

# Update

Giving Young Kenyans a  
Brighter Future



## 2024 in Review

(Top Left) One of the 11 students chosen this year to be sponsored to High School.

### Introduction

Every year is a busy one for our work in Kenya and 2024 was no different. This newsletter is a pictorial overview of the year's highlights. We have taken snippets of the year's activities, a comment from one of our students, and information on our different programs. We have also included an article by Peter Harding, one of our sponsors who visited Kenya with us in 2024. Peter shares some of his impressions of the differences between Kenya and our Western lifestyle in Australia.



### 2024 was a year of firsts.

For the first time 13 new students were sponsored to secondary school. In addition, Stanley, a special needs boy who is deaf, was also sponsored. Life for this boy was bleak. His able-bodied siblings were given preference for education and he was destined to stay at home and mind the goats.

Stanley completed Grade 8 in a Primary School for the Deaf. He was their top student for the year. Although not seen as 'academically bright' by Australian standards, we felt to give the lad an opportunity to reach his potential. Stanley's desire is to become a teacher of the deaf.



Students finishing 4th Form fill out a Feedback Survey for KKI. Below is one youth's comment

Major  
Sponsor



Ability Consultants

1. Describe what it was like for you to be a sponsored student.

*It was like a miracle in my life since I had no one who could guarantee my education so, when the KKI support group identified me for the scholarship I was very much thankful.*



**...Another first...  
in 2024, 11 University  
students were sponsored**

11 new University students were sponsored. We appreciate the significant corporate support from Ability Consultants for making this possible. Important changes are underway in the Kenyan Education system and students from poor families are now means tested, with fees being slashed.



**Medical students are the "guinea pigs". Using a fellow student to practice how to take a blood sample. Note the improvised (rubber glove) tourniquet.**

**Breakfast Program  
in school**



As a result of food shortages experienced by many families, the feeding program at Agolomuok Primary School was reactivated for a term. This ensured all students received meals of millet porridge and beans 5 days a week. Parents volunteered to prepare, cook and serve meals to some 300+ students. With the arrival of good rains and an approaching harvest, the program was paused until a future need arises.

**Water reconnected to kiosks  
and primary school**

In April KKI Rob and Rikki visited Kenya accompanied by one of our sponsors, Peter Harding. Peter met Gerald, the student he had sponsored through secondary school. Gerald is now in his 3rd year of university studying to become a surgeon.



**KKI was able to provide funding to fix an existing bore by supplying new solar panels, a new pump and pipework. Over 3,000 people benefit from clean water being available as well as the local school.**

**Special Needs were met**

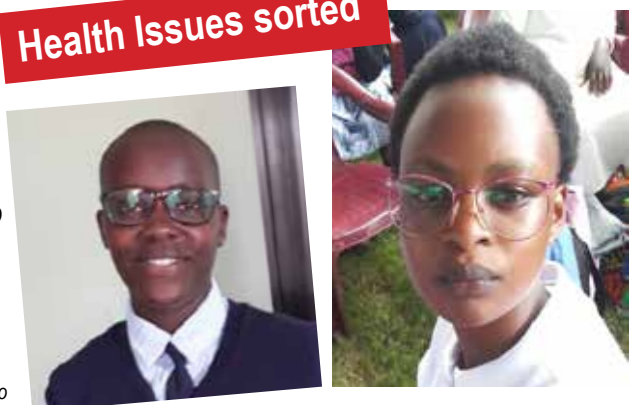
KKI assisted a family of 4 orphan children by renovating their home, sealing floors, building a bathhouse and toilet, supplying beds and bedding and recruiting 2 female live-in Carers. The eldest boy left for University to study journalism and eldest girl went to board at a local secondary school. The 2 youngest stayed at home and went to primary school. The best laid plans don't always work out. An older sister took advantage of the better life on offer and moved in. The situation became unworkable so we are presently working out how to effectively meet the needs of the 2 youngest siblings.

**For a 2024/25  
tax deductible receipt  
donations must be  
received before  
28th June**

Send donations to KKI at  
Summerland Credit Union  
BSB: 728728  
ACCOUNT: 22314767  
Tax deductible receipts for  
donations available on request.  
Email treasurer@  
kenyakidsinternational.org.au

**Health Issues sorted**

**It may be Malaria,  
tuberculosis, eye  
problems or other  
issues. During  
the Term break all  
students needing help  
are taken to hospital  
to be assessed and  
treated.**



*Pictured, 2 students who received glasses.*



## 8 extra infants fed at Macalder Baby Home



**Funds given by KKI supporters provided infant milk formula for 8 extra infants to come into care.**

**Formula is very expensive in Kenya and the nuns can only buy a limited amount, which means they have to turn away those seeking help for their infant.**

**The Home cares for infants when a mother dies and there is no one in the extended family able to care for the child. KKI supply milk formula for the first 6 months of the infant's life.**

## Their Ways VS our Ways.....

By Peter Harding



My trip to Kenya, in April was a life changing experience. There were so many differences to what I was used to here in Australia.

Kenyans are so resourceful because they have to be. There is no Centrelink, no pension and no aged care. They must find a way to support themselves by growing their own food, and/or selling it, fishing, carting water from Lake Victoria using donkeys and wooden carts.

I saw many "shops" that were simply made out of 4 poles, a slatted bench, covered with a tin roof. One person I saw, sold charcoal. To make charcoal, tree branches are burnt and then broken into smaller pieces which are bagged and sold. People buy charcoal to burn in their outdoor cooking fires. In Australia, we use a gas B-B-Q or cook inside using electricity. In this area of Kenya electricity isn't easily available. If it is connected to the odd home it is still not used as it is unaffordable.

For all their hardships, I never heard anyone complain about their lot in life. Kenyans just have to get on with it and make do to survive. I guess this would be because most don't know anything different. Most Kenyans were smiley and looked happy.

**Time** - is treated very differently in Kenya and operates on what we called "Kenyan Time." A meeting planned for 9am could mean 9am, 10am or even 11am! Sometimes people don't even turn up; they may or may not call you to let you know.

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**A mama sitting on the side of the road selling the charcoal she had prepared earlier which will be used by locals for cooking**







***In the area I visited most people don't have access to electricity. The tailor pictured left is using a treadle sewing machine and his iron works by filling it with hot coals***

This is not seen as rude or a lack of respect, it is just "the Kenyan way." There is little sense of urgency, even when it is required, such as for a deadline. It may get done today, tomorrow, in three weeks, or sometimes not at all.

**School students** - are reluctant to ask questions of their teachers. A complete contrast to our education system. Whilst assisting some students with their English, I let them know how different this is in Australia and encouraged them to speak up and ask anything they wanted to know. The outcome was positive.

Children and people in general are so grateful for education, they see it as a huge privilege. They know it is the only way out of poverty. Students are respectful and well behaved. This was so noticeable at the meetings that KKI held while we were there.

**Family** - is everything to Kenyans and several generations will live under the same roof or next door to each other.

When I told people in Kenya that I worked in a nursing home, they didn't know what I meant. Inevitably I would be asked 'what is a nursing home'? When I told them that in Australia we put our elderly parents in a home and someone other than family cares for them, they were horrified. In Kenya children care for their elderly parents, who live with them. Having many children means more children to take care of the parents in their old age. This is an excellent part of their culture, sadly lacking in Australia.

**Back breaking work** - Watching women working in the field or washing clothes by the lake I noticed they all bend from the hips, resulting in a very straight back, while we bend from the waist, putting stress on our 'curved' spine which can cause back pain.

**Home stay** - For Kenyans, having a visitor is seen as a huge honour. When I stayed two days and a night with one family, the neighbours brought fruit, vegetables and freshly caught fish to eat. Also, a relative loaned a new mosquito net for me to use! The host's son, Keith is a secondary student sponsored by KKI. Keith's ambition is to go to University and to become a pilot.

**Transport** - There are few cars in the rural areas where KKI operates. Most transport is by pikki pikki (motor-cycle) that carries 1 – 4 passengers. Public transport whether motorbike, taxis or Matatus (mini buses) are crammed to capacity. There are no rules about how many people are allowed to be in any vehicle. It is common to be stopped by traffic police. This does not change the drivers' behaviour as a few Kenya shillings discreetly handed over in a handshake gets you off the hook. We take so much for granted in Australia. If we are unwell we can go to a doctor, our pantries and fridges are fully stocked, flick a switch and a light comes on, most of us have safe running water and education is easy to access. There is so much government assistance available here, whether it be financial, facilities or community services.

We have such an easy life in comparison to the Kenyans I met.



***KKI and our Kenyan partners would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Your contribution has made a difference in relieving some of the pressure off the poor. For this we are grateful.***

