



Ikumbo Secondary School Eastern Province, Kenya

Project goal – Construction and furnishing of a secondary school that will make it possible for over 160 children of the village of Ikumbo to continue their education after primary school. The project began in 1998 and great progress has been made since then, but the school still lacks basic facilities and materials.



Ikumbo Secondary School will give the children from the village the opportunity to continue their education once they finish their primary studies

Description of the current situation of the school, achievements and other information of interest

Before Strathmore made its donation, the school was on the verge of closure. Enrolment had dropped from 28 in year one to 20 in year two. There were only 2 semi-permanent structures at the school – forms one and two. The school shared a staff room, kitchen and toilets with the primary school (located on the same compound). The donation helped to start the construction of the first permanent structures, the office block and form three class and toilets, which were a basic requirement for a school to be registered by the government. This donation prompted the government to register the school, send a head teacher, and enrolment rose from 20 students in the first year, to 52 in the third year. Currently, the school has four classrooms; two semi-permanent, one complete permanent and one incomplete permanent; administration block (incomplete) semi-permanent kitchen store, and 6 pit latrines. In June 2008, Strathmore University made a donation of KSH 300,000 (ca. EUR 3,000) for the construction of a Form Four classroom. This was very necessary, as the current Form Three class needed a room for the fourth year class, which would enable them to graduate in the end of 2009. Right now, the room is also acting as an improvised science laboratory as the school does not have a lab.

Secondary education in Kenya

Although primary education was made free and compulsory for every child in the country by the government of Kenya in 2003, it was not until the first half of 2008 that Kenya's President, Mwai Kibaki, promised to enact free secondary education in two phases, starting with Forms One and Two this year (secondary education is divided in four Forms or years in Kenya). While this represents a strong improvement in access to higher education, secondary school will remain a hurdle for Kenyan children because of the high associated costs of schooling and the relatively small number of places available. Many of the secondary schools in Kenya are boarding schools, and while the government plans to waive tuition for secondary school students, additional costs such as room & board, food, textbooks and uniforms will continue to make secondary school prohibitively expensive for many of them.

As the prospect of a government subsidy brings secondary school almost within reach, communities like Ikumbo are tackling other obstacles on their own. The village has a local primary school; however, out of the roughly forty-five students that complete primary school every year, on average only four go on to secondary school, most of them to Igwanjau Secondary Boarding School located 8km away.

1998 – The parents of the village formed a committee to begin construction of Ikumbo Secondary Day School

1998-2005 – The committee raised enough funds to construct two temporary classrooms of cinderblock and wood

2006, 2007 – Reinforced fundraising campaign, with donations from Gartland family & friends (NJ, USA), Retamar School pupils (Madrid, Spain) and the Kenya Government (Constituency Development Fund). The Strathmore University Foundation in the USA, and Strathmore University in Nairobi facilitated the fundraising

July 2007 – Construction of permanent structures for administrative block (necessary for the school to qualify for government funding of staff, supplies and electricity), staff room and Form Three classroom begins

October 2007 – The school was officially registered with the Government of Kenya

January 2008 – The first Form Three students at Ikumbo Secondary School were admitted

May 2008 – Newly-elected Nithi Constituency Member of Parliament and Kenyan assistant Minister for Agriculture, Hon. Japhet Kareke, joins the villagers in building the school

June 2008 - Construction of Form Four classroom begins, with a donation of 300,000Ksh (EUR 3,000) made by Strathmore University

Urgent needs

As the school was initiated only recently, some basic needs still remain to be addressed. Listed below are the most urgent needs, but other necessary items such as a library and a computer lab are also required to provide a standard education. For a more complete, detailed budget of the needs of Ikumbo Secondary School, please contact the Community Outreach Programme of Strathmore University (see contact details at page bottom)

Item	Need (Ksh)	Raised
Finalisation of buildings (Office block, Laboratory, Classrooms and Store)	3,716,000	1,765,400
Lab fixtures and equipment	2,244,000	20,000
Text books	200,000	2,000
Water tank (reservoir)	45,000	-
Electrification	200,000	-
Desk & Chairs	180,000	-
Sanitary facilities (latrines/ bathrooms)	160,000	40,000

1 EUR = 100 KSH (aprox.); 1 USD = 70 KSH (approx.) – October 2008

More on Ikumbo and the Eastern Province of Kenya

The school is located in the village of Ikumbo, on the eastern slopes of Mt. Kenya, ca. 15km. from the town of Chogoria, in the Eastern Province of Kenya. Ikumbo is a small village of around 5,000 inhabitants: the vast majority are peasants who practise mixed farming. Fruits (mangoes, oranges, bananas, avocados etc.), vegetables (kale, spinach, sukumawiki, carrots), roots (arrow roots, cassava, sweet and Irish potatoes) and dairy cattle do well in the area, but they have not yet been commercialised. There is piped water (sponsored by the Canadian Government in 1986). Electricity to the town might come soon through a rural electrification programme, as a result of the electrification of the school. Christianity is the main religion: most christians are Catholic, Presbyterians or Methodists



Davis Karambi: one of Ikumbo's success stories

Davis was one of the first students from Ikumbo to complete secondary school at Igwanjau, a secondary boarding school located 8km. away from the village. Upon graduation he was given a scholarship to attend Strathmore University in Nairobi. His ability to complete his education was a testament to the power of the Ikumbo community to come together and support one another - all of Davis' tuition fees during



Davis Karambi speaks to Ikumbo villagers on the future plans for the school

secondary school were paid for by the people of his village. Their investment was well returned, as Davis graduated at the top of his class and took a job with the Clinton Foundation. It was there that Davis met Matthew Gartland

and the idea for this project began to take shape. Teaming up with Ravi (medical student, New Jersey, USA) to complete the trio, they asked friends and family to contribute to the cause and in doing so were able to raise the funds necessary to finally begin the construction of a permanent secondary school that all children of Ikumbo could attend, nearly nine years after the parents of the village formed a committee to build a secondary day school at Ikumbo.



The first buildings of Ikumbo Secondary School under construction – July 2007

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