

ISSUE NO:33

2020 SCHOOL CALENDAR

The ministry of education through the Cabinet Secretary George Magoha announced all schools to resume next year in January 2021. This decision was made by all the stakeholders in education; this is after seeing the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases rise in Kenya on a steady basis. Currently the number of people that have contracted the virus is 27,425. Based on this disturbing trend, stakeholders have shelved an initial proposal to reopen basic education learning institutions in September for Standard 8 and Form 4 classes because of the risk of infection to the students & teachers is very high. Hence the year 2020 is considered to be void in this year's school calendar.



A photo of the Cabinet secretary and all the educational stakeholders during the briefing.

DUSK TO DAWN

Kenya as a country is also affected greatly by the COVID-19 hence forcing the country to be under lock down from dusk to dawn for over 4 months now. This was seen as way to inhibit the spread of the virus. The government also enforced county lock down within the country. There were a lot of challenges which emerged during lock down which include the economy deteriorating. Most citizens were affected in their places of work as they were forced to close early hence experiencing a low productivity in their field of work. A bigger number of the citizens were laid off from work thus leaving them stranded in meeting their family needs.



EDUCATION UPDATE

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected educational systems worldwide, leading to closures of schools, universities and colleges. This also affected our entire students who are currently in SAAS program including the computer students.

Since schools closed in Kenya, the ministry of education indicated that learners should undertake online learning or technology-mediated learning on TV, radio and mobile phones.

It has become a challenge to the learners who are living in the remote parts of Kenya as they cannot access the online lessons. This is because they cannot afford to possess the gadgets which are needed for effective running of the online classes. Network coverage is also a problem in some parts of Kenya.

Another disturbing factor is School closures have cut off girls from teachers who can sound the alarm in suspected cases of abuse at home, students have been left idle and often ignored by busy parents. Restrictions on movement have also made it harder for girls to access contraceptives and family planning services and mandatory curfews have trapped girls in homes with predatory family members and neighbors. This has led to the number of pregnancy among the teen to increase tremendously.



Left: A pupil listening to the teacher using a radio. Right: A mother teaching her children at home.

SAAS CANDIDATES

The SAAS office offered room for the Form 4 students to do their private studies. The elder siblings of SAAS also showed support towards their younger students by helping them in their revision. Much appreciation goes to Mr Henry Brackin from Kilquade who ensured that these students have enough revision books and calculators throughout their studies. The students also have access to the online classes through laptops and Wi-Fi which is provided by the SAAS office. During this time we ensure the students follow the safety measures by washing their hands frequently and maintaining social distancing.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION

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Directors: Gina Woods, David Maguire, Vanessa Hayes, Henry McLoughlin, Vat No: IE9579195E Charity No : CHY 17318



SAAS candidates being taught by Elizabeth Naliaka who was a former SAAS student. Elizabeth is currently a teacher at St Kelvins High School.

CARE PACKS FOR GIRLS

During this difficult time, we realized that most of SAAS parent are out of work hence proving it difficult to support their children with basic needs like sanitary towels. Some of the schools have programs which support girl child to acquire the towels but since the shutdown of schools, girls are left hanging, they do not know where or whom they can run to in case they are in need of packs.

Most of them opted to use, leaves, old rags or even pieces of mattresses during menstruation times. Others even go ahead and put themselves in risk of getting pregnancy or HIV. All this is because they need cash to acquire sanitary towels.

We greatly appreciate Madam Monica Kennedy for her thought of the girls during these challenging times. Through her we were able to distribute 500 sanitary towels among 140 girls & their mums.

The girls are now contented and relaxed since they know the pack can last for few months before they run out.



SAAS girls are happy to receive their sanitary pack from Md. Monica Kennedy

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FOOD RELIEF PROGRAMME

SAAS directors together with SAAS sponsors came up with the idea of supporting SAAS families with food during this difficult time. This amazing idea came up after a very serious thought of the welfare of the families in Mombasa Kenya. Most parents have lost their jobs due to of COVID-19, thus affecting their source of income proving it difficult for them to cater for their family needs.

More than 100 families benefited from this food program since we started from phase 1 in May to phase 5 at the end of July. The food packs include mainly the basic food which they need in their homes for example beans, rice, wheat flour, maize flour, soap etc.

According to them they are going through hard times to the extent of not affording even one meal in a day. They said the closure of schools has not only affected their children education but it has increase burden to them as they have to assume responsibilities of feeding them too. This is because schools provide meal to children as it is covered in the fees which you always pay on time. Most parents mentioned that they are facing so many challenges during these pandemic times and they do not know which need they should meet first e.g. either to provide meals or pay rent. Receiving food parcel from SAAS has solved half of their problems as they can now concentrate more on other needs.

We received a lot of heartfelt gratitude and prayers messages on behalf of everyone who supported this program. There were smiles all over their faces as they walked out carrying their food parcels.

Lots of appreciation goes to Connor McKenna, Richard Hayes, Monica Kennedy, Robert Neil, Donald Watson, Annette Daly and Denis Byrne. SAAS families will pray for your well being always!



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Some photos of the whole food batch before and after packing in addition to photos of the happy parents after receiving their food parcel.

MARIAM NYINGO'S CORNER



Mariam is 21 years of age. She is currently in Form 4 at Kanzalu Slopes Academy.

Below is a poem she dedicated to SAAS.

SOAR SAAS SOAR, SOAR TO EAGLE HEIGHTS

Here we are from all walks and talks of life

You crown coveted mission that is "assistance"

You are who you are for your perpetual mission, people with certified satisfied goals

Happily we are for choosing what to become

Soar SAAS soar, Soar to eagle heights.

Education, a predominant proud SAAS product

Creative support being your daily conduct

From abroad to Mombasa Kenya

Our nice future standing smoldering high,

Soar SAAS soar, Soar to eagle heights.

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SAAS

SPONSOR AN AFRICAN SCHOLAR

SAAS towards a fully supporting mission,

Our future vision, a viscous vision with a mission

To permanent eradicate, pangs of hunger

Like a juggernaut forward ever backward never

Smile SAAS smile, for the daily step of our success

Soar SAAS soar, Soar to eagle heights

SAAS, a stepping stone of every success

No more despicable dilapidated failure

No more frequent fail to our success

The preparation of our shinning future, restored

Soar SAAS soar, Soar to eagle heights.

Hurray group of SAAS, for your fiery focused assistance

Hats off group of SAAS, for your are a blissful blessing for many

Big up group of SAAS, for your tactful timely support

Salute group of SAAS, for the good work you always do

For what it is all said and done, our dreams will come to pass.

Soar SAAS soar, Soar to eagle heights.

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