

Mkamenyi redevelopment case for support

An ambitious project to transform a dilapidated and under-funded primary school in rural Kenya into a first-class facility with the capacity to deliver an education worth having, ensuring the long and tiring walk to school for hundreds of disadvantaged children is a worthwhile one.

The need

Primary education has been free in Kenya since 2003. However, the reality of a government-funded education for over 6 million pupils in over 25,000 primary schools is that limited financial resources are spread very thinly when faced with the demands of employing sufficient teachers, providing adequate resources and investing in physical infrastructure.

In common with many primary schools in rural Kenya, Mkamenyi Primary School is in a truly pathetic state, with crumbling classrooms, filthy and unhygienic sanitation facilities, and a chronic lack of teachers, educational materials, furniture, food and water.

Children sit on pot-holed and crumbling classroom floors, those few lucky enough to be seated at one of the few useable desks squeezed alongside three or four other classmates. The solitary water tank has long-ago stopped being capable of harvesting and storing rainwater, leaving the school without any on-site source of clean water for drinking, cooking and cleaning. Toilets, too few in number for the high pupil roll, are so rancid that children prefer to urinate and defecate in the open bush instead.

In the face of these overwhelming challenges, and without sufficient government support to invest in the necessary redevelopment, the school is simply unable to provide an education worth having to the 500+ children that it serves.



Photos of the existing school

"I was shocked by the contrast with those schools I had seen before. It was stepping back in time. Buildings that should probably be condemned, classrooms that were dark, dusty and with simple mud floors. Little or no furniture for the children. Classes hopelessly overcrowded. It's difficult to imagine the children believing that education is important when nobody cares for the learning environment. From a personal viewpoint, I couldn't take any photos simply because I was so embarrassed by what I saw. It was this visit that really clarified my understanding of the transforming quality that African Promise delivers."

Our then new Chairman reflecting on his first visit to Mkamenyi

About our plans

Of all the schools we have worked with, Mkamenyi is arguably the one in most desperate need of our expertise and support, so it is perhaps fitting that we should begin our second decade as a charity with what will be our most ambitious project to date, and one which will set new standards.

A piecemeal, long-term redevelopment is not the solution for Mkamenyi; something much more radical and immediate is required. With that in mind, we have put together exciting plans for a two-year, £250,000 project to comprehensively rebuild, remodel and expand the school.



Artists impressions of the proposed new school

In addition to essential core facilities including sufficiently furnished classrooms, a staffroom and offices, and safe toilets, the new school will also incorporate:

- a multi-purpose hall and kitchen to facilitate the introduction of a whole-school feeding programme and remove hunger as a barrier to learning;
- establishment of a dedicated resource room to include a library and, ultimately, computer equipment;
- a rainwater harvesting system capable of storing at least 100,000 litres of water (about 200 litres per pupil) to provide the school with a reliable, year-round supply of clean water;
- a playground for the pre-school pupils as well as landscaped garden areas and an assembly ground to create a beautiful as well as functional school.

The potential impact of this project

This redevelopment, like others we have undertaken elsewhere, will transform the school into a first-class institution that will remove many of the barriers that prevent children in the area from accessing and receiving even a basic standard of education. It will do this by:

- providing a safe and inspiring educational environment conducive to productive and effective teaching and learning;
- facilitating improvements in pupil well-being and welfare which will ensure more children are in school more of the time; and by
- increasing learning and educational opportunities for pupils.

“These children are the future of the community. If we are going to change the community, which is always living in poverty, we need to support the children. If African Promise could support us it would create a big impact.”

Nicholus Mutui, headteacher

Our track-record and background

With over 10 years' experience working in this field we have earned a reputation as one of the leading school-development charities in the region. Our most recent partner school, Ngambenyi Primary (pictured below), has been declared a 'model' school by the local county government following our two-year, £110,000 redevelopment and it is widely regarded as one of most child-friendly and well-equipped schools in the county, eclipsed perhaps only by those that have been constructed by the Chinese!



Ngambenyi Primary School

We currently support seven partner schools in the isolated Kasigau region of south-east Kenya and in addition to improving the fabric of these schools, we also provide an on-going, long-term programme of support which includes the provision of a daily lunch to all 2,500 pupils, funding for much-needed additional teachers (currently 17 in total) and the ad-hoc supply of books and other educational resources and equipment.

“This is the single biggest investment we’ve ever made towards one project – a testament to the huge confidence we have in African Promise.”

Trustees of Hazel’s Footprints Trust who fully-funded the £110,000 redevelopment of Ngambenyi

How your support would make a difference

We have a wonderful opportunity to transform the lives of thousands of children in the Mkamenyi community, now and for generations to come, if we can afford to bring the school on as our eighth partner school. But we cannot do it alone and we need your support to make this project a reality.

We have forecast the cost of the project at approximately £250,000 and have targeted raising at least half of this sum before we commence any works, with the balance to be raised over the projects expected two-year implementation period. To date we have secured around £90,000 through a legacy gift from a generous benefactor and the proceeds of the 2018 *BigGive Christmas Challenge*, leaving an immediate shortfall of approximately £35,000 still to raise.

To find out more about this project, including a short appeal film as well as further artists impressions of the proposed new school, please visit our website at www.africanpromise.org.uk/new-school

“Everybody deserves a chance. African Promise is giving these children a chance.”

Emily Kituri, local government education official

Project budget

	(£)	(£)
Building work		
Classrooms (new)	60,000	
Classrooms (renovated)	20,000	
Nursery school	15,000	
Dining hall and kitchen	20,000	
Rainwater harvesting	15,000	
Library/computer room	10,000	
Staffroom and offices	12,500	
Sanitation	10,000	
Electrical	5,000	
Landscaping	5,000	
Gate and entranceway	2,000	
Water and transport	10,000	184,500
Resources		
Furniture (classrooms, library, dining hall, staffroom/offices)	30,000	
Educational materials (textbooks, reading books etc)	15,000	
Playground	2,500	
Equipment (copier, printer etc)	5,000	52,500
Project administration		
Project management (5% of build and resources)	11,850	11,850
Total Project Cost (£)		248,850