

Look out world ... the slum kids are coming

'Good morning; this is the office of the Prime Minister, calling on his behalf to congratulate the pupils of Green Pastures School on their performance in the National examinations.....'

It's not every day Japheth Mutinda gets such a call. But this day was special. **Ranked 5th out of some 1200 schools in Nairobi**, and 56th in the country in the 2011 KCPE (Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education), it was perhaps not surprising his school attracted so much attention – including later that day 2 showings on national TV.

The students learned their results after stumbling through the rough alleyways of their slum-home, stepping over piles of rubbish and stagnant pools of sewerage in their worn-out shoes. Most had had no electricity to light their one-roomed shacks, and it was still dark when they pulled on their only decent clothes to make their way to the school that has nurtured and guided them to success.



Lucy scored 81% and won a scholarship to one of Kenya's top schools

Sadly the support of the government was short-lived, and the Giraffe Project Kenyan Executive, Japheth Mutinda, found himself begging for places for his pupils in secondary schools that had been instructed to give priority to kids from government primary schools, and which had strict quotas to follow. A month passed, and many days were spent camping outside Head teachers' offices before all 27 students were placed.

Across town in Mathare slum **Tumaini School**, with less experience, fared reasonably well, with two-thirds of their candidates getting places in government secondary schools. You can find all their results at the bottom of this letter.

Tumaini is right now celebrating another achievement – the completion of its new building, pictured left. We were honoured by the presence of His Excellency the Belgian Ambassador to Kenya, who cut the ribbon to officially open the building, and inspired the students, telling them, 'one day one of you could be an Ambassador...'. The students entertained us with songs and dances, and an impressive speech was delivered by Austine Uoma of class 8.

The event was attended by a highly impressed official from the Ministry of Education, who admitted that when she had granted the school its registration in 2010 there was so little 'school' in evidence she feared for a her job if her bosses saw it. But she, like us, believed that it was better to risk and give the children a chance.

And what a chance! The Tumaini building is 4 stories high, has 12 good-sized, well-lit classrooms, a library, a fully equipped computer room, a staff room, toilets and offices. It cost giraffe a cool 120,000 pounds sterling. If you were a part of that, you can be proud of the immeasurable difference

you will have helped make to the lives of many children now and in the future.



Left: The Ambassador inspects the Tumaini scouts.



The school will be fully functioning once the team of young people from The American Protestant Church in Bonn has finished painting it this week. For now 3 of Tumaini's classes have to wait to move in, as our secondary students are occupying the top floor.



Justly proud of their hard work; some of the team from Bonn, Germany, take a break from painting. Below: Tumaini's computer lab.

Neema Senior School is the first stage of the Giraffe Project initiative to establish a secondary school and technical/vocational training college for young people from the slums. Our vision is to buy land and build a boarding facility, classrooms and workshops outside the slums. For now the project is stalled by lack of funds and spiralling land prices, but the 70 students and 12 teachers in their borrowed classrooms are nevertheless showing they are worthy of every shilling that is spent on them. Last year's graduating class all achieved between B and the pass mark of D+ in their national exams (the KCSE), and had a class average of C. Their results, and those of the Giraffe students sponsored in government secondary schools, are pasted below.



Nurses, pharmacists, teachers, hotel managers, IT specialists, chefs, mechanics ... If we thought we could stop sponsoring students after secondary school, we quickly discovered we could not. Traditional Kenyan secondary education leaves a student sadly lacking in practical skills and job opportunities, not to mention life skills. If our goal of bringing these young people to independence was to be reached, it was going to take much more. Already we have graduates of our **college programme** working in schools, hotels and retail outlets, and last week Julia, our Administrator/Counsellor, and I had the privilege of listening to the hopes and aspirations of 24 of this year's students who had succeeded against all the odds at making the grades for college. It was inspiring to dream with them, and to realise that we are witnessing the breaking of the poverty cycle for these young people, and for their future families and others whose lives they will undoubtedly affect.

We also interviewed 14 Neema School students for sponsorship. It was shocking to hear how many of them have to support themselves, walk long distances to school, and regularly go hungry. We want to open another boarding house to accommodate all of these needy cases. Some of their stories are wilder than fiction, but their commitment and determination know no bounds. Here are just a few ...

Julius is Neema's Head Boy. Orphaned at 6 years' old, he ended up in the slum. He leaves the ill-equipped children's home where he now lives at 6a.m. and walks an hour to school. As one of the oldest in the home, he has to clean, hand-wash the younger children's clothes and help them with their homework. He is articulate, caring and extremely focussed – I imagine he is a good teacher. Kennedy's story is similar, except he has never known his parents.

Winnie and her sister take in washing after school to earn small amounts of money to buy food for themselves and their 2 brother. Their parents believe the girls are too old to be dependent, and should marry. Dency shops and cooks for her 4 brothers each evening,- that is if the two oldest have found a way to earn any money. If not, like many others, they go hungry. She leaves home at 5:45a.m. to get to school at 7, as does Molly, an orphan who fears to go 'home' at night to the relatives she stays with because of approaches made by her uncle.



'My father had 4 wives ...,' was how J... 's story began. Still young when her parents died, she virtually lived on the streets, sleeping with relatives or well-wishers who would take her in. She has collected scrap metal and plastic bags from rubbish dumps to sell for tiny amounts in order to survive, has suffered horrific abuse and contemplated taking her own life. Determined to progress, she managed to get onto a course in hairdressing. Then somebody told her about our school, and she began to dream again.

There were some stories of redemption. Like P ... 's. Last year she thought her life had all but ended. Raped by a relative in her own home in the slum, she fell pregnant, then very sick, and then miscarried. Her salvation was a very supportive, caring father, and the counsel and support she got from Giraffe Project's Julia, and her teachers. Afraid to return to the school where she was known, she asked to be transferred to Neema. Her beautiful smile was testimony that she was well on the way to recovery – and she is currently top of her class with an A-.

Other highlights of our brief and intense week in Kenya were cutting the ribbon to open **Green Pastures new building**, 2 days of **teacher training**, during which the Neema teachers told us how much things had improved since they implemented some of the methods and ideas from the training we gave a year ago, and hearing a 13-year old Green Pastures pupil guess Richard's age at 'over 70'! (We reminded him that is an honour in Kenyan culture!) The Bonn team worked with nurse Elizabeth to give **medical checks** to an astonishing 660 Green Pastures children in just 3 days, and cleaned and painted about half of Tumaini School. We left them for another



week's painting and medicals for 350 children from Tumaini and Neema.



So now we are on our way home ... and what next? In March, **Giraffe Project became a registered company**, and most of the papers needed to open a branch office in Kenya were delivered to our Kenyan lawyer last week. We should be registered within 2 months, at which point we can buy land for our secondary school – once we have the cash. We will need boarding facilities and classrooms for 70, before the present Neema students can move in and allow Tumaini to fully occupy their new building. We need at least 80,000 pounds to make this

happen, and so far have about 20,000 towards this project. So if you know anyone with about 60,000 pounds to spare, please do send them our way ...

The other big financial challenge is the college programme. The 24 students starting this year and our continuing students will need some 10,000 pounds over and above existing sponsorships. If you would like to donate to this programme you can do so through our usual accounts (see below) with the communication 'College programme'.

The challenges seem greater than ever, but as we leave Africa far behind us, and approach Amsterdam airport, I can still hear young Austine giving his speech at the Tumaini opening ceremony.

'Where there's a will,' he said, 'there's a way'. Austin has seen Tumaini grow from its beginnings in an iron sheet shack. He moved with it into a concrete building with small, poorly-lit, musty rooms, and now to the new building and the bright, spacious class 8 room where he will take his national exams this November. The Ambassador commended Austine for his serious and confident delivery. Austine deserves his moment of glory: he represents the Tumaini vision. Much more than a school, they call it the 'Tumaini Fraternity', a community of people who cherish opportunity, are committed to education, and believe in the enormous potential in Austine and his school-mates from the slum. As the Ambassador finished, he thanked the community for making him a part of the *Tumaini Fraternity*. You who have believed with us and have given your time and money to make the dream a reality are a part of that too.



The *Tumaini Fraternity* thanks you, and welcomes you as only Kenyans can: 'Karibu'. Welcome.

Yes - **the slum kids are on their way to change the world.**

Denise, for the Giraffe Project Team.

KCPE 2011	SCHOOL	ENGLISH	KISWAHILI	MATH	SCIENCE	Soc. Studies	Total /500
Chrisantsus Okioi Amwata	Tumaini	70 B+	54 C	52 C	57 C+	69 B	302
Dennis Munala Muela	Gr Pastures	69 B+	59 C+	73 B+	75 A-	83 A	359
Elizabeth Mwendu Mutinda	Gr Pastures	75 A-	82 A	75 A-	74 B+	76 A-	382
Elvis Kingiri Masolia	Gr Pastures	62 B-	82 A	75 A-	74 B+	63 B-	356
Eurelia Atieno Odongo	Gr Pastures	69 B	86 A	76 A-	72 B+	74 B+	377
Faith Musyawa Mulandi	Gr Pastures	73 B+	80 A	60 B-	74 B+	66 B	353
Hamid Yusuf Saidi	Gr Pastures	75 A-	85 A	82 A	75 A-	78 A-	395
Linda Akoth Opiyo	Tumaini	76 A-	70 B+	75 A-	69 B	64 B-	354
Lucy Akoth Juma	Gr Pastures	83 A	91 A	79 A	75 A-	78 A-	406
Lynnet Mutindi Kyalo	Gr Pastures	86 A	82 A	70 B+	69 B	71 B+	378
Matilda Muthoni Wanyoike	Tumaini	73 B+	73 B+	75 A-	58 C+	66 B	345
Maxon Onyango Okoth	Gr Pastures	73 B+	79 A-	78 A-	74 B+	72 B+	376
Michael Oluoch Opondo	Tumaini	72 B+	73 B+	78 A-	70 B+	69 B	362
Peter Gathii Mungai	Gr Pastures	73 B+	89 A	84 A	67 B	81 A	394
Prudents Matata Kweyu	Tumaini	76 A-	48 C	63 B-	67 B	55 C+	309
Purity Abuti Matiasi	Tumaini	61 B-	54 C	61 B-	43 C-	42 C-	261
Remresha Wilunda Indiazzi	Gr Pastures	80 A	85 A	70 B+	75 A-	73 B+	383
Saida Mwinyi Omar	Gr Pastures	80 A	84 A	67 B	75 A-	62 B-	368
Salome Mumbua Kivuva	Gr Pastures	81 A	89 A	61 B-	69 B	74 B+	374
Scolastica Mghoi Mwambai	Gr Pastures	83 A	84 A	76 A-	74 B+	74 B+	391
Shamilla Ibrahim Sidra	Gr Pastures	85 A	88 A	79 A-	75 A-	79 A-	406
Sharon Akinyi Obiro	Tumaini	64 B-	39 D+	55 C+	40 C-	42 C-	240
Sheila Anyango Atieno	Tumaini	75 A-	53 C	49 C	62 B-	58 C+	297
Stephen Kiteto Masese	Gr Pastures	81 A	79 A-	79 A-	77 A-	72 B+	388
Valary Achieng Omondi	Tumaini	72 B+	53 C	54 C	46 C	52 C	277
Vina Akinyi Hamisi	Tumaini	61 B-	57 C+	54 C	65 B	58 C+	295
Vivian Atieno Onyango	Tumaini	70 B+	67 B	64 B-	60 B-	56 C+	317
Winnie Kerubo Nyangweso	Gr Pastures	80 A	82 A	64 B-	72 B+	77 A-	375
Zamzam Ismail Walid	Gr Pastures	76 A-	85 A	66 B	67 B	69 B	363

KCSE 2011 - College 2012

	Name	School	Mean grade	College course applied for	College
DA042	Cejay Kinyua	Dagoretti	B-	These boys came into the programme though Dagoretti School and we committed only to see them through school. Their preparation makes them able to manage their own future, so Giraffe does not sponsor them further.	
DA051	David Kariuki	Dagoretti	C+		
DA043	David Ndung'u	Dagoretti	C+		
DA050	James Njuguna Kinyanjui	Dagoretti	C+		
DA049	John Mureithi Mwai	Dagoretti	A		
DA045	Moses Mburu Ngugi	Dagoretti	C+		
DA044	Samuel Wachira Micheni	Dagoretti	C+		
KT013	Leah Mwhaki Kamau	Maria Imm	B	Nursing	Kenya Medical Training College
T119	Dennis Odhiambo	Masinga	C+		
KT014	Justus Muoki Kioko	Masinga	B	Pharmacy	Kenya Medical Training College
EN042	Jane Gathoni	Masinga	C-	ICT	Railway tech college
	Calvin Amolo Atieno	Neema	C		
GS022	Sylvia Anguso	Neema	D+	Early Childhood development	Unity College
KT027	Celestine Toya	Neema	C	Early Childhood development	Unity College
KT031	Faith Kawira	Neema	C	ECD/Primary teaching	
EN024	Jackline Lumayio Alusiola	Neema	D+		
KT028	Jackline Chituyi	Neema	C+	Business management	P C Kinyanjui Tech College
KT024	Jackson Nyeru	Neema	C+	Secondary teaching	
GS016	Janet Jones	Neema	C+	Human Resources	Railway tech. college
KT019	Linet Okwira Amollo	Neema	C	Early Childhood development	Unity College
	Diana Luyayi	Neema	C-		
GS020	Matsanza Collins	Neema	C	Jounalism ?	
GS019	Wycliffe Nagambo Osobolo	Neema	C	Catering and hotel ?	Unity College
GS014	Hanningtone Obenge Omondi	Neema	B	Pharmacy	Kenya Medical Training College
GS023	Immaculate Ogoma Auma	Neema	D+	Early Childhood development	Unity College
	Millicent Okumu Okoth	Neema	D+	Hotel & Catering	Unity College
GS018	Juma Mustafa Omondi	Neema	C	Automotive engineering	P C Kinyanjui Tech College
GS015	Kennedy Otieno Onoka	Neema	B-	Secondary teaching	
GS017	Sylvia Oyoo	Neema	C+	Secondary teaching	
GS021	Stephen Mutunga	Neema	D+	ICT	Unity College
KT016	Wycliffe Achayo Owaka	Neema	B-		
KT023	Faith Somba Ndinda	Nembu	C+	Marketing, advertising &PR	Railway technical college
NE001	Jackline Mbula Mwanzia	Nembu	B	Business management	P C Kinyanjui Tech College
NE002	Tabitha Wilkistor Achieng	Nembu	B-	ICT	Railway technical college
KT022	Jecinta Kageha Agoi	Ng'araria	C+	Civil Engineering	P C Kinyanjui Tech College
NG001	Monica Wangari Wangi	Ng'araria		Awaiting confirmation	
SH002	Brenda Bosire Kemunto	State House		Awaiting confirmation	
KT020	Saida Mbithe Kimiti	State House	B-	Business management	P C Kinyanjui Tech College

Account details for donations:

“The Giraffe Project” HSBC account number 42240726, sort code: 40-24-17

“The Giraffe Project Belgium” BNP Paribas account number 001-4832075-96

Secure on-line credit card giving: www.giraffeproject.org/support/donate.php and click on the link.

Current needs:

- **More sponsors for children of all ages**
- **Donations for the college programme,**
- **Capital donations for land and buildings for Neema Senior School.**