

29th April 2025

Dear friends of Lunchbowl,

Update September 2024 - April 2025

First and foremost, we want to express our gratitude for the kindness and generosity that you have continued to show to the most vulnerable and very poor children from Kibera. Your support is always highly appreciated and valued.

We would like to give you a significant update since the date of the attached Trustees report.

Eight years ago, Stuart and I set up a social enterprise which was a Kenyan International kindergarten. The social enterprise has provided significant funding and has been the largest single donor to Lunchbowl over the last 5 years. In the wake of Covid and the overall considerable reduction in charitable giving from the UK, this social enterprise kindergarten has stood in the financial gap, providing operational costs for the primary school.

On the 1st January 2025, the social enterprise kindergarten was forced to close. It became impossible for the commercial kindergarten to continue as the kindergarten business became a target for extortion in an ever common Kenyan crisis of land grabbing and financial manipulation. There is an understanding in Kenya, that when two bulls fight, it is the turf that gets damaged. The commercial kindergarten was the turf and we have been catastrophically damaged. Almost over night, we lost an eight year business which was extremely successful and of high reputation.

It has been beyond stressful and the sense of loss and robbery has at times been overwhelming and the domino effect upon the charity has been extremely distressing. We had to make an immediate decision to close the charity primary school, as we would be unable to meet the immediate and ongoing operational costs. This meant that we had to cram the youngest children into one, much smaller Angel Kindergarten premise near to Kibera. In addition, the closure of the primary school meant the displacement of 250 primary children which included some of our deaf children and some of our children with special needs. Our prime concern has been for the wellbeing of the displaced children, left without a good school, safety and daily food.

Through the engagement of our Kibera team and the Kings Rugby partners, in February we were offered primary school places at a state school in a military barracks called Langata Baracks School. We have negotiated special enrolment and ongoing terms for the primary children and now 172 of these children have been enrolled. We consider this great provision in the crisis.

We remain committed to the children from Kibera who find themselves at the 'bottom of the pile' and are the most forgotten. The Lunchbowl team in Kenya are fully engaged to continue their co labour with us to bring daily hope to these children.

Financially, the charity is in great need of your continued support. Over the last 5 years our UK annual funding has dropped by £120,000, this is the financial gap that was filled by the Kenyan social enterprise.

Due to the financial down turn and the ongoing need, especially for the youngest children and those with special needs and the deaf, we would ask that our friends of Lunchbowl would help us to build and extend our network of supporters. Please could you help by telling and engaging your friends and family, introducing churches, introducing schools, introducing businesses, trusts and match funders. We are convinced that there is sufficient resource when people understand the need and have confidence in the stewardship of the resources.

We would love to hear back from you personally and again we thank you for your ongoing support in this challenging season.

Warm regards,

Sally and Stuart McGreevy
Trustees
The Lunchbowl Network