



Porridge and Rice

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charity number 1155841

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Porridge and Rice (PaR) is a small education charity that operates in the slums of Nairobi. The charity's goal is to combat poverty by enabling children of the extreme poor to obtain a sound education - studies show that education is an effective way of combatting poverty. The charity adopts an holistic, human-rights-based approach in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

PaR was founded in 2013 and received its formal registration in February 2014. It is run by a management team in the UK which meets monthly. The charity has no salaried staff in the UK with all members of the management team giving of their time freely and covering all their own expenses. The management team is led by a chair, Ken Surridge, an independent tutor, and a vice-chair, Emma Ballinger, a qualified nurse.

The charity is supported in Kenya by the local leadership team which is made up of the head and deputy of each partner school. The charity actively develops the capacity of this team to enable them to participate in the management and running of the charity work.

Members of the UK management team visit Kenya two to three times a year, covering all their own expenses. While in Kenya, the team monitors progress on the ground, builds relationships with partner schools, and implements projects including training sessions for the teachers and Kenyan leadership team.

The charity currently partners with five community schools representing nearly 2000 pupils and 70 teachers. None of the schools receive government funding and all are led by local people. The schools and their staff are carefully vetted by the charity's members before partnership is proposed. The work of PaR is organised into 7 programmes which are (in alphabetical order):

- (1) **Education and Sponsorship.** Despite being committed and talented, most teachers in the Nairobi slums have no more than the equivalent of a GCSE education. PaR provides in-house training by educational professionals and sponsors formal education courses at colleges and universities for some teachers. In addition, some parents cannot afford to keep their children in school. Where there is genuine need, PaR provides work within the schools for parents that will enable them to pay the fees of their children.
- (2) **Extracurricular Activities.** Children of the slums have virtually no access to activities like sports and art classes. PaR has collected equipment and helped schools introduce extracurricular activities including football, rugby, and drawing, enabling children to access experiences not usually available to them.
- (3) **Facilities and Furniture.** The slums are, by definition, made up of poorly constructed, inadequate facilities. PaR works to improve school facilities to create an environment conducive to learning through, for example, building new classrooms, repairing blackboards, painting the school, and buying new desks.
- (4) **Feeding and Nutrition.** Prior to setting up the charity, the original founders spoke to a number of schools in the Nairobi slums about their challenges. At the top of the list, teachers described the difficulty of teaching hungry children and how each meal time they would scrape together something for the worst sufferers. When PaR partners with a school, it thus leads with a feeding programme, providing African porridge in the morning and bean stew on rice at lunch, hence the name of the charity. Since its inception, the goal of the programme has expanded not only to combat hunger but to address regional nutritional deficiencies identified by the WHO .

- (5) **Gender and Rights.** Kenya is a patriarchal society with women facing considerable challenges like child marriage and FGM. The charity runs regular seminars for the children and the community addressing a wide range of issues, educating them in their rights under the Kenyan constitution, which is, in fact, very modern, and how to exercise their rights.
- (6) **Health and Hygiene.** According to the WHO, 1 in 5 children in the Nairobi slums dies of diarrhoea before the age of 5 in the Nairobi slums. The charity provides clean water, disinfectant, and soap, plus runs classes for the schools and the community on hygiene as well as the treatment of basic illnesses such as diarrhoea. The charity is in the process of having all teachers trained in First Aid after watching a choking child nearly die because of teacher ignorance – fortunately a volunteer nurse was on site at the time and she intervened.
- (7) **Sustainability and Accountability.** The charity works with the Kenyan Leadership team to develop basic management skills such as budgeting and leadership, to make them more effective and accountable. In addition, it has initiated projects like the raising of chickens and keeping of pigs to earn money locally and teach pupils and parents skills that will enable them to earn some money. By the end of October 2017 the charity currently will have 16 pigs and 2000 chickens.

The programmes are designed to remove barriers and provide resources to enable each school to deliver the best education possible to the children of the slums.

The PaR Facebook page chronicles the work of the charity with photographs in roughly chronological order, and the website provides an overview of the work of the charity.

Please do not hesitate to contact the charity if you have any questions on info@porridgeandrice.co.uk or by filling in the form on the charity website www.porridgeandrice.co.uk

Thank you for reading.

Ken SurrIDGE (chair)
Emma Ballinger (vice chair)



Figure 1 Lunch at Lizpal School.