



THE THUNDER FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

September-December Issue January 2023

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Celebrating Thunder's 10th Anniversary

In December, the Thunder Foundation celebrated its 10th anniversary. In 2012 Raad Swais, a young British teacher working at Braeburn Gitanga School in Nairobi founded the Thunder Foundation in support of children from the Karangware slum. Raad selected 25 children from the most disadvantaged families in Kawangware and each child received support for school fees, uniforms, books and transport. Raad took the holistic approach to education and all the children and their families also received instruction in the importance of nutrition and hygiene.



Our anniversary has given us the opportunity to look back over the past 10 years, the work that has been done and the incredible support we receive from our sponsors and our donors.

YOU all make our work possible through regular monthly donations and by supporting our fundraising events. The difference you have made and are continuing to make to our children and also their families is immeasurable.

Special Needs School

Our 15 children have started the new school year this week and we are delighted that all of them are in attendance and are in good health. Our Kenyan Manager Ramadan has been working hard to ensure that they all have safe transport to get to school and this has now been achieved. The children are all in great spirits and are very happy to be back at school after the long Christmas break.





Completion of Primary School

After 10 years in Primary School, 12 of the Thunder children have successfully completed their education at primary level and they all obtained their Primary Diploma in November 2022.

This is an extraordinary achievement and is the result of a collaboration between the children themselves, their families, the school and the Thunder team and sponsors. To celebrate their hard work and to expose them to life outside Kawangware, we took the children on a day out.

They went on a trip to the Mall and had a delicious lunch at KFC which all the children really loved. Most of them had never eaten at a restaurant let alone eaten chicken and they all loved it. The day was a huge success and the children felt that they had had a well-earned treat for all their hard work.

Additions to the Thunder Foundation team in Nairobi

As Raad decided to step back from Thunder when he returned to England last summer the charity is now run by two of the Trustees – Paola and Gina. They took over at a particularly challenging time with twelve of the children due to graduate to High School shortly afterwards. They have been overwhelmed by the support and encouragement that they have received since taking over their roles.

One of their first tasks was to find a new Project Leader who could run the charity in Nairobi under their close supervision and we are pleased

to introduce our new Kenyan Project Manager, Ramadan Okimaru Omurunga. Ramadan became our Project Manager in September 2022 and supervises the project in Nairobi.

As some of you may know Ramadan is not new to the Thunder Foundation as he has been involved in activities as a volunteer since 2014. He has a strong relationship with the children and the parents and acts not only as our Project Manager but also as a mentor and role model to all our children. In Nairobi, we are receiving additional support from Stephen Ogwere. Stephen brings valuable experience by supporting the children with mentoring and practical advice.

Paola's visit to Nairobi

Just before Christmas Paola travelled to Nairobi to meet with Ramadan and all the Thunder families and to monitor activities. Paola also attended the Braeburn Gitanga Christmas fair and together with Ramadan helped to raise awareness of Thunder locally as well as manning the Thunder stall.





Some of the Thunder mums had made some lovely beaded key rings and Christmas tree decorations for the Christmas Fair at Braeburn. A big thank you to Braeburn Gitanga School and the FAB mums for inviting the Foundation to their Christmas Bazaar and for gifting our 40 families very important food donations to make their Christmas special.

Another big thank you goes to INDOMI Noodles. What a Christmas surprise it was for our families to receive 40 boxes of noodles in addition to the food donated by the Braeburn mums. There were big smiles all around when the families received these donations.



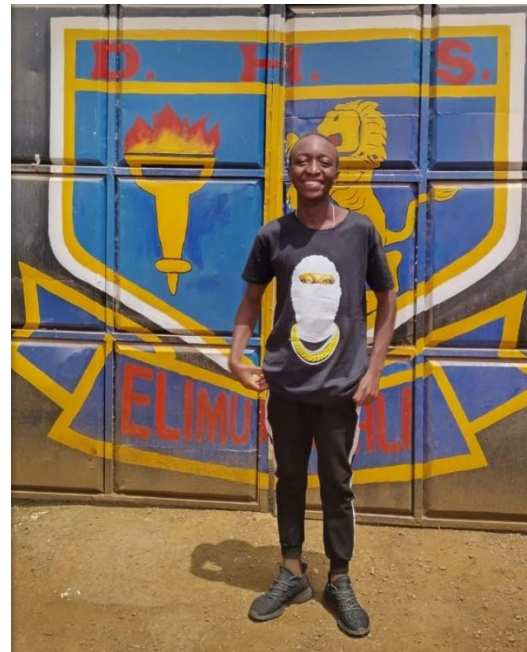
NEW Chicken and Gardening Project

The Year 2022 came to an end with an exciting new project. The Thunder Foundation was able to provide seven of the families with three chicks and chicken food

plus bags for a new project of vertical gardening. The project has really taken off in a big way and all the families have nurtured their chicks to become fully grown. We are now looking to increase the number of families who are given chicks as the project has the double benefit of teaching the children how to look after animals as well as being a food source!

Primary School marks and the move to High School

From the start of the year everyone eagerly awaited the results of the exams and when they came in January, we were blown away. Our children have done so well and many of them exceeded all our expectations. Considering the daily struggles, they and their families face, completing their primary education with marks in the top 30% of the country is an outstanding achievement. We could not be prouder.



The children have now all received offers of places in schools in or around Nairobi. Ramadan has been working extremely hard to select schools that are appropriate for all our children and we are confident that each child has been placed in a school where they will flourish. Many of the children will stay together in their new



schools which is great news particularly as they will be boarding for the next four years. We also have two children from this cohort who are beginning a training in their chosen profession as High School is not an option for them.



Compared to costs of £450 on average for a pupil in primary school, the costs for these 10 children will rise to an average of £1,200 for the first year.

Beside the school fees, books and uniforms, Thunder provides all the items essential for the children to be able to board such as mattresses, blankets, trunks etc. We will therefore need to implement some fund raising in 2023 to supplement our current income.

Fundraising events

To cover these additional costs Thunder is looking for supporters to come up with fund raising ideas. For example, two wonderful supporters, Elena and Davide from Italy will run the London Virtual Marathon while Anna will take on the Three Peaks Challenge in the UK.

Please follow our social media sites for updates on these events and if you know anyone who would like to support Thunder please let us know.

And finally ...

Thank you to all our sponsors and supporters. Thunder would not exist without you – you are all making a huge difference to the lives of our Thunder families, and we thank you so much for all that you do.