



**HANDS OF LOVE EDUCATIONA CENTRE
ANNUAL REPORT 2017**



INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking time to review our annual report. Yet another year has flown by and during that time we have seen some changes to the staff and children, saying farewell to some and welcoming others. It has also been quite an eventful year on the political front. Going through two elections in period of two months. Sadly, the violence that is always associated with elections in Kenya claimed the life of one of our parents and caused disruptions and loss of valuable learning time. Yet despite this turbulence Hands of Love Educational Centre registered remarkable growth and continued to be a beacon of hope, for our children and their families.

This report looks at our work in 2017 and essentially tries to answer the four questions below:

1. What have been the significant changes this year?
2. What have been the successes this year?
3. How much academic progress did the children make?
4. How are we working with the parents and the community?

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

Significant changes in the year included:

Change in Governance Structure

We made a few changes to our governance structure aimed at enhancing efficiency, transparency and accountability.

We changed our certification status from an informal school to Alternative Provision of Basic Education and Training (APBET) school. While there is no difference in how they operate APBET schools are supervised by the national government while informal schools are supervised by local county government. This change makes the school eligible for support by government and it also means we will face less harassment from corrupt local government officials.

We changed the membership of the community based organisation (CBO) that legally owns and runs the centre. The CBO now has 9 members who now act as the centre's board of governors. The board membership is as follows:

1. Terry Little – Chairman
2. Sami Waweru – Secretary
3. Four Parents representatives each representing 5 neighbourhoods in Kariobangi – to be elected in January
4. Two co-opted members (Currently Charity Ndungu Manager Barclays bank Ruaraka Branch and James Nduguti who is a teacher at a Neighbouring High School)

The board has strategic oversight of the centre and will meet at least three times a year. It establishes all policy for the general direction and operation of the school and from time to time reviews those policies and hear a record of operations. It also employs a director who is also acts as its secretary to oversee, direct and drive forward the its policies. The director has delegated powers for the day-to-day operations including matters of employment, finance, contracts, legal compliance etc.

2017 KEY FACTS

Grades

Playgroup - Standard 4

School Population

Pupils - 192

Classroom Teachers - 9

Support Staff - 4

Pupils Demographics

Male - 105

Female - 87

Additional Facts

Per-pupil expenditure - US\$255

Teacher-to-pupil ratio - 1:22

Change in the number children

We welcomed 61 new children and bade farewell to 11. Most (41) of the new children were three-year olds joining school for the first time in January. While the others joined different classes at different times of the year. By the end of the year the total number of the children at the centre stood at 192.

Children who left the centre left for different reasons as shown below	
NAME	REASON FOR LEAVING
Precious Akoya & Reagan Omondi	Precious and Reagan moved with their mother to Isiolo (a town 300km to the north of Nairobi) after she got a job there
Maryliz Muthoni & Fiona Njeri	Maryliz and Fiona had to go live with their grandmother after their parents separated
Giftone Otera	Gift did not show up for the third term. We have not been able to establish why or where he is now
Victor Mbinji & Mildred Esuchi	Victor and Mildred are orphans who were living with an abusive aunt. Through our effort both got places at Wajibu Wetu Children's Home in Limuru
Isaiah Nacheri & Brian Amukhula	Isaiah and Brian's dad lost his job in Kariobangi and decided to move the family to Nakuru in search of new opportunities
Christopher Mulama	Christopher got a place at a nearby Catholic-run children's home
Antonio Carlos	Antonio's mother married and moved out of Kariobangi
Isabela Ngina	Her family moved to their rural home
Stephen Owino & David Omondi	Stephen and David's family moved to their rural home at the beginning of the year
Claire Anyango	Moved out of Kariobangi to other parts of Nairobi for different reasons
Cecilia Ngute	
Wayne Amusiva	

New teachers

We saw some changes to the staff, saying farewell to some and welcoming others.	
Ramadhan Omar	We were sorry to lose teacher Ramadhan at the end of January when he left to join Kabete Teachers Training College
Catherine Njeri	Teacher Catherine left at the beginning of May. She re-joined Kenyatta University to finish her Bachelor's Degree in Education
Margret Saidi Basela	Margret joined the centre in January as a teaching assistant in Nursery Class. She has a Diploma in Early Childhood Education and 5 years teaching experience.
Maurine Kemunto	Maurine started working in at the centre in January. She is the grade 1 teacher. She has a Diploma in Primary Education.
Daniel Otieno	Daniel replaced Ramadhan as grade 3 teacher.
Queenter Oduor	Queenter replaced Teacher Catherine as grade 4 teacher. She has a Diploma in Early Childhood Education.
Anthony Mulanzia	Anthony has been volunteering with us since January helping in administrative chores

New classrooms

We were able to get two bigger classrooms on the first floor of our building easing pressure on space a little bit.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The year was very productive thanks to the hard work and dedication of our teachers and staff. We continued to be a vibrant centre of learning supporting the academic, social/emotional, and physical growth for our children.

One of the most important achievements in this area is that we were able to increase the level of parent's engagement with the centre and keep them involved in their children's education. As we know, children do much better when their parents are involved. We held regular meetings with parents, invited them to join in during field visits, and organised a sports day which featured a soccer match between teachers and parents. These activities helped foster better relationships and contributed to improved educational outcomes.

We wanted our kids to have varied learning experiences. Therefore, we continued to develop extra-curricular interests for our children by offering them opportunities for sports, gardening, arts and music. We also organised three field trips in the year where children learned different things and had loads of fun. Children also enjoyed growing different vegetables and fruits in our school garden.

We took steps to strengthen the achievement of our vision of providing quality early childhood care and education in safe and inspiring environment by improving our curriculum to bring it into alignment with the new National Curriculum Policy rolled out countrywide in May 2017. With the help of an expert, we were able to develop a curriculum which focuses on seven areas of learning shown in table below and can be differentiated to meet the individual needs of all learners. The curriculum also adopts instructional and assessment approaches which deemphasise examinations and test score as a way of gauging educational growth and replaces it continues assessment through progress reports which give qualitative summaries of a child's social emotional learning and academic progress over a period. This is a big shift from the current situation where society associate learning with ranking and competition and schools and teachers are often under pressure from parents to produce high test scores.

This table shows the national curriculum objectives which are covered in our areas of learning		
Prime Areas	Communication and language	- Listening and attention - Understanding - Speaking
	Physical Development	- Moving and handling - Health and selfcare - Physical education
	Personal, social and emotional development and behaviour	- Self-confidence and self-awareness - Managing feelings - Making relationships
Specific Areas	Literacy	- Reading - Writing - English/Kiswahili
	Mathematics	- Numbers - Shape, space and measure
	Understanding the world	- Science - Social Studies - Computing - Religious Education
	Expressive arts	- Exploring and using media and materials - Being imaginative - Art and crafts - Music

At the end of the school year on October 20, 2017 we graduated 21 children from pre-primary in a colourful ceremony attended by over 200 parents and guests. Over the past three years the graduating class acquired strong foundation in basic literacy, numeracy and writing skills. They also acquired the cognitive skills and disposition that we believe will enable them to be successful in primary school.

Children in grades 1 – 4 sat for a district wide (24 schools) end-of-year examinations – the last of this kind of examinations as per the new curriculum. Our children put a very strong showing with all the grades emerging top ten in overall performance.

Grades 1- 4 Performance						
	Mean Score Overall	Mean Score Maths	Mean Score English	Mean Score Kiswahili	Mean Score Science	Mean Score Social Studies
Grade 1	393.1	70.1	84.0	86.0	77.2	75.8
Grade 2	363.0	77.0	84.0	68.0	70.0	64.0
Grade 3	407.0	81.2	78.8	76.8	85.3	84.2
Grade 4	323.8	59.9	61.7	63.9	68.0	70.1

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Hands of Love Educational Centre is embedded in Kariobangi community and our children’s reality and prospects are inexorably linked to the conditions in this poor neighbourhood. Because of poverty children may not have enough to eat at home, they may be forced to stay at home to take care of younger siblings as their parents go to work, or they may miss school because of water-borne gastrointestinal illness. Recognising these realities our work goes beyond mere provision of education to addressing the unmet non-academic needs of the children we serve. By providing them with food at school, supporting their families to take good care of them at home, and providing them with health services we ensure that they are healthy and ready to learn.

Food Program

In the year we served a total of 92,916 meals – two meals a day for an average of 178 children per day, for 261 days. Challenges related to increasing cost of basic food items threatened to derail the food program in the year (food prices rose by an average of 70% in 2017), but we are grateful our partners were able to increase their support to help fill this gap. We also received a significant boost in May when African Angels Bakery agreed to provide 200g of bread to every child in the centre every school day. Therefore, despite the challenges, the food program remained on track and we believe its success has a direct link to the improved academic performance.

For many children, the centre is their only hope for a proper meal and this has continued to incentivize enrolment and retention. Many kids report to school in the morning without having had breakfast making them struggle with decreased cognitive performance (e.g. alertness, attention, memory, processing of complex visual display, and problem solving). The breakfast that we offer at the centre is therefore very important for these children.

Health

Constant health monitoring is part of our work at the centre. Our kids live in neighbourhoods where there is no clean drinking water and sanitation facilities are inadequate. Outbreaks of cholera and other gastro-intestinal track infections as well as skin diseases are very common. This situation affects the children disproportionately and has been a key reason for high absence rate. At Hands of Love we are very vigilant facilitating the kids who fall sick to get proper treatment and periodically conducting health check-ups and giving our kids deworming pills and antifungal medication.

Following check-ups in 2016 we discovered that nine of our kids have HIV/AIDS. We continued to ensure that these kids had proper nutrition and they were taking their ARVs as required. In early May there was an outbreak of measles in Kariobangi area and 16 of our kids in baby class and nursery were affected. All of them received treatment and recovered quickly. As an additional measure all the children under the age

five were taken for measles vaccine at the local health centre. For much of this year there has been an outbreak of cholera with cases reported in different neighbourhoods around Nairobi including Huruma and Korogocho but luckily none of our kids was affected we however remained vigilant and ready to deal with it.

Other than these outbreaks, we provided medical assistance to 60 children. Majority of the cases were upper respiratory tract infections and water and sanitation related illnesses. We also had 3 cases of accidents – one child was hit by a motorcycle, and two kids fell off buildings. A boy in grade one who has diabetes was hospitalised for more than two months. We were also following up on two cases from 2016 that needed follow-up treatment (Kevin, who injured his eye; and Edgar who had surgery on their head).

In one of the most heart-breaking case this year in November, a nursery class kid was sexually assaulted by a neighbour and needed to be hospitalised for 7 days.

Welfare/Outreach to Families

As part of our mission to nurture families, we have worked very hard over the years to create a strong sense of community between ourselves and the families that we serve. This continued in 2017 where we conducted more than 50 home visits. In our home visits this year and other interactions with parents we put a special focus on children with behavioural challenges with the aim of uncovering what caused them. Better understanding of the child's family and living conditions helped us connect the overt behaviour with the underlying message which the child was conveying allowing us to respond more emphatically.

Most of welfare programs were directed at dealing with political tension and the resultant disruptions caused by the long and contentious electioneering period in the country. This tension whipped tribal feelings that in a number of instances led to deadly violence.

In July, Direttamente Onlus, our partner organization in Italy, made a donation so that we could help families deal with this challenge. We were able to help families living in areas most vulnerable to violence move to relatively safer neighbourhoods. Fifty of the neediest families were provided with enough basic food supplies to last them two weeks. This was important because the tension caused disruptions which caused kiosks and shops where people get their supplies to close. In case most of these families live from hand to mouth and they could not work during this time. There are also families that felt they would not be safe in Nairobi and needed help to travel to their rural homes, we gave assistance to 29 such families. This intervention was very successful and very appreciated by families, as violence raged on in August and again in September and October, none of our families were affected. There was an awesome sense of togetherness amongst families as people went out of their way to update each other on what was happening in different parts of Kariobangi and keep track of no-go areas. This helped keep all of us safe.

Unfortunately, in November political tension was on the rise again in Kariobangi and things were moving fast out of control. This time we would not emerge unscathed. In a serious outbreak of intercommunal violence on 18th November 2017 in Riverside area, Lyness Minayo's dad was killed. Lyness is three years old and is in baby class. Once again, HoL community banded together to support the family. Everyday for two weeks as funeral arrangements went on, different groups of parents and teachers went to be with the family and helped in different ways. The centre also supported the family financially and the director accompanied by Teacher Lilian and Teacher Maureen travelled to western Kenya for the burial.

The situation for this family is very dire as it is one of the neediest we have at the centre. Mama Lyness who is unemployed now has the very hard task of bringing up four kids on her own.

We were also able to help our families in other ways unrelated to politics. Following our intervention two kids that were living with an abusive aunt were able to get a place at a children's home. We also helped Kevin Kimani and his brother move to a better house (they were living in very dismal conditions). What is more, a HoL parent volunteered to take care of the kids and she has been doing this since May 2017. Kevin is boy who injured his eye last year, soon after this his mom got into problems with the law and had to leave Kariobangi abandoning them.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The centre's financials are presented here. Audited statements will be available in January.

2017 financial results compare favourably to the budget set in December 2016 (Ksh4,991,121 actual expenses versus Ksh4,743,743 in the budget). This outcome is a result of successful cost containment efforts which were employed in the face political unrest that impacted the school negatively leading to unplanned expenses, increasing cost of basic commodities, and a sharp rise in the number of children at the centre.

Total income in 2017 was Ksh5,495,895 (US\$53,881/€50,421). Thirty five percent of these funds were given by Terry Little and/or HoL USA, Direttamente Onlus accounted for 57.6%, while parents' contribution and local donations accounted for the remaining 7.4%.

Hands of Love employs 9 teachers and 4 support staff. In total staff related costs represented 53.6% of all expenses, food program accounted for 14%, health and welfare 1%, while rent, furniture, equipment and maintenance of the facility accounted for 16%. Other expenses were learning resources which included classroom and curricular materials accounting for another 14.4% and utilities which accounted for 1% of total expenses.

Income & Expenditure Statement as at 31st December 2017

	AMOUNT			Notes
	KSh	£	US\$	
INCOME				1US\$ = 102KSh / 1£ = 109Ksh
2016 Surplus	5,920	54	58	
Terry Little/HoL USA	1,939,935	17,798	19,019	
Direttamente Onlus	3,162,800	29,017	31,008	
Parent's Contribution	296,840	2,723	2,910	
Other	90,400	829	886	Damanyotti, Carol Goodrich & Kids at Susan's School
Total Income	5,495,895	50,421	53,881	
EXPENSES				
Salaries	2,547,160	23,368	24,972	
Professional Development	23,300	214	228	
Staff medical care	106,534	977	1,044	Treatment for Sami at Nairobi Hospital
Rent	563,000	5,165	5,520	
Telephone & Internet	8,600	79	84	
Local Transport	12,800	117	125	
Utilities	28,875	265	283	
Transaction costs	13,770	126	135	
Repair & maintenance	86,055	789	844	
Equipment & Furniture	125,516	1,152	1,231	
Food Program	694,380	6,370	6,808	
Classroom Materials	148,912	1,366	1,460	
Health & Welfare	385,702	3,539	3,781	
Garden	1,950	18	19	
Other	244,567	2,244	2,398	Field trips, graduation ceremony, etc
Total Expenses	4,991,121	45,790	48,933	
SURPLUS/DEFICIET	504,774	4,631	4,949	

PLANS FOR 2018

2017 was also a year of great learning. We had engaging, sometimes messy and thought-provoking conversations among teachers and with the parents and through this were able to re-evaluate what we want for our children and their future, and more importantly how we can best facilitate that outcome. As we go into 2018 there are certain things that we will need to do differently and improve on others.

As already mentioned implementation of the new national curriculum will be a big priority for us in 2018. In order to achieve the best results, we will need to scale back so that we can focus on those aspects of our work that have the most impact and are sustainable. We need to put our energies into what matters most because we only have so much resources. Our core offer in 2018 will therefore reflect the neglected educational needs of children in our target communities. These needs we feel are related to lack of access to quality early childhood education. In this regard we have chosen to cut out the primary section of the centre and focus entirely on provision of early childhood education. For this reason, we will be cutting out grades 3 and four in 2018 and grades 1 and 2 in 2019 so that we will remain with playgroup, pre-primary 1 and pre-primary 2 classes. This change will reduce the total number of children from close to 200 to 140.

We will also need, to improve our food program by increasing consumption of fruits and dairy products. This aspect of our food program has been neglected due to increase in the cost of basic food items

2018 BUDGET ESTIMATES					
A	Staff Costs	2,107,920	20,665	19,338	Salaries, professional development
B	Property Costs	576,000	5,647	5,284	Rent 48,000KSH/Month
C	Administration	133,400	1,307	1,223	Utilities etc
D	Food Program	1,123,680	11,016	10,309	
E	Classroom Materials	177,790	1,743	1,631	
F	Health & Welfare	390,000	3,823	3,577	
G	Contingency	218,769	2,145	2,007	5% of total budget up to this line.
TOTAL		4,727,559	46,349	43,372	

CONCLUSION

Despite the numerous challenges, 2017 was an overall success for Hands of Love. We were able to maintain high quality service delivery and continued to be a centre of excellence for provision of early childhood education in Kariobangi. The centre maintained a positive tone throughout the year and continued to provide stability and continuity in education for our children ensuring that they have a strong foundation in basic literacy, numeracy skills,

We tried our best to work with children and their families in ways that we hope will leave a lasting impression. Though not always easy we provided the children with an excess of affection to compensate for difficult situations they might be going through at home. There were many beautiful moments throughout the year – the kinds of moments of joy that kept us all going – the field trips were especially joyous moments for the kids and then we had the sports days on Fridays and activities on Saturday often with visitors from different parts of the world.

We look forward to an even more productive 2018.



HANDS OF LOVE EDUCATIONAL CENTRE

Cejo House, Kamunde Road, Kariobangi, Nairobi Kenya

www.holkenya.org