



Newsletter March 2021

We now have hope

It has been a very challenging year for all communities. We hear so many stories of unimaginable difficulties but also some incredibly positive steps taken by unexpected people. This pandemic has left no one untouched, we must continue to work together to restore faith, hope and what will be a new and different way of life.

Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends of EducAid Africa,

Well, what strange times we have been living through!! Our Treasurer, Jenni, and I were so fortunate to have been able to travel to Kenya to visit our sponsored pupils and schools just before the lockdown commenced. In the last newsletter you were able to read all about our time there.

I do hope that you are all keeping safe and well, looking forward to the better times ahead. I have had my first vaccination and looking forward to my second!

The schools in Kenya did close for a while but opened again in January this year. We provided our colleagues in Kenya, Jonah and Stephen, with an amount of money to allocate to any of our sponsored pupils who were in need.

We, as Trustees, have continued to meet but this time via ZOOM. I am so fortunate to have such a strong and hard-working team working with me and I do thank them so much for their continued support and encouragement.

May I also thank you all for the tremendous support that you have given and are continuing to give EducAid Africa. Generous donations have continued to come in from individuals and families, but of course we have missed the support of organisations and schools due to the pandemic and we haven't been able to give talks to various organisations. We have been thrilled that some families have remembered our pupils when celebrating their special birthdays and anniversaries and asked for

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donations rather than presents and some have sent us a donation from the money that they received for their heating allowance.

I had the sad honour to conduct a funeral for a good friend of mine and the family kindly sent a generous donation to EducAid Africa. This money is going to be used to build a kitchen at Malau School in his memory – a building that is very much needed.

We do appreciate the monetary gifts that you send but we especially appreciate the interest and support that you give us as Trustees – it means a lot!

The greatest joy that we get is to see and hear what a great difference our organisation is making to the lives of these Kenyan children. One of them writes:

“I am truly grateful for your unending support in helping me realise my dreams and achieving my goals which will definitely make a difference in my life and the community at large. May the Almighty God bless you abundantly.”

I hope that you enjoy reading the Newsletter and finding out more about what is happening with our friends in Kenya.

Again, thank you for your very kind and encouraging support which is very much appreciated.

Every blessing to you all.

Ian

Ian D. Carnell MBE

Chairman of the Trustees

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Good news!

It was so good to hear that the schools in Kenya have now returned fully after a phased introduction late last year and students are at long last able to resume their studies. The more difficult news is that their dedicated teachers did not receive any pay during the suspension of education services and did not gain any financial support. The teachers who are employed by the schools as opposed to the government fortunately still have their jobs.

Due to the lack of schooling pupils haven't had a great deal to report to sponsors educationally but some have endeavoured to write. A very interesting letter was written by a young lady called Naomi Mwamumba who has just completed her certificate in Early Childhood Studies. She now plans to pursue a diploma in special needs education prompted by her knowledge of a needy cousin. She says in their society 'the disabled are lowly thought of. I feel like I can create a change amongst the children and parents that I work with and at least shed some light on them that being disabled does not mean that all is lost and change the mentality of our society step by step.' It is so heartening to hear a young person talking about changing perceptions of society. She is hoping that Educaid Africa can continue to support her in this next step. Currently we sponsor 24 individual secondary students and 12 in Further Education.

Ex Educaid Africa Students

Felix, one of our very first sponsored students is now an ambassador for us, keeping in contact with past students and willing to mentor young students. He spent some time in December contacting 23 former sponsored students to enquire of their position during the pandemic. He summarised his conversations for us below.

- Some students who had just finished their final college course had to wait for nine months at home before being able to return to sit exams.
- Those in medical sciences such as nurses and physiotherapists were busy helping wherever possible in the fight against Covid.
- Some in technical fields, engineering, like Felix himself for example have found their jobs going relatively smoothly.
- Teachers were not in schools but have subsequently returned.
- Felix reported only one job loss as a result of the pandemic.

He was pleased to tell us that everyone he had spoken to is conscious of the ruthless effects of the pandemic and he hopes they will all emerge stronger.

Malau School



This picture shows some of the pupils at Malau School outside in the sun but appropriately wearing masks.

Malau Toilet Block

Educaid Africa have raised funds to provide the construction of the much-needed girls' toilets, the Headteacher, Joyce Wandeto sent a personal message of thanks to us all. Another teacher at the school, who the Trustees have met on several occasions is a former Educaid Africa sponsored student both at school and in her teacher training, she runs the Early Years at Malau and is testimony to what we as sponsors can help people achieve.

Our Educaid Africa team member Stephen Arome being shown around the new toilet block!



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Malau Kitchen Project

When two of our Trustees visited Kenya last year, they noticed that the school kitchen, which was endeavouring to support the feeding programme, was woefully inadequate. It was unhygienic, unsafe and not fit for purpose. You will see from the pictures what they meant!

When Jenni, our Treasurer, and Ian, our Chairman visited Kenya in February 2020 they visited Malau Primary School where they were providing lunches for the older pupils so that they didn't have to travel home at lunchtime and could spend more time studying. We found that the kitchen and cooking arrangements were poor and felt that a new kitchen would be most desirable. This was echoed by the school and Jonah and Stephen our representatives in Kenya.

In November Ian conducted a funeral for a special friend who, with his family, had been strongly connected with the school at which Ian had been Head. The family very kindly gave a special donation in his memory which was to be used by EducAid Africa.

It seemed fitting that this donation could be used for the new kitchen – especially as he had been so involved in the primary school in Solihull. The family happily agreed to this and so plans have been made for the new building. You may remember that this is the same school at which we supplied the funds for a new toilet block.

We look forward to seeing pictures of its development and the finished building which will have a plaque attached in memory of this special friend.



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It is hoped that the feeding programme will be rolled out to most pupils eventually and be along similar lines to our school dinner system.



Plans have been drawn and quotations for the work received, hopefully we can share some pictures with you as the work progresses.

Kenyan Education System

The education system has very recently undergone a complete reorganisation process. The new structure appears to give a broader range of opportunities and experiences for all students whilst being underpinned by essential IT skills to include online learning for older pupils. It looks a very exciting development and we will watch its roll out with keen interest. Good Luck everyone!

Even the younger children are now returning to education as you can see here at Malau School.



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School Closures

In response to school closures in 2020 as a result of Covid, the government have devised a complex timetable to ensure pupils and schools complete their school year and exams, by extending the current academic year to July. In the past, the school year has started in January and finished in November, the next school year will begin on July 26th and finish in April 2022 this pattern will continue until pre Covid arrangements are resumed January 2023. Exam weeks and holidays have been set out, so let's hope they are able to continue full time education without further disruption.

If you sponsor a pupil we will be in touch about your payments and what implication this may have.

This means that in the months leading up to July, we will be looking for sponsors for new secondary pupils starting Form 1. Our colleagues in Mombasa interview prospective pupils with good primary school exam results who apply for assistance because they could not otherwise afford the necessary fees. If you would like to start a new sponsorship, please get in touch by our email address. We would love to hear from you! Sponsorship can be by individuals or groups of family and friends and we know it positively changes lives. It not only improves the life choices for that individual, but can have a much wider impact on the whole family, or even communities. The current cost of sponsorship in secondary school is £450 a year for 4 years, which works out at £38 a month.

Thank you.

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