 8 individuals in need were referred to St. Catherine's social office for food and clothing assistance through the Amaranth Food program.

We are always grateful to those who support vulnerable individuals unable to afford necessary services. All donations are distributed to those in greatest need. Recently, the Clinic received generous medical donations from well-wishers that will provide essential support for diabetic patients.



Donation from Felix

The Clinic hosted a training on Malaria Management organized by the Ministry of Health (MOH). This training aimed at enhancing staff skills with updated trends and practices in malaria care. Additionally, the Clinic received supervision for its Tuberculosis (TB) and Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) programs. The MOH commended the improvements in data quality and documentation. Furthermore, the MOH pledged to continue supporting the Clinic to sustain its progress.



Announcements

Activities outside the Departments

- A historic meeting was convened at the MPC Head Office on 12th November. After many years of deliberation on the registration of Mukuru Promotion Centre, the Provincial Leader, Sr Theresia Waraga and Mr Chiru, Sisters of Mercy legal council, announced that the Sisters of Mercy had officially registered MPC as an independent Trust. While this marks a significant change in governance, it's important to note that MPC remains a Ministry of the Sisters of Mercy, ensuring the continuity in our mission. The governance has transitioned from the Registered Trustees of the Sisters of Mercy Kenya Province to the Registered Trustees of Mukuru Promotion Centre Trust.



Sr Esther, Mr Chiru, Sr Theresia Waraga, Sr Mary and Sr Theresia at the MPC Head Office

- A meeting was held on the 6th of November at the head office to scale up the catering courses in the Inua program. The objective of the meeting was to come up with a plan for how more of the students can be absorbed into the job market after their training.



*Dinah, Deborah (skills), Josephine (Kibondeni College) Eric Githua (KWAL), Sr. Christine (HOD), Judy Munge (KWAL), Linda (Kibondeni College)
Seated: Rion and Sr. Mary*

- Wolfgang Boehm and Karin Radauscher from Austria paid a courtesy visit to the Head Office. They spent most of the week visiting various Departments engaging with staff and beneficiaries.



Wolfgang and Karin

- DKA officials, Ute and Kiki, visited MPC for a monitoring and evaluation exercise on the DKA funded projects, engaging with management, staff, parents and interacting with pupils and students from MPC education institutions.



- The MPC field received its final touches as the grass marking laid and goal posts erected. Thank you again to Airtel for sponsoring the upgrade.



MPC Field

- Mater Misericordiae Hospital donated discarded wood, scrap metal and seats for the skills welding and plumbing classes for their practicals.