

Race for the finishing line



Virtual Kenya Marafun: 497 take part on three continents

The former street boys at the Sunshine Centre in Kenya were ready to run at 6 o'clock in the morning, but had to wait patiently for half an hour for the sun to rise before being flagged off for this year's (virtual) Kenya Marafun.

Accompanied by Sunshine Centre staff, the boys raced around a 5 km course on the roads near the Centre.

The event is one of the highlights of the year for the boys, and their way of helping us raise funds for their care.

Their efforts were supported by 62 adults and children from England, Wales, Spain, France and USA who ran, walked and swam distances (and at speeds) of their own choice (*photos right*).

Five canine participants ensured we kept the 'fun' in the Marafun!



Marafun success!



The Sunshine Boys' Marafun effort was supported by staff (above and below), girls from Bishop Wambari School (left) and vocational trainees from the Naivasha Technical Training Institute (right).



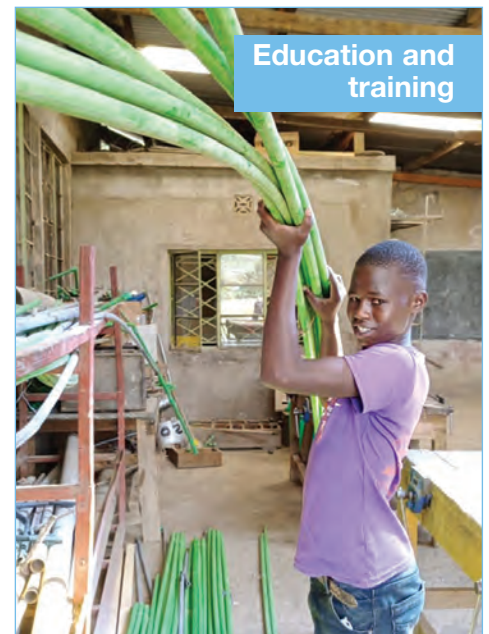
Marafun sponsorship helps fund:



Nutritious food



Staff and hygiene essentials



Education and training

Helping former street boys over the line

Footsteps' aim is to support our former street boys through to independence.

Sunshine Director Rev Simon, and his wife Rebecca (Mama Chege) are pictured handing over a set of automotive tools to Paul Guchu (*right*) and plumber's tools to Joseph Mbuthia (*far right*).

With the end of their vocational courses in sight, Paul and Joseph are equipped with the tools they need to earn their living as independent adults, taking them over the finishing line of their journey at the Sunshine Centre.



George Gitau and Joseph Njoroge showed off their cooking skills by using the ovens they had been presented with to bake delicious cakes which they served to the (very appreciative) younger Sunshine Boys. Both young men are nearing the end of their hospitality and catering courses.



Above, left to right: Paul Guchu (automotive engineer), Rev Simon Kinyanjui (Sunshine Centre Director), Joseph Mbuthia (plumber), Ben Ndichu (leather technologist), George Gitau and Joseph Njoroge (chefs).

Paul said, "I really appreciate the mechanic's tools. I promise to take care of them because they will help me nurture my small dream into a Big Dream Come True of becoming the best there is in providing automotive services."



Meet our Tumaini children...

House mum and dad **Mary and Charles Osaleh** have been caring for children at the **Tumaini Children's Home** since it opened in **2004**. The group of children they originally looked after have grown up and left the Home, but their places have been taken by fresh arrivals - children whose personal circumstances deprived them of the home and family they needed.



I am **Ruth Mbinya Mutua** and I am 11 years old. I am just finishing grade 5 at Tumaini Timbwani Primary School, and my best subject is Science. I like playing football when I am not in class.

My name is **Ali Hamisi Tsetse**. I am 12 and I am just completing class seven at school. My best subject is English and I like drawing. I would like to be an engineer when I finish school.



I am **Jackline Atieno** and I am 13 years old and have nearly completed grade 7 at primary school. I read story books to improve my English and I would like to work as a therapist in the future.



I am **Benard Okumu Otieno**. I am 15 and in form one at high school where I am the top student in Physics and Computer. In my spare time, I am making a robot car, and I also enjoy playing football and basketball. I want to become a locomotive engineer.

My name is **James Tumbo Mutiso**. I am 17 years old and a form two student. My favourite subjects are Mathematics, Chemistry and Christian Religious Education. My dream is to go to university to study law.



I am **Mika Onyango** and I am 16 and a form one student. I like playing football during my free time. I would like to be a chef in future. My favourite foods are fish and ugali (a Kenyan maize meal dish).

When the Tumaini children grow up, we help them take the next steps towards independence:



Joshua Kitela (left) is 20 years old and has just started a vocational training course in electrical installation at Shanzu Business School.

While he was at school he found he had a knack for repairing phone chargers and fixing broken bicycles.

With formal training and a proper qualification, he will be able to make a good living when he completes college.

Mike Okwara (right) is 20 years old, and started at Chuka University in January.

He is studying Computer Science and reports, "The course has helped me grasp some skills that I can use both academically and socially. My favourite unit is IT and Customer Care. I am currently doing continuous assessment tests and hoping to do my best."



I had lost hope, but...

Doreen Kagendo came to Tumaini children's home in 2011. Here is her story:

I became part of the Tumaini children's home in 2011 under the care of Charles and Mary after the death of my grandmother who was taking care of me. I can remember my first time at the home being very shy because I was not used to living with a big family.



Doreen joined Tumaini in 2011

After my grandma's death I had lost hope and I did not have any idea what my fate would be, but all this changed. Footsteps brought me back to life. I finally had a mum, a dad, brothers, sisters, a home and a chance to even eat three meals a day.

I was able to join Tumaini Primary school. Here, I was given books, new uniforms, new shoes, and so many other goodies when I joined. This brought so much excitement into my life and I was ready to work so hard. I continued receiving

overwhelming support until I finished primary school and passed my national exams with flying colours.

In 2015 I was offered a chance to join Tumaini High school for my secondary school education and this was the beginning of a new chapter. The support I got was not any less. I saw my brothers and sisters finishing school and succeeding in different careers and I was motivated to work hard so that I can also succeed and achieve my dreams.

2018 was my final year in high school. It was quite scary because I knew it was a time to build or break my life. From the love and support I got at the home and from my teachers, I managed to successfully sit for my final exams and passed. This again opened a new life chapter for me. I was able to join The Cooperative University of Kenya in Nairobi and pursue a Diploma in Human Resource Management.

This phase has been exciting. I have received overwhelming support and love. I remember when Covid-19 hit and we were told to go back home, my university decided that we should study online and I didn't have the tools to facilitate online learning.

I reached out for help from Mary and Martin and they responded positively and very fast. I was able to get a new phone and attend all my classes. They also kept

on checking on me and how my health was and this really encouraged and motivated me during those tough times. I have just started my industrial attachment to be able to complete my diploma and finally graduate. I am definitely getting closer and closer to achieving my dreams.



Doreen in 2021 - dressed to impress future employers as she starts her industrial placement as part of her university course.

Thank you for giving me a chance to prove and improve myself. You will always be part of my success. The secret of being successful is Discipline and Honesty!

Covid strikes Kenya again...

Church on the Rock School children explain how they and their families were affected by the latest lockdown



My name is Lillian Achieng. My parents and siblings and I had been living well before this disastrous Covid pandemic struck our country.

Things changed suddenly - Church on the Rock School closed, my father lost his job, and life began to be more difficult. My mother worked tooth and nail to make sure we could get all the basic needs.

Despite the challenges we faced, we had to put up with the situation. I trained on how to plait women's hair - I never wanted to be idle because an idle mind is the devil's workshop.

I thank the Almighty God for keeping us alive and enabling us to cope with the challenges.

We are now back in school, and my father is now back in his job.

My name is Victor Nyamai. I live in the Mukuru kwa Reuben slum and I am in Standard 7.

My father is crippled, so my mother does everything at home, providing us with our basic needs. For sure, she is a fighter. All I pray is that one day my father recovers and helps my mother who works in a food processing company.

When the schools closed because of the pandemic it was tough and we could not study and my mother's salary was reduced. The school directors helped us by giving us flour, maize, beans, sugar and soap. I thank Footsteps International for this donation.

During the school closure I had good fun by going to Mombasa and swimming in the Indian Ocean (I was sponsored by my aunt). I also put more effort into my learning because I want to be a doctor and change the life of my family. Thank you.



Church welcomes Sunshine boys

At the Sunshine Centre we provide for the boys' spiritual needs as well as looking after their physical well-being.

Under the guidance of the Sunshine Centre's Mama Chege and part-time

chaplain Joseph Ndungu, 25 of our former street boys were baptised and welcomed into the Africa Inland Church in March.

The photo right shows Sunshine Boy Kennedy Mbogo about to be baptised by Pastors Muruga and Joseph.



More emergency packs to combat Covid

When Covid struck again in March, the Sunshine Centre staff re-launched the emergency aid effort for street boys and their families

On 26th March, Kenya's President Kenyatta ordered travel restrictions across 5 major counties and closure of hospitality businesses and places of worship, coupled with a halt to all in-person learning in Kenyan schools, colleges and universities.

The former street boys we care for at our Sunshine Centre, who had just settled back into school, were sent home. Their parents, many of whom have lost their sources of income because of the restrictions, faced the impossible burden of feeding their boys for at least 7 weeks until the restrictions eased.



Mastin, Achaya, Nelson, Mary and Augustine safely home in Kinamba with their family emergency food and hygiene pack.



Our team in Naivasha immediately re-started the emergency aid programme that was so successful last year in keeping the boys and their families well-fed, and ensuring the boys stayed at home rather than drifting back into street life.

In April, our team reached 112 families with emergency packs, a total of 678 individual beneficiaries.

Each family pack included flour, sugar, cooking oil and large quantities of fresh fruit and vegetables. We increased the size of the packs to try to make them last until the Covid restrictions were lifted again in early May.

Left: Sunshine staff members Kamau and Onesimus prepare emergency packs for the Sunshine Boys and their families.

Right: Former street boy Stephen Mwangi collects his family's aid pack from the Sunshine Centre.



Our Sunshine Boys need protection from Covid at school as well as at the Centre.

Sunshine Centre staff visited Karai Primary school to distribute reusable facemasks. All 635 children received a new, clean mask, helping both our Sunshine Boys and the local children to stay safe.

Fun and games at Sunshine



The boys at the Sunshine Centre are enjoying a range of new board games, and the opportunity to have a break from football to learn basketball and volleyball.

Sunshine Centre social worker Simon Kuria reported that the popularity of the new games could be judged by the fact that, when the bell rang to call the boys in for their evening meal, they ignored it and carried on playing.



Does Sunshine transform lives?

- it did for John Mbogo

John Mbogo is one of 8 children. When his parents separated, his mother was unable to earn enough to feed them all, so John decided to leave home.

He went to Naivasha town and joined a group of young street boys. The boys used to sniff glue and steal food and other items which they sold to earn a living. "Life on the street was not easy because we were harassed by policemen, were beaten and we would go for days without food," John remembers.

After some time living on the street, John met one of his

brothers, who had also left home and had spent time living as a street boy. His brother was now being looked after at the Sunshine street boys rehabilitation



Centre and he told John that this was a place where he could be helped. John took up his brother's offer and immediately headed for the Sunshine Centre where he was admitted and began to go to school at Karai Primary School. John joined the Sunshine Centre in 2005 when was just 13 years old.

Recently, he called in to the Sunshine Centre to greet the staff who remember him well.

He is now employed as a salesman in Thika where he lives with his wife and two children, one of whom came on the visit to Sunshine with him.

Footsteps International in Kenya



Transforms the lives of 140 former street boys at the Sunshine Centre



Cares for 24 orphaned and abandoned children at the Tumaini Centre, Mombasa



Strengthens education of 380 children in Nairobi's slums



Helps train 300 young people in life-skills

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 five trustees, all unpaid volunteers, committed to putting their Christian faith into action.

They are: Martin and Mary Print, Barbara Huntley, Barrie Francis and Paul Robinson.

Under normal circumstances, trustees carry out regular visits at their own expense to check progress on the projects.

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

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