AMARA
CHARITABLE TRUST

Newsletter 2023



Dear Amara Community,

2023 has been a busy year for the Amara Charitable Trust team, and we are excited to share our latest updates and achievements with you, our generous donors. Your unwavering commitment has made a profound impact on the lives we touch and the communities we serve.

In this edition, you will find heartwarming stories of lives changed, progress achieved, and dreams realized, all thanks to your donations and incredible support. From empowering education initiatives to transformative infrastructure projects, your donations have been the driving force behind our success.

In addition to celebrating the accomplishments made possible by your kindness, we want to give you a glimpse into our plans for 2024. Together, we are creating positive change, building stronger communities and leaving a lasting impact on the lives of countless disadvantaged youth.

With gratitude,

Vasha Vora, Smita Shah,

Manisha Dave and Bindi Shah

Raising Funds and Awareness Through the Year



Throughout this year, we organized events aimed at both raising funds and awareness of our initiatives in underserved communities as well as our programs catering to disadvantaged youth.

In April, we had a delightful afternoon of jazz and eighties classic hits, which received remarkable support. Guests got to enjoy delicious food, live music, dancing and participate in an art auction. Beneficiaries of our Education Fund Program were involved in serving and tending of the bar. During the event, they each got the opportunity to speak about the impact the Education Fund Program has had on their life's journey and the hope it has given them for their future.







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We are grateful to all our donors who step up each time we request. Thanks to the support, we can do so much more in the communities we serve. We remain committed to being transparent about how every donation is utilized. Please visit our website to see our annual financial statements.

"Giving is not just about making a donation. It is about making a difference." - Kathy Calvin.









Walking for education

In June we organized a walk in the scenic Karura Forest, and the event's success was made possible by the generosity of our donors. With a turnout of nearly 350 walkers, the event themed “Make a Difference One Step at a Time”, raised funds to support our Education Fund Program. Our event's main sponsor, Sachit Shah from GA Assurance, graced the occasion by addressing the participants and flagging off the walkers. Before embarking on their walks, participants enjoyed an energetic warm-up to lively dance music, and they were free to cover distances of their choosing. Additionally, the students of Oshwal Academy went above and beyond in their efforts to raise funds for less privileged students and actively participated in the walk.



Diwali Fair

One noteworthy event was our participation at this year's Diwali Fair, which took place over two days. During this event, we showcased our beautiful Amara-branded merchandise for sale and engaged with attendees to shed light on our mission. The Fair not only served as an excellent platform to connect with our existing donors but also provided us with an invaluable opportunity to connect with potential supporters. When you purchase our merchandise you help us support a community school in Kibra.









Bowling fundraiser

We ended the year with a Bowling Fundraiser which was spread over two fun-filled evenings on 1st and 2nd November. The event took place at PINS Bowling and raised funds for our Feeding Program and Water Projects. The lively competition among the 360 participants sparked countless moments of laughter and served as a fantastic chance for teams to bond and build connections.



Construction and Upgrades



Mitaboni Training College

One of the highlights of this year was the completion of a significant infrastructure upgrade at Mitaboni Training College, our very first undertaking at a technical and vocation college. With the support of our donors we constructed two new ablution blocks, refurbished three classrooms and three workshops, and repurposed a hall into a dormitory for the girls, thereby improving the facilities for our students.









Utangwa Youth Polytechnic

We also extended our support to the Utangwa Youth Polytechnic, where we facilitated soft upgrades to their tailoring and hairdressing classrooms, ensuring students have access to quality training facilities.

We encouraged the college to involve the students in the upgrade project so that they would take ownership and have a sense of pride and responsibility for caring for the upgraded facilities

The carpentry students made beds, built the shelves, counter tops and worktables for the tailoring and hairdressing departments from scratch. They also repainted the exterior of the building and classrooms thereby allowing our limited budget to stretch further while at the same time putting into practice their carpentry and masonry skills.

Education Fund Program

Our program continues to impact lives of disadvantaged youth and this year we enrolled 21 students into secondary school for four years and 36 students into various technical colleges.







Our First Graduating Class

2023 marked a significant milestone for us, as we celebrated with 29 students who completed their TVET courses. We held our first graduation event to honor their achievement and celebrate their success. It was heartening to see firsthand the transformation of these young adults from shy timid individuals into confident young people with a promising future.

Total Number of Students Enrolled (including those that exited early)		
Year	Technical Institutions	Secondary Schools
2020	4	4
2021	20	8
2022	33	30
2023	36	21
Total	**93**	**63**



We are thankful to all the donors who make it possible for the youth to pursue their aspirations for a secure a future. You are effectively the gatekeeper of their dreams! For many of these students, they are the first in their family to go to college or even complete four years of secondary school.

We were equally excited to participate in an event, themed "Understanding the Journey", held at the I&M Foundation offices, for 20 of our scholarship students who are recipients of scholarships made possible by their generosity. Witnessing the profound impact that education has on these young minds is a privilege and knowing we are changing their lives is humbling.



In October, we attended the official graduation ceremony of two of students at St. Kizito Vocational Training Institute. We watched with immense pride as Kelvin Mutuku and Grace Onyango received their certificates.





This is what Kelvin had to say:

"Good morning. I thank the Lord for this far that we have reached and also thanks so much Amara Charitable Trust for helping me to achieve this level where I am today. Am so happy. When I was in high school I wanted to be an engineer in plumbing, so I used to go for construction (mjengo) and I was good at it. No one forced me to go, I was just willing to do it. I'm thankful so, so much to you all. Now I am in Narok county doing a plumbing job for my former high school teacher. Last week I went one of teachers took me to install water tanks on her farm."



Other Initiatives to Promote Learning

- Gulf Power, a potential partner hosted four of our students at their power plant in September. It was an educative and eye-opening visit for our students studying electrical installation







Feedback from *Brian Nzomo*, who studied Electrical Wireman:

"I feel blessed to have this opportunity from Amara because of the way you show confidence in me which is so inspiring. Also I thank the entire team of Gulf Power for giving us a chance to have a visit and learn more about power generation."

Farming and Gardening visits







We arranged visits for our head teachers, technical college students studying General Agriculture and secondary school students to see working farms and learn about good farming practices.

Royal Seed Africa, hosted 15 students from Kanaani Secondary Girls and Introduced them to basic crop management and irrigation methods.

At Plant Raisers, five of our 5 general agriculture students and teachers from Ngalalya and Kwa Mboo Primary Schools were excited to see modern farming methods and learn about different varieties of crops and seeds suitable for their individual regions.

Our feeding program

Now in its 10th year, the feeding program continues to impact the lives of 5,820 young learners across 7 primary schools. Our ability to sustain this program is totally dependent on our incredible donors. We are unfortunately facing the daunting decision to cut back on the number of days we can continue providing a hot meal to the schools.







School Support





We were fortunate to receive over 12,000 story and reference books this year from generous donors. Thanks to them we have 17 fully stocked libraries in all the schools we support. Encouraging a reading culture has never been more important at this point in time considering all the distractions youth have to deal with.

We also received donations of exercise books, school furniture, geometrical sets and other school stationery. All of these donations go a long way towards enhancing learning and improving the students' literacy.

Menstrual Health Workshops

This year, we conducted two interactive menstrual health and pad-making workshops as part of our ongoing efforts to combat period poverty within underserved communities.

These workshops involved local stakeholders and aimed to challenge cultural norms that hinder women's progress while empowering the young girls and women through education, awareness, and community involvement.
The workshops successfully engaged with 230 girls on menstrual health talks and trained 33 mothers in pad-making.







We also gifted the school and the Maasai women's group with a sewing machine each. The Maasai women were trained to use the sewing machine and we are encouraging them to set up a small business enterprise and work towards their financial independence.



To increase awareness of cultural practices that hinder women's progress, we proactively arranged a session with students from Najile Boys Secondary School.

The objective of the discussion was to impart life skills, educate them about the risks associated with alcohol and drug abuse, and demonstrate how cultural practices and traditions can be thoughtfully incorporated into their daily lives.





Upcoming Projects

Utangwa Youth Polytechnic
The institution is growing and the existing facilities are fast becoming insufficient to support the student population adequately. We have pledged to raise funds to facilitate an upgrade which will include, two ablution blocks, classrooms/workshops, dining hall and kitchen.

Ngwata Primary School
This project will be a major undertaking. Our plan is to decongest the school which will mean constructing facilities on a new site neighbouring the existing school. Earlier this year the Amara Trustees met with the County Governor to discuss the allocation of the land.

School Playgrounds
Our vision is to create a holistic learning experience for the young learners in the primary schools we support and in 2024 we are planning to create and equip playgrounds in 2 primary schools. The estimated cost of setting up a playground with slides, swings and merry-go-rounds is KShs 500,000.

Education Fund Program
Enroll 50 new students to the Education Fund Program in 2024. This will be made up of both secondary school and technical college students and continue to support existing students.

Feeding Program
Continue with our feeding program in the 7 primary schools we currently support. The number of students we support continues to grow each year and we expect that 2024 will see an increase in the student population.

While our upcoming endeavours may appear ambitious to some, we remain absolutely confident that they will come to fruition, all thanks to our extraordinary donors who continue to share our vision and trust us with their unwavering support.









Thank You!

We look back on our accomplishments with immense appreciation, and extend our heartfelt thanks to all of you who share in our mission to educate, empower, and enhance the lives of marginalized youth. Every step we take on this journey towards a brighter and better world for the voiceless is made possible because of your belief in our cause and your commitment to walking alongside us.

We extend our special thanks to our team of remarkable volunteers: Deepali Karani, Aashnaa Savani, Tanvi Shah, Seju Mihir Shah, Geeta Vora, Bansi Shah, Ashni Dave, Onesmus Muiruri, Stanley Wambugu and Festus Musembi. They all bring their unique perspectives, skills and flair to Amara.

As we celebrate this season of joy and togetherness, we take this opportunity to wish you and your families a truly wonderful holiday season. May the approaching New Year bring prosperity, good health, and peace to us all and especially to young people everywhere affected by conflict, natural disasters and economic hardships. May they find hope in the dawning of a New Year.



With our best wishes,

The Amara Charitable Trust Team