



August 23, 2025

Dear Friends and Supporters of Hand in Hand for Kenya,

To begin on a different note than usually, we have news from Germany. In early May, we had the pleasure of welcoming Joseph Njenga, Project and Health Manager of the Maisha Mazuri Children Center (MCC), and Arriet Nyatichi, Deputy Principal of the Maisha Mazuri Senior Secondary School, to Munich.

These kinds of visits are particularly important to us as an organization. They promote international exchange, strengthen our sense of community, and encourage collaboration. Moreover, they foster understanding of different life circumstances and motivate us all to continue advocating for social justice and children's rights across borders. With new insights and renewed energy, we return to our work together - because this is the only way our project can sustain itself and grow.

The packed schedule included visits to nine partner schools in and around Munich, job shadowing at a residential child and youth care facility (St. Josephsheim, Haidhausen), and at a farm in Gaimersheim. During a joint association meeting, Joseph and Arriet shared up-to-date photos and information about the current situation at MCC. In addition to the official appointments, shared trips provided joyful moments and lasting memories.

"May we introduce" – A New Section

In the spirit of continued exchange between our Kenyan colleagues and you, our supporters, we are introducing a new section in our newsletter: "May we introduce"

The Maisha Mazuri project, consisting of the children's center, partner program, school, and farm (Shamba), now employs 25 dedicated staff members. Their shared mission is to provide children coming from extreme backgrounds of poverty, neglect, or abuse with a safe environment and real opportunities for the future. In each of our upcoming newsletters, we'll introduce two to three team members.

If you'd like a quicker behind-the-scenes look, we invite you to follow us on Instagram at @handin-hand4kenya or visit our photo gallery on our website (<https://www.4kenya.info>).

Joseph Njenga

Joseph is one of two social workers at the children's center and has been part of the MCC team for seven years. As Project Manager, he is responsible for local finances and bookkeeping. Ensuring that all resources are used efficiently is a priority for him. He also leads the team at MCC, making sure responsibilities are met and internal communication flows smoothly. As a Health Worker, Joseph

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ensures that all 124 children at Maisha Mazuri have access to quality healthcare, whether outpatient, inpatient, or specialized. He also provides health education to the children's families and raises awareness about healthy practices.

“My wish is that every child at MCC achieves their dreams, success in school and have a dignified life.” - *Joseph Njenga, April 2024*

Arriet Nyatichi

Arriet has been working as Deputy Principal and English and Literature teacher at our Senior Secondary School for two years. In addition to her teaching and administrative roles, she lived in the adjacent boarding facility until recently - gaining valuable insight into boarding life and forming close relationships with students. Creating a safe and supportive learning environment is especially important to her. She aims to offer each student the guidance they need to succeed.

“Beyond academics, the Academy provides a safe and supportive environment – a true ‘home away from home’.” - *Arriet Nyatichi, June 2024*

You'll soon find the full interview with Arriet on our Instagram channel.

The School System in Kenya - An Overview

In this newsletter, we would like to give you an overview of the Kenyan school system. We've addressed aspects of children's educational journeys in Kenya before (Newsletter 3/2023), but the system has undergone significant changes in recent years. As it forms the framework for our own educational programs on-site, we find it especially important to bring you up to date.

Education begins with **Pre-Primary School**, which children from the age of three can attend on a voluntary basis. In a playful way, they develop early cognitive and social skills - such as numbers, letters, pencil grip, or how to interact in a classroom.

As in Germany, school attendance is compulsory. Kenyan children must complete nine mandatory school years: six in **Primary School** (similar to German elementary school), followed by three in **Junior Secondary** (comparable to lower secondary level). Additionally, there is the **Senior Secondary School** (grades 10–12), which is politically supported but not yet fully compulsory. Access depends on passing national exams and the availability of school places.

The Primary School curriculum focuses on holistic competence development, covering basics such as reading, writing, arithmetic, but also creativity, social and moral values.

After six years of Primary School, students enter Junior Secondary (grades 7–9), where they deepen foundational skills and gain broader orientation in subjects like science, technology, arts, languages, and social studies. This stage ends with a national standardized exam. Senior Secondary School

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(grades 10–12) allows for specialization in one of three tracks: academic, technical-vocational, or arts/sports. Students choose elective classes based on their interests and career goals. Lessons are intended to be practice-oriented and competency-based, preparing students for university, vocational training, or employment. This stage also concludes with a final examination.

Our Maisha Mazuri Senior Secondary Academy

In Kenya, Senior Secondary education is commonly offered in boarding schools, often unaffordable for families in our rural region. The Senior Secondary School we established in 2019 provides a local alternative for many students from the surrounding communities. Our school offers a dual-track secondary education: it provides a general academic curriculum aimed at obtaining a nationally recognized diploma, alongside practical components supported by our on-site facilities such as a bakery, farm, and computer lab. These are complemented by theoretical instruction in the respective vocational fields. Our Academy is still developing. We are continually working to improve the infrastructure, expand our team, and refine our educational approach. We'll keep you updated as we move forward.

The “Skill Center” - An alternative Vocational School

Students with a more hands-on learning style can attend the Skill Center, built by our local partner organization *Youth Support Kenya* and *Promoting Africa*. It offers formal vocational training within a dual education system, a path many of our Maisha Mazuri partner children have successfully taken. <https://youthsupportkenya.com>

Despite government efforts to promote educational equity, the Kenyan school system still faces major practical challenges. While access to basic education is theoretically secured through school mandates and state-supported Primary Schools, the quality of education remains highly uneven - especially between urban and rural areas. Many schools suffer from overcrowded classrooms, teacher shortages, and inadequate facilities. Even Primary School is out of reach for some children due to the cost of uniforms and exam fees. As a result, many only sporadically go to school. Although transition to Junior Secondary is guaranteed on paper, infrastructure challenges often prevent it. Senior Secondary remains inaccessible to many - due to school fees, long travel distances, or family poverty. Other obstacles include gender-based discrimination, early pregnancies, or child labor. Widespread poverty, unemployment, and social inequality further hinder access to education. The new national curriculum introduced by the Kenyan government is highly ambitious but requires costs that many schools currently can't afford. Even the authorities are overwhelmed by the reorganization, and there is widespread uncertainty about the upcoming school year. Nonetheless, for most families, education remains the central hope for social advancement. The challenge lies in structurally securing quality, equal opportunity, and sustainability in the education system.



Your continued support enables us at Hand in Hand for Kenya to make a meaningful contribution - empowering children and young people in our program and the surrounding community to recognize and realize their potential.

Asante Sana

Want to know more? Then check out our website, where you can find the latest updates under the "Current News" or "Volunteer Reports" sections, or follow us on Instagram.

Follow us:  [handinhand4kenya](https://www.instagram.com/handinhand4kenya)   [Maisha Mazuri Children Centre](https://www.youtube.com/MaishaMazuri)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MMP Letters Deadline:

Saturday, 20 September 2025 to:

Helen Milkau

c/o Hand in Hand für Kenia e.V.

Münchner Str. 7, 81379 Munich

or by email to: mmp@4kenya.info

Saturday, 29 September 2025

General Assembly

Friday, 3 October 2025

Innschifferl Boat Race in Wasserburg –

a portion of the proceeds will be donated to our association. <https://www.innschifferl.de>

Saturday, 15 November 2025

Hand in Hand for Kenya Benefit Event

in Edling (near Wasserburg)

with music, a bazaar, and African food.

Thank you for your wonderful support!

Maria Böhm, Christian Steinwender, Anna Haerty und Anne Roll

translated by Verena Wagner

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