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Dear donor and supporters,

We are going to try a different approach to the newsletter this year. We will be keeping project status on our website on the new [Karimu 2021 Plan page](#). We will update that page with project completions and changes to plan so you can see from a bird's eye view all the projects Karimu is driving and where each is at. This will give us space to drill into individual topics here in the newsletter in more detail. If you'd like us to drill into a particular topic, please let us know at contact@karimufoundation.org. This month we are drilling down into schools, but I must briefly tell you about a major recognition that we received recently, fundraising, our 2021 plan.

Karimu Recognition

Let me celebrate with you the recognition given to Karimu by the Manyara Regional government (like a state in the US). Our Regional Manager, Shau Ae Erro, accepted on our behalf a plaque recognizing **Karimu-KAHESO as the #1 NGO** in the entire Manyara region in terms of community impact.





Shau receiving the plaque

We are very proud of being recognized as the best NGO in the region - an accomplishment that would not have been possible without you, our volunteers, our staff, and the community and government partnerships we have nurtured over many years. The recognition reaffirms the Karimu operating model based on full community engagement and sustainability. However, it also comes with more demands. As our visibility across the region increases, we are getting requests for assistance outside the wards in which we operate. We did satisfy many of those requests last year during our COVID Response project providing PPE and sanitation supplies to clinics throughout the district. However, while we would like to support these many requests, we don't want our efforts to become diffuse. We found some middle ground by agreeing to create a Karimu Social Fund which will support a limited number of emergencies at the district or regional levels. This fund has already been exhausted for 2021 by helping to rebuild Majengo Primary school which was destroyed by a storm. That project is currently underway.





Majengo Primary School destroyed by the storm

Fundraising

First, THANK YOU to all of our donors. You make everything possible. With so much need and so many financial challenges world-wide, fundraising was quite a challenge this year. Out of an approximately \$800,000 goal, we have thus far raised \$539,000. However, \$300,000 of that was a one time donation without which we would have fallen even shorter. We are expecting to receive a substantial contribution from a foundation that has been a major past contributor to our health and sanitation initiative. And another foundation is deliberating on a significant contribution to Karimu towards our income projects. However, to continue to have the kind of impact that we want, we must focus on diversifying our funding sources. If any of you know foundations or major donors who want to contribute to eliminating poverty in Africa, please put us in contact with them by emailing us at contact@karimufoundation.org. We have fully funded the Ayalagya hostel and high school project for this year and the first part of Arri water project. We will continue to focus on fully funding our key 2021 projects: the health center, the income projects, and finishing the construction of the last primary school classrooms in Ayalagaya.

2021 plan

We are moving forward with our [2021 planned projects](#) assuming that we will make up the shortfall in fundraising as we go forward. You will see that the plan is very full and that we are entering the final stretch of our educational projects in Ayalagaya.

The major 2021 projects are:

- Building a high school with [hostels](#) on the existing Ayalagya Secondary School campus



Hostel construction

- Completing classroom construction at the primary schools
- Expanding the existing Dareda Kati clinic into a health center with a complete maternity ward including overnight stays and expanded outpatient staffing, space, and diagnostic equipment.
- Implementing a set of healthcare initiatives to reduce disease and increase wellness specifically targeting issue in the area
- Designing and laying the foundation for clean water for all Arri ward residents (likely a 2 year project)
- Creating income projects to increase income from farming and livestock.
- Providing financial assistance to savings groups having completed Karimu training and continuing to form and train savings groups

Please visit our new [Karimu 2021 Plan page](#) for overall timing and more detail on these and more projects.

Schools

As you know from my prior newsletter, we are extremely proud of the performance of Ayalagaya students on their national exams and we know we have had a major impact on that result. You can read about our overall Education Program [here](#). The program is the foundational program of Karimu and has been a focus since inception. All phases are active in Ayalagaya and some are closed to completion. If all goes well, we should be done in Ayalagaya in 2022. We opened phase 4 to Arri teachers in 2018.

Phase 1. Creating a Healthy School

This phase focuses on sanitation facilities and hygiene practices at all schools.





Bacho Primary School staff toilet before and after

We expect to **complete this phase for Ayalagaya ward** this year. We started the final 2 projects: [bathrooms at Ufani Primary](#) and the teachers bathroom at Ayalagaya Secondary at the end of last year. Together with creating a sophisticated sanitation system for the Ayalagaya secondary, high school, and [hostel complex](#), this will complete the work of this phase. We expect to be done mid year. While the program is not fully active in Arri, we are building bathrooms at Dohom Primary in Arri to avoid a school closure this year.

Phase 2. Building an Adequate Learning Environment

This phase focuses on safe, clean classrooms and kitchen facilities so that all school children receive a meal at school and class size can be limited to 45 students per classroom. We have been building this out in phases, a building at a time at each school. We have identified the buildings needed by school according to the local population and have designed buildings and their locations to accommodate this and future growth. We expect to continue expanding the primary schools, secondary school, and the high school this year and next. We have just finished the construction of 3 classrooms and 1 office at [Haysam](#) and [Gajal](#) Primary Schools, 6 classrooms and 2 offices at Dareda Kati Primary School, and remodeling of 11 classrooms and 3 offices as well as construction of 3 additional classrooms at Ayalagaya Secondary (hopefully soon also High School). We have yet to accept the new classrooms at Ayalagaya as we are unhappy with the floor quality and repairs must be made, but that will be done soon. We are currently building Ayalagaya hostels to be able to open the high school.





Students helping at the construction site

As you know, sustainability of major investments is critical. Through 2020, this was primarily a Karimu-driven process whereby our staff would periodically inspect, identify, and track issues. However, this was not a satisfying solution and had mixed results. While in 2019 and 2020 88% of the 235 maintenance issues identified were resolved (a very positive outcome for a community that never did maintenance before), the average days to fix an issue was 108 and 102 respectively. We asked the schools and villages leadership to come up with a proposal that satisfies our needs to be able to validate how assets are being maintained while giving the schools more responsibility. They did not disappoint! We now have a school and village-driven process whereby all items on the maintenance checklist have teacher owners who monitor and note issues in a booklet kept in the head of the school's office. Repairs costing less than \$45 will be completed within 30 days as they can be accommodated within the school discretionary funds while larger repairs will require community contribution and will take 2 months. We hope to see results this quarter in reducing time to resolve problems.



Phase 3. Promoting Academic Excellence

This phase focuses on adequate supplies for students - library, books, sports, and arts material and was fully completed in January of 2020 with the delivery of books following a ratio of 2:1 student:book, sports and arts material. We believe the abundance of books for the first time in our schools certainly contributed to the excellent results in the National Exams. The community contributed to this project by agreeing to fully pay the labor cost of building furniture for all schools. Karimu will cover the material cost. This project has just started and will provide to each school in Ayalagaya: desks for the students, tables and chairs in classrooms and offices, and cupboards in classrooms and every school office.

Phase 4. Supporting Teachers' Excellence

The phase focuses on training and retaining top quality teachers. This becomes even more important as we open the high school and the teacher qualification requirements increase. Our main projects are creating teacher housing (including electricity), providing teacher scholarships for continuing education, and providing computer training and a teacher technology center for their school. We just finished adding electricity to the Ayalagaya teachers housing.

We have had 2 schools complete computer training and receive their teacher's technology center: Haysam Primary and Bacho Primary. The technology center includes a computer, printer, and electricity installation if not already present. Gajal Primary is currently in training and is expected to graduate in March. Another class will be scheduled subsequently. Teachers, KAHESO staff, and our volunteers give up a chunk of their Saturdays for this training.

For the 2020/2021 school year we have granted an additional 21 scholarships (10 in Ayalagaya and 11 in Arri). To be eligible to receive a scholarship the teachers' school must have > 90% teacher and student attendance, achieve a qualifying passing rate on the national exam (based on classroom size), and be feeding the students school lunches. Education is delivered over remote learning, so the teachers need a laptop and computer skills increasing the importance of our computer literacy training. From inception to date, Karimu scholarships have contributed to 9 people receiving degrees (4 years of study, 1 received in 2020) and 7 receiving diplomas (2 years of study, 4 received in 2020).



Teacher's graduation

What's Next

We do not know if we will be able to visit Tanzania in person this year. The US lists Tanzania as "Reconsider Travel" and the CDC has issued a level 4 health notice. We are all still awaiting vaccinations for COVID-19. We dearly miss our Tanzanian friends and thank goodness for video conferencing. We are currently in the process of wrapping up the needs assessment and leadership input for creating a strategic plan for Arri ward. We will definitely tell you about that in the upcoming months.

In the meantime, thank you for your generosity, for caring about those far from you whom you have never met but whose lives you improve dramatically.

Stay healthy and well. *Kaa na afya njema na mzima.*

Nelson Mattos
Karimu, Chief Operating Officer



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