



FALL 2021

Dear Friends,

The future. It's something people typically spend a great deal of time thinking about. However, over the past 18 months, many of us have simply tried to just weather the storm. At IPI in Meru, Kenya, our kids have also had to weather this storm, deal with uncertainty, be flexible and resilient. But, we're not just surviving; we're thriving!

Sustainability and planning for the future has always been a top priority for IPI and today is no different. We have children that need fed, clothed, educated and most of all loved. **Because of your support, our kids have a home and a hope for a brighter future.** Through your generosity and partnership, we have been able to welcome new children into the Kithoka Amani Children's Home, provide for the children already in our care, complete a beautiful meeting space at Tiriji EcoCenter, continue construction on the boys dormitory, celebrate 10 of our kids graduating from university, and begin transitioning leadership to two of our former KACH kids. We are always learning from the past, but excitedly planning for the future.

Would you please consider a [year-end gift](#) to ensure a brighter future for the children at the Kithoka Amani Children's Home? Read on to learn more about a special matching gift opportunity, which doubles your impact! It indeed takes a village to raise a child and we are thankful you are part of our village!

MESSAGE FROM IPI FOUNDER & PRESIDENT DR. KARAMBU RINGERA

If there is anything I have been taught by the presence of COVID-19, it is to let go and trust life. What I mean is this: when you have 80+ kids looking up to you to keep their world sane as everything around them seems to be falling apart, you must take a pause. We took that pause collectively at International Peace Initiatives - the kids, staff, our support systems, our donors, and members of the IPI Boards in the U.S. and Kenya. Together, we kept the children fed, clothed, meaningfully engaged, healthy, and academically inspired throughout the long months of school closures in 2020.



In 2021 when schools opened, we fervently prayed that no COVID-19 incidents would occur in schools in general and specifically, the schools our children attend. None of their schools have been closed to-date, and our prayer is that remains the case. Our children's safety has been my focus since last year. I thank God that He has kept them, and all of us, safe. Letting go and trusting life is anchored on trusting that God holds everything together. **Thank you, our partners and supporters, for your love, light and support over the years.** Our story is written because you chose to do this life dance with us. May all your giving come back to you a million fold! ASANTE SANA!! THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

A FEW HIGHLIGHTS

Kithoka Amani Children's Home

FAMILIAR FACE, FRESH FUNCTION



Evans Kamau is IPI's new Programs Director, he is also Founder and President of Synergy Youth Kenya, a Founding Chair member of the Tiriji Foundation and an inspirational author. He is also a former KACH Kid. Almost nine years ago, after a decade of homelessness and constant struggles to care for his baby brother on the streets, Evans' life was changed forever. He found IPI's Kithoka Amani Children's Home. With the help of IPI's supporters, Evans completed high school and joined Kenyatta University. In 2021 he graduated with a bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Computer Science. He holds five certifications in the field of cybersecurity

and just received a Certified Ethical Hacker certification.

Evans was overjoyed to graduate but the real miracle, he said, was being offered his current position as Programs Director with IPI. "This is a great opportunity for me to serve at a deeper level the home and family that gave me an opportunity to transform my life. Working with Dr. Karambu Ringera is so transformational in itself."

Evans understands the purpose of this work on a personal level. "My dream has always been to be there for KACH and ensure that thousands of other kids are able to transform their lives like I did. Therefore, I look forward to building my home near KACH so that I will always be there to support KACH."



As we look towards the future, the sustainability of IPI, and the eventuality of succession planning, all of us at IPI are proud to serve alongside Evans Mwangi: a fearless leader, a positive role model, and above all else, a wonderful big brother to Tirus, a current resident of KACH.

"I send my deep gratitude to all the people in the world who support KACH. You can't fathom the impact that you make in the lives of the kids and the people we work with here. It inspires me to see the vastness of the impact. This year, 10 IPI College Scholars Program (ICSP) scholars are graduating from university! All of them are a symbol of resilience and inspiration to the community."

KACH KIDS RECEIVE ACADEMIC AWARDS

Twelve years ago, the Kithoka Amani Children's Home (KACH) was launched as a space where children would find love, peace, support and care. KACH has lived up to the prayers offered that day when our community joined us to dedicate the home. The old adage, "it takes a village to raise a child," rings true and it has taken a very BIG village, both local and international, to create the KACH village. Thank YOU for being part of our village as we work to transform the lives of our children and those who visit us.

The pandemic obviously restricted people from visiting the home and from us hosting events at Tiriji. Without visitors, the kids spend most of their time working on school work and reading because they are "bored." It truly makes a difference to have good teaching and learning supplies, which we had to provide a lot more of this past year! When the schools shut down, the kids all worried they would fall behind, but they all continued to study at KACH, read to one another, and helped each other with their lessons.



[Your continued support](#) allowed us to invest in technology upgrades and improve our internet connectivity. Improved connectivity allowed our children to conduct research, connect with international friends, and present unique projects to their teachers. We also hired a teacher for a time to help out, and as a result of our Kenyan colleagues' dedication, our kids are doing exceeding well in school! None of this could have been possible without your continued support.

Pictured are some of our primary school students who received academic awards for all their hard work. All of our more than 80 children maintain A and B averages and have thrived where their fellow classmates have struggled. Join us in congratulating our kids on a job well done!

FORMER COLLEGE SCHOLAR HELPING MOVE MERU TO A BIO-ECONOMY

Our goal at IPI and the Kithoka Amani Children's Home has always been to provide our children with the tools and resources to move from violence, poverty, and crisis to stability and self-reliance, thereby building resilient communities. This is the true root of sustainability for IPI. We love showing you the fruit of the investment you've made in our kids.

Meet Alex. Alex was an ICSP Scholar who stayed at KACH while attending university. He now owns his own plumbing company, which installs bio-digester septic tanks in residential homes. He and his four employees install these systems that break down organic waste materials into carbon dioxide, methane and water. The bacteria in the tanks feed on organic waste water and as a result, waste is turned into gas and water. Bio-digester septic systems are cost-effective and time-saving to maintain and are environmentally friendly. He is helping Meru to embrace a bio-technology policy developed by the Kenyan Ministry of Science and Technology. While Alex has only installed 10 of these systems to-date, he is confident this technology will be embraced in the construction industry while also creating employment opportunities.



Tiriji Eco-Center

FROM FARM TO TABLE



Overall, the children have access to many very healthy foods at KACH including greens, beans, avocado and fruit. Much of these healthy fruits and vegetables are grown organically on-site. Over the past two years, work has been done to create sustainable sources of healthy protein for the children, as well. A chicken coop was built and chicks were purchased, which have now developed into full grown chickens who are producing eggs and providing meat for the children.

Additionally, fish ponds have also been constructed, allowing fresh catfish to be consumed on a more regular basis. We also had three bulls and 20 goats. These additional resources are helping to provide more adequate consumption of protein, vitamin D, calcium, potassium, riboflavin, vitamin B12, biotin, zinc, and choline! [Your investment](#) has made such a difference and allowed us to keep our kids fed and healthy!



Not only are the children benefiting from the nutrients they receive, but they are exposed to many different kinds of fresh produce. The children have learned not only to eat but grow things such as arrowroot, aloe vera, papaya, lemon, avocado, sugarcane, bananas, passion fruit, yam, cassava, sweet potato, chicken, goats, rabbits, fish, and a variety of herbs, including

lemongrass, red pepper, rosemary, mint, artemisia, neem, moringa, chia, and chayote squash (*shown right with IPI-Kenya Executive Director Naomi Mwangi*).

In 2020, since all the kids were home most of that year, all the food we grew was used in the KACH kitchen. This helped cut down the cost of buying food for us in a big way - especially beans and vegetables. Additionally, since the children were home most of the year, we did the farm work ourselves, and that saved us on labor costs, but most importantly taught the children how to grow and harvest their own food.

Tiriji Amani Community Hub

IPI has been working to finish additional meeting space at Tiriji as another revenue-generating stream. With this newly-completed space, visitors can enjoy the beautiful accommodations at Tiriji and host meetings and gatherings at the new Tiriji Amani Community Hub. Amani means “peace” in Swahili, and the space truly is a place of tranquil peace and calm.



March 3, 2021, we inaugurated the Tiriji Amani Community Hub, a Nile Journeys Community Hub. Nile Journeys works to create Community Hubs around Africa as a way to inspire communities to own their regeneration. They have partnered with Tiriji Foundation to create one of two Community Hubs in Kenya. We are so proud to hold space for our community to come to innovate and create regenerative initiatives!



The pandemic has created challenges, as we restricted visitors to IPI in order to keep our children, some of which are immuno-compromised, safe and healthy. As we are slowly moving towards a return to normalcy, we hope to be able to begin hosting more New Generation Leadership Forums and welcome other visitors to this beautiful space. We have been using the space ourselves, too! Our girls gathered on International Day of the Girl Child on October 11 (*shown above right*), and to host Dr. Karambu’s mother’s 88th birthday party (*shown left*)!

IPI College Scholars Program

Among the poor in Kenya, income and quality of life aren’t much better for those who complete high school compared to those who don’t. To overcome poverty, further education is needed after high school in order to obtain vocational skills or professional credentials. ICSP supports students by paying tuition and living expenses that enables them to break the cycle of poverty. In 2021 alone, 10 ICSP scholars completed their university degrees. Meet Enoch and Joy, two of our scholars (*pictured below with former IPI-U.S. Board Chair, Nancy Martin Ross*).

ENOCH OWINO



“Communication is a powerful tool for sustainable social change. I grew up in a little village west of Nairobi. I was intrigued how the local missionaries brought fighting local communities together for peace talks and maintained peaceful relations. I joined them to distribute food, provide peer counseling, organize youth sports, conduct peace debates, and distribute school supplies. In all these, the communications aspect stood out for me. I was fascinated by the power of people coming together and talking about issues affecting their lives and the power of choosing to peacefully

resolve conflicts. After finishing my bachelor’s degree at Chuka University in Meru, I was hired as a Communications Assistant at IPI. It had an eye-opening, enduring, profound impact on my world, my perspective about service to humanity, compassion, ethical leadership and sustainable community empowerment. I saw a connection between challenges my community faced and other parts of the world; that global problems could be solved through partnerships and collaborations with like-minded groups regardless of their geographical locations.

I learned that ethical leadership was at the heart of solving problems at every level. This led me to pursue

a master’s degree in Political Science and Public Administration at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. My most memorable experience was my six-month internship with U.S. Congressman Emanuel Cleaver II, where I learned that organizations with clear, well-defined communication structures and ethical leadership tend to progress better. I studied communications because I aspire to work with local communities to empower them to be fully involved in key decision-making processes that affect their lives. People’s participation is the cornerstone of sustainable

community development and social change. My key interest is communication in the areas of rural poverty, ethical leadership, and public policy. Park University offers a great opportunity for me to grow and be a global citizen as I earn my PhD. I love Kansas City. It is such a beautiful place with incredible people and the home of the Kansas City Chiefs! I’m falling in love with football and baseball here! I am looking forward to an incredible journey of learning and fun. Thank you for your support!”



JOY KARAMBU

“I grew up in Meru and when I was 12 years old, my mum was diagnosed with asthma, which affected her ability to provide for my sister and me. Every time she had an asthma attack, I would walk her to the nurse’s house. It didn’t matter that it was dark or that elephants might make their way into the village. All I cared about was what I could do to help my mother breathe! I realized I wanted to become a nurse and provide care for my mum and others who suffer from chronic illnesses.



I met Dr. Karambu when I was 17. Her dedication to empower, educate, and encourage young people heightened my desire to receive an education and pursue my dreams. KACH soon became my second home. Dr. Karambu inspired me to explore educational opportunities outside Kenya. During my time at Towson University in Maryland, I met a great community that invested in both my social life and academic journey. Through the ICSP program, this community generously paid for my education. Through God's grace, provision, and the committed support from families and friends in

the U.S., I graduated from Towson University with my nursing degree. The nursing program at Towson was vigorous and challenging, but I cannot imagine doing anything else. I recently passed the board exam to become a Registered Nurse. As an international student, I am allowed to work for a year in the U.S. and gain experience. I would like to serve people in need (both in Kenya and other parts of the world).

I would like to sincerely thank IPI, my family, friends and the many people who supported me during my journey. Without your financial support, I may not have been able to complete my education. As the first person in my family to get a college degree, words cannot express enough the excitement and joy that this accomplishment brings to my family. Because of my humble background, I experienced financial and systemic challenges that made my yearning for education a dream beyond my reach. I will forever be grateful for the unwavering support and the precious gift of education." *(Pictured above is Joy with some of those who supported her through nursing school).*



IPI-Kenya Staff: Naomi Mwangi (Executive Director), Evans Kamau (Programs Director), Dr. Karambu Ringera (Founder & President)

IPI-U.S. Board of Directors: Heather Boyd (Chair), Timothy Ehlinger (Vice-Chair), Eamon Aloyo (Director of ICSP), Mike Beerntsen, Kathleen Holton (Secretary), Bridghette Parker, Angie Phetteplace (Treasurer), Michael Steinback, Nancy Martin Ross (Advisory Committee)

IPI-U.S. 1777 S. Harrison Street, Ste. 1500 Denver, CO 80210 www.ipeacei.org