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**UCESCO-AFRICA**  
UNITED CULTURAL EMPOWERMENT & SOCIAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION - AFRICA

# UCESCO - AFRICA

MAGAZINE



# Editor's Letter



Dear Readers,

It is with great excitement and pride that we present to you the inaugural edition of our magazine. This publication celebrates the incredible stories, experiences, and voices that shape our community.

As we embark on this journey, our mission is to inform, inspire, and connect you through insightful articles, thought-provoking discussions, and captivating narratives.

In this edition, we highlight the remarkable experiences of volunteers who have dedicated their time and efforts to making a meaningful impact. One story that stands out is that of Amaer, a volunteer from Australia, whose time at New Horizon High School was both enriching and transformative. His reflections on teaching, cultural immersion, and the warm hospitality he received exemplify the power of cross-cultural exchange.

As you turn these pages, we hope you find inspiration in the stories shared and the voices amplified. This magazine is more than just a collection of articles it is a platform for learning, sharing, and growing together.

We extend our gratitude to everyone who contributed to this first edition and to you, our readers, for your support. Your feedback, ideas, and stories will help us continue to build this vibrant community in future editions.

Happy reading

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Zedella Chirchir'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Editor in chief**  
**Communication Department**

# TRANSFORMING LEARNING SPACES: RENOVATIONS AT PEGGY LUCAS SCHOOL

Peggy Lucas School has recently undergone a significant transformation, thanks to extensive renovations aimed at improving the learning environment for students. These enhancements not only provide a fresh and vibrant look to the school but also create a more functional and organized space for both students and teachers.

The renovations included the partitioning of classrooms for Grade 5 and Grade 6, ensuring a more structured learning environment tailored to each grade's specific needs.

Additionally, the school received a fresh coat of paint, revitalizing both the classrooms and the school's front facade, giving it a welcoming and inspiring appearance.

To enhance hygiene and organization, the kitchen was stocked with new food buckets, while each classroom received dustbins and class buckets, fostering cleanliness and discipline among students. Another notable improvement was the installation of bag hangers and class labels in all classrooms, helping students keep their belongings organized and making navigation easier for both learners and visitors.

The school also saw the installation of a new flagpole, reinforcing a sense of national pride among students.

Furthermore, much-needed repairs were carried out, including the renovation of broken toilet doors and the repair of chairs and tables, ensuring that students have a safe and comfortable space to learn.

Beyond the physical improvements, the heart of Peggy Lucas School lies in its dedicated teachers. These passionate educators go above and beyond their duties to ensure that students receive quality education and mentorship. Despite the challenges that come with teaching in under-resourced environments, the teachers remain committed to nurturing the potential of each child, fostering a culture of academic excellence and personal growth.

Through their unwavering dedication, the teachers have played a crucial role in shaping young minds and instilling the values of discipline, hard work, and creativity. Their impact extends beyond the classroom, as they continually inspire and mentor students, encouraging them to strive for success despite any obstacles they may face.

The recent renovations, coupled with the teachers' relentless commitment, have brought a renewed sense of enthusiasm to the school community. With an improved learning environment and a team of exceptional educators, Peggy Lucas School continues to be a beacon of hope and a place where students can dream, learn, and achieve their full potential.

As the school embarks on this new chapter, the support of stakeholders, donors, and the community remains invaluable in ensuring that Peggy Lucas School continues to thrive and provide quality education for generations to come.



# STRENGTHENING BONDS THROUGH TEAMWORK: UCESCO, MVETI, AND PEGGY LUCAS STAFF BONDING EXPERIENCE

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On January 24, 2024, the spirit of unity and collaboration was on full display as staff members from UCESCO Africa's Nairobi team, MVETI, UCESCO club members from MKU and Gresta and Peggy Lucas School along with students and teachers came together for an exhilarating bonding experience at Rowallan Field. This dynamic event provided an opportunity for participants to step away from their daily routines and engage in fun-filled activities aimed at fostering teamwork, camaraderie, and mutual understanding.

**T**he teams were divided into three groups Red, Blue, and Green

each consisting of a mix of staff members from the three institutions. These diverse teams competed in a variety of exciting games, including races, relays, tug of war, and the ever-entertaining egg-carrying competitions, where participants had to balance an egg on a spoon both by hand and in their mouths. The games not only brought out the competitive spirit in each team but also emphasized the importance of trust, strategy, and collective effort.



The day concluded with an energetic Zumba class, which saw everyone dancing and moving to upbeat music, reinforcing the idea that teamwork extends beyond just work-related tasks it is about creating an environment where people feel connected, valued, and energized.

Beyond the fun and laughter, the bonding event served as a powerful reminder that teamwork is the backbone of success. By working together, supporting one another, and sharing experiences, we build stronger relationships that contribute to a more positive and productive work environment. This experience has set a strong foundation for collaboration as we move forward, geared toward a brighter and more impactful 2025.

As the teams return to their respective roles, the lessons learned on the field cooperation, resilience, and unity will undoubtedly translate into even greater success in their daily responsibilities. Here's to more teamwork, growth, and shared achievements in the year ahead.

# David's Journey: Empowering Students Through Technology at Peggy Lucas School



When David first walked into the newly established computer lab at Peggy Lucas School, he was greeted by a room filled with eager faced students who had never had the opportunity to interact with a computer before. The excitement in their eyes was undeniable, a mix of curiosity and the hunger to learn something new. For David, this was more than just teaching it was about transforming lives through digital literacy.

Equipped with a few donated desktops and a passion for technology, David began his lessons with the basics turning on a computer, using a mouse, and understanding the functions of a keyboard. Some students hesitated at first, unsure of how to navigate this new world, while others dived right in, clicking and typing with cautious enthusiasm. As the weeks passed, their confidence grew, and soon they were learning how to create documents, browse the internet responsibly, and even practice basic coding.

One of David's most memorable moments came when a young girl named Aisha, initially too shy to touch the keyboard, completed her first typed sentence. Her face lit up with pride, and from that day forward, she became one of the most dedicated students in the class. These small victories made every challenge worth it whether it was dealing with power outages, troubleshooting faulty equipment, or explaining a concept multiple times until it finally clicked.

Beyond the technical skills, David emphasized the importance of using technology for problem-solving and self-improvement. He encouraged students to think critically, explore educational resources, and dream beyond the boundaries of their current environment. Many of them, who had once viewed computers as something distant and inaccessible, began to see them as tools for empowerment and opportunity.

Teaching at Peggy Lucas School was not just a job for David; it was a mission. Each day spent in that computer lab reinforced his belief that education is the key to unlocking potential. As he watched his students progress, he knew that he was not just teaching them how to use computers he was opening doors to a future filled with endless possibilities.

# Lesley Wagner's 5-Day Mount Kenya Adventure

## MEANINGFUL TRAVEL ADVENTURES

Climbing Africa's second-highest peak is a dream for many, and for Lesley Wagner from the Netherlands, this adventure became a reality. With the perfect blend of breath taking landscapes, thrilling challenges, and unforgettable experiences, the 5-day trek along the Sirimon and Chogoria routes offered a journey of both endurance and reward.

### Day 1: Sirimon Gate to Old Moses Camp (3,300m)

Lesley's journey began at the Sirimon Gate, where a trek through lush forests led to Old Moses Camp. Along the way, the towering trees and diverse wildlife set the stage for the adventure ahead. As the day came to an end, a warm meal by the campfire provided the perfect way to prepare for the next leg of the climb.



### Day 2: Old Moses to Shipton's Camp (4,200m)

Ascending higher, Lesley traversed alpine landscapes and unique plant species such as giant lobelias and groundsels. The crisp mountain air carried the sight of Batian and Nelion Peaks, filling the team with excitement and anticipation for the journey ahead.

### Day 3: Acclimatization at Lenana Point (4,985m)

To adjust to the altitude, Lesley and the group took a short hike to Lenana Point, enjoying incredible glacier views before returning to Shipton's Camp. This day was crucial for building strength and preparing for the summit push.

### Day 4: Summit & Descend to Chogoria Camp

With an early start, Lesley conquered Point Lenana, the third-highest peak of Mount Kenya. The golden sunrise painted the mountain in breath taking hues, a moment of triumph and exhilaration. From there, the descent through scenic ridges and valleys led to Chogoria Camp, where the journey's hardest challenges gave way to deep satisfaction and reflection.



### Day 5: Chogoria Town & Departure

The final day saw Lesley trekking through lush rainforests, a stark contrast to the rugged terrain of the previous days. Arriving in Chogoria Town, the journey concluded with a well-earned sense of achievement and memories to last a lifetime.

# Making Waves: The Birth of the Peggy Dolphins Swim Team

The morning sun painted golden ripples over the calm waters of the pool, the perfect stage for a brand-new adventure. Along the edge, eight eager students stood, their toes curled over the cool tiles, buzzing with excitement and anticipation. Today marked the first day of training for the Peggy Dolphins, an 8-team swim team ready to dive headfirst into the world of aquatic sports. Leading this promising group was Venessa, a seasoned swimmer with a passion for the sport and a patient heart for coaching.



The students exchanged glances some filled with nervousness, others with pure excitement. For a few, this was their first time standing beside such a large pool. For others, the thought of being part of a real swim team was thrilling. But they weren't alone in this journey. Three dedicated volunteers Jukka, Leti, and Gaelle stood by, ready to guide and encourage them every step of the way.

The students followed along, inhaling deeply and shaking out their arms to loosen up. Then came the moment they had all been waiting for the first jump into the pool. Venessa counted down, and one by one, they cautiously leaped into the water, their laughter and splashes filling the air. Some floated effortlessly, while others kicked frantically, trying to find their balance. Jukka and Leti waded in, offering guidance to the hesitant swimmers, while Gaelle swam alongside the more confident ones, demonstrating how to extend their strokes gracefully. It was a moment of transformation eight beginners turning their initial fears into fun, their uncertainty into determination.

By the end of the session, each student had taken their first real strokes. As they climbed out of the pool, dripping wet but grinning from ear to ear, Venessa looked at them with pride.

***"That was an incredible start! You are all on your way to becoming true Peggy Dolphins"***

The students high-fived one another, their excitement barely contained. They knew this was just the beginning. With every stroke, kick, and splash, they weren't just learning to swim they were learning to soar through the water, just like real dolphins.

Their journey had begun, and the waves they were making would only get bigger from here.

# A TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCE AT KIBERA PRIMARY SCHOOL ECO FARM



Federica, Filippo, and Lesley's time at Kibera Primary School's Eco Farm was an enriching and educational experience. With a strong commitment to environmental sustainability and community engagement, they actively participated in various agricultural and ecological activities alongside the students.

Upon their arrival, the volunteers immersed themselves in the daily operations of the farm. They collaborated with students in weeding the vegetable gardens, an essential task to ensure the crops' healthy growth. Throughout this process, they engaged in meaningful discussions with the students, exchanging knowledge about sustainable farming techniques and environmental conservation.

In addition to working in the gardens, the team contributed to the maintenance of the school's worm farm, a fundamental component of the eco-friendly initiative. They worked closely with school staff to maintain optimal conditions for the worms, which played a crucial role in producing nutrient-rich compost. This experience deepened their understanding of sustainable agriculture and the role of organic waste management in soil fertility.



Another vital aspect of their engagement was their work with the decomposition pit. Together with the students and school personnel, they sorted biodegradable waste and facilitated discussions on proper waste disposal techniques. This hands-on approach emphasized the importance of responsible waste management in fostering a cleaner and healthier environment.

As their time at the Kibera Primary School Eco Farm concluded, the volunteers sought to express their gratitude toward the students who had actively participated in the project. On their final day, they distributed exercise books, stationery, and candy as tokens of appreciation. The children's joyful reactions highlighted the strong connections formed during their time together, making the farewell moment both rewarding and emotional.

Reflecting on their involvement, Federica, Filippo, and Lesley recognized the profound impact of their experience. Their engagement at the Eco Farm not only reinforced their dedication to environmental sustainability but also strengthened their belief in the power of community collaboration. This initiative exemplifies how educational programs and practical experiences can foster environmental consciousness among young learners, ultimately inspiring future leaders in sustainability.





# UCESCO-AFRICA Mombasa Team

A MONTH OF IMPACT AND TRANSFORMATION

Under the leadership of Derrick, the UCESCO-AFRICA Mombasa team embarked on a series of impactful activities throughout January, aimed at uplifting the community of Moroto in Tudor, Mombasa. The month was a testament to the organization's commitment to social change, environmental conservation, and community empowerment.

## **Empowering Young Swimmers: Lessons at Maryclif Comprehensive School**

One of the most exciting initiatives was taking children from the Moroto slums for swimming lessons at Maryclif Comprehensive School. With the help of volunteer Gaëlle, the children learned the basics of water safety, floating, and basic strokes. Many of them had never been in a pool before, making this experience both thrilling and empowering. Their eagerness to learn and conquer their fears was evident, turning each lesson into a moment of growth and joy.



## **Preserving Nature: Beach Cleanup at Shelly Beach**

With the amazing Flavia leading the charge, the UCESCO team organized a major environmental conservation initiative at Shelly Beach. Joined by local volunteers from the area, the team set out to clean the beach, collecting plastic waste, bottles, and other debris that threatened marine life and the beauty of the coastline. Armed with gloves and garbage bags, the volunteers worked tirelessly under the sun, motivated by a shared goal to restore and protect their environment. Through this initiative, the team not only beautified the beach but also raised awareness about the importance of environmental responsibility. Passersby and local fishermen stopped to ask about the activity, sparking discussions on sustainable waste management and conservation efforts.

## **Connecting with the Community: Home Visits in Moroto Slums**

The month-long efforts concluded with deeply touching home visits in the heart of Moroto slums. The UCESCO Mombasa branch visited homes within the community, engaging with residents, listening to their stories, and identifying areas where support was needed. These visits provided firsthand insight into the challenges faced by families in the slums ranging from inadequate housing and food insecurity to limited access to healthcare and education.

Despite the hardships, the resilience of the community was evident. The UCESCO team offered words of encouragement and discussed possible interventions to improve living conditions. Through these visits, they strengthened bonds with the residents, reinforcing the spirit of solidarity and hope.



## **A Month to Remember**

To create your own, choose a topic that interests you. It can be anything from fashion and beauty to travel and the news. Once you have your overall theme, you can start brainstorming the content. Just starting? Design a memorable masthead with an equally memorable name. This goes on the cover and sets up the branding for your entire magazine. What style are you going for? Is it playful? Classic? Bold? A good masthead captures the essence of your magazine, so it needs to be flexible, meaningful, and consistent enough for future issues.



# Amaer's Experience Volunteering at New Horizon High School



When Amaer, a volunteer from Australia, first arrived in Kenya, he had little idea of the incredible journey that awaited him. Assigned to teach Form 2 and Form 3 students at New Horizon High School, he quickly found himself immersed in a world of eager learners, dedicated educators, and a warm, welcoming community.

From the moment he stepped into the classroom, Amaer noticed that the students were a bit shy at first. This was different from what he was used to, but as the lesson progressed, he saw them emerge from their shells becoming curious, energetic, and enthusiastic about the Physics class. Their curiosity and determination to grasp complex Physics concepts made every lesson both engaging and rewarding. Whether explaining Newton's laws of motion or conducting simple practical demonstrations, he was constantly inspired by the students' willingness to learn.

His experience was further enriched by the dedicated teachers at New Horizon High School, who were incredibly supportive and always open to sharing insights on the Kenyan education system. Their collaboration helped him tailor his lessons to align with the school's curriculum while keeping the sessions interactive and engaging. Beyond the classroom, the school staff and the team at UCESCO played a crucial role in ensuring he had everything he needed. They provided teaching resources, guidance, and assistance whenever required, making his transition smooth and comfortable.

Outside of school, Amaer had the opportunity to experience the warmth of Kenyan hospitality. The home-cooked meals provided at the house were nothing short of delicious each dish a flavourful introduction to the rich culinary traditions of Kenya. He also had the pleasure of interacting with fellow volunteers from different parts of the world, exchanging experiences, learning from each other, and forming lifelong friendships.

Reflecting on his time in Kenya, Amaer is 100% grateful for the experience. Teaching at New Horizon High School was not just about imparting knowledge; it was about cultural exchange, personal growth, and building meaningful connections.

To those considering volunteering, Amaer has one message: "Be prepared to be fully immersed in the culture and traditions of Kenya and its people. It is an experience like no other one that will stay with you for a lifetime."

# JEFFERY: A HEART FOR SERVICE

Jeffery, a dedicated volunteer from United States, has left an unforgettable impact on the lives of many through his unwavering commitment to service. With a heart for the community, he has immersed himself in counseling and mental health support, offering a listening ear and guidance to those struggling with emotional and psychological challenges.

His passion for uplifting others has been evident in his work with women at Masayo Visionary Empowerment Training Institute (MVEI), where he has provided encouragement, mentorship, and empowerment sessions to help them build confidence and resilience. Through his words and actions, he has instilled hope in many, reminding them of their potential and strength.



Beyond counseling, Jeffery has actively participated in home visits in Kibera, meeting families in some of the most vulnerable communities. Whether sharing an encouraging word of God, offering a helping hand, or simply being present, his kindness has touched countless hearts. His dedication to evangelism has allowed him to spread faith and positivity, bringing people closer to God.

Jeffery's service extends even to the creative space, where he has been involved in painting projects that have transformed learning spaces and community centers into more vibrant and welcoming environments.

Through his selfless actions, Jeffery embodies the true spirit of volunteerism, faith, and compassion, making a lasting difference in the lives of those he serves.

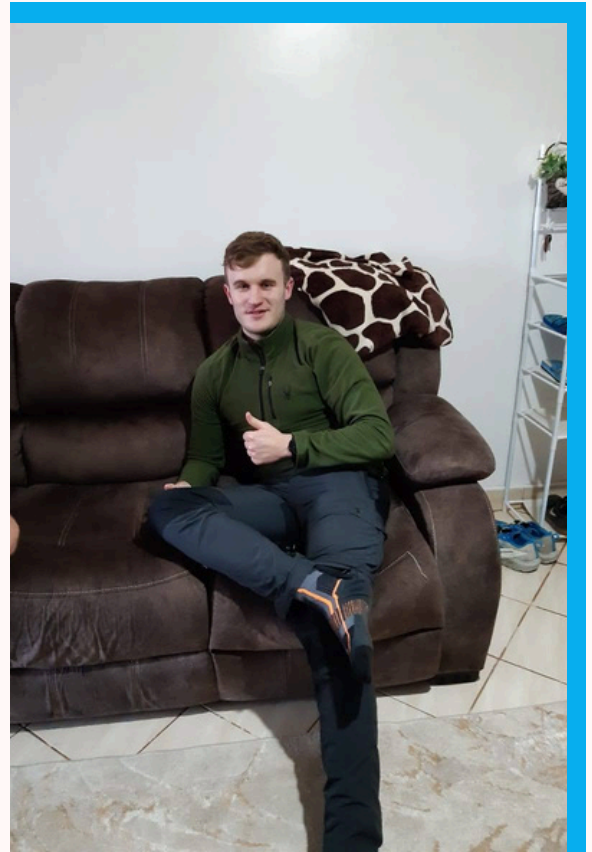
# JOSHUA'S JOURNEY AT UCESCO AND NEW HORIZON

When Joshua Douglas arrived at Peggy Lucas Centre at the start of the year, he was eager to make a difference. His first task was contributing to the renovation efforts, where he took up painting, helping to transform the space into a vibrant and welcoming environment. Each stroke of paint wasn't just about improving walls—it was about creating a brighter future for the students who walked through those doors daily.

As the academic year began, Joshua transitioned to New Horizon High School, stepping into the role of a Mathematics teacher for Form 2 students. Teaching wasn't just about equations and formulas; it was about mentorship, encouragement, and making learning an engaging experience. Many students initially struggled with certain concepts, but through patience and interactive lessons, he helped them build confidence in their abilities. Witnessing their progress and enthusiasm for the subject became one of the most rewarding aspects of his time there.

Beyond teaching, Joshua extended his impact to Kibera Primary School, where he contributed to the Eco Farm project. His hands-on involvement in sustainable farming reinforced the importance of environmental conservation and food security for the school. By working alongside students and local staff, he helped nurture a project that would continue to benefit the community long after his departure.

But Joshua's journey wasn't just about giving it was also about personal growth and connection. Living with other volunteers from different parts of the world, he formed lifelong friendships. They shared meals, exchanged stories, and learned from each other's cultures. Whether it was brainstorming new ideas for community projects, unwinding after a long day, or exploring Kenya together, these moments became an integral part of his experience.



Looking back, Joshua is immensely grateful for his time at UCESCO and New Horizon. He came with the intention to help, but in the process, he gained so much more: new friendships, a deeper appreciation for community work, and memories that will stay with him forever.

To those considering volunteering, Joshua encourages them to take the leap. "The impact you make in someone's life, no matter how small, is truly invaluable. And in return, you grow in ways you never imagined."

Thank you, Joshua Douglas, for an incredible two weeks with UCESCO Africa. Your dedication, resilience, and passion have truly made an impact. From inspiring students at New Horizon High School and Peggy Lucas Centre to contributing to the Eco Farm at Kibera Primary, your efforts have been nothing short of remarkable. We're grateful for the time you've spent with us and wish you all the best in your future endeavors. You'll always be part of the UCESCO family.



# Gaëlle: The Volunteer Who Made Waves in Nairobi and Mombasa



Volunteering is more than just lending a helping hand it's about leaving an impact, sharing passion, and creating unforgettable moments. Gaëlle from France, an exceptional volunteer with a love for swimming, did just that in both Nairobi and Mombasa. Her journey with UCESCO Africa was one filled with dedication, enthusiasm, and an unwavering commitment to making a difference in the lives of young swimmers.

## Preserving Nature: Beach Cleanup at Shelly Beach

From the moment Gaëlle arrived, she brought a tidal wave of energy to the Peggy Dolphins Swimming Team. Teaming up with fellow volunteers Jukka, Vanessa, and Leticia, she played a key role in organizing the team's first-ever swimming class at the Impala Club. It was a moment of excitement and triumph, as the young swimmers experienced professional training in a world-class facility. Gaëlle's patience, encouragement, and technical expertise helped build the children's confidence in the water, making their first swimming session an experience to remember.



## A Lasting Legacy

Gaëlle's dedication went beyond the expected. She gave her time, skills, and resources to uplift young swimmers, ensuring that both the Peggy Dolphins in Nairobi and the children in Mombasa had the opportunity to develop their skills in the water. Her kindness, passion, and determination left a lasting impact on everyone she encountered.

Her story is a testament to the power of volunteering not just in teaching skills but in empowering communities and creating lifelong memories. Gaëlle came as a volunteer, but she left as a mentor, a role model, and an inspiration to many.

Her journey with UCESCO Africa is proof that one person's passion can ripple through communities, making waves that last far beyond their time of service.



## Taking the Mission to Mombasa

After her time in Nairobi, Gaëlle traveled to Mombasa, bringing the same enthusiasm to the coastal city. She immersed herself in UCESCO's programs, making home visits, interacting with the local community, and even spending time at the Mombasa office to understand the needs of the region. But her most remarkable contribution came at Shelly Beach, where she saw the passion of young swimmers but also noticed the lack of proper equipment.

Determined to make a difference, Gaëlle donated essential swimming gear, including goggles, floaters, and life jackets, ensuring that the children could train safely and effectively. Her generosity not only provided much-needed equipment but also instilled a sense of confidence and motivation among the aspiring swimmers.



# Scholarship Board

courtesy of Paulina Schulte-vels and friends from Germany .



**NAME: Esther Mutisya**



**NAME: Jane Joy Mmoga**



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**NAME: Branice Khavetsa**



**NAME: Esther Luderer**



**NAME: Ratib Musotsi, Rakib Nyangwe**

THANK YOU





# GALLERY





# GALLERY





# GALLERY





# GALLERY





As we close this first edition, we want to extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who made this magazine possible. To our writers, contributors, and volunteers your dedication and hard work have brought these pages to life. To our readers thank you for taking the time to engage with these stories and for being a part of our growing community.

Your support, feedback, and enthusiasm drive us forward, and we are excited for what the future holds. We look forward to bringing you more inspiring content in the editions to come.

With appreciation,

# THANK YOU