



From Our Founder Connie Cheren

Partners for Care is about changing lives. For this special edition newsletter I asked our staff in Kenya who are “on the ground and in the field” to tell a story of someone whose life was changed - someone who touched them, a story that stays with them. As you read these stories please remember it is our supporters that make it possible for our staff to change a life. Every donation large or small helps reach the most vulnerable. Those crawling on the ground, those without the skills to get a job to support their families, those dying from drinking dirty water or from a mosquito bite. Without our supporters our staff could not reach those most vulnerable, most in need. John Wesley said, “if your heart is as my heart, take my hand.” Even though our staff serve 10,000 miles away in another country they know you have joined hands with them to change a life. I hope these stories touch your heart as they did the PFC staff and mine.

Connie

A Message from Sammy Wanjau

Executive Director
PFC Kenya



When I come to the US to meet and thank our donors, I am often asked if I would ever want to come live in America where life is easier and most people are richly blessed with the basic necessities and much more. And while I truly love the US and am grateful beyond words for our many generous supporters there, I would not trade my life here in Kenya for life anywhere else. The stories in this newsletter are the reason why. Here in my native country, I am privileged in a very different way – I can be a part of changing lives in a way that I could not do in a developed country. To see the utter joy on the face of someone who has crawled on the ground their whole life and has been given the gift of mobility – that kind of joy changes not only their life, but mine, too. It makes me happy to give a thirsty child a drink of clean, cool water from a water backpack, knowing it will quench her thirst and keep her healthy so she can go to school, play with friends, and just be a kid. To have a small part in helping a mom or dad in a slum community to become literate or to learn computers so they can find a job and support their family is a gift I treasure. The people we help often tell us that we “changed their lives.” But truly, the work of Partners for Care in my beloved country of Kenya has also changed my life – in ways for which I will always be grateful.

Sammy

Changing Lives

Special Edition 2020

Eunice Gatakaa

Watamu



Eunice Gatakaa joined PFC in 2013 as a tutor in the Watamu literacy school and loves what she does. Her passion is to see lives transformed through education. Through the years, she has seen hundreds of students' lives change as they

received the gift of literacy. As Eunice shared her story of Parasanka Ole Saitoti, it became clear that literacy is not just about learning to read – it's about restoring a life. It's about creating hope, promise and a whole new world of possibilities. It helps a person become whole.

When I met Saitoti, he lacked the most fundamental and basic reading skills. He was not able to follow directions even enough to locate the right water tap. He was unable to find work and had essentially lost his sense of self-worth – the saddest form of poverty of all. I began by taking Saitoti by the hand and leading him to find water. I told him about the literacy school and he enrolled.

He says it was, "The best decision of my life!" Learning to read and write in English was "more than he had hoped for" giving Saitoti a whole new beginning. He went on to find a job. His employer told him how very proud he is of him. He has since been promoted. I believe Saitoti's story is a perfect example of how the gift of literacy can completely change a life.



Peter Chea

Watamu

Peter Chea grew up on the coast of Kenya and struggled to get an education most of his life. Over the years, despite his own struggles, Peter developed a heart for the less fortunate and a desire to help change their lives.



Joining PFC in 2013 as an IT tutor in the Watamu computer school gave me the opportunity to realize my dream. I believe that access to education is the "most precious gift" PFC has extended to communities in Kilifi County. I've seen the lives of former schoolmates, friends, and relatives transformed for the better. Some now work in shops, some in hotels and others in schools or hospitals, but their message of gratitude is all the same: "Peter, if it were not for Partners for Care and your help, I would not have gotten a job and be able to provide for myself and my family."



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Partnering for hope and health in East Africa

Saving Lives

Max Maina

Max Maina grew up in Marurui slum as an orphan. Though he was materially poor, Max strongly believed God would make a way for him to help change lives for the better in his community someday. He was overjoyed to have this become a reality when he joined the PFC medical clinic as a community health outreach worker in Nairobi, in 2009. Illness and disease are rampant in a slum. Countless people suffer, as does the community as a whole. Max is improving the health of individuals through his work conducting home visits, educating residents on how to care for themselves, preventing illness, and organizing community health outreaches and awareness events.



I have seen many lives saved through this work. Among my favorites is a dear man named Francis, who lived in the same slum where I grew up. I found Francis in the midst of a severe asthma attack. We rushed him to the PFC clinic where he received treatment. Francis always said that his life was saved that day because someone cared enough to help - even when he had nothing to give in return.

We monitored and managed Francis' condition at the PFC clinic and he became a proud and passionate ambassador of our work. He volunteered with water backpack and bed net distributions, mobilization of residents for health screenings, and regularly referred patients to the clinic. Francis passed away in Kiambu Hospital in the spring of 2018. It is very gratifying for me to know that Francis spent most of his last years in good health. He left this earth with a passion to help others live their healthiest lives, and best of all, knowing he was not alone.

Through the life of Francis and so many others, I can clearly see God's faithfulness continue to unfold. The same God who redeemed my life, goes into the slum with me every day, changing the lives of others.

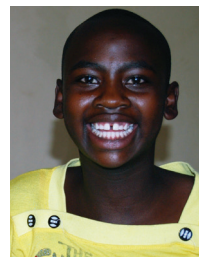
Pastor John Njuguna



Pastor John is the Director of Kathy's House in Mai Mahiu. He and his wife Mary have a passion to care for widows and vulnerable orphaned children. They meet not only their physical needs but give them the security and belonging - of

being a part of a loving family as well. Pastor John and Mary currently have seven children in their home. The village of Mai Mahiu is in Nakuru County in the Rift Valley. It lies on a main trucking route from the coast of Kenya into its interior and the greater African continent. It has one of the highest rates of HIV/AIDS in Kenya and one of its highest orphan populations.

It's not uncommon for Pastor John to see orphans on the streets or begging in the villages and cities. This is heartbreaking enough, but when friends told Pastor John about a little girl named Jedidah, he knew he had to do something to help her.



When I went to find Jedidah and rescue her, my heart was torn by what I saw. Here was this precious child, very small and all alone. A beautiful little girl of about 7 years old, her tiny frame had taken refuge in the safest place she could find: a toilet. Some realities need no other words. For me it was enough. I was sure that PFC would help me care for another child so I took her home. Mary met us at the door with open arms. Together we fed Jedidah, bathed her, put her in clean clothes and comforted her. This was the beginning of a new life for Jedidah and I was so proud that PFC gladly accepted the blessing of another life to change. Jedidah told us she had to drop out of school in Grade 2 and find a way to care for herself from that time on. I couldn't imagine being that small and finding myself all alone in this world.

PFC's decision to rescue Jedidah changed everything for her. She is now in Grade 8 and is becoming a beautiful young woman with dreams of her own. Her life is full of hope, restoration and promise. Mary and I give all the glory to God and thank PFC for the opportunity to save and change another precious life.



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Changing Lives

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Mary Wang'ang'a



We probably all know people who, due to physical disability, have never experienced the joy of walking. In some places in the world, people with disabilities do not have access to the resources they need - and suffer greatly. Even as they grow into adulthood, they are

forced to continue crawling on the ground. They drag or pull themselves along the dusty roads, pathways and sand to get where they need to be - the body parts that work pulling the parts that don't. They are calloused, bruised and their clothes are soiled. Some are still being carried by aging parents. To say their life is hard is a gross understatement. To be able to say that Partners for Care, in partnership with Mobility Worldwide is doing something about it - is a life-changing truth.



Mary Wang'ang'a is the Director of the Partners for Care mobility carts program. Her passion is to see physically challenged people become mobile. For Mary, and all who witness it, seeing a person being "lifted up" and given mobility for the first time in their lives, is a miracle. It's like watching the transformation of a life right before your eyes.

My story is of Samuel Ndung'u whom I found in a broken wheelchair that was stuck in the mud. To me, Samuel's life seemed wrought with a million struggles and he lacked the most basic amenities. Samuel's greatest wish was for mobility.



Through my work with PFC, I experienced the joy of seeing his life transformed from the day he received his mobility cart. Everything was easier and the change so meaningful. Samuel's life became a better life. Samuel is no longer stuck in a broken wheelchair. He has been given the gift of mobility. He received physical therapy and has started a business using the Igloo cooler that was given to him by Mobility Worldwide, Columbia Mo. He is healthier in every way in a new, empowered life. I believe that Samuel's story is proof that when we reach out to help the needy, to lift up immobile people, we restore so much more than just mobility. We help restore their dignity and potential for the future.



Partnering for hope and health in East Africa

Saving Lives

Ashley Waudo



Many of us are unaware that approximately 2 billion people globally (one in three) lack access to safe drinking water. Or that 827,000 people in low-middle-income countries die annually as a result of inadequate access to safe water. That intestinal disease remains a major killer – and is largely preventable. With better water, sanitation,

and hygiene we could prevent the deaths of 297,000 children under 5 per year. These facts are staggering, but true. (WHO 2019) As we work together to provide water to those in need, it's important that we consider not only access but ensure its safety as well. One without the other can be as life-threatening as not having water at all – as it can end up spreading disease rather than preventing it. People who lack safe water also lack access to the medical care required to treat disease from contaminants. Addressing water safety, along with access, is the best way to save and sustain lives.

Partners for Care has become a leader in this through the implementation of the water backpack - a revolutionary design that is proving to save and improve lives. Its ergonomic design reduces back strain and resulting injury caused by carrying up to 40 pounds of water. Its liner is removable, self-sanitizes in sunlight, and is replaceable. Its padded straps are adjustable, reducing shoulder strain. It can be hung in homes, huts, classrooms or from trees. The spigot, located on the outside of the pack, provides 'running water' for the very first time for many. It has become a proven lifesaver throughout Kenya.

Ashley Waudo's passion is to transform lives through service to others. She is the Director of the PFC water backpack program, which includes distribution, education and ongoing research on safety, disease prevention and the pack's effectiveness. She says it is "a joy seeing thousands of lives, especially those of children, saved through the water pack's prevention of waterborne illnesses."

I have seen the water backpack bring joy to the lives of thousands of children in schools throughout Kenya, giving them the opportunity to grow up healthy and strong. When children see the water backpack, the excitement on their faces is immeasurable. Distribution and training on the water backpacks in schools inspires me every day as Partners for Care continues to impact the lives of many children and families in Kenya. The pack serves as a teaching tool to the students on the importance of drinking safe water in order to prevent waterborne illnesses. This encourages behavioral changes in the children that is replicated in their homes, which I believe will one day bring about a generation free from waterborne illnesses. It gives me great joy to know that lives are transformed through this noble cause and gives me determination and energy to keep pushing.



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Pastor Hirbo



Pastor Hirbo is the Director of the Marsabit ministry up in the northern desert of Kenya. He serves in one of the harshest climates there is – where life is hard. Many people are destitute and yet anyone who knows him will tell you, that is not what Pastor Hirbo sees. He sees the value, potential,

and dreams that have yet to come true. He sees lives worth changing. Pastor Hirbo will utilize anything you give him to reach others and transform lives. He asks nothing for himself except that which will help him reach the hurting, homeless and those most in need. He could tell you stories that would initially break your heart – and then fill it with joy! Pastor Hirbo has reached thousands of hurting people, seeing countless lives change.

There is one story though, that still touches his heart; that of a homeless man named George. George lived on the streets of Marsabit. When a person has lived on the street so long, they eventually become invisible. Though they dwell amongst the living, they are essentially forgotten: overlooked, disregarded.

It's been said that Pastor Hirbo sees with heaven's eyes and it was with those eyes that he spotted the disheveled man one day. A man who was lonely, hungry, dirty, diseased and forgotten. Yet that's not who Pastor Hirbo saw. He saw a person no different than us. Someone worthy of love, dignity, purpose and of having his life restored.

When I saw George, I set aside my plans for the day and spent the day with George. He had a bad case of jiggers on his hands and feet so I treated his infection sites and bought him clean, new clothes and a new pair of shoes. George told me he could not remember the last time he got new clothes or shoes – let alone, had someone he could call “friend.” As I cleaned up George's tired, old body, I tried to bathe his heart as well. I shared how much he was loved by God and gave him reason to hope. Already, George was beginning to look like a new man – and not only on the outside. Life was coming back into his eyes. He began to smile.



Over the next few weeks, I continued to follow up with George until one day, my prayers were answered. George had gotten a job! He was able to buy food and clothes, pay his own rent and was making new friends. Now, when George smiles, it makes me smile too. Truly, he is proof that there is great promise in everyone. When we see and believe the best for someone, their life can completely change.



Partnering for hope and health in East Africa

Saving Lives

Ann Mugure



Ann Mugure Nyoike joined Partners for Care as a tutor in the computer school in Nairobi a few years ago. Her heart is for service. Not only to her country but also to her people where so many live in poverty. Ann's joy is to help change that by bringing hope,

opportunity and a sustainable future to others. She has seen hundreds of students lives transformed through the PFC classes. Ann shared a story that she said "gave her great delight."



One Saturday morning I was doing some shopping. As I approached the cashier to pay for my purchases, I looked up to see one of my former students, Monica, behind the desk. Monica was beaming at me with a big smile. I always hoped that one day, she would be able to rise from her difficult circumstances and begin a better life. In that brief

moment in the store, I saw in front of me the fruit of her labor – a happy, free, changed life.

I was so thrilled that Monica had been able to secure a job for herself through the knowledge she gained in the computer program. Though I already loved my job, my heart grew bigger and my gratitude to PFC became even stronger. I witnessed a life that appeared one way when we first met and now, had clearly been changed!

John Wang'ombe

John Wang'ombe joined Partners for Care in 2010 as an IT tutor. His passion for community transformation and his love of computer technology has been a perfect pairing. He is now the director of Internet Technology for PFC. He has seen his dream come true time and time again. Nearly a decade ago John had a student named Ester Mwikali in one of his computer classes.



I met Esther when she enrolled in the Nairobi computer school. Esther had a real knack for computers and it wasn't long before she became the top student in her class. So I introduced her to teaching and became her mentor. She advanced to become a teacher in the computer school, starting a special class for children on Saturdays. She is now a tutor in our computer school and has taught over 1,000 students who have successfully graduated. Every one

of these lives is better because of her influence. Every day I am blessed to see lives transformed in my community through the PFC IT school. Esther is a wonderful example of how when one life is changed, a ripple effect occurs – and every life it touches is made better too.



Changing Lives

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Charles Mathenge (Chalo)

When asked to recall a life that's been changed, Charles Mathenge, PFC's Communications Director, could think of many. It was hard to choose just one! He Charles (who goes by Chalo) had joined Partners for Care in 2009, bringing with him a passion to care for others. The story Chalo selected was about his own life transformation.

The first time I heard about Partners for Care was when they opened the What if? Life Changing Center in Marurui slum. I wanted to volunteer there so I would show up every day and ask where I could be of service. Every day, I would clean desks and seats, straighten chairs, tidy up the classroom and sweep the floor. Really, no job was too small for me. I just wanted to help. I was grateful for the opportunity PFC gave me to serve, for the hope it was bringing to my community, and for the lives I saw being changed there.

After a while, PFC hired me to be the receptionist in the IT school. I later became the IT leader and eventually, moved into my current role as Director of Communications. I think that one of the best days of my life was when I was hired to work for Partners for Care. This alone, was life-changing. My work with PFC has taught me to be a good leader, which is something that cannot be traded for anything.

I don't consider my job at Partners for Care to be work. It's really just a way of life where you learn to put the needs of others before your own. I'm very grateful to PFC because as I continue to show up every day and help change lives, I am reminded of the incredible change it has made in my own life.



Partnering for hope and health in East Africa

Kano Daro

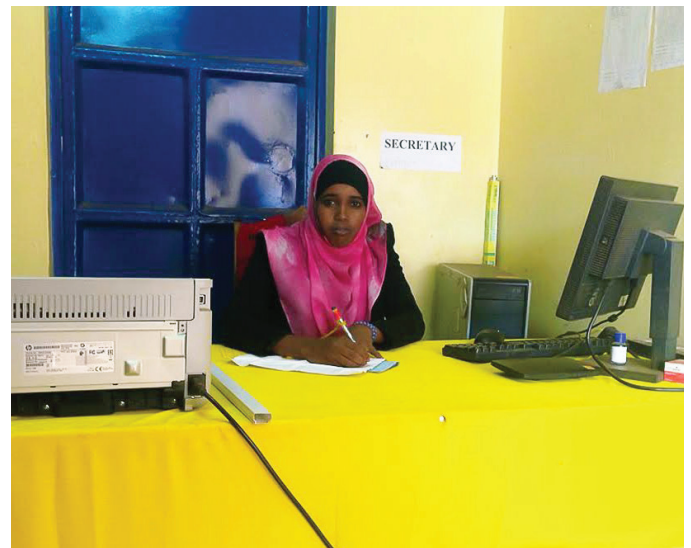
Kano Daro is the head of the Partners for Care computer school in Marsabit. He believes that education is one of the most powerful ways we can change people's lives. In his community, many people do not have this opportunity and unemployment, poverty and hopelessness are prevalent. Kano is passionate about passing knowledge on to others through teaching, empowering them to change the course of their lives.



One of my favorite stories of a life changed is the story of Jillo Guyo Galgallo, a former student in the PFC computer class. Jillo came from a very financially-challenged family. Jillo was raised by a single mom, who had no money to send her to school. They lived in a small manyatta in a remote village, Jillo joined a computer class and because she had no funds for transportation, she walked 9 miles each way to attend.

I encouraged her to work hard and believe God had a good plan for her life. She soared to the top of her class and graduated with a new-found hope. Jillo went on to get a job as a secretary at the Marsabit Driving School. She is able to put into practice the knowledge and skills she learned in our PFC computer school; keeping records of all the new clients, managing the database, printing and photocopying, and coordinating the school's operations through email communications.

Jillo's life has been changed. She is able to use a portion of her salary to help support her siblings and aging parents. Through the PFC computer school, Jillo is an overcomer and she is changing lives in her family as well. She is very grateful to PFC for giving her the opportunity to learn, and I am grateful for the role our PFC computer school played in her story.



Changing Lives

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Sammy Wanjau

There are few stories more riveting than that of Rebecca. She is a perfect example of how love in action can completely alter the course of a life; redeeming and restoring it to a bright and promising future. She is a testimony that anything is possible for those who believe.

Connie Cheren, our PFC Founder, was in an orphanage assisting a Kenya team with testing the children for HIV/AIDS. Her daughter, Mindy Melgar, had accompanied her on this trip. That is when we first met Rebecca. A frail, tiny, frightened little child, she had lost most of her hair and had cancer skin lesions on her face. Shockingly she was one of five children who tested positive for HIV/AIDS. Rebecca was in the final stage of the disease and close to death.

Connie didn't know that Pastor Hirbo had brought Rebecca along with other desperately ill children from Marsabit to Nairobi in an attempt to save their

lives. Connie returned to the US and asked David Gruber to help save this little girl and the other four children. David funded the building of a home for them called Kathi's House in memory of his wife who had recently passed away.



I have had the privilege of overseeing the care of Rebecca for the last ten years. I hired Pastor John and his wife Mary to be the “parents” of the five children. I also worked to ensure that Rebecca had all the necessary medical care, as well as the proper schooling. There is a close bond between Rebecca and myself and it's incredibly gratifying to know that Rebecca is healthy, and in her third year of high school. It's hard to believe that the Rebecca we see today is the same little girl she was so many years ago. She truly is a miracle - proof that love in action can make all the difference in someone's life.

If it stirs your heart as it does mine to read stories like these, I invite you to help support the continued work of the PFC staff. Any donation size will help change a life, and 100% of your donation will go to our programs and staff in Kenya.

You can make a donation using the envelope provided in this newsletter or go online to www.partnersforcare.org/donate.

Asante Sana!
(Thank you very much!)



Partnering for hope and health in East Africa

Sharing Supporters' Stories

Written by Linda Grosskopf, PFC Board Member

True Friends

While I was visiting a rural Kenyan school, a friend shared a sweet observation one day. There, ahead of us were two young girls, arm in arm, skipping along. Smiling, there was joy on their faces and in their laughter. Thinking about the gift that a true friend is, I smiled back at my friend. It was then that she pointed at their feet. Each was wearing one shoe – of a matched pair. If I had a friend with no shoes would I share my only pair? Could I be a friend like that and be happy with so little? We go to change lives, but times like these change our lives as much as theirs.



Sharing a Starburst

A small, six-year-old girl, named Fortune taught us a life-changing lesson one day. Grasping her only coin, she hurried through the gate at the end of her school day, her little dress blowing in the breeze, and ran down the dusty trail to a local kiosk. Standing tip-toed, she banged her coin on the counter. Peering over, the owner smiled, and handed her a small wrapped candy. Holding her prize, she ran back, calling to her friends. In a silent, little circle they sat. Only the sound of the wrapper could be heard. All eyes were on Fortune as she carefully unwrapped her gift. With even greater care she bit her one candy into four, equal, pieces. Then, with a loving smile, handed a piece to each of her friends. With great joy, Fortune shared the little she had, causing us to ask ourselves, “What might we be holding in our hands that someone is waiting for us to share?” Whose life could be changed if we gave even the little we have?



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Thank You to All Our Partners!

