ALWAYS MOVING FORWARD
A note from our Executive Directors

With every new year comes reinvention: new projects, new strategies for existing projects, and the chance to regroup and refocus. It also brings the opportunity to look back on what has been accomplished. Thank you for your generosity throughout the holiday season—your continued support makes great change in Kibera. (See what you helped accomplish in the sidebar.)

Looking ahead, lots of important work is on the horizon for CFK. Construction will begin on the new girls center for Daughters United soon. The new Head of the Economic & Entrepreneurship Department, Stella, came on board in November and is developing an initiative to address unemployment of youth in their 20s. Inside, you will read about CFK’s rapidly growing hand-washing & hygiene campaign (funded by Ronald McDonald House Charities). Between these, the annual soccer tournaments for boys and girls, and continuing to provide high-quality healthcare at the Tabitha Medical Clinic, it’s going to be a busy and fulfilling year.

We are very excited about what’s ahead, and very thankful for your continued support.

Tuko Pamoja (We are together),

Leann Bankoski & Hillary Omala
CFK Executive Directors

2,000 BOOKS HAVE ARRIVED IN KIBERA

Hauling behind them carts stacked high with boxes—and drawing looks from passersby—CFK staff and volunteers made their way over Kibera’s ruts, ditches, and makeshift bridges to deliver 2,000 books to Carolina for Kibera.

The books were donated to CFK by Books For Africa, a 25-year-old NGO in St. Paul, Minnesota, that to date has supplied 30 million books for schools, libraries, and universities in 49 African countries. About 800 of these books, including midwifery textbooks collected in Minneapolis, MN and new Merck Manuals, will create a new medical library honoring the late Dr. Alan Cross, a longstanding CFK supporter and board member. The “Dr. Cross Memorial Medical Library” will provide young students and experienced clinicians alike a place to study and learn more about the medical fields that interest them. (continued on page 2)
The remaining books span all genres and will be made available to young students and community members in Kibera who are eager to read and learn.

Alan’s eldest daughter, Julia Cross, a midwife practicing in Minneapolis, raised over $1,000 to offset the cost of shipping the books from the U.S. to Kenya.

By helping with this project, Julia is continuing her family’s legacy of supporting access to education in Kibera. When Alan sat on CFK’s board, he helped grow CFK’s Health Department immensely. By leading negotiations with the CDC along with CFK co-founder Salim Mohamed and former board chair Kim Chapman, he helped expand the Tabitha Medical Clinic, which now treats over 34,000 patients and saves thousands of lives each year. His family also established the Alan Cross Memorial Scholarship, which invests in Kiberans who hope to pursue a career in healthcare.

The entire delivery provided 22,000 books to the Kibera community in partnership with General Electric, Shining Hope for Communities, and Books For Africa.

This library, along with the other books donated by Books For Africa, will give thousands of students and community members in Kibera access to new materials and knowledge. Thanks to the Cross family and their enduring spirit of friendship and partnership, CFK can continue to nurture the lives and minds of students in Kibera and to provide educational opportunities that they deserve.

**JOURNEY INTO KIBERA WITH CFK**

You heard it here first—we are organizing a special trip to Kenya this fall! By embarking on this trip, you will see Kibera from an insider’s perspective. Volunteer alongside CFK staff and local Kiberans as they improve their community. Meet the remarkable people that you support. Learn about this dynamic, emerging nation at the crossroads of change from local experts. Combining comfort and adventure, this immersive experience will give you a special look inside CFK and show you the best of Nairobi. An optional wildlife safari extension to the Massai Mara is available. The trip is organized by Elevate Destinations, a travel agency that specializes in “transformative travel” by making sure each trip benefits local communities and conservation efforts. We are very excited to offer this unique opportunity.

Learn More and Reserve Your Spot, email visit@carolinaforkibera.org
CLEAN HANDS SAVE LIVES

During a monthly parents’ meeting at CFK’s Nutrition Center, a young mother gets up and walks towards a makeshift hand-washing station at the front of the room. A Community Health Worker (CHW) is standing next to it, encouraging volunteers to come up and try it out. The young mother giggles as she turns to the other parents, who are standing and leaning between each other to watch. She then turns and begins to wash her hands. When she is finished, the CHW applauds her and asks the other parents what they saw. “She didn’t wash under her fingernails,” one mother says. “She needed to wash farther up her wrists,” says another.

This forum is jovial and friendly, but behind the community laughter is the hard truth that anyone living in Kenya learns: clean hands save lives. Unlike in the US where bacteria and parasites are usually separated from our food, water, and way of life, in Kibera, there is no separation. The best protection against waterborne diseases, food poisoning and illness is proper sanitation and hygiene. In other words, washing your hands is vital.

The problem is that washing your hands in Kibera is not always easy. Given Kibera’s lack of infrastructure, it’s hard to even find clean water. If it can be found, most families have trouble paying for it. Thanks to the support of Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC), CFK has been hard at work installing hand-washing stations in households with children under 5 and rallying community members to make washing hands part of their daily routines. Led by CHWs, the campaign, “Your Health is in Your Hands,” is being promoted across CFK programs and throughout the greater community.

Hand-washing and sanitation education has already had a positive effect on the community. The Tabitha Medical Clinic, in partnership with the U.S. CDC, recently noted that they are seeing fewer incidences of typhoid in Kibera. Typhoid is a serious disease that is more prevalent in areas with contaminated water and poor sanitation. While it’s not certain why cases have reduced in Kibera, clinicians have speculated that the increased education of hand-washing and better sanitation practices may have made an impact in stopping the spread of the disease. The enthusiasm that people have for learning about proper hygiene and sanitation will ensure that it becomes part of everyone’s routines, keeping them healthy and saving lives.
The over-used line, “It takes a village to raise a child,” is definitely true in Kibera. Not everyone will be a good “parent,” but those that can, will. From the security guard and cooks to the nutritionist and data clerk, everyone at the CFK’s Nutrition Center cares for the children who are enrolled there like their own children. I continued to notice this as the staff held a training session for the parents on strategies and methods for ensuring proper sanitation and hygiene at home. (continued online)

Read the whole story and see more photos online at cfk.unc.edu/hand-washing

Learn More

Over the past few months, there have been lots of wonderful stories from Kibera. Check out more stories at cfk.unc.edu/blog, where you can learn about:

- Sarah’s journey to a good, affordable education
- Marketing workshops for small business owners
- Isaac’s recovery from malnutrition
- Effie’s passion for family planning education

Want more stories every month?
Sign up to receive email updates from Kibera

cfk.unc.edu/signup