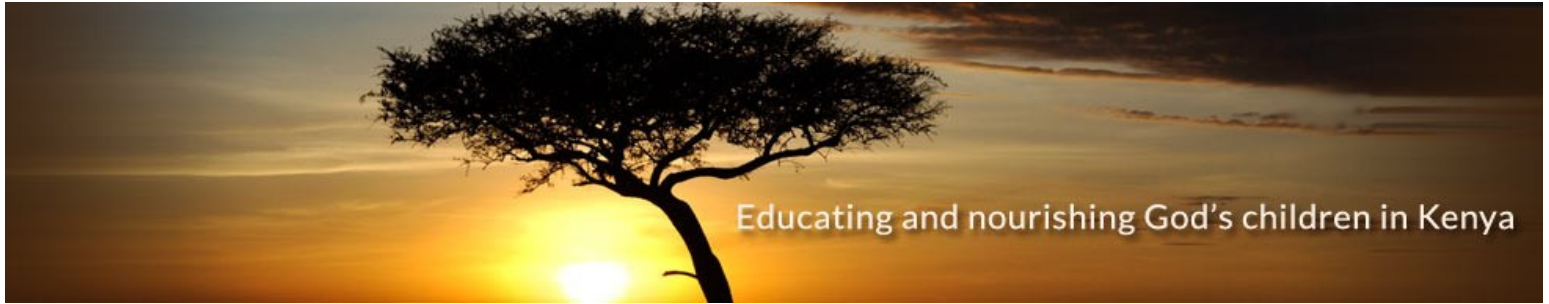


# Kijabe Children's Education Fund



February 2021

Dear Friends and Partners of KCEF,

In early January, we told you about the reopening of schools in Kenya, as over 1800 students returned to our partner schools and programs. It has been just a month, but things seem to be going very well.

In a “normal” year, members of our Board would be in Kenya right now, visiting each school, working with the leaders, hearing from the teachers, meeting with the students. Of course, this year, like last, is hardly normal. So we’ve postponed our trip until later in the year, or perhaps until January 2022. In the meantime, we’re finding other ways to be in touch consistently.

Kariuki Waweru, an outstanding part-time colleague in Nairobi, is just finishing visits to each school and is providing comprehensive reports:

- ◆ all schools are operating well, and enrollment is about the same as in 2020
- ◆ a few teachers have moved on, but the vast majority have returned with joy and enthusiasm
- ◆ students are required to wear masks, and there are more hand washing stations
- ◆ though schools are doing the best they can with social distancing, this is challenging
- ◆ new benches and tables are helping to provide more space and distancing
- ◆ every student receives two nutritious meals each day at school
- ◆ about 175 computers are in use by students across all grades

All seven schools report a high level of enthusiasm and commitment by their students. For most of them, 2020 was a “lost year.” They’ve returned to class with the desire to make up for that lost time and to resume pursuing their goals and dreams.

These students still face enormous obstacles:

- ◆ they come from very poor families. Even in normal times, there are few resources for basics like food, rent, and school fees
- ◆ many parents are still without work and have lost hope
- ◆ the slums where they live remain dangerous and threatening places, especially for girls
- ◆ the ongoing threat of Covid-19 is very real and present to them



*Class 8 preparing for the national exam in March*

The pandemic in Kenya seems to have flattened out a bit for the moment, but new cases and deaths occur daily. Health data is very inconsistent and unreliable, so the full extent of the crisis remains unclear. Vaccines may be on the way—from China or Europe—but the schedule and supply remain uncertain.

You may recall that, to add insult to injury, 2020 was a year for the worst locust plague in over 70 years, decimating crops and threatening the food supply. Now it appears that another wave of locusts is arriving, and food insecurity for the entire country is a very serious concern.

In spite of all of these issues, we are constantly inspired by the enthusiasm and perseverance of the leaders and teachers for each KCEF school. To give them as much support and encouragement as we can, we call or text with them every week.

The energy and joy of the students is amazing to us, and gives us hope—hope for each child, for their schools, for the future of Kenya.

Though it has been a very hard eleven months for all of us, we are sustained by your financial support, encouragement and prayers. Keep them coming!

With much gratitude,

*Craig Hammon*  
Craig Hammon, Board Chair



*Porridge time!*

p.s. We're in conversation with a US foundation about another matching grant to strengthen and expand our work with these very precious children. More on that coming soon.

## OUR VISION

Kijabe Children's Education Fund is dedicated to providing educational opportunities to children in rural Kenya and the slums of the city of Nairobi. Through feeding programs, school sponsorship, and project support,

KCEF is helping to keep its students fed in body, mind and spirit.

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