



MAASAI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

FALL 2025 | NEWSLETTER NO. 15



“EDUCATION IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON
WHICH YOU CAN USE TO CHANGE THE WORLD.”

-NELSON MANDELA

WELCOME BACK FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



BRIAN BENHAM
MEF Chairperson

Welcome back to the Maasai Education Foundation (MEF) quarterly newsletter, Fall 2025 edition! As always there is lots to report about happenings and our efforts to support the Engaruka Community Initiative Organization (ENCO) and its operation of a charity boarding school dedicated to educating Maasai youth.

In December 2025, Engaruka English Medium Primary School (EEMPS) will graduate its second class of 7th graders—an accomplishment that seemed almost unthinkable when the cornerstone for the first EEMPS classrooms were laid in May of 2017, just over eight years ago. With your help, and Martha's drive and dedication, her vision of a charity boarding school dedicated to educating Maasai youth has become a reality. While I am continually amazed by the accomplishments

and progress that Martha, her dedicated faculty and staff, and, of course, the students have and continue to make, there is much left to do. To that end, MEF's End-of-Year Fundraiser runs from December 2nd through December 31st. Our goal for this year's End-of-Year Fundraiser is \$50,000 USD.

Please read on to learn about recent campus construction updates, an initiative to accommodate and encourage potential supporters to visit campus, a report from a recent campus visit by MEF Board member and Service Without Borders alumnus Jarek Campbell, MEF's 2025 End-of-Year Fundraiser, and much more! As always, the progress reflected in this newsletter is due, in no small part, to the generosity of MEF's donors. Thank you! Just imagine what else is possible!



MARTHA MERESO SENGERUAN

EEMPS Manager
ENCO Executive Director



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Warm greetings from EEMPS. On behalf of our students, staff, and the entire Engaruka community, I extend our heartfelt appreciation for your continued support and belief in our work.

This past quarter has been a period of meaningful progress at EEMPS. With your partnership, we have moved closer to completing key infrastructure including the boys' dormitory, science laboratories, and the extended school kitchen improvements that will greatly enhance learning and living conditions for our children.

Your support has also strengthened our environmental and agricultural programs. Students actively participated in planting grass on 55 acres of land, expanding the school orchard, and labeling trees across the campus, hands-on learning experiences that nurture both skills and environmental stewardship.

Academically, our 7th grade and 4th grade students successfully completed their national examinations, and our Pre-Form One program is now preparing learners for secondary school with great enthusiasm. We were also proud to introduce boys' and girls' clubs for the first time, promoting leadership, confidence, equality, and life skills among students.

Through your generosity, we have continued to rescue and support vulnerable children, ensuring their safety, dignity, and right to education. Stories like Lomayana's, who is now thriving with his new prosthetic leg, remind us of the life-changing impact of your commitment.

Despite recent challenges caused by national instability and communication disruptions, the school community remains strong, focused, and hopeful because we are not walking alone. Your support continues to inspire us and open doors of opportunity for every child at EEMPS.

Asanteni sana for walking this journey with us. We deeply appreciate your trust, kindness, and unwavering partnership.

END-OF-YEAR MATCHING FUNDRAISER

The 2025 MEF End-of-Year Matching Fundraiser starts December 2nd (Giving Tuesday) and ends December 31st. Our goal is to raise \$50,000 USD to support the operation of EEMPS in 2026. The goal consists of \$40,000 USD in sponsorship and operating funds and \$10,000 USD towards the construction of teacher/staff housing, which we hope to start in 2026 and complete in 2027. The \$40,000 USD will cover half of EEMPS's 2026 operating costs.

Want to donate early? Please do so now by clicking [HERE](#), and your donations will get us off to a great start! A generous donor has provided up to \$5,000 USD in matching funds that will be used to match the first \$5,000 USD in donations to EEMPS starting on Giving Tuesday.

Canadian citizens can donate to the Canadian Maasai Education Society charity [HERE](#).



AMERICAN DONORS
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CANADIAN DONORS
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Nengshon Elia Singa | Girl in 4th Grade



Naini Lakisar | Girl in 2nd Grade

CLICK HERE TO SELECT A STUDENT FOR SPONSORSHIP

GUEST TENT PROJECT

In an effort to expose more people to the school and generate income for the school, ENCO is in the process of acquiring and installing six permanent luxury guest tents with bathrooms and electricity on campus. These tents will be similar to the accommodations that folks typically stay in when on safari in the Serengeti. The tents will provide an opportunity for safari companies to bring clients by the school for a brief (two-night) visit on their way to or from a safari. The hope is that with these tents and an associated guest visitation program, ENCO can begin to generate more funds to support school operations. Experience shows that people that visit campus are more likely to become long-term school supporters. Other similar, successful charity boarding schools have similar programs and guest accommodation infrastructure. A \$30,602 USD grant was provided by MEF in September 2025 to support the purchase and installation of the six guest tents. A subcommittee comprised of MEF Board members is working with ENCO to develop the guest visitation program and associated marketing materials. The goal is to have the tents up and operational by January 2026. Additional details and a progress report will be included with the MEF Winter 2026 newsletter.



Stock image showing a tent similar to those that will be erected.

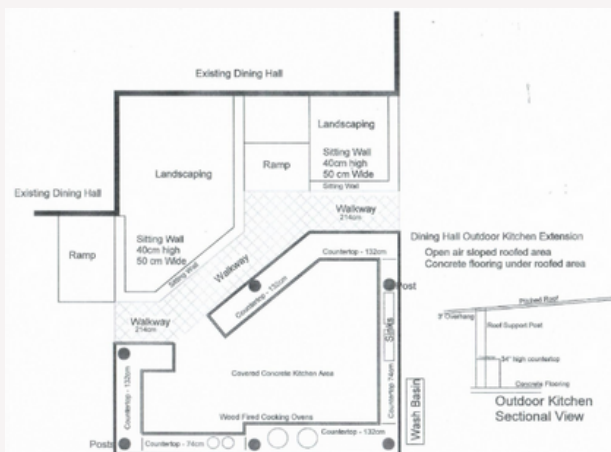
CAMPUS CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS

Construction on campus continues at a rapid pace. The fourth wing of the boys' dormitory and associated washroom facilities are nearing completion. Completion of the fourth wing of the boys' dormitory is supported by a \$53,050 USD grant from MEF that was awarded in July 2025. Once finished, the fourth wing of the boys' dormitory will help reduce congestion and improve students' living conditions.

To improve the school's ability to prepare and serve food for the growing student population, an outdoor kitchen extension is being constructed. The outdoor kitchen is adjacent to the Peter Ozolin Dining Hall. The kitchen will have two wood-fired stoves, electricity, and water. The large opening seen in the pictures below will enable staff to rapidly serve food to students. Construction funds for the new outdoor kitchen were provided by non-MEF donors.



Low angle drone photo of boys' dormitory showing roofing installation.



Outdoor kitchen footprint.



Outdoor kitchen at ground level.

CAMPUS CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS, CONT'D

Progress also continues with the two ENCO Secondary School (ENCOS) laboratory buildings (biology and chemistry) and girls' and boys' secondary school washroom facilities. The washrooms have been completed. Remaining work includes completion of the student workstations and interior furnishings. The construction of these buildings was made possible by the Crane family of Columbus, Ohio.



Drone photo of the ENCOS biology and chemistry lab building.

EEMPS EXAM RESULTS

Grades 2, 4, and 7 recently completed their national examinations. Grade 7 achieved an average score of B, and the school is still waiting on results for the other classes.



After completing their examinations in September, the Grade 7 students returned to school to join the Pre-Form One program. This program is designed to help them transition smoothly into secondary education. It focuses on strengthening their skills in key subjects such as chemistry, mathematics, and physics, while also introducing them to secondary-level study habits and discipline. The sessions, taught by teachers from ENCOS, ensure students receive high-quality instruction and early exposure to the secondary school curriculum. This preparation helps students build confidence and readiness for the next stage of their education in the coming academic year.

JAREK CAMPBELL'S VISIT TO EEMPS

Since 2019, I've been very fortunate to travel to Engaruka and EEMPS several times—first as a student, then as an advisor with Virginia Tech's Service Without Borders (SWB), and now as the MEF Sponsorship Committee Chair. In early November, I spent about a week in Engaruka, my first time back since the summer of 2024. Needless to say, a lot has changed! Martha gave me a tour of all the progress from the last year and a half—a completed secondary school



Jarek digging a hole in May 2023.

building, the foundation of the secondary school science labs, and the nearly completed boys' dormitory, for which I helped lay a few stones during my last trip! The progress was so amazing to see, and I couldn't help thinking back on my previous visits to the school.

One of the most notable transformations was the school's fruit orchard. On the SWB trip in May of 2023, I worked alongside a team of dedicated students, advisors, and agriculture specialists to dig one hundred 1-cubic-meter holes. As you might imagine, this was no easy task! We frequently woke up before the sun and dug until the Engaruka heat became too much to bear. But at the end of that week, those hundred holes promised to



Jarek sitting in a half-dug hole in May 2023.

hold a new milestone for EEMPS—self-sustained food production! And now they house full, growing avocado and other fruit trees! In just two years, the previously barren land is ripe with avocado, watermelon, cassava, papaya, and banana plants! Knowing that our hard work helped produce what is now such a bright, flourishing resource for the school means so much to me.

JAREK CAMPBELL'S VISIT TO EEMPS



Holes dug in May 2023.



Avocado tree in Nov. 2025.

My visit to Engaruka this year left me with much to look forward to. As you've read in the newsletter, from new guesthouses to great test scores, Engaruka is thriving. And so are the students! Children who were only as tall as my waist during my first visit in 2019 are now taller than me! I talked to my friend Jesca, who I also sponsor, about her goals for the future. She's focused on learning about tourism to one day become a tour guide herself! While catching up with other school children, it quickly became apparent how much they appreciated their sponsors as well. Dozens of students asked me if I knew their sponsors, telling me what they do for work, where they live, and how much they love them. It was so fulfilling to see the direct impact made on these students, and you should know that your care and sponsorship pay off!

So, on behalf of the MEF Sponsorship Committee, the community in Engaruka, and the children you sponsor, THANK YOU! I'm so excited to see how the school progresses in the future, and how your contributions will provide support for years to come!

Best,
Jarek Campbell
MEF Sponsorship Committee Chair

MAASAI EDUCATION SOCIETY

A Canadian charity was formed to support the school in the spring of 2023 called the Maasai Education Society (MES). MES specifically aims to provide sponsorships for Maasai students in need. Over the last year, generous Canadians have donated \$50,000 CAD toward sponsorships.

If you are Canadian and would like to support a Maasai student directly, please contact us at audreylspielmann@gmail.com or maasaieducationsociety@gmail.com, or eTransfer to mescandonate@gmail.com. You can also check out the Maasai Education Society website or donate here via PayPal. Feel free to contact Audrey Spielmann (audreylspielmann@gmail.com), based in Vancouver, if you have any questions.



Lowassa with his older sister.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Lowassa Lesnet's journey began in 2022 when he was identified during the rescue of his sister, Naihorwa, from early marriage. He was too young to start school then, but Naihorwa persistently appealed for his admission. After their mother's death, she kept asking EEMPS to help her brother. The family resisted since Lowassa was responsible for herding goats at home. Despite several failed attempts, renewed efforts in 2025 by Martha and the head teacher finally succeeded. Lowassa is now safely enrolled in Grade 1 at EEMPS.

Lowassa's future depends on consistent educational support. With a sponsor, he can have the stability he needs to thrive, access learning materials, and stay focused on his dream of completing his education. Please consider sponsoring him so he can stay with his sister at EEMPS and be successful in his learning.



**CLICK HERE
TO SPONSOR**



HOW CAN YOU HELP EEMPS OR ENCO SECONDARY SCHOOL?

STUDENT SPONSORSHIPS: An EEMPS student sponsorship is \$700 per year and ENCOSSE sponsorship is \$900 per year. Sponsorship covers a child's tuition, fees, clothing, room and board, and medical care. You can also provide partial support for a child. Sponsors receive regular updates on their child. MEF will assist you in picking a child to sponsor if you do not select one from [our website](#).

DONATIONS: General donations go towards school operating costs or facilities construction. Construction needs include staff housing so that ENCO can attract the best teachers and support staff, a water treatment system, and guest housing for visitors. To donate via credit card, click [HERE](#).

CORPORATE MATCH: Many corporations match the donations of their employees to charities. We receive over \$15,000 in corporate matching funds annually from corporations such as Altria, Apple, GE, IBM, and Verizon. Thousands of companies participate. Please check and see if your donations are eligible for a corporate match at the following website: <https://www.charitynavigator.org/donor-basics/giving-101/employee-match-programs/>.

KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS: The Kroger family of companies (Kroger, Ralphs, Dillons, Smith's, King Soopers, Fry's, QFC, City Market, Owen's, Jay C, Pay Less, Baker's, Gerbes, Harris Teeter, Pick 'n Save, Metro Market, Mariano's) and some other merchants donate a percentage of your purchases to a charity if you specify them as your preferred charity. Sign up at: <https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards>.

EBAY SALES: Did you know that you can designate all or a portion of eBay sales to charity? When you do so, eBay waives the percentage of the fees that you donate. For example, if you sell something for \$20 and designate all the funds for a charity, eBay will waive all your transaction fees. If 50% is designated for charity, 50% of fees are waived.

MEF AMAZON WISHLIST: Items for the school will be delivered on our next trip. Donated items are charitable donations and tax deductible.

<https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/6ADPF403U0A2>

Questions? Reach out to us at info@maasaieducationfoundation.org.

HOW TO DONATE

BY CHECK: Send checks payable to –
Maasai Education Foundation,
345 Woods Lane | Newport, VA 24128

BY CREDIT CARD (no fees): Select the applicable PayPal Giving Fund –



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MONTHLY DONATION OPTION

For just \$700 USD per year, you can cover the cost of a primary student's education. Through our [PayPal Giving Fund](#), you can offer your support via a monthly donation of \$58.33 USD; you can also choose to cover the associated PayPal fee (1.99% plus \$0.49 USD). If you would like to donate a different amount monthly, please [contact us](#).

You do not need a PayPal account to set up monthly donations, but you will need an account to stop or change monthly donation amounts in the future. Receipts and thank-you notes for tax-deductible gifts made via PayPal will be sent to you by MEF periodically during the year and you will receive a summary of all your donations early in the following year.

**CLICK HERE TO SET UP \$58.33 USD MONTHLY
DONATIONS FOR A SPONSORSHIP**



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