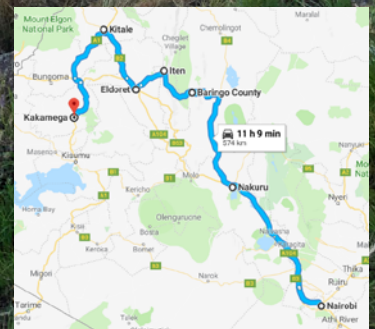
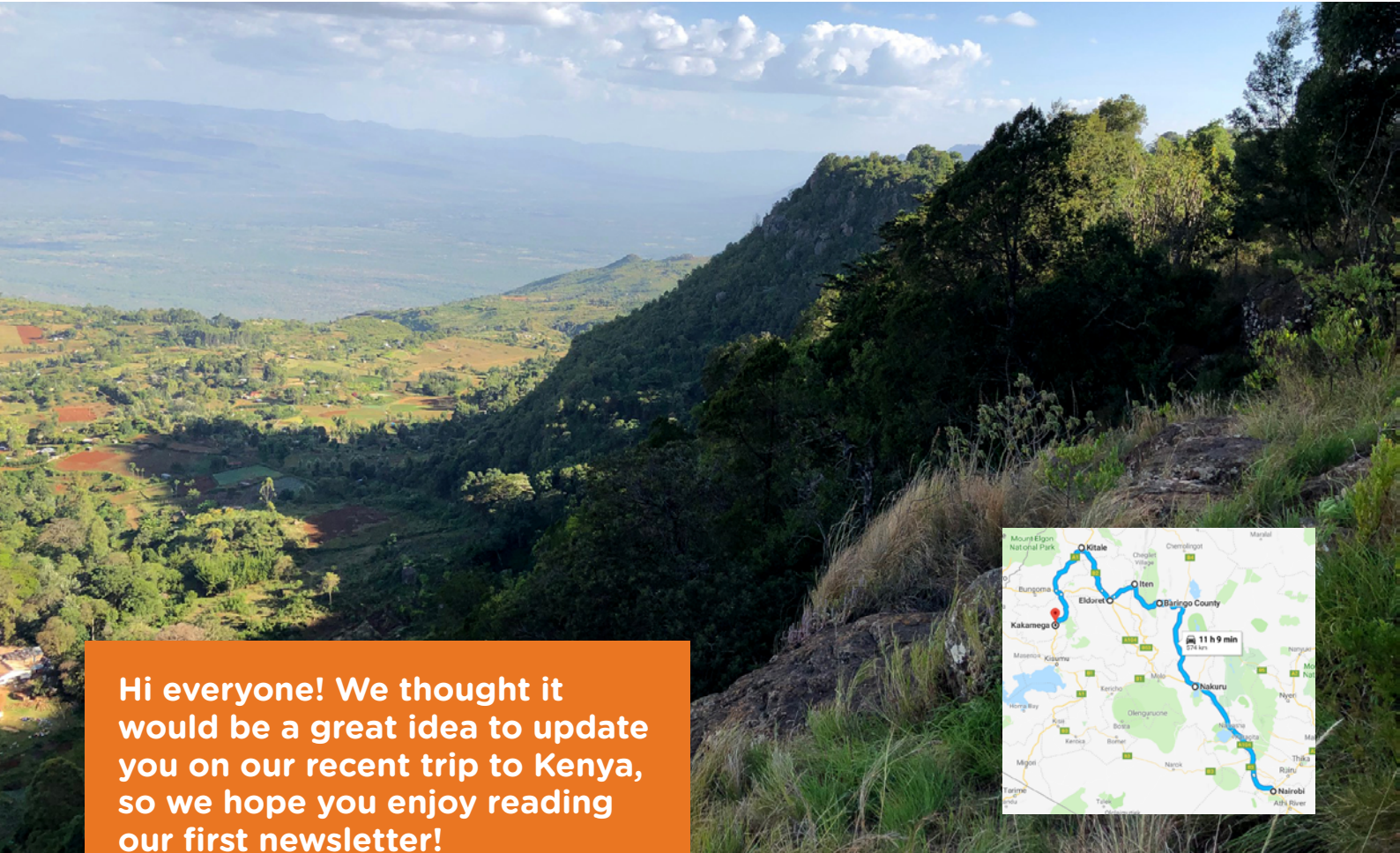


En Route

MAY 2019 • ISSUE 1 • NEWSLETTER



New Routes
Foundation



Hi everyone! We thought it would be a great idea to update you on our recent trip to Kenya, so we hope you enjoy reading our first newsletter!

First of all, we would like to let you know what has been happening with the charity (NGO in Kenya) as there have been a few changes! We have learnt a lot since researching and discovering the needs that exist within our specific areas of operation.

Arriving in Kenya on the 7th of January, we spent six weeks travelling around the Rift Valley area in the west of the country. We spent time in Nairobi, Nakuru, Iten (Elgeyo-Marakwet County), Eldoret (Uasin-Gishu County), Kabarnet (Baringo County), Kitale (Trans-Nzoia County) and Kakamega (Kakamega County).

The purpose was to gain a better understanding of Kenya as a whole, but also seek which part God was calling us to. We both, separately, really felt God was asking us to settle and work in two counties called Elgeyo-Marakwet and Uasin Gishu.

Above: Elgeyo-Marakwet, from the viewpoint at the top. It is at high altitude and is perfect for athletes to do high-intensity training before major events, e.g. the Olympics, creating a massive draw for world-class runners. • Inset: Our journey

These two counties are next to each other, with regular free movement of people between them. For example, if a student goes to school in Elgeyo-Marakwet they may live in Uasin-Gishu, and vice versa, therefore making it wise for us to operate within both counties. It was incredibly exciting for us to find out where our NGO will be operating so early into our trip and we immediately felt very passionate about the work to come.

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP

In Elgeyo-Marakwet (of which Iten is the capital), we had the privilege of meeting with the County Government to discuss our NGO programmes and a potential partnership with them. We were expecting to meet with only one county director, but were surprised to find three high ranking county government officials and one national government representative sitting in the office waiting for us!



SUCCESSFUL CONTACTS

We ended up meeting with officials representing various fields such as youth, gender, social services, sports, ICT and also the Department of Children’s Services. The meeting was incredibly successful and the County Government agreed to partner with us as an NGO (incredible!!).

Later, we were taken to meet the Governor of Elgeyo-Marakwet where we presented our NGO to him and he again assured us support from the county (even more incredible!!). They have since written a signed letter confirming the partnership and endorsed our NGO application (which we applied for on the 2nd April). This adds a lot of weight to our application.

Above: The highlighted counties are the areas our charity will operate in: Elgeyo-Marakwet (capital: Iten) and Uasin Gishu (capital: Eldoret)
Below: Storm with one of the Kenyan students



GOING FORWARD

We spent time visiting different schools in our areas of operation to ask for feedback/advice on our proposed NGO programmes. We received very positive feedback which is helping us shape our overall initial programme going forward. Our aim is that this NGO will work with and benefit the Kenyan people, never to think we know it all! We also spent a lot of time with Kenyan students, which has been invaluable to us gaining further insights for our work going forward.

With the knowledge we have gained from our time in Kenya, our NGO will initially run programmes with school students. Our initial programme is designed to support students from Form 3 (equivalent to Year 12 in the UK) until the end of university or college. As Form 3 is their second-to-last year of secondary school most of our beneficiaries will be aged between 15 and 17 when they begin the programme.

Below: Sophie & Storm along with some of the Kenyan students



Summary of our Form 3 to Tertiary Education Programme

In our first year (starting in January 2020), we will select 10 needy/vulnerable children with the help of the Department of Children's Services from our area of operation. We will support these 10 students until they complete their education.



Above: Sophie & Storm along with one of the Kenyan students

We have decided to start with the current programme so that we can start smaller and spend some time getting to know the culture and establishing ourselves in the community. We plan to build on this programme and run similar programmes for other demographic groups such as teenage mothers, street children and vulnerable primary school students in the near future. Our long-term goal is then to establish a children's village or alternatively a nursery to secondary school boarding school for the extremely vulnerable and needy.

We understand this is quite a lot of information all at once, so feel free to ask questions! Our website and NGO booklets will launch soon and expand more on each area. We cannot wait to get started!

We have welcomed Trish Farrelly and Jacqueline Olweya onto our NGO Board of Directors (equivalent to trustees in the UK), which is really exciting and we are already seeing the NGO taking on new ground with these added additions! As some of you also may have realised, our NGO name has changed (again!). This has been frustrating, but is all part of a non-computerised application process for our NGO in Kenya. A manual name search revealed that 'Maisha Mapya Foundation' was already taken. Therefore, 'New Routes Foundation', will now be our name! We love what it represents – especially the play on 'routes'/'roots' (it's also easier to pronounce!). As of 2nd April 2019 our Kenyan NGO application has been sent off which will enable us to start operating – please be praying for this!

In Form 3 our students will take part in various extra-curricular courses (Male/Female Empowerment, Soft Skills, First Aid and Nutritional Balance courses), individual/group mentoring sessions and fellowship groups for all students together.



In Form 4 (last year of secondary school), they will attend more extra-curricular courses (Financial Management and Male/Female Empowerment), as well as individual/group mentoring sessions and fellowship groups.



After ending secondary school, there are often a number of months before starting tertiary education. This provides opportunity to help our students gain an internship or work experience placement (something not often done in Kenya), as well as being able to support them in a personal project (they may wish to pursue an entrepreneurial idea or run a course for their community etc.) within this time. Personal mentoring for the students will continue in this time.



In their first year of tertiary education we will give each student a 'course starter pack' which will include essential items for them to succeed at college/university (for example, a laptop, course-related equipment, stationery).



For our students' entire tertiary education we aim to provide supplementary grants to each of them that will close the gap between their government tuition grants (which are never 100%) and the remaining tuition fees, personal maintenance costs and additional course-related costs (e.g. for a medical student: a stethoscope, hospital uniform, licensing fees, transport costs to hospital placements etc.). If this funding gap is not closed for most vulnerable students, it often means they are simply unable to go to university or college at all. In fact, for many such students the inability to pay for exams means they don't go to or complete university!



The Lindenberg Family

The main purpose of us being in Kenya was for us to conduct on-the-ground research and set up the NGO. However, we as a family have also really felt God's favour and provision while we have been in Kenya. We have now started renting a home in Eldoret (Uasin-Gishu county) which is incredible and we love it so, so much!

We have spent time furnishing the house (which takes longer than you would imagine due to there being no department stores – and much less an IKEA!) and have also been hugely blessed with having our own car to move around in.

We have spent time with missionaries in both Eldoret and Kakamega, making friends and learning more about the country we now call home. We have found the most incredible church down the road from our house, where we have got really involved already, in particular in the youth ministry. We have also been able to make lots of friends from the local community through the church, which is super exciting. Storm absolutely loves gardening in our little garden, and he has planted many flowers and even butternuts, which makes the house feel very homely!

We really do feel so settled in Kenya. It is our home and we are so grateful to have had these 3 months where we had the opportunity to figure everything out before our NGO programmes start, and also before our little one arrives! I'm sure we will be seeing most of you over the next few weeks/months to properly catch up with you but hope that gives you a good idea of what we have been up to these last few months.

Lots of love,

Storm and Sophie



Find out more

We are are planning on having a fundraising event in the next couple of months. Please could you select one of the following options if you wish to be kept informed about New Routes Foundation's progress and growth as we start to build this charity both in Kenya and here in the UK.

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