

From the Streets to Securing the Digital World

"I am learning to hack ethically," Karanja tells us with a broad smile. He is studying at Kiambu National Polytechnic for a diploma in Computer Science, specialising in Cybersecurity.

As he tells us enthusiastically about the opportunities he will have when he graduates, it is hard to believe that Karanja was once a street boy.

Poverty at home drove him onto the streets of Naivasha, where he spent his time begging for food and money to survive. In 2018 we gave him a place at our Sunshine Centre and enrolled him into school. Today, he has the world at his fingertips!

Street boys: this is my story...

At our Sunshine Centre in Naivasha, Kenya, we provide home, food and education to 147 former street boys. We visited the homes of some of our Sunshine Boys to hear their stories

Owen Kariithi (age 14)

I'm 14 years old, and I live with my grandmother, Irene Njeri, who has taken care of me since I was six months old. My parents separated when I was very young, so my grandmother took me into her home. We live in a small wooden house with cardboard on the walls to keep us warm, and a small kitchen outside.

Life hasn't been easy. When I was about seven, I started running away from school and later ended up living on the streets. I collected scrap metal to earn a few coins, slept outside shops, and sometimes ate from hotel bins.

Then Mama Chege found me and offered me a chance to go back to school at Sunshine. Now, I'm happy, learning, and hopeful for my future.

My grandmother is thankful I'm safe, though we're worried — we've been given notice to leave our home. Still, we trust God will make a way. I help my grandmother with chores and enjoy church during the holidays, but I'm always excited to return to Sunshine. **Sunshine is the best!**



Brighton Kamau (age 14)

I'm the eldest of three brothers, and I live with my mother, Lucy Njeri, who works hard doing laundry and weeding to care for us. Sometimes we had no food at home — only a little porridge — so I would run away and live on the streets. I collected scrap metal to earn a few shillings and slept outside shops, using a sack as a blanket.

One day, Mama Chege found me, gave me bread and a soda, and offered me a chance to return to school. I said yes, and soon joined Sunshine. Now I'm in Grade 8, happy, studying well, and feeling like I belong. My mother is proud and thankful. **Sunshine has changed my life.**

Brian Kibet (age 16)

I live with my mother, Nelly Chelagat, who does casual work on nearby farms to support us. Life was very hard — sometimes we had no food or school fees, so I left home and lived on the streets.

I collected scrap metal to sell, earning about 30 to 50 shillings (20 to 30 pence) a day, but some days I went hungry. At night, I slept outside or in kiosks with other boys, using sacks as blankets.

One day, Mama Chege found me with other street boys, gave us bread and sodas, and offered us a chance to go back to school. I agreed and joined Sunshine. Now I have food, friends, and education. **I'm in Grade 8, and I love science, maths, and being the football captain!**



...and why Sunshine is good for them

Since 2004, our Sunshine Centre in Naivasha, Kenya, has been a safe haven for street boys. With the support of our dedicated staff, we offer what life on the streets cannot - safety, love, belonging, nourishing meals, warm beds, and the chance to re-start their education and build their futures.



Chad proudly holds up his colourful drawing as we arrive at the Sunshine Centre.



Evanson loves the fresh food he gets to eat at the Centre, and lends a hand with the weeding and harvesting.



Ayub Kinyua loves knitting (he was helped by Wendy when she spent 7 weeks working at Sunshine last year).

Helping street boys' mums...

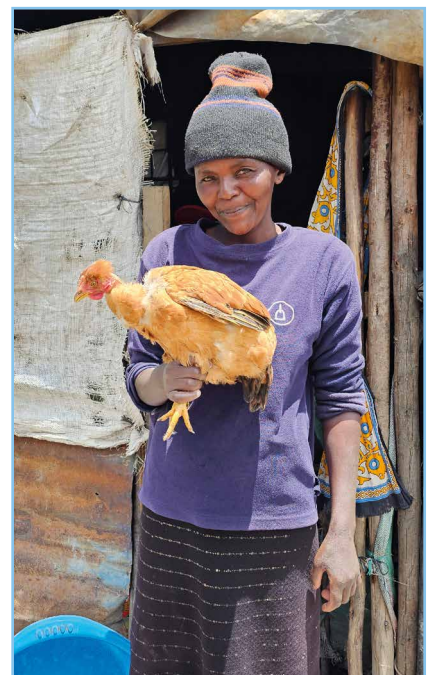
Our Sunshine Boys come from desperately poor families. Although we help the boys, the parents (usually single mothers) and other siblings still suffer. To try to help, we have given two mothers paid work at South View Farm - part of the Sunshine project which supplies fresh vegetables. The initial impact has been transformative.



Providing just two days' work leaves time in the week for the mothers to get casual work elsewhere, and reduces their dependency on us.

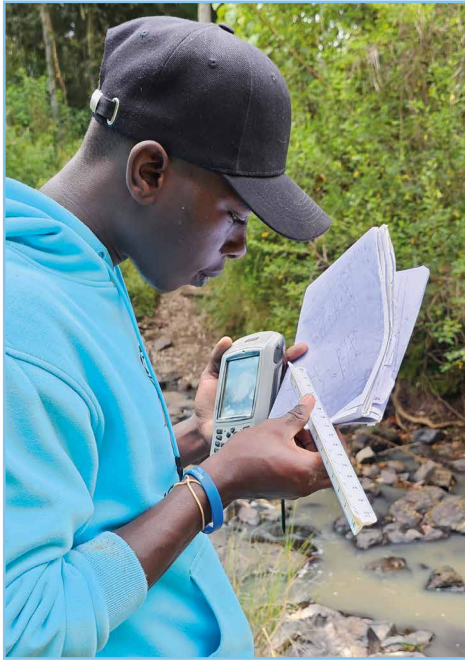
Cecilia (left) was smiling broadly when we met her. She told us that she was splitting the 600 shillings (£3.50) we gave her each week to cover food and essentials for her family, leaving 200 shillings to pay her daughter's school fees.

Beth (right) was very happy to see us. She was a completely transformed person — happy and confident. She told us that she's been using the money she's earned to buy food, pay her children's school fees, and has even purchased a couple of chickens — one of which she proudly held up for a photo!



Does Sunshine work?

When a street boy joins our Sunshine Centre, our goal is to support him until he can live independently - a journey that requires many years of dedicated care.



Deserted by his father, Fabius went to the streets before coming to our Sunshine Centre in 2013.

He has recently completed his time with us, and we headed into the hills behind Naivasha where we found



him — now an intern with a land surveying company — preparing to map the plot of a large house using GPS equipment.

After setting up the base station on an outhouse roof and connecting to



satellites, he traced the boundary, even wading into a stream for precise readings. Fabius's surveying skill and confidence were clear, and we were inspired to see how far he's come since his days on the streets.

Jeremiah is lighting up the town



We dropped in to meet Jeremiah Mwangi, a former Sunshine Boy who now works in an electrical shop in Naivasha town, having completed his training in electrical installation at the Polytechnic.

He showed us round the shop and gave us a guided tour of the products he sells (strips of flashing lights to adorn your house or car are currently selling well).

Jeremiah proudly told us that he is taking good care of himself, cooking ugali, rice, and vegetables to keep himself healthy.

His employer confirmed that he is a good and reliable worker, who usually works six days a week and covers alternate Sundays as well. We were very encouraged to see how this former street boy was succeeding and living independently.

Kelvin aces it

A car pulled up and out jumped Kelvin Otieno, a former street boy from our Sunshine Centre.

After finishing a banking and finance course, he started work knocking on doors selling Safaricom products.



He has risen through the ranks of the company, working in various locations in Kenya, and he and his wife Mary (also a Safaricom employee) also run a company that provides product and services training for Safaricom.

Proof that training transforms lives

For more than 20 years, Footsteps has supported the Naivasha Technical Training Institute (NTTI), helping over 500 young Kenyans each year acquire vocational skills to enable them to earn a living. Does it work? We visited some of NTTI's alumni at their places of work to find out.

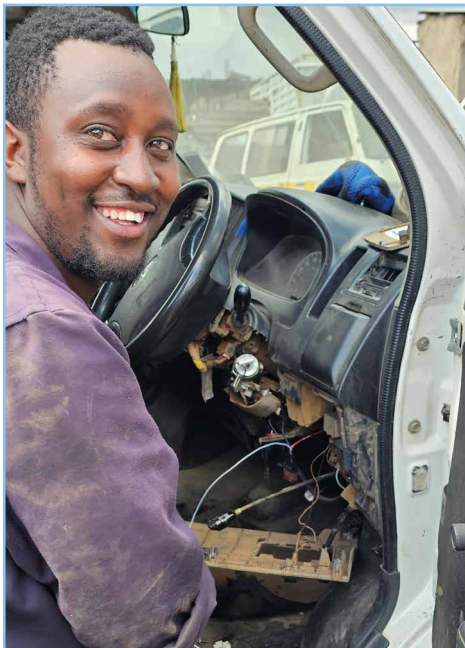


Our first call was to **Samuel Kuria (left)** and **Dennis Njihia (right)**, who are now working together in a local hair salon. They came in specially on their day off and explained that they have to keep earning to make ends meet.

Both are highly skilled and passionate about their work. They worked quickly, efficiently, and professionally, and their clients were clearly happy with the quality and style of their cuts.

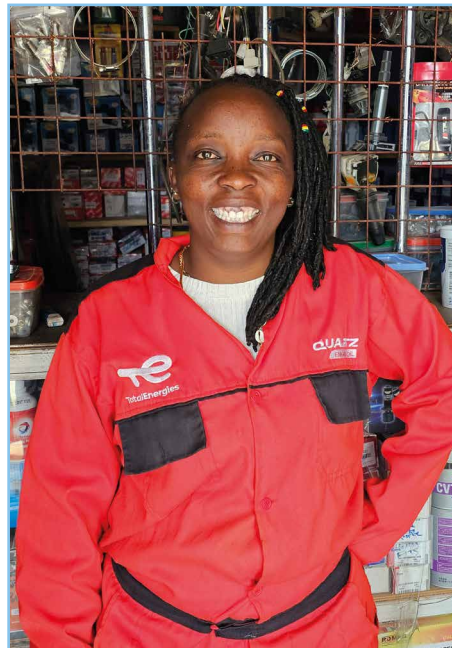
It was obvious how much they love what they do, and their dream is to own their own salon one day.

They spoke enthusiastically about encouraging others — especially clients interested in learning a trade — to join the Polytechnic, where they themselves learned the basics of their craft.



Enok Kuria graduated in vehicle electrics in 2023. He now works at a busy one-stop garage. When we visited, he was troubleshooting an electrical issue on a minibus.

It was obvious he knew exactly what he was doing — the vehicle burst into life while we were standing there! He looked very happy and confident in his work, and it was clear he is doing very well.



Alice Wanjiku trained in vehicle electrics at the Polytechnic between 2009 and 2010. After graduating, she worked at various garages before eventually opening her own electrical spares shop which supplies components for a variety of vehicles.

Alice is married and has three children. She is clearly doing extremely well — bright, bubbly, and full of energy.

She was delighted to see us and very proud of her achievements.

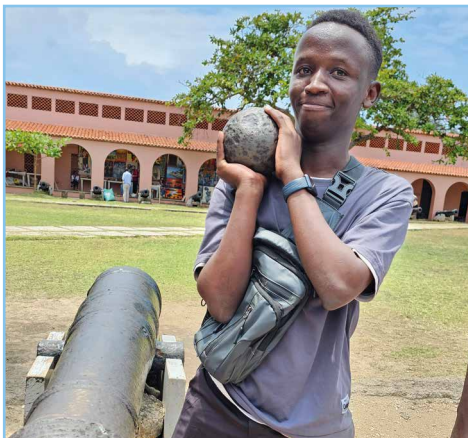


Joseph Kimani qualified in Electrical Installation at the Polytechnic in 2016 and now has his own shop and business. His work includes electrical fencing, automatic gates, CCTV systems, solar panel installations, and standard electrical work.

Joseph now employs six other electricians and regularly takes students on attachment from the Polytechnic — giving back to the institution that trained him.

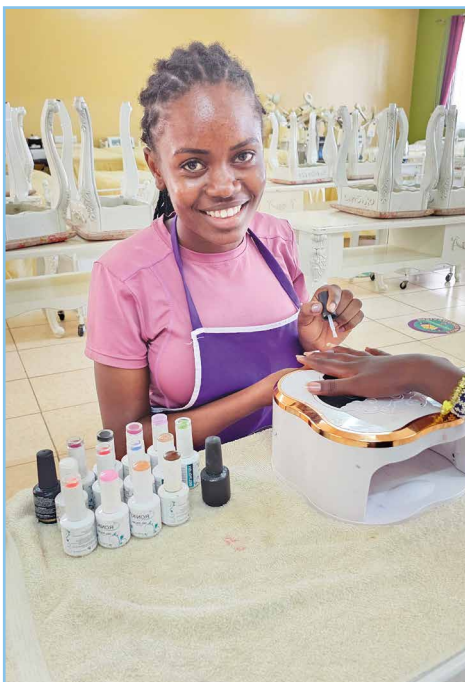
Exploring Mombasa's rich history

The young people from our Tumaini Children's Home helped organise a visit to Fort Jesus - a World Heritage Site that reveals the story of the influence of Oman, Portugal and Britain on Mombasa's historic port.



Our guide explained that the long cannons were made by the Portuguese to guard the entrance to Mombasa port — a strategic trading centre. David Muthuma (who organised the transport) tested his strength lifting a cannon ball, and we admired the amazing craftsmanship of the hand-sewn, wooden Arab sailing boat.

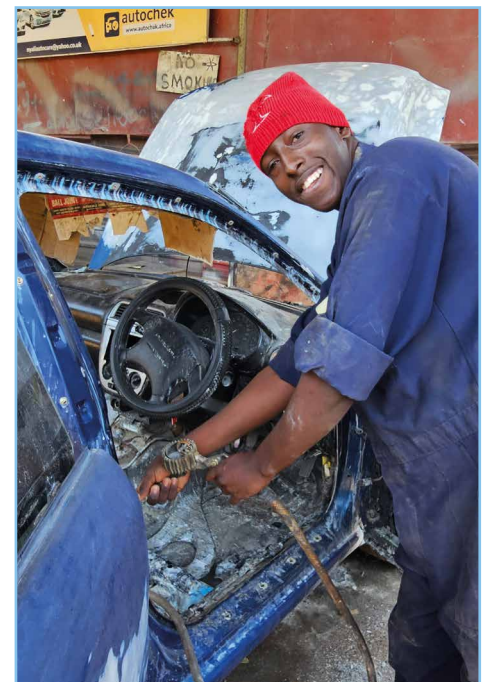
Focussed on their Futures



We created our Future Focus programme to provide employment-focussed further education or training for orphaned/abandoned young people, and those who come from families too poor to afford the cost of a course.

Brillianne is loving her beauty course and is taking private clients after lessons to earn extra income.

David Mwangi's smile shows how much he is enjoying his vehicle mechanic course. Currently, on attachment at a garage, we met him working on a stripped-down car — cleaning and preparing it before reassembling the interior.



Thrown out of her family for having a disabled child

We have always tried to help those with disability, and have recently formalised our efforts into the Sunshine Disability Programme. It's headed up by Irene Wanjiku (on the right in the first photo) who took us to visit the mothers of some of the disabled children we are supporting by paying their special needs school fees.



Hamlet and Havila

Welcoming us into her home in the Kihoto slum, Hamlet explained that she was orphaned at age 12 and went to live with her brother and his wife. But, when her son Havilah was born with disabilities, they forced her to leave, and she moved to Naivasha to seek work.

Havila (inset photo) has cerebral palsy and has social and communication difficulties, spending his time roaming the streets.

Local schools refused to admit him, saying he was too old, so he spent his days wandering around the community while his mother was at work—often asking shopkeepers or strangers for

food (Hamlet works part-time at the flower farms and takes on other casual jobs when they are available).

A friend helped Havilah get an assessment at Pangani Special Needs School, where he was given an admission letter, but Hamlet was unable to afford the fees. Hearing of her plight, we arranged to pay the school fees, and he was admitted in August.

This is Havilah's first term in school. She has not yet visited him at Pangani, but the term is ending shortly, so she will be able to see for herself the progress Havila has made.

Hamlet says she is very grateful to God and to the Sunshine Disability Programme for helping her son.

Carol and Kelvin

When Kelvin was born, Carol's family rejected her, telling her that they did not want someone with a disability living with them.

She was forced to move out with her two sons at that time, and they now live in a single rented room, paying 2,500 shillings (£15) per month.

However she is currently behind with the rent, and the landlord has threatened to lock her out if she does not pay soon.



Carol takes casual jobs when available but had no work during the week of our visit. She was desperate for help for Kelvin who has cerebral palsy and scoliosis, and was delighted when Footsteps offered to pay his school fees at Pangani Special Needs School.

Carol has seen Kelvin make remarkable progress since joining school. During the holidays, he is happy and more interactive — he can now say "Mum" and "where are you?" He has also learned to feed himself, and he loves music.



Eunice and Levis

We visited Eunice at her shop displaying the colourful, beautifully handmade bags, purses, and backpacks she had made on her sewing machine.

She thanked us for paying the school fees for Levis, her autistic son (inset photo), saying that before he was admitted, she had to leave him locked in the house for his own safety when she went to work in the shop - her only source of income.

When he comes home at the end of term, Eunice told us that Levis is now much calmer, interacts better, and can accompany her to the shop for short periods before becoming restless.

We were delighted to see how enabling Levis to go to school has made a huge difference to Eunice's life.

We encouraged her by buying several of her lovely bags, and promised to come back with visitors!

Joseph aiming even higher



When we visited former street boy Joseph Chege in 2020, he had just joined Kiambu High School where he was aiming high (inset photo).

Today he is at Kenya's prestigious Jomo Kenyatta

University, studying statistics. He is aiming even higher, with clear ideas of where he will apply his skills, including banks, and government departments. "All large organisations need data analysis," he assures us.



From Street to Peak



On Saturday 18th October, Martin and Wendy Print, accompanied by 148 Sunshine Boys and staff climbed Kenya's Mt Longonot. Although the climb was challenging, the boys bounded up the mountain like gazelles!

For Martin and Wendy, it was very much a case of "pole

pole" (slowly, slowly), but eventually — and triumphantly — we all made it to the rim of the crater.

Thank you everyone who has already sponsored the boys.

The JustGiving page is still open - just £30 will help transform a life.

www.justgiving.com/campaign/street-to-peak-2025



Footsteps International in Kenya



Transforms the lives of 147 former street boys at the Sunshine Centre, Naivasha



Supports 27 orphaned and abandoned children in Mombasa



Strengthens education of 250 children in Nairobi's slums



Helps train 550 young people in vocational skills



Supports 41 ultra vulnerable families in Naivasha

We are delighted to receive single and regular donations in support of our work.

We work with trusted partners to ensure that donations actually get where they are needed.

We do not discriminate against any needy person on the grounds of their religion, tribe or nationality.

Footsteps is managed by trustees who are all unpaid volunteers, committed to putting their Christian faith into action.

This newsletter was compiled following the visit to our projects by trustees Martin and Wendy Print in October 2025.

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