

IMPACT OF SPONSORING EDUCATION BY FOUNDATION STANDUP4TALENT ON COMMUNITIES IN KAJIADO REGION, KENYA

As StandUp4Talent, we are obviously proud of the results of all the students we have been able to support. We have supported some of them since secondary school, a few even since primary school and a number of students have now completed their Bachelor degree.

Of course, we see the impact of the work of our foundation first and foremost in the individual students we sponsor. Their personal and intellectual development, their process of awareness, their drive to study and afterwards to find a job, their desire to support their family and community after graduation. It is wonderful to be able to contribute to this.

Thanks to a special cooperation between two of our students, Purity Meikan and Faith Supeet, the impact of their individual development has extended to their entire communities. We are very proud of Purity and Faith's tremendous efforts and dedication. This is how we can contribute to the development of their communities and the Maasai population in general.

Purity graduated from Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Studies. She is now working as a teacher at a local primary school.

Faith graduated from St. Pauls University Nairobi, Bachelor of Communication.

As one of the results of their studies, they have become powerful, self-confident young Maasai women who realise that as traditional Maasai, they need to adapt in a flexible way to the challenges and opportunities of the present and the future in order to have a viable future on the long term, with respect of the Maasai tradition and culture.

They live in the villages of Orpirikata and Tikoishi, about 1/1.5 hours' drive from the town of Kajiado. They met by coincidence because they are both active in empowering and encouraging their village communities to become less dependent on herding and trading of livestock (cows, goats and sheep), and also develop other forms of food production, trade and business.

Long periods of severe drought (a consequence of climate change) are also a huge challenge for the Maasai: their cattle dies in large numbers, the men have to move with the cattle, often hundreds of kilometres away, to search for water, and the women and children are left behind.

Faith and Purity have joined hands, working together on various projects in their villages since 2022. They are supported by Friends of the Maasai Foundation (<https://www.friendsofthemaasai.com/>).

Together with their active fellow villagers (mostly women, but the (young) men also join now), they worked on the following projects:

- Establishing community gardens to grow vegetables for their own consumption and for sale to others;
- Improving water supply, for own consumption, for livestock and for the vegetable gardens;
- Undertaking various training courses in Laikipia (Permaculture Farm), to set up and maintain the gardens in an ecologically responsible manner, without harming nature and its rich wildlife;
- Establishing kitchen gardens, vegetable gardens just behind the house and planting fruit/food trees and using them to grow food for their own consumption;

- Growing and planting trees (Moringa) and aloe vera, with the purpose of using them to make products (Moringa powder, soap, cosmetics) that can be sold stablishing;
- Setting up bee communities/ bee-hives for honey production;
- Organising a 2-day workshop, in which 30 people from Tikoishi and Orpirikata villages made a future vision for their villages with each other, plus the steps needed to make that vision become reality;
- Participation in a large Search Conference with approximately 150 Maasai, government representatives, NGOs and experts to create a future vision for the entire Maasai community;
- Establishing a Community Based Organisation (CBO), including a representative CBO Board from the community;
- A 4-day workshop ("Mentorship programme") for 100 Maasai girls and boys, together with 100 Maasai mothers and fathers, with the aim of raising awareness and reducing the consequences of female genital mutilation, marrying off very young Maasai girls, pregnancies at a very young age and drug abuse by boys;

Future projects which Faith and Purity are already thinking about (together with their CBO board and the community), include:

- improving the water supply using solar panels;
- better protection of vegetable gardens from wild animals and birds;
- selling water through so-called water-ATMs (to save money for maintenance of the water system);
- procuring dairy-goats for the women's groups to supplement daily food;
- establishing grass pastures for making fodder (storage for dry seasons);
- the raising and keeping chickens (for eggs and meat);
-(much more to come....!)