



Kenya Education Endowment Fund

- Empowering Young Kenyans

www.kenyaeducation.org

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KEEF Newsletter #11 November 2013

The Season of Appeals

Most of you reading this newsletter are currently receiving numerous appeals for donations from a wide range of worthy charitable organizations, and we hope that you will include KEEF in your donation planning. Secondary school fees must be paid in January, so we request that sponsors send in funds during the month of November. With high inflation in Kenya over the past couple of years, we ask donors – if at all possible - to contribute \$600 per year, which is an increase from the \$500 level over the past few years.

Planned monthly donations can be arranged on the Canada Helps or PayPal options on the KEEF web site, by your bank's credit card or e-transfer options or by post dated cheques. See "**Donors' Alert**" on page 3.

Please note that if you are not fully sponsoring a student, donations of any amount are welcome, and there are also gift card and other options. For more details of how to donate, please see "**How You Can Help**" on page 5.

We remind readers that 100% of your donations will go to students in Kenya. Our low administrative costs are covered by special fund raising or by donations directed toward administration.

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A Visit to Mwikhomo School

Last May, KEEF board member Shelagh Armour-Godbolt travelled to Kenya and one of the highlights of her trip was a visit to Mwikhomo School for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired in Kakamega. This school has about 80 boarding students - a mix of boys and girls - aged 4 to 20.



Students with Shelagh at Mwikhomo.
All photos by Martha Mutiso



Younger students signing a poem that they hope to perform at a regional contest. The government pays the salaries of 8 of the 13 teachers, parents pay fees and the school Board of Governors also raises funds. As with most

schools in Kenya, Mwikhomo is affiliated with a church (The Pentecostal Assembly of God) which also provides financial support. There is a small farm on the property and the older students help in the working of the vegetable gardens.



The youngest student, age 4, meets the Chair of the Board of Governors, Shelagh, Sarah (KEEF Office Secretary) and the Head Teacher

The playground is shared with the adjacent elementary school and the children from both schools play together during breaks in classes. Some of the children at the other school have chosen to learn finger spelling or KSL (Kenyan Sign Language) to better communicate with their friends who are deaf.

KEEF currently supports two senior students at Mwikhomo.



Shelagh with Maureen, whose KEEF sponsor lives in West Vancouver

New GC4C Project at Mwikhomo

When Shelagh visited Mwikhomo School for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, the Head Teacher identified several projects on the school's "wish list." We are pleased to report that Global Change for Children [GC4C] will be making one of those wishes come true by funding a project to upgrade the school's water storage tanks.

GC4C has worked through KEEF on several previous occasions – a library project at Bondeni Primary, and a new classroom at Mwiya Secondary. Their most recent project was a new kitchen at Bondeni Primary, completed earlier this year, shown in the photo.



Principal of Bondeni Primary School outside the new kitchen built from funds donated to KEEF by Global Change for Children.

KEEF Endowment Fund Update



The primary mission of KEEF is to provide scholarships for very bright students who cannot afford to pay secondary school or post secondary fees. When KEEF began as a non-profit society in 2004, the name was chosen with the hope that one day there would be a trust fund in place that would generate annual funds to support our mission. As Marie McKay wrote in our last newsletter, we have begun raising funds specifically for an endowment fund. When we reach the \$10,000 level the Vancouver Foundation will manage the fund on our behalf as part of their other investments. **We have already received over \$3000**, but here is even better news – **the next \$3000 in donations will be matched** by an anonymous donor! So if we receive only \$3000 more, we will be very close to the \$10,000 figure.

Why not “double your money” by donating to KEEF’s Endowment Fund?

Donors’ Alert

By Margaret Klesner

We would like to alert you to the various costs of donating to KEEF. We have listed payment methods from lowest to highest costs to KEEF. There is no difference in most cases to the donor as it is received and receipted on the value of your original donation. The handling or service charges are usually subtracted from KEEF when we are notified of a donation.

A personal cheque written to KEEF directly is the least expensive, and has little or no service charges collected by our account holder, Royal Bank. So \$600 donated is \$600 for KEEF. Just stamps and an envelope are required for the postal costs. KEEF provides the receipt.

Interac e-Transfers: This allows you to send money **to** and receive money **from** many other financial institutions within Canada. You must be registered for online banking and know the

recipient's name and e-mail address. [For KEEF, that is Peg Klesner, lachaiam@telus.net]. Check with your bank or credit union for more details. The Interac fee to you is \$1.00 to \$1.50 with no fees for KEEF to receive your donation—if you donate \$600, KEEF will receipt you for \$600, but you will pay the small Interac fee to your bank.

PayPal: PayPal is an online payment system that KEEF offers on our web site. Your credit card donation is collected by the company and KEEF is notified by email that the donation is available. PayPal applies a 1.9% service charge for us to transfer your donation to our chequing account, so \$600 donated becomes \$588.60. KEEF will provide you a receipt (for \$600 in this example).

CanadaHelps: This is another online donation system that many charities, including KEEF, offer on their web sites. Credit card donations are collected by the company, a 3.9% handling fee is charged, then the remainder is deposited directly into KEEF’s chequing account. A \$600 donation becomes \$576.60 to KEEF. CanadaHelps does the receipting directly to the donor – in this example, you will be receipted for \$600.

United Way: These donations are collected monthly from the donor and paid to KEEF two or three times a year. A 15% handling fee is subtracted from the original total, so your \$600 donation becomes \$510 for KEEF. Receipts are provided by United Way on the amount of your original donation.

As you can see, the shrinkage of your original donation depends on the donation method selected. In some cases it may be convenient to choose one of the more expensive ways of transmitting your donor funds. But, during this year alone fees lost through the handling and service fees totalled \$252.62.

Note that all options can be set up to enable planned monthly deductions.

We thought by providing you with this comparative information that you may want to select one of the cheaper methods when you transmit your future donation for your student and the projects you wish to support.

Sad News From Kenya

In late October we received the news that one of KEEF's post secondary boys had suddenly taken ill and was rushed to hospital, but sadly did not survive. **Benson Odour**, the first KEEF sponsored student, was studying accounting, and his loss is a tragedy for his family as he is the only one to have completed secondary school and to go on to post secondary. Alinda Ware is currently in Kakamega as a KEEF Agent and was able, along with Sarah our Office Secretary, to attend the funeral.



KEEF also lost one of our strong supporters in July with the passing of **Terry Nielsen** from Courtenay, BC. Terry and his wife Tanya Harmon worked in Kakamega with KEEF and TEMBO, supporting students but also working with fish farming, water projects and other training activities. Terry's Rotary connections along with Tanya's **One Drop of Hope** crafts provided funding for their outstanding volunteer work. We wrote an article about their work in Kenya in our Newsletter #8 in June, 2012. [All our newsletters are posted on our web site.]

Nairobi Shopping Mall Attack

During those terrible days in late September, we were very concerned for the safety of many students supported by KEEF, CHES and other organizations we work with in Kakamega. Many of us who have worked in Kenya have friends that live and work in Nairobi. As far as we know, none of our post secondary students were injured. Some students have written describing their experiences, including the loss of friends and in one case a university lecturer. One KEEF-supported post secondary girl who takes classes at a hospital in Nairobi wrote that "what I saw was unimaginable." We often speak of the resilience and strength of our African friends and students and we extend our hopes that they can recover from those traumatic events.

KEEF Agents and Life Skills Workshops

Alinda Ware is currently in Kakamega, volunteering part time for KEEF and also working with a company that sells educational software in Africa. In January, **Marie McKay** will return to Kenya for several months.

Alinda and KEEF Office Secretary Sarah Nabongo are organizing the annual work shops for all the KEEF secondary students, to be held at the end of November.

These life skills workshops – usually over a three day period – are a key part of the school experience for our students. Most students are from very poor homes and they may have little family support so the connections with fellow students and the confidence-building activities at the workshops can be very significant for their future success. The leaders and instructors are all Kenyans, including some KEEF graduates who have returned to assist.

Funding for these workshops is often difficult to provide, and we depend on your directed donations or special fund raising. None of the regular donations for school fees and supplies are used for these workshops.



Above: 2012 workshop activity.
Left: Sarah Nabongo, KEEF Office Secretary
Below: Marie and student.



AGM Update

Our Annual General Meeting was held on Sunday, Sept. 15 in North Vancouver. Highlights of the past year included the hiring of a secretary for the KEEF Office in Kakamega, the first stage of a permanent Endowment Fund, and the addition of Monshe Mobambola to the Board of Directors. Monshe will be taking on the role of KEEF Treasurer.

Thanks to the continued support of our donors, KEEF currently supports 102 secondary and 42 post secondary students.



KEEF Directors for 2013-14 Back: Don Reimer, Susan Peake, Dick Glassford, Shelagh Armour-Godbolt, Monshe Mobambola, Pamela Frydenlund, Marie McKay. Front: Alinda Ware, Peg Klesner, Janice Trenholme



Penny Power! Shelagh Armour-Godbolt

Our requests to KEEF supporters and other friends for their pennies has resulted in donations of \$586.70 to date – a significant sum when translated into Kenyan Shillings! We are grateful to all the donors – whose gifts ranged from a few pennies to coffee tins-full.

Never feel it is not worth offering a few coins...added to other small gifts, a few pennies have real power. Please check pockets, under the couch cushions or the seats in your car, handbags and the kitchen “junk” drawer for pennies (or other coins) that can help support KEEF students. Maybe your neighbour has spare pennies? If you are lucky enough to be offered a large/heavy collection of coins, we may be able to pick it up (and roll it). Contact Shelagh at shelaghag@shaw.ca or 604-415-9397.

Become a KEEF Sponsor: How Can You Help?

KEEF seeks donations of all amounts to assist in our work. The board members and overseas agents of KEEF are volunteers and **100% of your donations** will go directly to support students.

We encourage sponsors to support a student for a full year, and ideally, donors sponsor their student through four years of high school. With rising inflation in Kenya, school fees have escalated and we encourage sponsors – if at all possible - to raise your donations from the \$500 we have had for many years to \$600 per year.

However, partial donations are always welcome, which enable us to “top up” fees as needed. Smaller donations also enable us to provide some students with essential items such as school supplies or medical care. Our **gift cards** enable donors to make a donation of any amount to KEEF in someone’s name.

With an annual donation of \$100 or more, donors will be recorded as **Members** of the Kenya Education Endowment Fund, with the usual voting rights set out in the BC Society Act. We also have the category of **Supporter**, based on a minimum \$25 annual donation, to encourage small donations, including gifts to KEEF on behalf of others. Both Members and Supporters will be included in our email contact lists.

Charitable tax receipts will be issued for all donations.

Donation by cheque: payable to **KEEF** and mail to:

Margaret (Peg) Klesner,
Suite 904, 2135 Argyle Ave.,
West Vancouver, B.C. V7V 1A5

Donation online: go to www.kenyaeducation.org and donate through **PayPal** or **Canada Helps**.

Gift Cards: View samples on our web site. We can send you blank cards, or mail them on your behalf.

For more information: Please go to the **KEEF web site** or contact Peg Klesner at lachaiam@telus.net or Tel: 604-926-3018, or at the postal address above.

Merville Community Members

Combine their Donations

By Peg Klesner

This year Merville Community members were very successful in jointly raising a total of \$860 for Harriet Chirima, their University of Nairobi student, and \$100 for Student Support as well. There were 12 separate donors who managed to contribute to the total.

KEEF has three different community groups who raise donations for their individual students by combining their giving power. With the high cost of living in Kenya and the rise in annual inflation effecting food, transportation, education and health care, we believe it is a positive way to continue to sponsor students.

If donors wish to combine their generosity in assisting students to cover the rising cost of school fees, we highly recommend considering this method by forming small support groups.

Please contact us if you have any questions on how to arrange this process. [Peg can be reached at lachaiam@telus.net]

KEEF Gift Cards

We have an easy way that you can send gift donations that directly benefit Kenyan students. Three gift cards are available:

A gift to the KEEF Student Support Fund – you can choose any amount to donate.

A gift of a solar lamp - Solar light is a priceless gift for those who live without electricity. \$25 per lamp.

A gift of a bicycle - A bicycle turns a long walk to school into a short ride. \$100 per bicycle.

You can request blank cards to send yourself or we will complete and mail cards for you. Please check the [KEEF web site](#) for details or contact Peg Klesner at lachaiam@telus.net or Tel: 604-926-3018.

About KEEF

KENYA EDUCATION ENDOWMENT FUND (KEEF) has been established to provide financial assistance to Kenyan young people to assist them in furthering their education and in developing skills that will empower them and their communities.

KEEF was established in 2004 under the Societies Act of B.C. and granted charitable status by the Canada Revenue Agency in 2006. # 845413145 RR 0001.

KEEF is a non-profit organization, not affiliated with any government or religious organizations. **All of the monies donated to KEEF are designated for educational purposes in Kenya.** Our very low administrative costs are covered through sales of Kenyan crafts and other special fund raising events.

Contact us at keefcan2010@gmail.com or visit our web site www.kenyaeducation.org

Call for Volunteer KEEF Agents

Do you have an interest in visiting and working in Kenya? This opportunity provides a rich cultural experience in an extraordinarily diverse country, combined with the rewards of making a meaningful contribution.

KEEF has 102 students in secondary schools and 42 students in post-secondary institutions in Kenya. Students bring in their marks, fee structures and letters to sponsors at the close of each term. Canadian volunteers help monitor the program.

Volunteers pay their own fare, housing and living expenses, but there are provisions for tax benefits under Canada Revenue regulations. To learn more about KEEF's activities visit our website: www.kenyaeducation.org.

If you are interested in an adventure and a chance to make a difference in someone's life, please contact us at: keefcan2010@gmail.com

Kenya Education



Endowment Fund

Empowering Young Kenyans Opening Doors to the Future

www.kenyaeducation.org

Newsletter prepared by Don Reimer.

Please feel welcome to share this newsletter!

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