Primary school children in Kenya celebrate as new school opens

Tuesday 14 March, 2017

Pupils at a primary school in rural Kenya have cause for celebration following completion of an 18-month long project to rebuild their dilapidated school thanks to a partnership between the UK charity African Promise and Scottish funder Hazel's Footprints Trust.

The £110,000 project has seen Ngambenyi Primary School, located in the isolated Kasigau region of south-east Kenya, significantly upgraded and extended for the benefit of its 130 pupils and hundreds more for years to come.

From classrooms with dirt floors and bare walls, as well as filthy toilets and a chronic shortage of furniture and educational materials, the school now boasts facilities that rank it amongst the very best schools in the region.

African Promise, which has been operating in the area since 2008 and supports six other primary schools nearby, came to the rescue following discussions with Hazel's Footprints Trust, who were looking for a trusted and reputable school-building charity with whom to partner.

Joan Scott Aiton, Trustee of Hazel's Footprints Trust, who have fully-funded the project, said: "This is the biggest investment we have made in a single project - a testament to the huge confidence that we have in African Promise. We are delighted with the results and are very proud to be associated with this life-changing project."

Work to rebuild the school began in June 2015 and has included the construction or renovation of eleven classrooms, a computer lab-cum-library, dining hall and kitchen, staffroom and offices, as well as new toilets. The charity has also installed 40,000 litres of rainwater storage capacity, provided new desks and chairs for every pupil, and supplied around 500 brand-new textbooks.

The much-improved school has delighted pupils, teachers, parents and the wider community alike. Mercy Marigo, until recently a volunteer teacher at the school, commented: "None of us ever thought the school would be built to this standard. I love it and I believe it will make a big difference to the pupils...they were really suffering before."

Since completion of the project, African Promise has extended its wider programme of support to Ngambenyi where it now funds the salaries of two trained teachers and provides a daily lunch to every pupil, as it does to all 2,700 pupils across its network of seven partner schools. To find out more about how you can support the continued work of this small charity at Ngambenyi and elsewhere please visit their website at www.africanpromise.org.uk.

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