



MAASAI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

SPRING 2026 | NEWSLETTER NO. 17



“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

First, on behalf the Maasai Education Foundation (MEF), thank you for your continued support for the charity boarding school that is operated by MEF's in-country partner, the Engaruka Community Initiative Organization (ENCO). The Engaruka English Medium Primary School (EEMPS) and the ENCO Secondary School (ENCOSS) comprise a learning oasis and beacon of hope that would not exist without your generous support. However, a recent natural disaster is threatening the schools.

In early March 2026, the village of Engaruka lost its water supply. Devastating floods and catastrophic landslides in the Engaruka River valley caused extensive damage to the already fragile Engaruka water supply system. The damage destroyed the water supply system's micro-dam that diverted water from the river and the pipes that

delivered the diverted water to the Engaruka community water distribution tank. Since the ENCO operated schools also relied on the community water supply system, the schools were without water for a period. Efforts led by the community have temporarily restored some of the water supply to the community and the ENCO schools, but the supply is meager and inconsistent.

In response to this water crisis, MEF is working with ENCO to identify reputable, experienced Tanzanian contractors capable of helping ENCO develop a permanent water supply by drilling a well. In addition, MEF is holding a special fundraiser that is dedicated to raising funds to aid in developing a permanent water supply solution to serve the schools' needs. This newsletter is devoted to providing additional information related to MEF's special water crisis fundraiser and how you can help. Please read on and please consider helping ENCO and MEF address this devastating crisis. Thank you!



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear MEF Donors, on behalf of the entire ENCO team, thank you for your continued support that is enabling us to shape a brighter future for our students. As Brian mentioned, the community of Engaruka is experiencing a crippling water supply crisis. Recently our students have had to divert time from their studies just to fetch water. In addition to limiting the quantity of water reaching campus, the water crisis has had adverse impacts on student health and is threatening our capacity to grow food. Developing a permanent water supply solution is critical to the schools' future. As is discussed in this newsletter, ENCO is seeking to drill a well to aid in alleviating our water supply issues. ENCO had long assumed that groundwater development (drilling a well) in our area was unfeasible because there were literally no wells for miles around. However, a recently drilled well located near the EEMPS/ENCOSS campus has

MARTHA MERESO SENGERUAN

EEMPS & ENCOSS Manager
ENCO Executive Director



given us hope that a well is feasible. The newly drilled well supplies a recently opened charity health clinic that has been under construction for years. The organization that is responsible for the health clinic has been very supportive of ENCO during this crisis, sharing water and information and we are hopeful that ENCO's efforts to develop a well will be equally successful. As always, thank you for believing in us and for standing with us. Your support is helping change lives, giving hope to children, and creating a brighter future for Engaruka.

WATER CRISIS IN ENGARUKA

The Crisis: On the night of March 8, 2026, the lives of the students at Engaruka English Medium Primary School (EEMPS) and ENCO Secondary School (ENCOSS) changed in an instant. Devastating landslides and floods swept through the area around Engaruka destroying the community's water infrastructure and leaving our school without a reliable source of clean water. Our school and the rest of the community immediately



WATER CRISIS IN ENGARUKA, CONT'D.

lost their water supply. In addition, about a mile of 4-inch galvanized pipe, which carried water from the community water intake to the large community water distribution tank, was mangled and destroyed. While, the EEMPS/ENCOSS campus did not suffer any direct flood damage, the two nearby Engaruka public schools did. Those



Mangled steel pipeline

schools were closed for over a month. Since the flooding, our students—some as young as five years old—have had to walk more than a mile up to four times per day to bathe and fetch water from the river or from the well at a nearby health clinic, carrying heavy containers just to meet their basic needs for drinking, cooking, and hygiene. Because there was

inadequate water to flush toilets, our school was forced to construct emergency pit latrines for excreta disposal. EEMPS and ENCOSS declared a forced mid-term break on April 1, and students did not resume classes until April 13.

Prior to the break, EEMPS and ENCOSS classes were shortened significantly because of the time required for students to collect water. The school also paid water haulers to bring water to the school, but this was a challenge because the entire community was competing for water and there were not enough water haulers. On April 13, classes resumed after Maasai junior warriors from the community created a temporary water intake and ran recovered pipes from the temporary



Students carrying water to school

WATER CRISIS IN ENGARUKA, CONT'D.



Temporary pipeline to community tank

widespread and the government officials do not have the resources to deal with the disaster in a timely manner.

The Reality on the Ground

- *Increased Health Risk:* Without clean water, there has been a rise in water-borne illnesses like diarrhea and skin infections at the school.
- *Disrupted Education:* Students are forced to spend some of their learning hours fetching water instead of in the classroom.
- *Threatened Sustainability:* The school gardens and livestock, vital for the students' nutrition, are struggling to survive in the arid Tanzanian sun.

The Solution: Permanent Well & Treatment

We refuse to let our students' futures depend on a temporary water intake. Water supply has been an issue since the school first opened in 2017 and has only worsened as the number of students, faculty, and staff has increased. In 2022, MEF invested \$42,000 USD to put in a new 2.25-mile-long, 2-inch pipeline from the community water distribution tank to campus. This pipeline supplied adequate water most of the time, but there were still problems.

For a more detailed look at the flood damage, click [HERE](#).



Student bathing at the river

RESTORING HOPE: SPECIAL FUNDRAISER

To address the water crisis as soon as possible, a new geophysical survey was just completed to identify the best location for a well. MEF is launching a special fundraiser to develop a **dedicated deep-water well and state-of-the-art water treatment system** on the school campus.

This system will provide:

- 10,000 liters/day of safe, potable water for drinking and cooking.
- A backup water supply for bathing, laundry, flushing toilets, and the school's livestock herd. We hope to still use the surface water pipeline from the community water system for non-potable uses.
- A water quality report from the nearby health clinic well shows generally good water quality, except for high fluoride levels. A reverse osmosis water treatment system will be required reduce the fluoride concentration to safe levels.

ENCO, with funds supplied by MEF, plans to start drilling the new well this month, but we need your help to finish the job! The total cost for drilling and developing the well, pumps, storage tanks, new piping and electrical supply systems, and water treatment system is estimated to be approximately **\$50,000 USD**. The exact cost of the new system will depend on the well's final depth, location, and yield, and any excess funds donated will go towards other school needs, such as housing for teachers.

ENCO, the Tanzanian NGO that Martha directs and that operates EEMPS and ENCOSS, has already committed \$5,000 USD towards this project and has already had over \$4,000 USD in unplanned emergency expenses to pay for water delivered via trucks, for increased medical expenses, for digging pit latrine, etc. **ENCO is invested in addressing the water supply crisis, and now MEF is asking for your help.** Every dollar brings us closer to a permanent water supply solution that will protect the school's children. Please help by donating during our emergency water crisis fundraiser from **May 15th to June 15th!** Click the link below to make a tax-deductible, fee-free donation by credit card, or see [Pages 8-9](#) for other donation options.



AMERICAN DONORS
DONATE NOW
CLICK HERE



CANADIAN DONORS
DONATE NOW
CLICK HERE

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.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Neyesu Losingiri is a 7 year old girl in the 2nd grade with great potential. Her teachers describe her as eager to learn, attentive in class, and always ready to participate in activities. Despite her abilities, Neyesu faces challenges at home as her parents are unable to support her education financially.

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



**CLICK HERE
TO SPONSOR**



HOW CAN YOU HELP EEMPS OR ENCO SECONDARY SCHOOL?

STUDENT SPONSORSHIPS: An EEMPS student sponsorship is \$700 USD per year, and ENCOSS sponsorship is \$900 USD 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 –



AMERICAN DONORS
DONATE NOW
CLICK HERE



CANADIAN DONORS
DONATE NOW
CLICK HERE



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



MEF BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

Brian Benham	Chairperson
Rebecca Caldwell	Nominating Committee
Jarek Campbell	Sponsorship Committee
Steve Conner	Treasurer, Proposal Review Committee
Theo Dillaha	Development Committee
Margie Lee	Audit Committee
Isabella Munson	Secretary, Social Media Committee
Karen Scalf-Benham	Board Member
Audrey Spielmann	Maasai Education Society Liaison
Jen Spori	School Visit Coordinator
Randy Stith	Board Member
Nina Tarr	Board Member



345 Woods Lane | Newport, VA 24128
info@maasaieducationfoundation.org
Tel: +1 (540) 922-2971
www.facebook.com/MaasaiEducationFoundation/
maasaieducationfoundation.org



MAASAI EDUCATION
FOUNDATION

