



Introduction by the Executive Trustee

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Welcome to the first official newsletter from the East Africa Character Development Trust (EACDT). We hope you will find it both interesting and informative.

In some ways, committing to producing a regular newsletter marks a bit of a watershed for the charity as it indicates that our base of donors, sponsors, stakeholders and friends' has grown to a size considered significant enough to justify a broader sharing of information regarding our work and the broadening too, of the delivery of our programme in Nairobi.

This first newsletter is being published at a time of historic significance globally, as country by country, the world seeks to manage a deadly pandemic that has fundamentally effected every level of our societies and communities, wherever we may be and for our team in Kenya, it has meant a significant adaptation to our normal routines and processes whilst schools have been closed and Nairobi in lockdown.

Almost 8 years ago now, a small group of friends, all members of Kenya Kongonis Cricket Club, got to talking about how they wished to offer something back to a country that was close to their hearts and to which they were all still emotionally and directly engaged. Led by the then Patron of Kenya Kongonis, Derek Breed, this group formulated the initial concept for a charitable programme that took to life in 2014 with the introduction of a 2 year pilot project, to deliver character education to young, disadvantaged children living in the slum communities of Nairobi, using cricket as its delivery vehicle.

At the conclusion of the pilot in March 2016, over 3,000 children were in the programme through their schools, with whom EACDT had negotiated to provide 'Character Through Cricket' during the PE sessions within the curriculum; an independent evaluation of the project had identified a significant improvement in attendance, behaviour, academic performance and aspiration amongst the children EACDT was engaging with and so the charity committed to a long term strategy of character education within state schools in and around Nairobi. Today, our team of coaches - all African Kenyans emanating from the same communities within which we work - engage with 4,700 children a week throughout the academic year, using the coaching and playing of cricket to instil core character traits and life skills that might help young people born and raised in extreme hardship, to manage their way through the challenges poverty poses and to elevate themselves beyond the circumstances they were born into.

The charity is now in its 7th year of operational delivery in Kenya and of course this could not happen without funding and the support and benevolence of others. EACDT is hugely indebted to Derek Breed who almost single handedly financed us through the pilot project phase and beyond. His determination to see our programme work and his pre-eminence in providing the financial wherewithal has helped establish a small, motivated and dynamic organisation that we hope, serves as a lasting legacy to him. Now, we have corporate benefactors that support a significant proportion of our delivery, led by COSARAF, Bibace, Tatu City and Isinya Feeds. The longer term commitment from these has been augmented over time by generous donations from the Sackler Foundation, Allan and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust, Star Lizard/Bloom Foundation, St James's Place Foundation, David Powell and Allan Gray, to whom we are eternally grateful. The search for funds, as for all charities, is never ending and we live in hope that our work and its effect might find us new supporters as we evolve.

In coming editions of the newsletter, we intend to inform you of the charity's progress and effect; we will also provide inspirational stories from our programme and introduce you to members of our team, school teachers, children and supporters, all of whom provide the framework within which EACDT operates and engages. In this issue, we hope we capture a flavour of who we are and what we do and how relevant our purpose is, in these, of all times. On behalf of the Trustees and the Team in Nairobi, welcome to the world of the East Africa Character Development Trust and stay safe and well, wherever this inaugural newsletter finds you.

Our Programme

Each week of the school year our team of 14 Kenyan full time Character Coaches works in 15 schools in socially deprived areas in and around Nairobi. The focus is on Character Development using the game of cricket as the mechanism by which we instil the character message.

All the schools acknowledge the positive impact we have made on the children's behavior, attendance, attitude, and academic performance. Our own impact assessments confirm this.



By focusing on 8 key character traits proven essential to providing young people with the foundation necessary for their futures, they are better equipped to lead productive lives and make a significant contribution to their communities. The 8 character traits - **Curiosity, Determination, Enthusiasm, Gratitude, Optimism, Self Control, Social Intelligence and Integrity** - each of which, like a jigsaw, contributes to moulding an individual's overall character.



Character Coach - Sarah Bhakita

I am Sarah Bhakita Wetoto. I was born in Bungoma, Kenya and was raised by my uncle after the demise of my mother when I was four years old. My family was polygamous so my auntie saw it fit to raise me as it was not a conducive environment for a 4 year old. My uncle and aunt were already retired when they took me in and raising a child in Nairobi after their retirement was not a walk in the park for them. They did the best they could, and God did the rest.



I was introduced to cricket when I was 11 years old at Dr. Livingstone Primary School, and I fell in love with the sport instantly. I joined the Kenya Women's National Team two years later when I was still in primary school and this really eased the burden on my guardians in regards to school fees as all my fees arrears and the costs of secondary education were catered for courtesy of well wishers in the cricket fraternity. Two years after finishing secondary school, I enrolled in a local college and studied Business Administration but wasn't able to finish the course and graduate because of finances. However, I continued doing cricket related activities, volunteering as a coach in schools under the watch of Cricket Kenya coaches.

In 2014 I got a job at the East Africa Character Development Trust [EACDT] as a coach/educator. EACDT introduced me to a very different approach to coaching, one which emphasises on character more than the sport. Sincerely speaking, the lessons I have learnt, and am still learning, have been so valuable to me - as much as we concentrated on teaching these character traits to the kids, they were also working on me. You can't help but become what you teach. They have taught me to dig deeper within and always find the treasure within. I can become anything I set my mind on.

I have also learnt that the decisions I make in life affect so many people directly or indirectly. The children we teach, being placed under us, have to get the sifted and the pure content coming from us; they look up to us for guidance and advice. The children have become a part of our lives, we always have to think out of the box to tackle issues and challenges that come with dealing with the different character traits. Without the character traits also working for us it would be a lot harder to do this job and have a real impact. I usually see a lot of myself in these kids: I relate to some of their stories and I am never ashamed to share my story with them just to encourage them and let them know that they can make it. My desire is to see these kids excel beyond what we have seen in our lives. Their environment is not their limitation.

I thank the kids for making me a better person. I have big dreams and ambitions and I want, and will, accomplish them not just for me but for those who are watching me and looking up to me. I owe them that.

Beneficiary - George Kuria



George is in his second year of secondary school at Ruthimitu Mixed Secondary School. He lives in a single room house with eight other siblings in a slum area of Nairobi called Kawangware. His older sister looks after, and attempts to provide for, the family as both their parents died at a very young age.

George has been one of the beneficiaries of the EACDT Character Development programme since we started in 2014 in the Kawangware hub. Before the programme started there, George used to hang out with bad company in his local community.

He was involved, even at such a young age, in the youth drug scene and engaged in other anti-social behaviour. Involvement in the EACDT character development programme has helped to transform George's character. He is now a completely changed person, focused on his secondary school studies. From being a reserved and withdrawn boy before EACDT started work in Kawangware, George has now become both confident and optimistic, engaging himself with people who might help him achieve his goals and keep him out of trouble.

George is also now a very keen cricketer. And so good has he got that at an international fundraising cricket tournament held in June last year he caught the eye of one of the participants who wanted to know more about his story. Such was the impression that both George's character and cricket skills had on this benefactor that he now pays the full cost of George's Secondary School education.

Covid-19 has brought huge challenges to George and his family. His sister was the sole breadwinner but she has struggled to earn enough to feed the 9 family members - even with one meal a day. George, at home because of the school lockdowns, took the initiative to look for a job to help his sister provide for their 7 siblings. He managed to find a job selling bananas, earning around \$1.40 a day. Together with some support from EACDT's temporary feeding project (on which more below), the family is surviving and George is using the skills and lessons learnt from our character development programme to give them a chance for the future.

Our Donors

We have a number of regular donors, both large and small, and are extremely grateful to them for their support and encouragement. A number of donors from overseas support specific hubs comprising 3 or 4 schools, which gives us the ability to deliver our programme to, in some locations, up to 3,400 children each week. Other donors in Kenya support a specific school, and have found our programme sufficiently successful that they have extended their support to include an additional school and sports facilities.

COSARAF, a UK foundation, together with their matching funders, Bibace Foundation, from Singapore, support the hubs at Kawangware and Starehe, both of which are located in impoverished areas of Nairobi and include a lot of what is generally called "slum" housing. The Bloom Foundation, from the UK, supports the hub at Kangemi, another area full of poor housing and poor people. Each of these areas lacks formal housing, running water, sewage systems and open spaces, all of which have a huge impact on the life experiences of the children who live there. Crime, drugs and prostitution are all prevalent whilst unemployment fuels the lure of criminality.



Since our project started in 2014 our team has provided character education to a total of 9,774 individual pupils comprising 5,930 boys and 3,844 girls. During February this year we broke our record for the number of individual children who took part in our programme in a single week - a remarkable 4,800 boys and girls.

Isinya Feeds Ltd and the family of Dipak Shah that owns it, support our activity at Dipak Kisaju Secondary School in Isinya, a small Masai town 50 kilometres and an hour on the way to the Tanzania border from Nairobi. Isinya Feeds Ltd, together with another local company, Zenith Steel Fabrications Ltd, provided the funding to build a new dormitory block and a new hall at the school. EACDT coaches and our Project Director were invited to the official opening and gave a presentation on the work we do to the audience that included the Deputy Governor of Kajiado County, local government education officials, teachers, parents and pupils. The photo below shows pupils, teachers, EACDT staff, donors and visitors at the event.



Tatu City, who are constructing a new city on a 5,000 acre site about 30 kms and 45 minutes from Nairobi on the road to Thika, asked if we would introduce our programme at the Tatu City Primary School in 2018 and Ngewe Primary School in 2019. They also asked Shamus Rugby Foundation, a charity that supports the development of the game of rugby, if they would run their programme at Tatu City. They are so pleased with the positive results of both programmes – the effect of the disciplines, lessons and life skills learned– that Tatu City are investing in a purpose-built sports facility to make the teaching and playing of cricket and rugby more professional and effective.

The photograph below shows the ground that pupils at Tatu Primary School and the nearby Ngewe Primary School have had to use up to now. But by the time the schools have reopened after the Covid crisis they and others from the local area will have access to the first cricket facility in the entire district.



EACDT Finances

The EACDT has finalised its 2019 accounts and passed them to the external examiner (we're too small to require an audit) for him to complete his work. The accounts combine the independently audited receipts and payments of the Kenya operational charity that executes EACDT's programmes and employs its coaches, and the receipts and payments of EACDT, the parent charity. This is a summary of what is being examined:

EACDT
SUMMARY EXTRACT OF RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS
YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 2019

	<u>£</u>
<u>RECEIPTS</u>	
Donations	221,540
Interest earned	<u>279</u>
	221,819
<u>PAYMENTS</u>	
Programme delivery	115,838
General	27,032
Governance, Finance and fund raising	<u>38,592</u>
	181,462
<u>SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</u>	40,357

2019 was a record year for donations, while payments increased by £13,000, £9,000 of which was accounted for by salary increases for our Kenyan character coaches.

At the year end, we had liquid funds of £93,276 in various bank accounts with Barclays Bank, both in the UK and in Kenya. We have thus achieved our aim of having reserves equivalent to 6 months of recurring expenditure.

We have a lot to do to keep our donations at a level that supports our ongoing commitments to schools and pupils, but hope we can also increase our donations to a level that will support the extra activities we have ambitions for.

And then came Covid-19



Out of nowhere, the world was turned upside down. By mid-March pandemic panic had engulfed the world, and Kenya, as elsewhere, went into lockdown. The schools shut, social distancing and curfews were enforced and the economy went into meltdown.

EACDT adapted very quickly with our character coaches supporting community programmes and continuing to promote the 8 character traits around the informal settlements where the pupils they teach and live. Soon it became clear that unemployment in both the formal and informal sectors of the Kenyan economy had skyrocketed and many of the families were struggling to provide their children with even one meal each day.

With no tangible government welfare or benefit system, the impact on families working in the informal sector who normally only earn enough daily to feed themselves was immediate. Within a week our EACDT coaching team reported increasing cases of genuine hunger amongst the children we work with.

A few of our EACDT team got together to buy some food for 6 of the families they knew were desperate and the idea to ramp up the scale and reach of the feeding programme was born.

Fast forward a month and as a result of the wonderful support and generous donations from well-wishers worldwide (including one of EACDT's main sponsors, COSARAF) and in Kenya, we have so far managed to distribute over 600 food packages each weighing 16+Kgs, each of which should feed a family of 4 for up to 10 days. AND the donations are still coming in.

Each one of the families receiving a food parcel is extremely grateful and also has a heart-breaking story to tell. One young boy from Musa Primary School in Isinya walked 8km to get to the distribution point...we arranged a moped lift home for him to his village.

Because of government restrictions on movement our coaches have, to some extent, been confined to the areas in which they live. However, this has given them the opportunity to promote our Character Development message and the relevance of the 8 traits to the current pandemic situation within their local communities. Posters, individual Character Cards (see photo) and assisting with community projects.

We are extremely grateful to all those individuals and other donors who have supported, and continue to support us, since we began our programme in 2014.



What next?

The Kenya government has recently announced that schools won't reopen until 1 January. That gives us the chance to start our 'Character in the Community' programme, which we are currently formalizing and will start on 1 August. We plan to run formal – but socially distanced and within government guidelines – meetings involving as many of our normal programme participants as can be managed – but to include also the mothers and senior members of the local community. We're looking forward to the challenge.

Our Sponsors

EACDT would like to acknowledge the following major sponsors of our programme.

In Great Britain and worldwide:

- Cosaraf Charitable Foundation
- Bibace Foundation
- Sackler Foundation
- Bloom Foundation
- Star Lizzard/Bloom Foundation
- David Powell
- Alan and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust
- St. James Place Foundation
- Allan Gray

In Kenya:

- Tatu City
- Isinya Feeds Ltd

