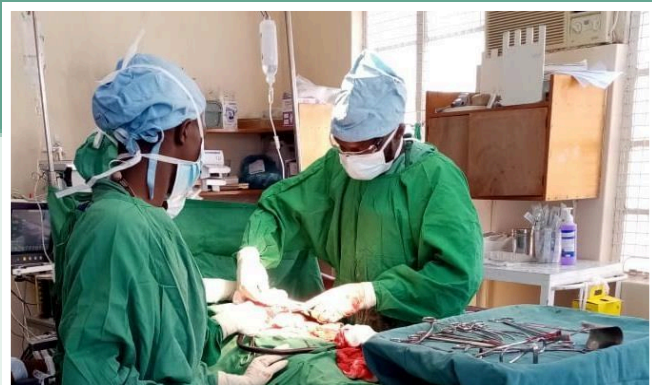


NEWSLETTER 2024

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Dear Friends of The Amara Charitable Trust,

As we reflect on 2024, the Amara Charitable Trust team is filled with gratitude and humility for all that we have accomplished together. Thanks to your generosity, we have, over the past 16 years, been able to touch lives and uplift entire communities, making a real difference where it matters most.

In this issue of our newsletter, we are excited to share stories of transformation and progress, showcasing the positive outcomes of our educational programs, infrastructure improvements, and community-driven initiatives. Every success story is a testament to your incredible support and commitment to our vision.

This year, we were fortunate to receive incredible support from individuals who took the initiative to raise funds and donations on our behalf. Their efforts do more than just support our programs; they also play a key role in raising awareness of our work in underserved communities and will hopefully inspire like-minded individuals to partner with us in 2025.

Looking ahead to 2025, we are eager to build on this momentum, with even more impactful projects on the horizon. Together, we will continue to educate, empower and enhance the lives of the most vulnerable in our society, giving them a voice and bringing about lasting change.

With gratitude and blessings,

Smita Shah, Vasha Vora, Manisha Dave and Bindi Shah

UPCOMING PROJECTS

In 2025, we are gearing up for significant infrastructure projects, particularly in Kajiado County. Our plans involve partnering closely with schools, community members, and county governments to ensure a truly collaborative approach. By fostering inclusivity, we aim to empower communities to take active roles as equal partners in these projects, creating a lasting and shared impact.

Nado-Enterit Primary School

Built in 1990, this school is in urgent need of a major overhaul. The proposed plans include constructing two new dormitories, three classrooms, a kitchen, a store, and a covered shelter for the students. Additionally, we aim to provide a sustainable water solution, launch a farming project to support the school's feeding program, and install an energy-efficient stove in the kitchen. This project is expected to cost just over KShs 15.0 million.

Kitchens and Covered Shelters

Schools in Kajiado have shown remarkable innovation in managing their school feeding programs, and we are eager to support their efforts by providing structures that improve efficiency and hygiene. Inkiito and Oololotikoshi Primary Schools in particular are in need of upgraded facilities. A basic kitchen complete with energy saving stove, storeroom and covered shelter is estimated to cost around KShs 1.5 million.

Olteyani Secondary School

This day school primarily serves students from the Maasai community, with many coming from Magadi, a town 84 kilometers away. These students often face challenges commuting to school. To address this challenge, the school has allowed the boys to board in an unfurnished classroom that currently serves as a dormitory, with students sleeping on the floor. The school also needs a dormitory for the girls, along with a proper kitchen and dining area. The estimated cost for this project is KShs 9.2 million

Utangwa Youth Polytechnic

At Utangwa Youth Polytechnic, we have made significant progress toward our 2024 goals, and we are looking forward to the future. In 2025, our main focus will be on refurbishing classrooms and girls' dormitory, as well as acquiring new tools and equipment to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. These upgrades will create a more dynamic and effective learning environment for both students and educators. The estimated cost for this project is KShs 1.9 million, and we are excited to announce that a donor has already pledged support for the infrastructure improvements. We will continue to raise funds and seek donations for the tools and equipment needed to complete the initiative.

Playgrounds

This year, we completed the installation of a new playground at Ewaso Primary School and are aiming to install five more in 2025! We are incredibly grateful to Jayaben Arunkant Shah and her family for pledging a playground for Mt. View Primary School, and to Dipal Shah and her family for their pledge to Ngalalya Primary School. That is two down, and three more to go! The cost of a complete playground ranges from KShs 350,000 to KShs 500,000, depending on the school's population.



INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AND EXPANDING OUR OUTREACH

We are excited to share that our first construction project of 2024 took us back to PCEA Kimuka Girls Secondary School, where we had previously built a much-needed dormitory in 2022. This time, our focus was on addressing the school's pressing water needs. Situated in a semi-arid region, the school required reliable water access both for sanitation and to irrigate their shambas (gardens).

We installed two 10,000-litre water tanks, complete with plinths, guttering, piping and taps. Now, the students and staff have a sustainable water source to support their everyday needs and agricultural activities.



Our commitment to supporting Utangwa Youth Polytechnic continues with exciting new upgrades this year. We recently upgraded the kitchen facilities by installing an energy-saving stove, boosting efficiency in food preparation. To further support the school, we also installed a 10,000-litre water tank, complete with guttering, ensuring a reliable water supply.

What made this project truly significant was the involvement of the students themselves. Those studying masonry and plumbing rolled up their sleeves and provided the manual labour for the renovations. It was incredibly inspiring to witness them take ownership of the work, gaining practical skills while improving their own learning environment.



We extend our deepest gratitude to Jayaben Arunkant Shah and her family, whose generosity has been pivotal to the growth of Mt View Primary School since they first funded the construction of classrooms and an open-air hall back in 2012. This year, they once again demonstrated their unwavering commitment to the school by donating funds for several key improvements.



Thanks to their support, a brand-new kitchen equipped with an energy-saving stove has been built, the classrooms, open-air hall and school building exteriors received a fresh coat of paint. Additionally, new desks were provided, bringing much-needed comfort and functionality to the students' learning spaces.

The handover day was filled with excitement, as the young learners celebrated the transformation of their school.



We expanded our outreach this year to a new school in Kajiado, Ewauaso Primary School where we constructed a boys' ablution, installed a playground, upgraded their existing kitchen and installed an energy saving stove.

The existing ablution block was both a health and safety hazard to the young learners and we are so grateful to Grant Thornton, Uganda who gave generously towards this project.



The school's playground, using upcycled tyres was made possible thanks to Sankesh Dedhia who launched the Mario Cup cricket league and donated proceeds from the league to Amara Charitable Trust.



The kitchen upgrades, which included the installation of an energy saving stove were done in partnership with the school community. We envisage our future projects to follow this model.



BEFORE



AFTER

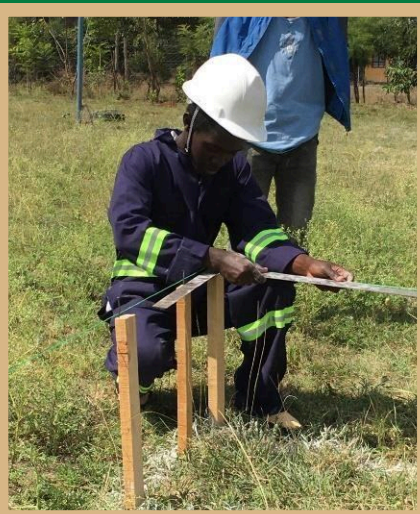
EDUCATION FUND PROGRAM

Our Education Fund Program Impact

In January 2024, 11 young learners from the Maasai community were enrolled into secondary school for 4 years, starting their journey towards achieving their educational goals.



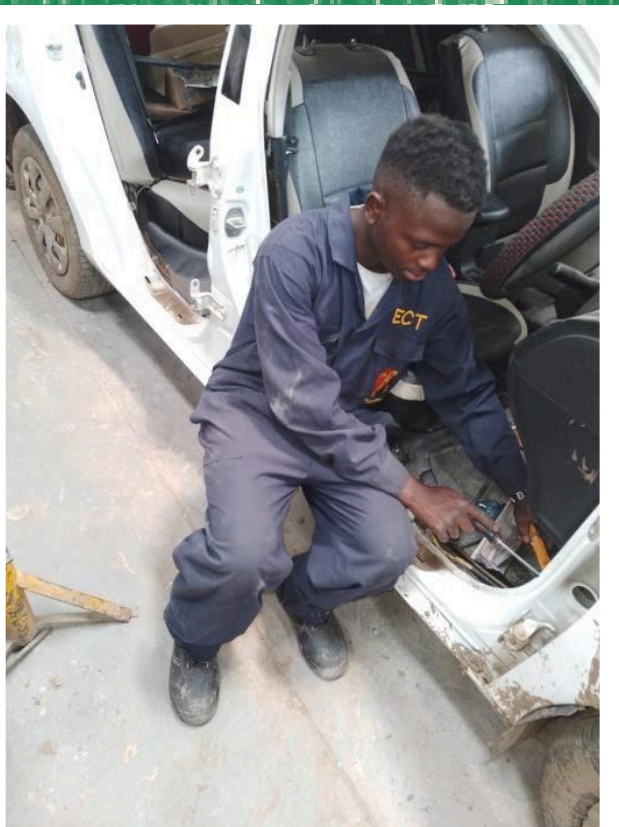
We are excited to announce that 39 new students have been enrolled in technical colleges this year, where they will pursue a variety of courses, from hairdressing to civil engineering. These students were selected from the secondary schools we support and have received full scholarships to continue their education in vocational training. Of the 39 students, 12 are individuals we have supported through secondary school.



Benson Kimani, a standout student who excelled throughout his time at Eastlands College while studying Motor Vehicle Technology. With an impressive 95% attendance record, Benson consistently held his place on the college's prestigious "Green List" for two straight years. His hard work paid off when he was offered a one-year contract with Riley Falcon Security Limited in Kisumu, following his final internship. But that's not all! While mastering his trade, Benson also pursued his passion for music, learning to play the guitar. He even performed at weddings and church services, earning money to support himself along the way.

Then there's Ivyen Wambui, whose culinary talents shone at Kibondeni College. She entered a national cooking competition and proudly took home second place! Over her two years of study, Ivyen gained experience training at top 5-star establishments. Today, her skills have landed her a coveted job at Kofisi Square where she was recently promoted to the position of Pastry Chef.

These are just two powerful examples of students who have worked tirelessly to change the course of their lives. Despite coming from single-parent families that often struggled to provide the basics, they have rewritten the ending of their stories—and we are privileged to have played a part in their journey to success.





Celebrating Milestones with our Students

In November, we celebrated the achievements of students graduating from our Education Fund Program. These students, who have successfully completed their courses, are now equipped to take on the next chapter of their journeys. The event was made even more special by the presence of our generous donors, whose support has helped turn education into a reality for so many students in our scholarship program. It was truly inspiring to hear their stories of resilience and dedication to improving the lives of their families.



This year, we had the privilege of attending three college graduation ceremonies, where we proudly watched our students celebrate the milestone of completing their courses. It was a moment of great joy as they achieved this significant accomplishment!

OUR FEEDING PROGRAM IS EVOLVING!

Since 2013, we supported seven primary schools with a daily school lunch program. Over the last two years, we started to gradually reduce the number of days we provided meals, due to the rising cost of grains and at the same time hoping to inspire schools and parents to take ownership of this vital initiative.

During our recent school visits this year, we witnessed parents stepping up to contribute to the grains needed for school meals. It is amazing to see these communities embracing the program as their own.

Our plan in 2025 is to provide support through the first term of the school year. That why, this year, we are actively meeting with teachers and parents to brainstorm sustainable, locally-driven solutions to address the school lunch program.

We are also piloting a groundbreaking project at Ngalalya Primary School, where students, teachers, and parents are coming together to grow their own food! We helped kick-start this initiative with seeds, a water storage tank and piping, a drip irrigation system, and part of the labor costs, while the school community prepared the land and is now managing the project. It is a powerful example of what is possible when schools and donors join forces! In the first phase of the program, they will grow maize, beans and greens.

Phase II of the program will be to grow other food staples as well as a fruit orchard.





We are encouraging the remaining schools to brainstorm similar ideas for a self-sustaining food program. We believe that when communities grow their own solutions, the results are truly impactful!

RAISING FUNDS AND AWARENESS

Our 11th Golf Fundraiser

On 12th July, we hosted our 11th Golf fundraiser at the prestigious Muthaiga Golf Club, with a fantastic turnout in support of our Feeding Program. This year's event featured exciting prizes, including a brand-new Isuzu pickup truck for a hole-in-one, which even the novice golfers were eager to win! Other prizes included holiday packages and branded merchandise. Participants enjoyed a round of golf on the world-class course, followed by a delicious dinner to wrap up the day. We are especially grateful to East African Packaging Industries for their generous support as our platinum sponsor, making this impactful event a huge success.



Together We Achieve More

This year, we were fortunate to receive incredible support from our donor community and friends. Generous supporters helped raise awareness about the important work we are doing and have played a key role in supporting our efforts to uplift and empower communities.

The Young Jains generously collected stationery for 6,000 primary school learners, and the impact was truly heartwarming. From colour pencils to exercise books, each student was provided with a full set of essential supplies that will directly impact their learning experience. For many of these children, this donation means having what they need to succeed in the classroom, something they may not have had access to before. It was inspiring to see how something as simple as a complete set of stationery could bring so much joy to children in rural Kenya. We are deeply grateful to the Young Jains for their ongoing support.



Khilna Shah, an ardent supporter of the Amara Charitable Trust, was deeply moved by the challenges faced by young learners during her visit to Ngwata and Kanaani Primary Schools with the Amara team. Upon returning to the UK, and driven by her desire to make a change, she launched a "Go Fund Me" campaign to raise funds to support our schools' lunch program. On her subsequent visit to Kenya, she presented us with a generous donation of KShs 571,000.



Bags of Hope, Mia Wilson, a student from the UK, was so inspired by the work we do that she, along with her friends, launched a program to collect school bags for two of the primary schools we support—Mathatani and Kwa Kalusya Primary Schools. Mia shared, "I am extremely inspired by the work of the Amara Charitable Trust in improving education and facilities in Kenya." This year-long project was truly a labour of love for Mia, and in September 2024, we received a shipment of 200 school bags. These will be distributed to the two schools in 2025, when they reopen for the new school year.

Mario Cup Cricket League, in September, Sankesh Dedhia, together with Hiren Varaiya, Sujay Haria and Saajan Shah organized a cricket league, Mario Cup, to raise awareness and funds for Amara's projects. The games took place over five Saturdays and Sundays, culminating in an exciting final on September 29th. Spectators at the finals enjoyed the chance to purchase raffle tickets for a shot at winning amazing safari packages, adding to the event's energy and impact. Thanks to their dedication and hard work, event raised KShs 400,000, which has been used to install a playground at Ewauo Primary School. This successful fundraiser is now set to become an annual highlight on the cricket calendar!



Ajit Shah, led his family on a challenging 10-day trek in Nepal in September 2024 to raise funds for two charities close to their hearts. Starting in Lukla and finishing at the stunning Gokyo Ri, Ajit's determination motivated his family to join him on this incredible journey. During the presentation of a cheque for KShs 262,500 at our offices, we had the privilege of hearing about their incredible adventure. We are profoundly grateful to Ajit and his family for choosing Amara Charitable Trust as one of the beneficiaries of their inspiring journey.



Dipak Shah has been a staunch support of Amara Charitable Trust over the years and has become an incredible ambassador for us. Not only does he raise awareness about our work among his peers, he takes time out of his busy schedule to attend our graduation events for exiting scholarship students and interacts with them.



Maria Buytaert, a special friend of Amara, recently celebrated a milestone birthday. In a generous and selfless gesture, she chose to forgo traditional gifts and instead requested donations to support Amara. Thanks to her efforts, an incredible KShs 585,120 was raised to benefit our feeding program, making a significant impact on the lives of those we serve. We are deeply grateful for Maria's kindness and her ongoing support which also included collecting medical supplies for the Kwa Kalusya Healthcare Centre.



Other Donations

A generous donation of blankets to Utangwa Youth Polytechnic, made possible by the Followers of Lord Mahavir Swami sparked excitement and gratitude among the students and staff. The students, who often face challenges in accessing basic necessities, could barely contain their delight.

During visits to rescue centres and remand homes in the latter part of this year, we witnessed young people who should be in school idling around as they waited for their cases to be determined by the justice system. Despite the limited resources available, these centers work tirelessly to meet the basic needs of these children. We supported their efforts by providing them with educational board games, stationery, and footballs so that they could keep the young minds engaged, and offer a healthy outlet for energy and creativity.



Thank You!

As we wrap up another impactful year, we extend our heartfelt thanks to each of you, our donors, partners, volunteers, and friends. Your unwavering support has touched countless lives, from providing educational opportunities to nurturing sustainable community projects. None of this would be possible without your compassion and dedication, and we are deeply grateful.

This holiday season, we wish you and your loved ones, warmth, joy, and togetherness. May the new year bring health, success, and countless moments of fulfillment. Together, let us look forward to 2025 with hope and a shared commitment to continue making a meaningful difference.

With our best wishes,

The Amara Charitable Team

Learn more: www.amaratrust.org

