



Investing in Kenyan Co-operative Development for Education, Health, and Economic Vitality

Highlights of 2020- Online Version

Harvest Half Marathon - Masks for Kenya

Since 2014, our annual Harvest Half Marathon has been an important fundraising event for KKFC. The original 21.1 km course ran through corn fields along the gravel roads near St. Clements, Ontario. These are the same roads that our co-founders Wesley and Tarah Korir train on when they are in Canada. On a rainy September morning in 2014, Tarah was one of 400 runners participating in our first Harvest Half event. Her course record time of 1:22:34 still stands. In 2019, we moved the race to St Jacobs where Wesley was able to participate for the first time. It is not surprising that this Kenyan-born elite athlete, Boston Marathon Champion (2012), and Olympic athlete (2016), set a new course record. Wesley's time of 65:54 was one of the fastest half marathons in Canada that year!



Like many other 2020 races, our Harvest Half Marathon was changed to a virtual event. The proceeds from this year's race were used to provide face masks for impoverished people in Kenya. We asked runners to register for our "Masks for Kenya" virtual race by making a donation. For every \$1 donated, Kenyan workers made and distributed one mask, helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in their community. A second benefit of this project was that it provided much needed employment and income for local workers.

Dairy Project Update



Our Cooperative Dairy Development project has come a long way since 2014, when we first started working with small-scale dairy farmers in Cherangany, Kenya. We provided equipment and expertise to help build two milk-cooling plants. A milk-processing facility was constructed this year, making it possible to sell pasteurized milk locally. Milk-packaging equipment has also been installed and will be operational soon. We are delighted that this project continues to grow and be successful. In 2021, we plan to begin offering agricultural extension services to the farmers. In addition to improving the health of their cattle and increasing their milk production, it will also help the farmers better provide for their families.



Agriculture Scholarships Turn to Kale

In late 2019, KKFC selected four high school graduates from more than 20 applicants to receive a KKFC scholarship to an Agricultural College in Kitale, Kenya. We had planned for these students, two boys and two girls, to start college in May 2020. COVID has delayed their start until at least February 2021. While they waited for their college programs to begin, we invited the students to participate in a hands-on learning experience. KKFC directors [Quentin Martin](#) and [Blair McKay](#) worked closely with Felix Kipsang (photo right) in Kenya to develop this project. Each student selected a small area of land on their parents' farm to plant kale. This area was divided into three plots. The first plot was grown without using any fertilizer or manure. The second and third plots were given fertilizer and manure respectively. The students observed and recorded their results from planting to harvesting. Felix visited the students, providing advice and taking photos and videos. He shared these with our Agriculture Committee.

Outreach in Canada

In previous years, KKFC volunteers have enjoyed visiting schools, churches, and other groups to share information about our work and to help Canadians gain an appreciation for life in Kenya. In June 2020, Tarah Korir and her ten year-old daughter, McKayla, made a presentation to Tyler Schaefer's Grade 7 class in Listowel, Ontario. Due to COVID, Tyler's students were attending school online using Google Meets. Even though Tarah and McKayla were thousands of miles away in Kenya, they were able to join the students for this virtual visit. McKayla shared her experiences growing up and going to school in Kenya. Here are some of the comments from students in Tyler's class.

- Thank you. It was really cool learning how different school is in Kenya.
- I loved hearing about your culture and seeing all the photos.
- It was so amazing to hear about what you do in
- Kenya and how different it is!



KKFC Early Years Programs:

At the beginning of 2020, KKFC was operating Early Years programs at three locations in Kenya. More than 150 pre-school children were benefiting by learning basic academic skills and obtaining much needed nutrition at lunchtime. One program is based in Ngong, an impoverished slum area near Nairobi. The other two programs are in rural Cherangany.



In March 2020, the government of Kenya closed all schools to limit the spread of COVID-19. For families whose children were attending our Ngong EY program, the day-to-day challenges of earning income and providing food became even more difficult. In order to help these Ngong families, we decided to provide extra funding and begin distributing food to them from our Ngong EY Centre. Rather than learning in a large group, the teachers at our Kahuho EY program adapted by meeting with small groups of children near their homes. Nutritional support continued to be provided to these children.

Schools in Kenya are scheduled to re-open in January 2021. We hope to be in a position to reopen our Early Years programs at that time.

Student Scholarships

In 2020, we were able to provide sixty students with scholarships, enabling them to attend school. Twelve of our scholarship recipients are from the Ngong area and attend schools near Nairobi. The remaining 48 scholarship recipients are part of our Transcend Running Academy Program, which is based in the Cherangany region. These students, 20 boys and 28 girls, attend BiriBiriet Secondary School. In addition to their academic studies, these students get extra tutoring and athletic coaching. As a group, they continue to excel in their running achievements. All schools in Kenya were forced to close in March and our students returned home. Recently, the Kenyan government partially re-opened high schools, allowing only Form 4 (Grade 12) students to attend. The government plans to allow all grades to return to classes in January, and is making changes to the schedule, extending the graduation date from December well into next year.



Our Successful Graduates – Now in University:

KKFC has supported many talented young athletes who have graduated from high school and earned scholarships to attend university in the USA. Recently, we invited eight of our former scholarship recipients to join members of our KKFC Education Committee in a series of Zoom meetings. During each meeting, two students shared their experiences growing up in Kenya, attending primary and secondary school, and traveling to the United States. Thanks to two of our Canadian volunteers for writing articles about these students. [Nell Van Walsum](#), a director who serves on our Water Committee, has traveled to Kenya twice. During those trips she shared her expertise as a hydro geologist, helping to provide better access to clean water for hundreds of Kenyan families. Nell also had the chance to meet and run with some of our student athletes (see photo). Colleen Laing has been a KKFC supporter for a number of years and recently offered her talents as a writer. Her story about Gladys follows. Stories about other students are available at: www.kenyankidsfoundation.ca/Grads.

Gladys Jemaiyo (written by Colleen Laing)

The dream of being a runner has motivated Gladys Jemaiyo since she was a young girl. As a graduate of KKFC's Transcend Running Academy and current Louisiana State University student, it is running that has carried her from the tiny village of Katanin in the Cherangany region of Kenya to her current life in the United States.

Despite endless challenges, Gladys says that the dream to run remained top of mind. As the sixth child in a family of seven children, her parents prioritized education as they worked to earn a living on their three-acre farm. However, when Gladys was in grade one, her father passed away and her single mother could no longer afford school fees. It was at this time that an older brother ended his own education by returning home to work on the farm, giving his siblings a brighter future.

Gladys left school in 2009 and stayed at home for three years before presenting herself to a local school principal and asking for another chance to continue her studies. The principal not only offered to waive her school fees but also told her about Wesley Korir and a scholarship program offered by Kenyan Kids Foundation Canada. The program allows students from families who cannot afford to pay school education fees to attend the Transcend Running Academy. Gladys (photo far right) earned her scholarship by placing in the top 10 women in a race sponsored by KKFC. As she describes, "I tried my best, I was so thankful."



Gladys Jemaiyo (far right) with other Transcend Students in school uniforms

She frequently thanks God for the opportunities that she received as her life continued. At her new boarding school, she benefited from a training program to develop her running talent and an improved diet. She worked very hard to pass the SAT tests to qualify for a U.S. college and was accepted into South Plains College in Texas. Upon landing in the United States, she expected to see a flat paved landscape and was surprised to see many trees and animals. After three years in the USA she misses her family, friends, and traditional food, although she has developed a fondness for cookies and cakes in Louisiana.

After gaining national honors for her fourth place half-marathon and third place 5K results last year, she now dreams about a future as a nurse, spending time in both Kenya and the USA. Helping others and giving back to her communities remains a priority in her future plan. And of course, running will always be a key part of her success.

Family Christmas Tradition Supports KKFC

For many years, the Montague's have gathered together with their extended family to celebrate Christmas. A number of years ago they decided to support a charity rather than exchange gifts with each other. In 2020, their Christmas gathering was a little different to say the least! Instead of getting together to enjoy great food and fellowship, they had a Zoom meeting. The youngest Montague grandchild, Zoe, who is a grade 9 student, has recently become a KKFC volunteer. She is working with a retired teacher and a retired principal to develop a resource for use in grade 2 classrooms as part of the Social Studies unit on "Celebrations around the World". Zoe pitched the idea of choosing KKFC as their family's 2020 Christmas charity during their Zoom meeting. Her family loved the idea. As a result, her aunts, uncles, cousins and other family members made donations to KKFC. Thanks to the Montague family for choosing Kenyan Kids Foundation Canada as their 2020 charity and to Zoe for volunteering with our foundation.

Volunteer Opportunities

KKFC has no paid staff in Canada and relies entirely on volunteers. We invite you to consider helping us in some of the following ways:

- Provide one-to-one tutoring support for a Kenyan high school student
- Develop fundraising contacts in Canada with individuals and/or corporations
- Help organize a fundraising event
- Make presentations (virtual or in person) to schools, churches or other organizations
- Help develop learning resources (online or print) for use in Kenya
- Help develop learning resources/presentations for use in Canada
- Assist with the writing of stories for our web site or newsletters
- Edit video content for our website and social media
- Provide support for updating our social media platforms

For more information or to donate, please visit: www.kenyankidsfoundation.ca/donate

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We invite you to consider volunteering on one of our committees

(Agriculture, Administration, Education, and Water).

Please contact us at info@kenyankidsfoundation.ca