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# EQUITY NEWS

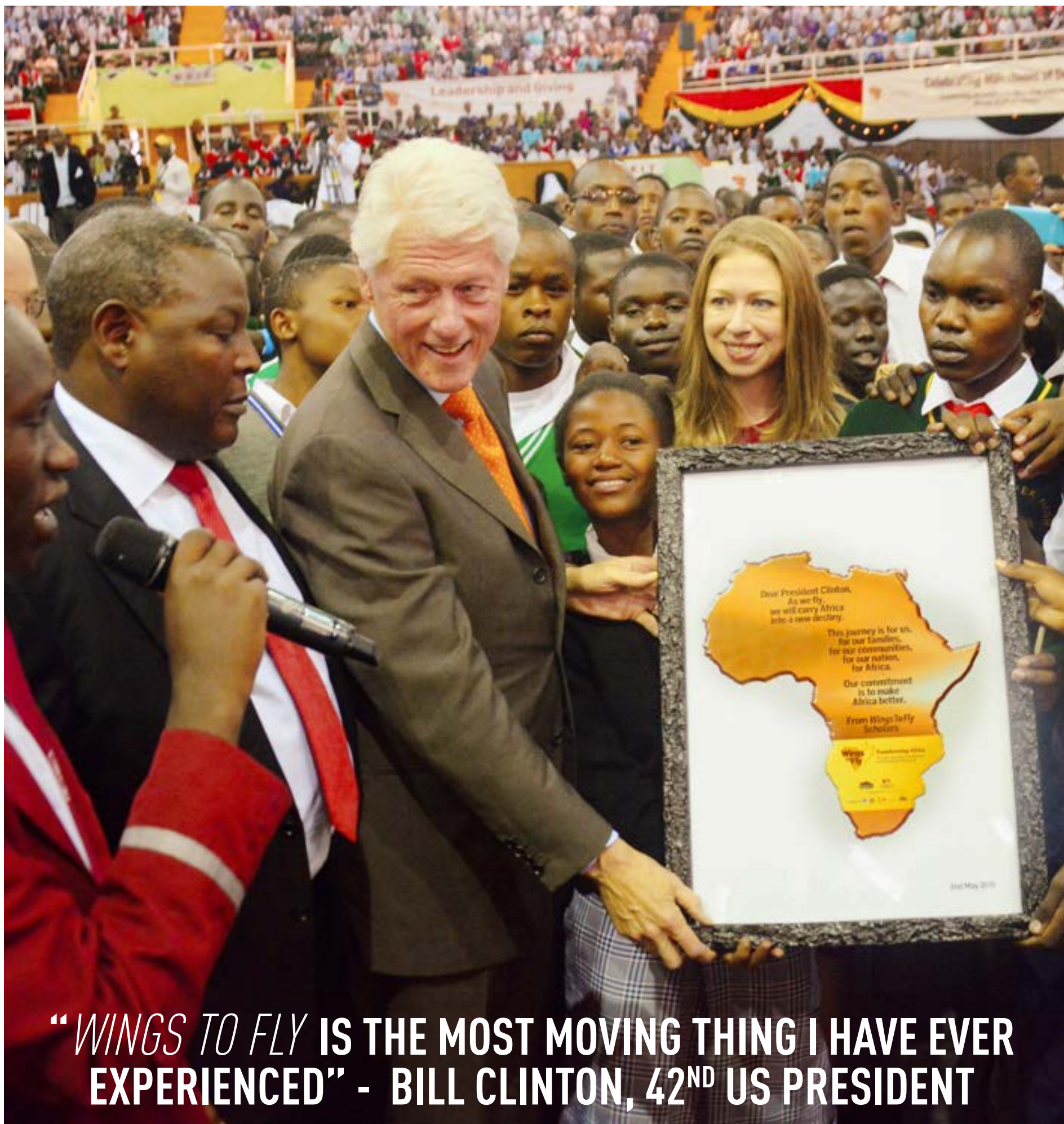
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**NOT FOR SALE**

Issue 09



**“WINGS TO FLY IS THE MOST MOVING THING I HAVE EVER EXPERIENCED” - BILL CLINTON, 42<sup>ND</sup> US PRESIDENT**



# Education is the weapon to change the world

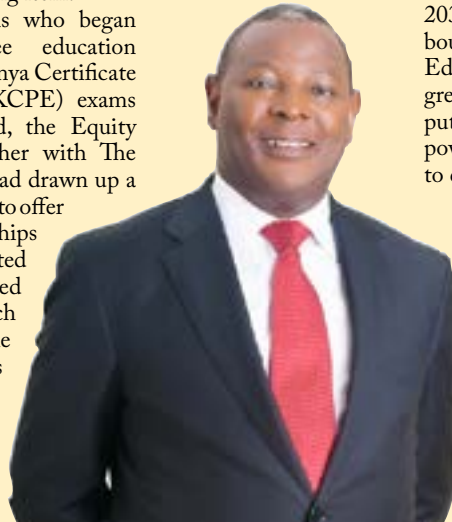
**W**hen the government of President Mwai Kibaki announced the rollout of mandatory and free primary education in public schools shortly after acceding to the presidency in 2003, it marked the beginning of unprecedented enrolment in primary schools across the country. Classrooms that had previously recorded below capacity enrolment now brimmed with eager pupils.

Within one year, enrolment rate in primary schools surged upwards of 40%. This outcome highlighted and brought to light a troubling truth; that for years, children some of them exceptionally bright, had lost out on a chance to gain education on account of circumstances beyond their control, top of which was poverty. With meagre incomes and unremitting expenses, households found themselves weighing their situations

in order of priority, and in most cases education was not a pressing item.

The first lot of pupils who began schooling in the free education dispensation sat for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exams in 2010. As it happened, the Equity Group Foundation together with The MasterCard Foundation had drawn up a programme whose aim was to offer comprehensive scholarships to academically gifted children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and which would complement the government's ambitions for the country's youth.

In its inaugural year in 2011, the *Wings to Fly* programme issued close to 2,000 scholarships to students who fell within the bracket of the top five percentile in KCPE.



**Dr James Mwangi, CBS  
Executive Chairman, Equity Group  
Foundation**

Over the last four years, *Wings to Fly* programme has awarded over 10,000 scholarships to deserving children. It is noteworthy that out of the 2011 cohort of *Wings to Fly*, 94% attained the minimum university admission criteria of C+ and above.

This is an investment that we are confident will pay dividends as Kenya comes closer and closer to attaining the ideals outlined in Kenya Vision 2030. An informed generation is bound to make prudent life choices. Education is fittingly considered the greatest equalizer. Nelson Mandela put it well: Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

In 1998, Equity Group launched the pre-university programme—a university education sponsorship programme that provided the best-performing boy and girl in districts where Equity had presence with internship opportunities to help them pay for their university education, while grooming them in life and professional skills. Since 1998, 2,673 young people have benefitted from the programme,

which was later renamed, Equity Leaders Programme.

In addition to providing internships in the Bank, ELP also grooms beneficiaries in life and professional skills through mentorship by Bank staff and during the Annual Education and Leadership Congress.

Importantly, EGF provides coaching and mentorship on college application to scholars who would like to study at global universities. To date, 265 of our students have gained admission to some of the most distinguished universities including Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Cambridge and the London School of Economics.

By supporting education in the country through our programmes and initiatives in partnership with the government, we are seeing young people whose dreams would have been squashed by poverty rise and take charge of their destinies, exploiting their full potential.

Through these initiatives, we are confident that their future and that of their families will be brighter. Kenya can look up to an emerging generation of servant leaders.

## “You are already showing us the power to change”

**I** am here to tell you a story. The story of a commitment made five years ago that has transformed *Wings to Fly* into a national movement.

The programme looks for high achieving students, boys and girls, who score in the top 5% of their district in the primary certificate exam. It screens for economic vulnerability to ensure the most deserving students have the opportunity to go to secondary school.

Community members across the country give their time to serve on district selection committees.

These highly respected citizens review applications, interview students and conduct home visits to meet families.

Branch managers at Equity Bank have shown such remarkable support and passion for this programme. They have coordinated with community selection committees and provided care packages for students each term.

This care package includes everything from snacks, shoes, to school supplies.

Beyond access to books, secondary students also receive comprehensive support to complete their education including mentoring, social support and access to wider community networks.

*Wings to Fly* is unique and the results speak for themselves. More than 90% of the first graduating classes have qualified for university, far exceeding the national average of 28%. Some have

already gained admission to international institutions.

Today we are celebrating that you are not only doing well in school, but many of you have been selected by your peers to become leaders in your schools and communities.

As captains of your sports, chemistry and drama clubs... you are showing us the power you have to create change... for yourselves, your families and communities and really for the country of Kenya.

President Clinton and Chelsea Clinton are here today because this incredible programme exists as a result of a pledge made at the Clinton Global Initiative five years ago.

Let me tell you how all of this came to be. In 2010, the Government of Kenya, The MasterCard Foundation, Equity Group Foundation and Equity Bank made a commitment at the Clinton Global Initiative in New York.

We committed to providing financial literacy to more than 600,000 youth and women in Kenya and to providing 672 students with a secondary education.

We have exceeded both targets. Today, I am thrilled to report that more than 10,000 students have gone through the *Wings to Fly* Programme. Isn't that incredible?

How was this possible? The government of Kenya, Equity Group Foundation and The MasterCard Foundation had a shared vision and The Clinton Global Initiative provided an important platform to collaborate.

The Kenyan Government



**Reeta Roy, President and CEO of The MasterCard Foundation,  
addresses scholars**

called on the cooperation of the Ministry of Education, schools, principals and teachers. The MasterCard Foundation provided financial support. Equity used the influence of the bank to leverage support.

We knew that this would be a transformational programme for all involved.

Before the end of the first year, The MasterCard Foundation increased our commitment from US\$4million to US\$41million so 5,000 students would have access to the *Wings to Fly* programme.

Equity Group Foundation immediately pledged to find other donors in order to match that amount, and succeeded.

By leveraging the Clinton Global Initiative commitment and the visionary support of President Uhuru Kenyatta, Equity Group Foundation was able to attract an additional

US\$50million in funding.

And today, here we are celebrating the fact that 10,000 young Kenyans have been able to be part of *Wings to Fly*.

Even though they weren't part of the CGI commitment, these donors deserve our thanks and acknowledgement for helping to make *Wings to Fly* what it is today.

So I want to thank USAID, UKaid and the German development bank KfW for contributing to this tremendous achievement.

This is the magic of the Clinton Global Initiative: encouraging organizations like ours to come together and helping us drive meaningful change in the world.

*Wings to Fly* scholars, you are outstanding. You are academically gifted... and talented...and you are leaders.

I had the pleasure of meeting one of you, David Okinyi, when I visited

Migori five years ago.

When we first met, David was a small, shy boy. But he was unmistakably a leader. He said he wanted to go to school to become a doctor.

When I met him again last year. He was graduating from secondary school as a *Wings to Fly* scholar. He was no longer the small, shy boy I had met. He was now a tall, confident young man.

His dream had also grown. He now wants to attend university and become a “world famous surgeon”. Now, I'm proud to say David is attending Arizona State University as a MasterCard Foundation scholar. He is among three graduates of *Wings to Fly* to become Foundation scholars.

Another one of the graduates, Elijah Koome, will attend Amherst College, one of the top liberal arts colleges in the United States. And by the way, Amherst also happens to be President Kenyatta's alma mater.

More than 550 scholars have interned at Equity Bank. Many are using the income from this internship as an essential way to save for university.

Many more are using the money to help their families and communities.

These stories are more than measures of success. They are measures of transformation.

One of the many things I love about this programme is that it reinforces the qualities we see so prominently in the young people of Kenya – ingenuity, intelligence, determination and resilience.

*Wings to Fly* scholars, you have the tools you need to

change your lives...to help you see the positive change you can effect throughout the country.

I want to thank you President Kenyatta for your leadership and support of this extraordinary programme.

The Kenyan Government has shown great vision and support for *Wings to Fly*. And for the cause of secondary education.

This year President Kenyatta announced that in the coming years secondary education will be free. Your vision for education is one shared by The MasterCard Foundation. By all of our partners in the *Wings to Fly* Programme.

Thank you CEO of Equity Bank, Dr James Mwangi and Managing Director of Equity Group Foundation, Dr Helen Gichohi for conceiving of and sharing your exceptional ideas for this scholarship programme. Your leadership and partnership has been outstanding.

When I met David, the *Wings to Fly* scholar, he told me “education elevates all of us”.

I am inclined to agree with him. Today Kenya is a country united by education.

I want to thank President and Chelsea Clinton for being with us today. And for providing the spark that started all of this.

*Wings to Fly* would not be the success it is today without your support.

*This speech was delivered by Reeta Roy during the 2015 the Annual Education Leadership Congress, attended by US the 42nd US President Bill Clinton.*



# President Bill Clinton shares his life story with *Wings to Fly* scholars

The 42<sup>nd</sup> US President Bill Clinton says that life is largely defined by gathering information and telling of our own stories.

President Clinton was speaking to more than 5,000 *Wings to Fly* Programme scholars during the closing ceremony of the 6th Annual Education and Leadership Congress held at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani in Nairobi.

He encouraged the scholars to persist in the quest to improve their story. "Work hard and never quit no matter what happens. Good things will happen. Defeat is no excuse to quit," he said.

The 42<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States of America said that there is strength and inspiration in telling one's story.

President Clinton and his daughter Chelsea told the story of their family tree and the challenges their parents and their grand parents faced.

"When I was born my mother was a widow; my father had been killed in a car wreck three months before I was born," he narrated.

Drawing examples from his upbringing in rural America, President Clinton, said that he drew strength and character by internalizing the values of hard work and integrity.

"I grew up in a family in which no one else had ever gone to college. We lived in the second poorest state in America. No one had the money to take vacations, we lived on our



Former US President Bill Clinton addresses the 5,000 *Wings to Fly* scholars. Inset: President Clinton accompanied by daughter Chelsea is ushered into the Moi Sports Centre gymnasium by Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman Dr James Mwangi



Scan this QR code with your smart phone to watch the video

story telling. Stories at meals; stories at night time before you go to bed. So the first value I was given was that every person has a story and therefore is entitled to respect," President Clinton said.

He shared the value of hard work saying he was raised not to make excuses for difficulties and to believe that everyone can make a better future for not just for themselves but for other people too.

"If life is hard, it's your business to make it easier. Get out and make the best out of whatever you find,"

he said.

President Clinton, who is the chair of the Clinton Global Initiative, lauded Equity Bank for believing in the possibility of nurturing needy scholars through establishment of the *Wings to Fly* Programme.

He called on the scholars to stand up to outside forces seeking to splinter the Kenyan society along sectoral lines, saying that the diverse identity of the country is stronger than the rhetoric of hate.

"You are living in a period of

history where borders look more like nets than walls", he said noting that "what we have in common is more important than our differences."

After listening to testimonials by some of the scholars Chelsea Clinton, who had accompanied her father, said she had never seen her father so inspired.

She implored the scholars to try and make a difference in their community in spite of criticisms. "Optimism is much more fun than cynicism. I grew up knowing there are many ways to serve and engage and each of us has an obligation to try. Try to make a difference," she said.

Chelsea narrated how resilient her grand mother and great grand mother were to find ways to solve challenges.

"The values that my father spoke about are pretty much the values that my parents raised me with. My grandmother held that life is not about what happens to you but about what you do with what happens to you. I was always taught it's better to get caught trying, always better to have tried to make a difference than to have never even engaged. There will

be challenges and difficulties and we inevitably always get discouraged but in my family we try to never stay discouraged for more than a day because it's just not very useful. And being productive and trying to find a new way to solve a challenge is the best remedy and anecdote to discouragement," she said.

The visit by President Clinton to the *Wings to Fly* Congress provided a reference point to the power of partnership in changing lives.

Reeta Roy, CEO and President of The MasterCard Foundation, which is the principal partner of the *Wings to Fly* Programme noted that it was in a meeting with the

Clinton Global Initiative and Equity Bank in New York City five years ago that the groundwork of the future *Wings to Fly* Programme was laid (see full speech on page 2.)

Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman Dr James Mwangi acknowledged the partners in the *Wings to Fly* Programme saying academic scholarships to needy but bright children embodies the spirit of doing good while doing well.

Dr Mwangi advised the scholars to seek and heed the advice of their mentors, guardians and parents.

"Sometimes we underestimate the love of our guardians and parents because of their position in life. Knowledge and wisdom have nothing to do with circumstances. Information knowledge and practice over a long time becomes wisdom. If you fail, you are failing everyone whose hope for the future is on your shoulders," Dr Mwangi said.

The week-long congress running under the theme 'Leadership and Giving' was held for Form 3 and Form 4 students.

## Making a difference

The 2015 Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) Annual Meeting held in New York in September brought together more than 1,000 world leaders from the philanthropic, business, and government sectors, who have created Commitments to Action that tackle issues like education, poverty, the environment, health and girls and women's empowerment.

The meeting was opened by President Bill Clinton and Chelsea Clinton. "Ten years ago, I had this idea that we might be able to create a new community—built around the realities of the modern world—where problem-solving requires government, the private sector, and civil society to work together," said President Clinton.

"Rather than bringing people together to just talk about problems, CGI has asked people to stop focusing on what we couldn't do, and think more about what we could do to make a difference."

In his presentation at the opening session the Equity Group Holdings CEO and MD Dr James Mwangi said that the *Wings To Fly* programme and the Financial Literacy training program known as Financial Knowledge for Africa (FIKA) have achieved the



Dr James Mwangi makes a presentation during the 2015 CGI Annual Meeting as former US President Bill Clinton looks on

targets that Equity Group and The MasterCard Foundation had committed to during the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) in 2010. He said that more than 10,377 secondary students have been provided comprehensive scholarships through the *Wings To Fly* programme.

"These students have excelled in national exams, with 93 percent qualifying for university, and a majority assuming leadership positions in their schools and communities. Their performance has been nothing short of inspiring, validating our belief that given an opportunity low income people are as capable and industrious enough to work their way into prosperity."

In a review of the *Wings To Fly*

achievement President Clinton warmly expressed his approbation of the program saying trend lines are more important than headlines.

"Chelsea and I were present with (Equity Group CEO) James Mwangi in Kenya, with 5,000 of the 10,000 kids that are in the *Wings to Fly* programme. They had a graduation rate from high school of well over 90%, and the graduates, 90% of them went to university," he told the delegates.

"There are other developed countries in terms of income that can't begin to match those numbers. And I just wish you could have listened to these stories.... These people are university graduates. That is what we can do," he said.

## Scholarship opens door for global opportunity

In late January 2010, Anthony Muchina accompanied his former primary school Head Teacher Juliet Wangai to Gatundu town.

A week earlier, Muchina had received notification that he had been selected to join the *Wings to Fly* scholarship that would enable him join secondary school at Maseno School in Nyanza.

Technically his guardian, Muchina's former teacher had been entrusted with the money to buy the boy his school uniform and other school supplies. Every item on the shopping list had been checked when Juliet came up with an idea; why not make this day indelible? So student and teacher checked into a photo booth and posed for a picture.

"I thought about this today," Juliet says as she retrieves

a photo from a picture album. "It was a great day and I remember it vividly." We are in her office at Ng'enda Primary School in Kiganjo, Gatundu where Muchina schooled. The Head Teacher invites Muchina around to her desk and both regard the photo with fondness, allowing it to transport them back to that January morning five years ago.

Anthony Muchina scored 397 marks in KCPE 2009, an unprecedented record in Ng'enda, emerging the best-performing

Continued on Page 4

Muchina with his grandmother





## Girl escapes marriage twice to go back to school



Vanesser

**W**hen Vanesser Cheruto returned home late 2014 after completing her primary school education, it had been close to eight years since she had left.

Understandably, her mother could hardly recognize her, and only did after she peered in Cheruto's mouth and saw the gap in her lower teeth.

Cheruto had gone through remarkable transformation: she was healthy, bold and articulate. Cheruto fled Kapenguria in West Pokot soon after her family gave her off as a child-bride to a wealthy suitor who already

had six wives. The girl was barely nine years old. After escaping the involuntary marriage with the help of the District Commissioner, Cheruto, 16 found refuge at a rescue centre and later enrolled in Standard Two at Naraman Primary School.

In school, Cheruto found community and family among her peers and the teaching staff. The head teacher became her guardian; during school holidays, Cheruto would remain in school with other girls and the head teacher would cater for all their needs. In this new setting, she blossomed, revealing her potential.

Cheruto's home is located roughly 100 km from Kapenguria town. Entrance to the village is only

possible through a forbidding route inaccessible by vehicle. All around is desolation. The harsh environment is only part of the problems that beset people who live here: cases of insecurity and cattle raids top a lengthy catalogue of challenges. Access to water is a project all by itself.

In a land so disadvantaged, the communities view girls as the quickest way to wealth through bride price. Cheruto's erstwhile suitor had parted with 40 cows for her hand.

"I ran away because I did not want to get married," Cheruto says. The man tracked Cheruto down and appeared in her school with a gun. He wanted the girl back. A scuffle ensued during which one of the teachers

sustained a gun wound.

Having recovered from her ordeal, Cheruto concentrated on her studies, scoring 357 marks in the KCSE exam. The marks secured her a spot on the *Wings to Fly* Programme. Now in Form 1 at Nasokol Girls Secondary School, she is looking forward to a career as a surgeon.

"I am thankful to be in the *Wings to Fly*," she says. "I plan to work hard in school."

Andrew Abok, a head teacher in a local primary school sees in Cheruto a catalyst for change.

"As she continues with her education, she will bring change in the community. The community will learn through her," he says.

## Scholarship opens door for global opportunity

Continued from Page 43

candidate in (then) Gatundu district. Muchina, 20, is still an inspiration to the school fraternity, five years since he graduated. After the nostalgic meeting in the head teacher's office, Muchina walks out to a riveting reception by pupils.

"You can succeed in your endeavours if you have the right attitude and apply yourself fully, regardless of your background," Muchina, who has gained admission to University of Toronto, Ontario on full academic scholarship tells his studious audience.

Looking back at his life, Muchina marvels at the opportunities that have come his way. "When I received my KCPE results, I was happy but I did not know how my future would be... how I would raise school fees," says Muchina, who was raised by his grandmother following the death of his mother in 2005.

"Getting the scholarship was an amazing opportunity for me," says Muchina. "Not only for education purposes, but also the mentorship I have received at the annual congress."

Muchina's grandmother, whose only income is the money she makes from her avocado farm, glints with pride when she talks about her grandchild. "What is there to say?" she poses. "I could not have raised money for Muchina's school fees. And now look; doors have been opened for him."

The *Wings to Fly* academic scholarship—at that time in its pilot stage came to Muchina's rescue as one of only two candidates selected in Gatundu.

Head Teacher Juliet is not the least surprised by Muchina's growing profile, both as a student and an inspiration. "He was very disciplined and focused," she glows. "I have always considered him a son and foresee a very promising future."

"You keep away from negative people when you go to school," she admonishes as she pours her grandson a cup of tea.

## "My dream is to be the President of Kenya"

**W**hile most teenagers would be a bit coy to reveal some of their more ambitious life goals, Seth Owino has no such inhibitions.

Owino made his position known during the commissioning ceremony of the 1st edition of the *Wings to Fly* Programme in 2010.

When the boy was invited to the stage to pass a vote of thanks on behalf of the students following the awarding of the scholarship letters, Owino looked at his audience, who included current President Uhuru Kenyatta— then Minister for Finance, and former Prime Minister Raila Odinga. Barely visible behind the podium, Owino declared, "When I become a big person, I will be the President of Kenya in 2035."

The room lit up with prolonged laughter and clapping by the audience as Owino, an unmistakable glimmer in his eyes soaked it all in.

A follow-up on Owino when he was in form 2 at Nyang'ori Secondary School revealed a young

man very much in the race towards his dream career. He had been appointed assistant games captain, a position ordinarily reserved for students in form 3 or form 4.

In school, Owino was fondly referred by his peers as Prezzo, the colloquial for President; his declaration on the stage having followed him.

Owino faced a hurdle when he reached form three. A promising, diligent student in the first two years, Owino's grades had dipped somewhat—casualty of inattentiveness, and a good score in KCSE seemed to be in doubt.

But Owino, who had been plucked from dire circumstances by the *Wings to Fly* scholarship knew success and failure were real options; and the latter would mean a life of want, made a turn-around.

"I missed the 2013 Leadership Congress because of my poor grades," Owino says. "I was forced to weigh the implications. I could not fail." True to his word, Owino scored a B+ in the 2013 KCSE.

On a February morning in 2014, more than 200 young people sat in the meeting hall of the Executive



Seth Owino at the 2010 *Wings to Fly* commissioning with, at the time, Prime Minister Raila Odinga, Deputy Prime Minister Uhuru Kenyatta and Education Minister Sam Onger. Inset: Seth addresses fellow scholars during the 2014 induction to Equity Leaders Programme.



floor of Equity Centre, Nairobi. The young men wore formal suits, the girls in skirt suits.

There was no hint that these professional-looking young people had been removed from high school by a mere three months.

The last time the group had been together was in 2010 when they joined the *Wings to Fly* Programme. The difference between that group and the one seated here was remarkable.

A young man was called onto the stage. He wore a black suit with matching tie. The moment he began to speak, the room broke out in knowing

smiles. Owino was back in the spotlight. He was taller and his voice a few decibels deeper; the four years had changed his physical appearance. But his dream for the top post hadn't lost an ounce of its fierceness.

"I am looking at my future Cabinet," Owino announced amidst cheers. He peered at his rapt audience. "My dream is to be the President of Kenya."

Owino is now a student at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) where he is studying for a Bachelors Degree in Development Studies.

## Medical student with plans to uplift her community

**F**or many people living in the wind-swept plains of Lodwar in Turkana County, hope comes in measly bits.

A portentous collusion of harsh weather, infrastructural neglect and repressive cultural norms has led to slow economic and social development in the region.

*Wings to Fly* Scholar Felicity Akiru is one of the people looking towards the light and confronting those challenges.

Akiru's home sits on a bare stretch of scorched land. The compound of low-hanging thatched huts is ringed with spindly posts and intertwined twigs.

Akiru has lived here with her aged grandmother and younger brother since their parents' death several years ago. The family survived on irregular donor stipends paid to her grandmother for food and other basic necessities. And even though Akiru excelled in her KCPE exams, her grandmother could not afford to take her to high school.

In addition to a seemingly dead end in her



Akiru with her grandmother at the family's Lodwar home

education, there was the very real specter of an early marriage looming large.

"After standard eight, I had no hope," says Akiru, her voice catching. "I wondered who would take me to school... I had nothing. Many of the girls used to excel, but had nobody to take them to school, so at 14 to 16 years of age, you get married."

The despondency hanging over Akiru's

future lifted after she secured the *Wings to Fly* scholarship and joined Turkana Girls Secondary School. With no school fees balance to worry about, Akiru clutched at the scholarship with zeal.

Here was a lifeline to a great and influential life, and she wouldn't squander it.

Akiru, 20, scored grade 'A' in the 2013 KCSE exam and is currently studying Medicine at the University of Nairobi.

She sees a bright future ahead, and plans to bring along the community with her.

Together with a band of students who hail from Lodwar — current and former *Wings to Fly* scholars — Akiru sees a formidable pool of enlightened and like-minded change agents.

"When we excel, we have to give back to society... just take one kid, two kids, sponsor them."

And she is already living up to her vision. Akiru gained admission into the Equity Leaders Programme (ELP) and served as an intern at Equity Bank Lodwar branch.

She used part of her earning to pay for her brother's secondary school education.



# Scholar joins President's alma mater

**O**f all the people he has come across or read about, Elijah Koome names Rancho, the likable, if not conflicted character in the 2009 Bollywood blockbuster 'Three Idiots' one of his most admired personalities.

On the face of it—and mostly because of the blatant and unlikely movie title, Rancho appears a most unlikely character to warrant devotion. But scratch deeper and the fandom bears traction.

Rancho is a college student who draws the ire of his professor by his inflexible insistence that one should pursue excellence, not success, as the latter will happen if the former is achieved.

Rancho, always searching, defies tradition and strikes an unorthodox path.

In January 2015, Koome and several other students stood before President Uhuru Kenyatta, several dignitaries and more than 2000 people gathered in the gymnasium of the Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani, during the commissioning ceremony of the 6th edition of *Wings to Fly* Programme.

The scholars, who comprised both alumni and continuing scholars of the Equity Leaders Programme (ELP), a number of whom were former *Wings to Fly* scholars, had been invited to recite a choral verse for the guests.

When Koome walked out to the floor and made his solo, he veered slightly off the script and freelanced. He looked up unflinchingly at President Uhuru.

"Mr President," Koome began, "I would like you to tell me which bed you slept in while in Amherst (College) so that I look it up."

Koome paused as the room erupted in prolonged cheers. President Uhuru leaned forward,



President Uhuru's alma mater.

Koome set a school record in Thuuru Primary School in Nyambene, Meru County—one that still stands, when he scored 395 marks in the 2010 KCPE.

Throughout his schooling, Koome, 20, sought to reinvent himself, pushing himself to excellence amidst a torrent of circumstances.

His parents earned a living tilling the family's small tract of land, barely making enough to feed the family of seven.

"I received my results, and though I had passed, I was not happy," says Koome. "My parents could not afford to raise my school fees."

Luckily, Koome's former teacher learnt of the *Wings to Fly* Programme and told his

pupil to apply. In addition to his good grade, Koome's bold demeanour and clarity in the interview room won him the scholarship.

"I went home and later that night my father received a phone call informing him that I had won the scholarship. To say I was excited would be sheer understatement," Koome says.

Koome, who attended Meru School scored a solid 'A' grade of 84 points in the 2014 KCSE.

At Amherst, he plans to pursue a major in Economics and English and a minor in Philosophy.

"I am interested in the study of economics because I believe that most of the problems bedeviling Africa sprout from lack of economic planning," says Koome, adding that he also plans to initiate multiple investment plans and initiatives to uplift people in need.

"After college I shall embark on a journey to replicate and multiply the kind of initiative taken by Equity Group Foundation to better the lives of our people. Making use of global connections, I know I shall be able to reach out to all vulnerable and underprivileged people in the world," says Koome.

Koome considers Equity Group CEO Dr James Mwangi one of his role models.

"I admire Dr Mwangi's many achievements and sheer energy of character. He strikes me as astoundingly brilliant and humane," he says.

After the commissioning ceremony was over, President Uhuru pulled Koome aside for a parting chat. "He invited me to State House before I leave for college," says Koome. "It was fun."



**Elijah Koome (left) meets President Uhuru Kenyatta during the 2015 Wings to Fly commissioning ceremony at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani**

**Inset: President Uhuru (centre) engages Koome (left) and Olive Murage (right) who are admitted to his alma mater, Amherst College.**

**Below: Koome (right) and his mother Josephine Nkirote picking tea in Maua.**



clapping encouragingly, the Amherst reference striking home.

Amherst, where Koome has gained admission is



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## Mother of two dares to chase her dreams

**A**urelia Atyang's dream of furthering her education was deferred for thirteen years. Aurelia first sat for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exams in 1998 and scored 412 out of 700 marks.

Lack of finances effectively crushed any hope of joining secondary school.

Over the ensuing decade, as her peers entered and graduated from high school,

Aurelia, who was brought up by her grandmother, moved from one menial job to another. She got married in 2004, settled into family life and had two children. But covered in the layers of fate and circumstances was Aurelia's stubborn, long-held dream of bettering her life.

That dream acquired new life in 2011 when Aurelia learnt about the *Wings to Fly* Programme. This is my chance, she recalls thinking.

With money she had saved while working as a domestic help, Aurelia went back to school. She

was 27 years old, and would be sitting in class with pupils more than ten years her junior. That would not be a deterrent; here was a lifeline thrown her way and she was not going to squander it. When the results were announced, Aurelia emerged the best-performing student in Noigam Primary School in Kitale.

Aurelia was selected to join the *Wings to Fly* Programme in 2012 and was admitted to St. Joseph's Girls High School in Kitale. In addition to averaging good grades, Aurelia

is a mentor to her considerably younger school mates.

"I am very passionate about helping others, helping the needy," says Aurelia who plans to be a children's lawyer in the future.

"I was given a great opportunity when I received the scholarship and I would also want to extend a hand to needy children. I am on my way to being who I was meant to be. I am reaching for my goals," she says.



**Aurelia Atyang' with her husband and their two children**



# Do us proud: President urges scholars

President Uhuru Kenyatta officiated the commissioning of 2000 bright but needy students into the Wings to Fly Programme in 2015, bringing the total number of beneficiaries to 10,377. Here is an excerpt of what he shared with the scholars

**W**e in Kenya are living proof of the impact of education in social, political and economic transformation. Our leadership position in the region is not accidental.

It is no coincidence that Kenya boasts a long history of advocating for social justice. It is also not by chance that Kenya had several indigenous entrepreneurs and millionaires before independence.

All this was possible because of our early encounter with education and our ability to clearly identify the opportunities that came with it.

My government considers its duty to be one of stewarding national transformation aimed at rapid take-off.

It is a plain fact that without wings to fly, take-off is a pipedream. Without *Wings to Fly*, the runway you sit in is also your destination. Individuals must be empowered with both ability and opportunity for them to conquer poverty and contribute to national growth.

Education brings both opportunity and ability to every person. My government has continued to increase its investment in education to sustain over a decade of deliberate efforts to increase enrolment.

The Free Primary Education programme expanded enrolment from 5.9 million children in 2003 to 10 million today.

Since inception in 2008, Free Day Secondary Education has dramatically raised enrolment from 800,000 to nearly two million currently. We are keen on expanding educational opportunities to all Kenyans regardless of background.

We are also committed to rapidly improving the quality and relevance of education and training to meet our human resource needs and the imperatives of a knowledge economy. This is why a programme like *Wings to Fly* is important.

It complements on a large scale my Government's commitment to ensuring that no deserving child misses the opportunity to realise their dream. It enables us to look beyond poverty, vulnerability and see possibility.

*Wings to Fly* speaks to possibility by showing what can be done. It also challenges our system to rise to its full promise and go beyond classroom drilling to mentorship of all-rounded and empowered citizens.

Without converting into a full-time charity or undermining its core objectives, the Equity Group has established itself as an organisation powered by vision, innovation and fresh thinking. For decades to come, the Equity brand will live up to the meaning of the word.

As I conclude, I want to say this to the *Wings to Fly* scholars: grab this opportunity with both hands and show the world why you deserved it more than anyone else. Do not look back.

Do your sponsors proud. Do your families proud. Do us all proud. Nothing stops you now from reaching for the stars and beyond.



Wings to Fly commissioning 2014. Seated are President Uhuru Kenyatta (6<sup>th</sup> left) and Kenya's Fourth President Mwai Kibaki (5<sup>th</sup> right)

## 650 top KCSE scholars join Equity Leaders Programme



Left: First Lady (seated centre) with EALP class of 2015. Inset: First Lady Margaret Kenyatta (left) presents a sponsorship letter to Vivienne Chebet, from Moi Girls High School, Eldoret. Chebet is a Wings to Fly scholar admitted to Maseno University to study Medicine.

**O**ver 650 scholars who excelled in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education exam 2014 have joined Equity Leaders Programme (ELP).

Her Excellency the First Lady Margaret Kenyatta commissioned their admission at a ceremony held at the KICC in Nairobi. Addressing the scholars, the First Lady lauded Equity Bank and Equity Group Foundation for giving young scholars the opportunity to access education and shape their future.

The First Lady paid tribute to Equity Bank and the Ministry of Education for putting Kenya on the world map.

"Kenya is best known for its world class tourist attractions; we are known for world class athletes and our quality tea and coffee. Equity Bank has shown the world that Kenya has some of the best brains too," she said.

The First Lady advised the scholars to make wise choices as they join universities and gain

increased freedom. "Success comes from hard work, patience and focusing on your goals. It is also about giving back to society and remembering those you have left behind," she advised.

She expressed her pride, as a mother, to see the scholars who have excelled on the platform of hard work, discipline, focus, determination and resilience. "Your bright faces and confidence gives me hope that the future of Kenya is in safe hands," she said.

Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman Dr James Mwangi said ELP is developing leadership to address world challenges. "Leadership is about being role models and if we get leaders without humility then the whole society is wrongly role modeled," he said.

So far 2,673 young people have joined the program with 265 scholars gaining admission to foreign universities. To date 800 of the scholars have completed their studies with 104 already employed in different sectors.



Scan this QR code with your smart phone to watch the video



**“We are known for world class athletes and our quality tea and coffee. Equity Bank has shown the world that Kenya has some of the best brains too**

**-First Lady Margaret Kenyatta**



## You can make it, in spite of your background



**Wayne Gakuo**  
Ashesi University

ELP scholar Wayne Gakuo (right) and two colleagues take a selfie with Dr Patrick Awuah (2<sup>nd</sup> left), the Founder and President of Ashesi University, Ghana.

am going to. Mine story is such a long story but to cut it short, what I learnt that where you come from will not determine your success.

Some people have a mentality that people from the coast cannot work. I remember promising Dr James Mwangi that I will come back and debunk this a myth.

We have about many other scholars from the coast: like Halima Hussein, who is going to the University of Pennsylvania; Amal Abdeen attending Arizona State University; and there is also Sarah Nzau who is in Wellesley College.

This means that wherever you come from, you can make it. After I graduate in Computer Science from Ashesi University, I am aiming to make the Vision 2030 possible. 4G Internet will not be a luxury. It is a luxury right now is because it is limited but in about 10 years time this will not be a luxury but a commodity for everyone in this country.

**M**y name is Wayne Gakuo. I am from Mombasa. I started my journey in *Wings to Fly* as one of the scholars of the pioneer class.

I transitioned from the *Wings to Fly* Programme to the ELP, from the ELP to the College Counseling and after that became a global scholar.

These transitions have had an impact in my life. I have learnt that I have to give back to my community no matter where I come from and no matter where I



**June Odera,**  
ELP scholar, North Western University

## ELP experience has changed my life

I had when I was in class six and I want to say that this experience has changed my life in ways that I cannot express because I have grown from being a timid girl to a girl who can stand in front of people and speak my mind.

I have been able to learn that as a woman and as human being I have an obligation to the community just as Dr James Mwangi has done for the rest of us.

My mother was so excited when I qualified as an Equity scholar because she knew I had a bright future. Thank you for giving me that and I have to tell the rest of the global scholars that this is not the end of our success stories but just the beginning.

If you are excited about going to America, stop. Think about what you are going to do once you get to America and beyond and have the mentality that once you are done with America, you will come back to Kenya ready to change Kenya and the rest of Africa.

**M**ine is a story of the power of a little faith, determination and hard work, a dream and a support system.

When starting my education, in my primary school I remember that my father once sat me down and told me, "As you head out to high school, I will not look for a school for you. It is you to go ahead and find a school for yourself."

Four years later, I have managed to look for a school for myself and now I am headed to the United States of America.

This is a dream



## It's rewarding to give back through mentorship

**Muturi Njeri (ELP mentor)**  
Colgate University alumni

graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Colgate University

I did College Counselling last year as an ELP mentor and it's so rewarding to see some of my mentees who are going to Stanford, to Amherst... it is very rewarding because that's the giving back we're talking about. It is something priceless.

I hope we can stand here next year, and watch the ones we are mentoring this year give their stories too.

## I hope to influence change through economic policy



**Sarah Nzau (ELP mentor)**  
Wellesley College

**I** am Sarah Nzau from Mombasa. I am student at Wellesley College and currently a mentor to Equity scholars. It was in form three that while watching NTV, I learnt about the Equity Leaders Programme. The documentary showed students who had been accepted into global universities.

One of them was Lydia Katini Mwangasha who was from my high school and only two years ahead of me.

I asked myself, 'why can't I be like her? She was the best girl student in the country that year. From that time I started working hard to be the best female student in the country and get into EALP and then apply to get into Stanford University.

I didn't quite make it to be the best student in the country but I was close. Fast forward to two years after watching the documentary I was now the college applicant.

I had gotten into ELP and into the College Counselling and now I was applying to colleges. Being an ELP scholar does not automatically mean that you get to apply to schools abroad. You have to apply to get into the process of application.

At the boot camp I met mentors who go to different schools besides

Harvard, Stanford and MIT and other big schools.

My mind opened up and I learnt of colleges like Amherst. It was no longer just about Harvard and Stanford. Other colleges are just as good.

The process was really draining. It had taken much of my strength, my confidence and my self-belief but all I had to do was look at my mentors because they had gone before me, and I knew I could make it because they had made it. Whenever I felt like giving up my passion for application was instantly rekindled because I wanted to be like them.

Getting to Wellesley proved immensely rewarding. Now I am a college student, I completed my first year and I remember that I vowed to come back to the ELP and I give back because so much had been given to me.

That's why I am here trying to be the best mentor. My hope is that we mentors and other scholars who have been through this programme will not continue to stand tall because we stand on the shoulders of those who gave us so much to access the best education.

We have so much potential, so much to do for Africa and upon getting the skills from Wellesley College I will come back and make this country better.

I am interested in economic policy and looking to joining the government at a capacity where I will have authority to influence change in this country.



**Sarah Nzau (2<sup>nd</sup> right) and other scholars with Wellesley College President H. Kim Bottomly (3<sup>rd</sup> right)**



**Allan Chege (ELP mentor)**  
Cornell University

**I** am currently a rising sophomore in Cornell University, having joined the Equity Leaders Program in the year 2013 after completing my KCSE in 2012 in Starehe Boys. My application to universities abroad was a bit crazy.

Coming straight from school I had the mindset that only some people were meant to go abroad; that some wouldn't make it. Equity changed all that believing in everyone and prompting me to apply to College Counseling programme. We started working with a few friends I met within the program. We studied together, writing our applications and reading each others stories to make them better.

When I applied the very first time I didn't get into my first

## Never give up

school of choice in the early decision. I took some time to step outside myself and sort of view myself within the entirety of the application program process and assess where I was. I saw I was very small and very insignificant.

I was humbled to accept I am not this great being who deserves a spot abroad without working for it. I had to earn it myself. I knew this was not going to come easy.

Getting rejected was a major low in my life but I got up, brushed the dust off and together with my friends we decided to use the rejection as a strong growth turning point. The rejection opened up the enormity of options and I applied to the second school, Cornell, and succeeded.

Most people try really hard to find ways to give back. There's always that, 'donate a few cents to Africa and you will save a dying child.' Those are the kind of things

that people think of when giving back to your community. Equity took a step in the educational direction and said the best gift that you can give a child is the gift of an education.

I am really passionate about mentoring. I look around and see the young adults that are going abroad and I am so proud of all of them for the hard work they have put in. Some of them barely sleep at night knowing fully well they have a very short time before they go back to their work stations.

I wish to thank Equity for the dream and finances and the time that you have invested towards this dream of bettering Kenya through education and I can promise with the utmost conviction that one day it will pay off.

One day Kenya will be a really great nation, greater than it is today under the wonderful foresight of our leaders in Equity Bank.

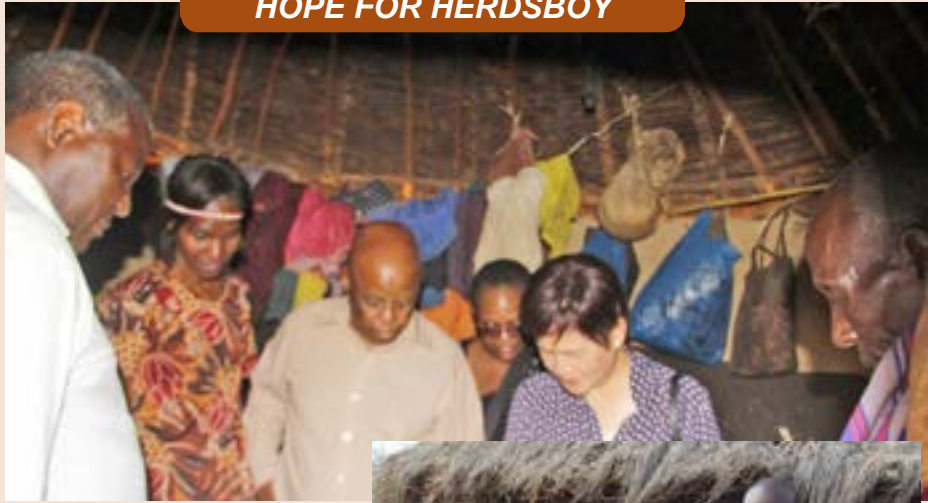


**Above: Allan (centre) is a member of the Cornell University band. Right: Allan (2<sup>nd</sup> left) with his football team mates**





**HOPE FOR HERDSBOY**



2015 Wings to Fly scholar Francis Lonyareng' Atundur from North Pokot ushers the team into his home. The delegation met his parents (right) and spent some time in the grass-thatched mud house (above). Courtesy of Wings to Fly, Atundur is one of the two boys to proceed to secondary school from the area. He has escaped the fate that has befallen his peers: marrying early and becoming a herdsboy.



**HIGH SCHOOL MOTHER DARES TO DREAM**



In Trans-Nzoia West, Aurelia Atyang' Ekasiba, a mother of two, receives former Botswana President Festus Mogae and the delegation to her home (above). Aurelia, an orphan who was brought up by her grandmother, sat her Kenya Certificate of Primary Education exams in 1998 but could not proceed to

secondary school due to lack of school fees. When she heard about Wings to Fly, she went back to school after being married for 7 years. At the age of 32, the mother of two is now ready to sit her KCSE this year. Inspired by Aurelia's success, her husband says he will also go back to school.



# Benefactors to Fly scholars

In 2015, 2000 bright but needy students received *Wings to Fly* scholarships bringing the total number of beneficiaries to 10,377.

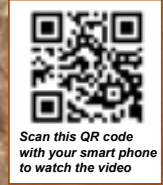
Phase One of the *Wings to Fly* Programme has now surpassed its target of 10,000 scholarships, which were offered through a partnership between The MasterCard Foundation and Equity Group Foundation, with support from KfW, UKaid, USAID, and Equity Bank.

Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman Dr James Mwangi led a delegation from The MasterCard Foundation and Equity Group Foundation in visiting several *Wings to Fly* beneficiaries in their homes.

The team comprised of Dr Helen Gichohi and Zainab Jaffer from Equity Group Foundation; and former Botswana President Festus Mogae, former US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer and Peggy Woo from The MasterCard Foundation.

The team visited scholars at their homes and interacted with their guardians as well as community members.

They had an opportunity to have a first-hand experience of the circumstances of the scholars and hear their inspiring stories of overcoming great odds to excel in education.



Scan this QR code with your smart phone to watch the video

Equity Group Foundation Managing Director Dr Helen Gichohi (right) assists Vanesser Cheruto Lokuka with her bag as she comes out of her house to meet the guests.

The delegation finds Vanesser's widowed mother preparing a meal of boiled herbs and wild fruits (inset).

After the death of her father, Vanesser was forced into marriage at the age of 9, for a bride price of 40 cows. She managed to run away from her first marriage but her suitor tracked her down.

She was however rescued from the marriage by the District Commissioner and taken to a rescue centre.

Having scored 357 marks out of 500 in her Kenya Certificate of Primary Education exams, she secured a *Wings to Fly* scholarship and is closer to realizing her dream of becoming a surgeon.

**LEADERS ASK PUPILS TO WORK HARD**



Dr James Mwangi addresses pupils who had come to welcome the delegation (above). He encouraged them to work hard in school because education would bring them a brighter future. Inset: (Left) President Mogae with a child; and (right) engaging pupils. He called on them to be diligent in their studies.



**SCHOLARS ALREADY**



*Wings to Fly* scholars who have completed secondary school have already started making a difference in their communities.

Felicity Akiru Lopeyok (left) and her brother (2<sup>nd</sup> right) grew up living in a grass-thatched traditional homestead with their grandmother following the death of their parents.

The family relied on relief food, because their grandmother was too old to work and fend for the family.

Now, thanks to the education she received through *Wings to Fly*, Akiru is able to support her family.

Akiru scored an A plain in her Kenya Certificate of Primary Education exams and was admitted to the Equity Leaders Programme. She worked as an intern at Equity Bank, Lodwar branch, and used her income to pay for her brother's secondary school fees.

She is currently pursuing a degree in Medicine at the University of Nairobi.



# The Equity Bank Journey

To a person not privy to its history, the shop is merely one of several similar stores clinging stubbornly to a small piece of real estate in Kangema town.

But for residents of a certain generation, that perception would be considered a travesty at best, treasonable at worst.

As the first Equity branch—and in all practical ways the original Head Office—the small shop in the heart of town represents rekindled dreams, financial freedom and most important of all, empowerment.

For many years, Equity, which started off as a mortgage provider in 1984, sat at the bottom of the chain in the financial services sector; a negligible firm hemorrhaging millions of shillings year to year.

Indeed, in the early '90s, Equity was declared technically insolvent.

"We were ranked number 66, out of 66," says Equity Group CEO Dr. James Mwangi, of the struggling building society. Against such a background, Equity



Above: The first Equity office in Kangema. Right: Equity Centre, the Equity Group Head Office



Group's current position as one of the biggest companies in the East African region is almost unfathomable.

With over 10 million customers, the Bank holds the enviable position of the bank with the largest customer base in the region, the Group has subsidiaries in Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo and with an asset base of more than Ksh400

billion.

But the Bank's legacy is its central roles of democratizing the banking industry, and empowering Kenyans.

For many years beginning from independence, the banking sector was parochial and inordinately discriminative, a cabal reserved for the well-heeled, locking out majority of the population.

When the long-established multinational banks

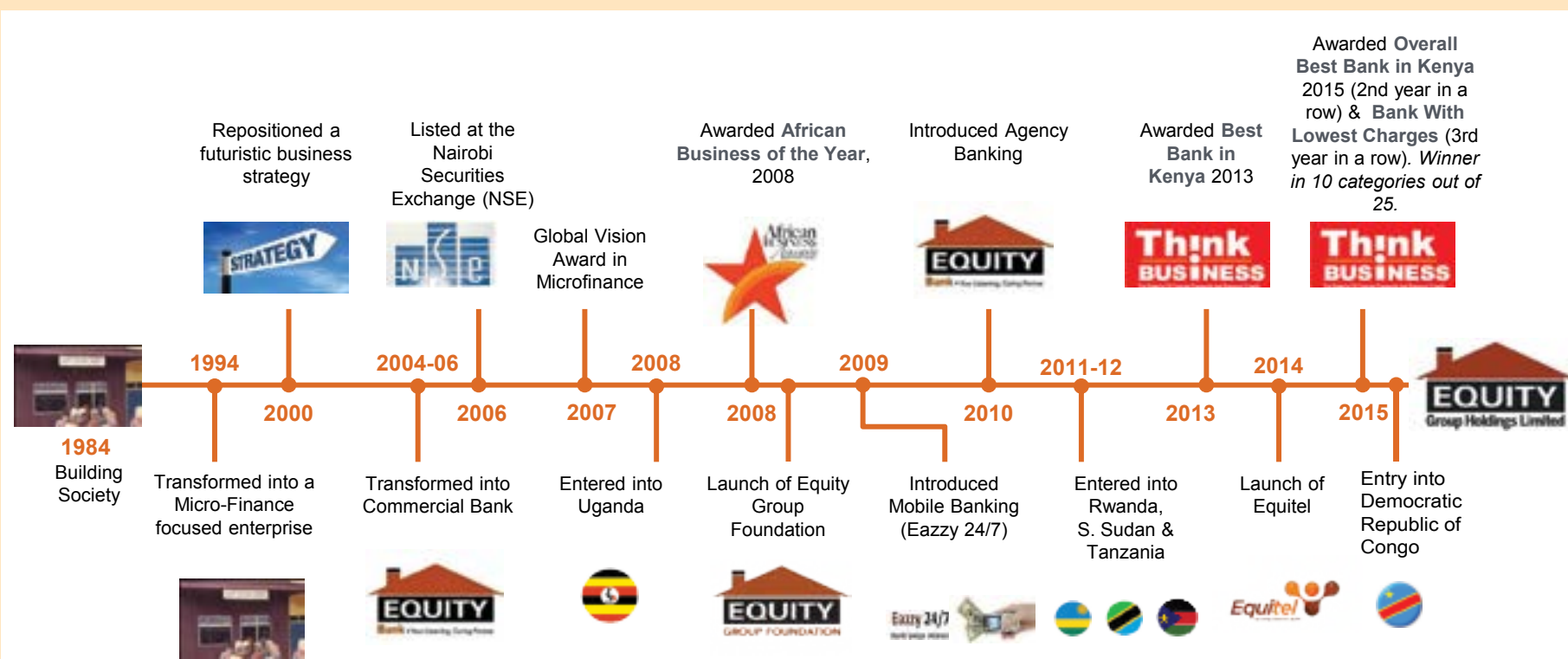
started closing their rural branches in the '90s, deeming the rural market unsustainable, they left common people with few options. They could only access financing through the few ex-

isting savings societies, and 'banking' their money under the proverbial mattress.

It is in this context that Equity, which by now had made strategic and structural changes, found an op-

portunity and seized it.

Equity converted to a bank in 2004—entering a decade in which the company engineered a stunning turnaround.



### Performance Trend Analysis

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2014
Funding	29m	302m	1.6b	16.3b	159b	246b
Loans	8.6m	169m	0.8b	10.9b	113.8b	214b
Total Assets	24m	213m	1.9b	20.0b	196.5b	345b
Profit Before Tax	(4)m	10.6m	55m	1.1b	12.8b	22.4b
Shareholders fund	(18)m	22.5m	238m	2.2b	34.2b	64b
Customers	9k	26k	105k	1.014m	7.150m	9.660m
Staff	27	57	165	1395	6243	8690

### Wealth Creation for Shareholders

Share Change	Number of Shares	Price	Value Kshs	Value Change
2000: Before split	1	20.00	20	0
2000: 1:3 Split	4	50.00	200	1,000%
2004: Bonus 1:5	20	50.00	1,000	5,000%
2007: Bonus 1:3	60	84.50	5,070	25,350%
2009: Split 1:10	600	12.50	7,500	37,500%
2014	600	50.50	30,300	151,500%



# Our future is here.

We deserve even more freedom, choice, and control to manage our businesses, our money, and our lives with ease. The freedom and control to plan, budget, save and borrow loans to fund our dreams. The choice to stay in touch with those we love and those we relate with. Welcome to Equitel.



## Bank on your hand

You can now do your banking at the comfort of your phone. Open an Equity account instantly, hapo hapo, by dialing \*247# . Check your bank balance, Transfer money, send and receive money, withdraw cash, apply for a loan, repay your loan, request for a statement, save, budget and fund specific goals.



## Send and receive cash

Sending money to other Equitel members is FREE! It's so easy, and the money goes straight into their Equity bank accounts. You can also send money to other mobile money networks (M-PESA, Airtel Money, and Orange Money) other banks, global credit and debit cards.

## Pay your bills

It's quick and easy to pay for utilities using Equitel. No long queues, no busy halls, no noise, no fuss. You can pay KPLC, Water bills, DSTV, Startimes, and many more, right on your phone.

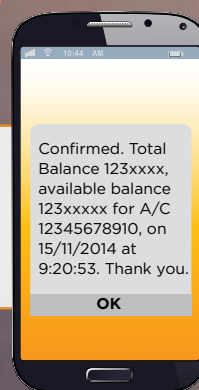


## Apply and get a Loan

Ask for a loan right on your phone. You don't have to fill in any forms. Just go to the Eazzy loan menu and follow the simple steps. It's easy.

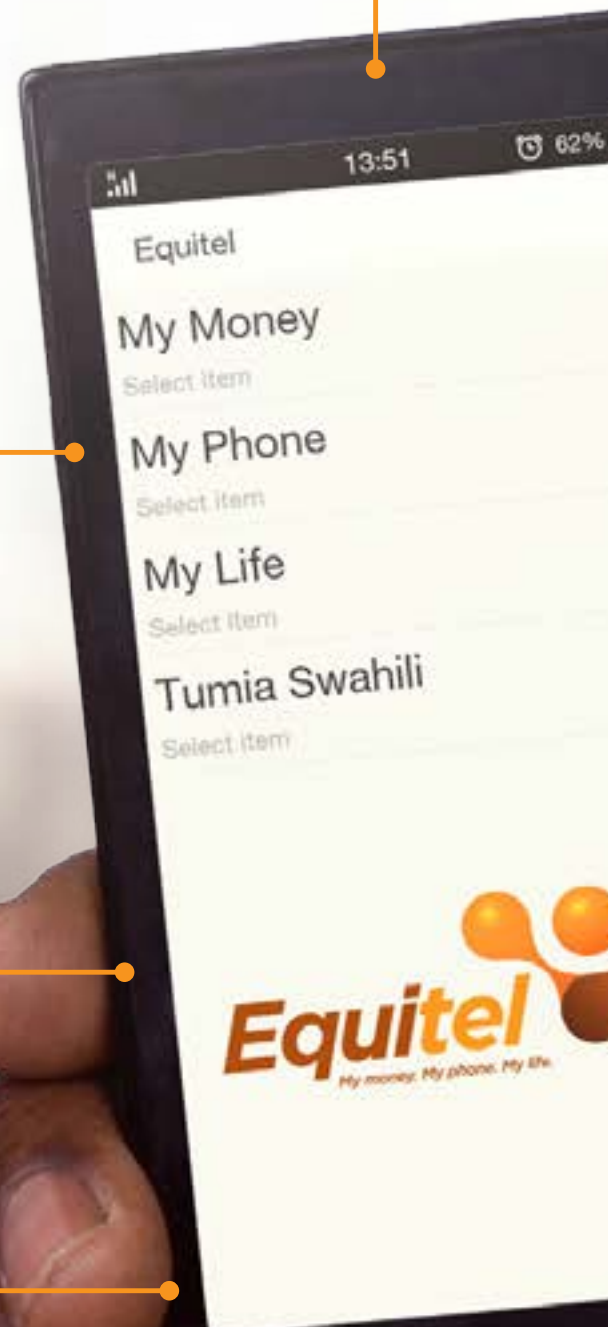
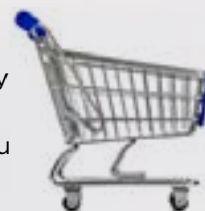
## Stay in control

Check your balance any time of day or night. Once you know how much you have, you can plan, budget and fund your goals.



## Easy shopping

You don't need cash to go shopping. You can pay for goods directly from your phone. Just pay to the seller's Equity account straight from your Equitel line. They will receive the money instantly and you will both get notifications immediately. And it's all FREE!







### Cardless banking

You don't need your ATM card to bank. Use your phone to withdraw money straight from any Equity Bank ATM or Equity Agent. It's quick, safe, and easy

### Manage your chama

Keep track of your chama payments, investments and loan disbursements through reminders and notifications. All on your phone.



### Fundraising with ease

In our Harambee spirit, we support one another because it's part of our culture. You can now fundraise virtually without a physical meeting.

### Stay in touch

Make calls, send messages, and access the internet at any time of day or night at affordable rates. Whenever your airtime is about to run out, we will send you a free reminder to top up, and you can also set up a top up standing order. You can also buy airtime from Equity Agents.



### Access information and knowledge

You can access useful and exciting information on your phone. Click on "My Life" and enjoy a variety of topics including maternal health, financial planning and budgeting, agriculture, education, financial literacy, entrepreneurship and wikipedia.



### Get well soon

Top up your Equitel line with Ksh 250 every month. Then, in case you are admitted in hospital for 2 nights or more, we will support you with Ksh. 5,000 to help pay your bills. And it's FREE!

### Grow your wealth

Buy and sell shares, government bonds and unit trust at the convenience of your phone. It is easy.



**Karibu Member. Pick your Equitel SIM card today at any Equity branch. To become a Member, dial \*247# and open an Equity account instantly hapo hapo.**

**Exercise your freedom, make your choice and take control.**



# Members, your trust in us has been recognised worldwide!



Dr. James Mwangi, CBS.  
Ernst and Young World Entrepreneur of the Year 2012

For 30 years, we've continued staying true to our essence... that members are our business. We have listened, cared and partnered with members from all walks of life, enabling them make a significant contribution to the enhancement of the Kenyan Economy. These awards are a testament that we are doing something right



In 2012, Equity was named Africa's Most Innovative Bank by the African Banker for championing delivery channels that have taken financial services to the last mile. These include Agency Banking as well as mobile phone banking.



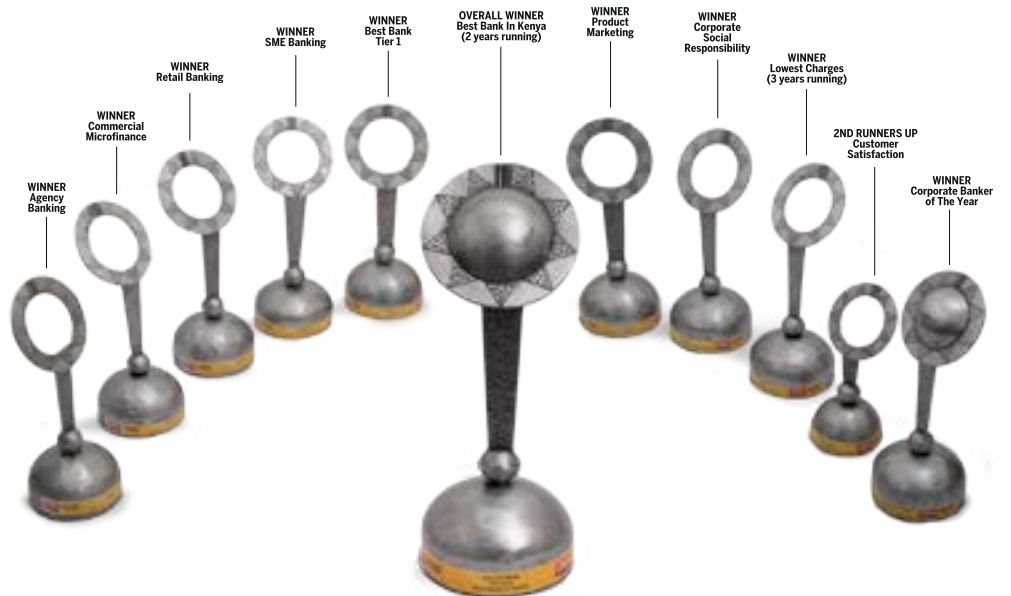
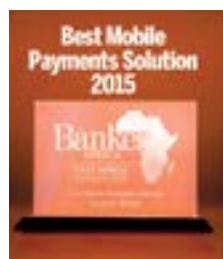
In 2011, Equity Bank was named as one of the 16 Global New Sustainability Champions redefining the ture of growth by the World Economic Forum.



In 2009, IFC recognized Equity Bank as Emerging Markets' Most Sustainable Bank in Africa and Middle East.



He is a holder of the Global Vision Award alongside Nobel laureate Prof. Mohammed Yunus of Grameen Bank. He was cited as an "Initiator of the concept of the future that will shape the world economy."



2015 Think Business Banking Awards



Equity Bank Chairman Peter Munga was co-winner of the 2009 YARA Prize for helping to innovatively strengthen agriculture value chains and increase Africa's food security.



Africa Leadership Network (ALN) co-founder Fred Swaniker (Left) presents the inaugural leadership award to Dr. Mwangi in recognition of his leadership in bringing prosperity to Africa.



2014 - Top Banking Brand in Kenya



Equity's International Rankings

The Banker  
**TOP 1000**  
WORLD BANKS 2015

Equity Bank	Overall	Soundness	Performance	
		(Capital Assets Ratio)	(Profits on capital)	(Return on assets)
2015 Global Rank	916	88	18	8
2014 Global Rank	999	112	8	4

Equity's Global Credit Rating

GCR GLOBAL CREDIT RATING CO. Local Expertise • Global Presence	Equity Bank Limited		
	Rating Scale	Rating	Rating Outlook
Kenya Bank Analysis	AAA	AA+	Stable
Long Term	AAA	AA+	Stable
Short Term	AAA	AA+	Stable



Forbes Africa Personality of the year

In 2012, Dr James Mwangi (2nd left) was named Forbes Africa Personality of the year



# Delegation visit Wings scholars at home



President Festus Mogae leads the team during a 3-kilometre trek to one of the scholar's homes.

## FROM STREET BOY TO SCHOOL LEADER



Former street boy Benson Lemaiyan (right) and his sister (centre) welcome the delegation to their humble home.

The two are orphans who lived in the streets before a well-wisher gave them the house in the background. The sister is a teenager who was married with three children but she now lives here with Lemaiyan.

Lemaiyan overcame difficult circumstances and excelled in his Kenya Certificate of Primary Education exams, winning a Wings to Fly scholarship. Lemaiyan has tasted the harsh street life and believes that one day he will become a lawyer and rescue children in similar circumstances. Now in form two, Lemaiyan already holds several leadership positions in his school.

## COMMUNITIES EMBRACE PROGRAMME



1

## SAVED FROM EARLY MARRIAGE



## PROGRAMME MAKING A DIFFERENCE



by their single mother when their father passed on.

She secured a Wings to Fly scholarship and after excelling in secondary school, she was admitted as an intern at Equity Bank through the Equity Leaders Programme.

With her initial earnings, Lesorogol roofed her mother's traditional manyatta and built her a shop (inset). Now the family is guaranteed a daily stream of income.

In Samburu Central, Wings to Fly scholar Florence Faith Lesorogol (right) transformed the life of her mother barely five months after graduating from high school. Lesorogol and her 8 siblings were raised



2



3

The Wings to Fly Programme has received immense support in the communities where it has been implemented and has been hailed as a great model of supporting needy students.

1: The delegation had an opportunity to interact with District Scholarship Selection Boards (DSSB), such as this team from Trans-Nzoia. The boards, comprised of community leaders and educationists are responsible for interviewing and verifying applications to ensure only the most deserving scholars are selected.

The Trans-Nzoia DSSB expressed gratitude for the opportunity to change the lives of needy students.

2: In West Pokot the delegation was greeted with jubilation and honoured with colourful traditional regalia.

3&4: Addressing leaders in West Pokot (3) and Samburu county (4) Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman Dr James Mwangi called on counties and individuals to join Wings to Fly partners in supporting more bright but needy children in the next phase of the programme.

4: During a courtesy call to Turkana County Government, Deputy Governor Peter Ekai (2nd Left) lauded the programme and highlighted the importance of education.



4



5



# Creating opportunities for the academically gifted

**E**quity Leaders Programme (ELP) is an internship program that selects the most academically gifted secondary school graduates from across Kenya and develops them into world-class leaders to transform society.

The programme selects the top *Wings to Fly* scholars who attain

grade A and the top boy and top girl in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination from the country and develops them into world-class leaders to transform society.

Of the 2,673 beneficiaries of the program as at 2015, 1,029 are alumni currently working or in post-graduate studies, while 1,644 scholars are still pursuing their undergraduate degrees.

This year, 2015, 65 scholars

have been admitted to join global universities as follows:

- 46 scholars traveling to USA and Canada
- 14 scholars travelling to South Africa
- 3 scholars travelling to Ghana
- 1 scholar travelling to the UK
- 1 scholar traveling to Costa Rica.

Twelve out of the 65 scholars are alumni of the *Wings to Fly* Programme. The total scholarship

value provided by the scholars' respective institutions is: US\$12,178,124.

Out of these scholars:

- 58 scholars will be pursuing their undergraduate studies
- 6 scholars will be pursuing their postgraduate studies
- 1 scholar will be pursuing his A-Levels at the African Leadership Academy.

Additionally, we have 8 scholars studying at Kenyan universities

who will be pursuing their clinical electives abroad.

Founded in 1998, the program has now benefitted 2,673 young people, including more than 265 scholars and alumni studying at global universities. The program is centered on a rigorous internship experience that allows scholars to work as members of staff at Equity Bank branches around the country before they join university.

## 65 ELP scholars join top global colleges and universities in 2015



**John Akol**  
University of California,  
Berkeley  
Kinyago Dandora School



**Job Nyanganya**  
Dartmouth College  
Utumishi Boys Academy



**Timothy Mwiti**  
Northwestern University  
Burieruri Boys High  
School



**Jackson Ltorisha**  
University of Pretoria  
Good Shepherd  
Seminary



**Lawrence Nyerere**  
University of Toronto  
Maseno School



**Abdinur Hussein**  
Arizona State  
University, USA  
Wajir High School



**Wendy Kang'ethe**  
Dartmouth College  
Riara Springs Academy



**Tom Wanderi Kingori**  
Princeton University  
Alliance High School



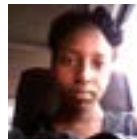
**John Kagwanja Wanjiku**  
University of Pretoria  
Kihoya Secondary  
School



**Noah Melvin Kones**  
University of Toronto  
Lodwar Boys High  
School



**Anderson Gitonga**  
Arizona State  
University, USA  
Kangaru Boys High  
School



**Fridah Rotich**  
Davidson College  
Segero Adventist High  
School



**Karen Komu**  
Smith College  
Alliance Girls' High  
School



**Kyalo Wycliffe**  
University of Pretoria  
Igembe Boys High School



**Brian Osoro**  
Vanderbilt University  
Nairobi School



**David Okinyi**  
Arizona State  
University, USA  
Kanyawanga High  
School



**Christine Kendi**  
Duke University  
Loreto Girls High  
School, Limuru



**Norah Borus**  
Stanford University  
Precious Blood High  
School, Riruta



**Nicholas Maina**  
University of Pretoria  
Nyandarua High School



**Vivian Wanjohi**  
Vanderbilt University  
Busara Forest View  
Academy



**Diana Achieng'**  
Arizona State  
University, USA  
WISER Girls  
Secondary School



**Jacqueline Maina**  
EARTH University  
Bishop Gatimu Ngandu  
Girls High School



**Robert Kinini**  
Stanford University  
Nyeri High School



**Ruth Kasavo Nzisi**  
University of Pretoria  
Kimangao Girls  
Secondary School



**Wanjiru Gachuhi**  
Vassar College  
Nyahururu Elite  
High School



**Peter Obila**  
Arizona State  
University, USA  
Mirera High School



**Daniel Getega**  
Harvard University  
Maseno School



**Alvin Orori**  
Tufts University  
Lenana School



**Samuel Njuguna Irumbi**  
University of Pretoria  
Murang'a High School



**Maryanne Naliaka**  
Williams College  
Maryhill Girls High  
School



**Selina Alulu**  
Arizona State University  
Buruburu Girls  
Secondary School



**Lynn Akinyi**  
Harverford College  
St. Albert's Girls High  
School, Ulanda



**Agnes Ouko**  
University of British  
Columbia  
Maria Soti Girls  
Educational Centre



**Michael Kitimet**  
University of Richmond  
Kimana Secondary School



**Josphat Luokot Lowoi**  
African Leadership  
Academy  
Lenana School



**Dennis Sifuna**  
Ashesi University, Ghana  
Lenana School



**Walter Mukira**  
Johns Hopkins University  
Pioneer School



**Protus Langat**  
University of British  
Columbia  
Kericho High School



**George Muiruri**  
University of Rochester  
Lukenya High School



**Terry Kipkorir**  
University of Cape Town  
Town  
St. Patrick High School, Iten



**Felix Omondi Oyoo**  
Ashesi University, Ghana  
Orero Boys High School



**Samuel Indech**  
Lafayette College  
Mang'u High School



**Elijah Koome**  
Amherst College, USA  
Meru School



**Anthony Muchina**  
University of Toronto  
Maseno School



**Fhazhil Wamalwa**  
University of Pretoria  
St Anthony's Boys High  
School, Kitale



**Wayne Gakuo**  
Ashesi University, Ghana  
Aga Khan High School,  
Mombasa



**Bior Leek Ajak**  
McGill University  
Chebisaas Boys High  
School



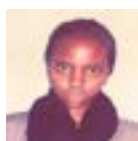
**Mary Kilonzo**  
University of Chicago  
Booker Academy



**Michelle Nyamai**  
University of Sheffield  
Mt. Kenya Academy



**Frederick Opado**  
Baylor University



**Veronica Mulila**  
Barnard College  
Mt. Laverna Girls  
Secondary School



**Winnie Nyakundi**  
McGill University  
Mary Mount High School



**Halima Said Hussein**  
University of Pennsylvania  
Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed  
Al Nahyan Secondary  
School, Mombasa



**Dickens Nyakongo**  
University of Toronto,  
Canada  
Kanga High School



**Stanley Mutinda**  
University of Cape  
Town



**Maryanne Wangui  
Kihui**  
Bryn Mawr College  
South Tetu Girls High  
School



**Hafsa Shariff**  
Michigan State University  
Nairobi Muslim Academy



**Geoffrey Otwan Okochil**  
University of Pretoria  
Nakuru Boys High School



**Frank Mkala**  
University of Toronto  
Kenyatta High School,  
Mwatate



**Carolyne Mbatia**  
University of Cape  
Town



**Abdihakim Yunis**  
Cornell University  
Starehe Boys Centre  
and School



**June Hellen Odera**  
Northwestern University  
Newlight Senior Girls  
School



**Godfrey Eric Muendo**  
University of Pretoria  
Nguviu Boys Secondary  
School



**Josephine Nyambura**  
University of Toronto  
Nguviu Girls High School



**Jeremiah Nzioka**  
University of Cape  
Town



## How Equity Leaders Programme moulds leaders

The ELP leadership development model is delivered through 10 initiatives:

**Internship program:** Allows scholars at local universities to return for internships with Equity Group and its partners during university holidays to get professional experience while saving for their university education.

**Global Summer Internship:** Allows scholars studying at international universities to return to Africa for their summer holidays and intern with Equity Group and its partners, giving them work experience and building their professional networks on the continent

**College Counseling:** Supports Equity scholars to access admission and scholarships to some of the world's leading universities, including the Ivy League universities in the US

**Annual Leadership Congress:** Allows scholars to connect with each other to form a strong community, learn about leadership and employability skills, and interact with successful leaders from various industries

**Innovators:** Trains and develops scholars in innovation and

entrepreneurship skills, allowing them to write business plans and pitch their ideas for seed funding

**Centers of Excellence:** Provides residential mentorship to students at three high schools around Kenya: Kwale Girls, Nyawara Girls, and Nyagatugu Boys

**eQademy:** Encourages scholars to take Massively Open Online Courses (MOOCs) to complement their university education with ideas from leading global thinkers

**ELP Journals:** encourages scholars to express themselves through writing and digital media, allowing them to share their poems, short stories, political commentary, photographs, and more with fellow scholars

**University Chapters** in Kenya and abroad serve as platforms for interaction, networking, and activities for the scholars during their university session

**Wings to Fly Mentorship:** Enables scholars to visit *Wings to Fly* high school scholarship recipients at their respective high schools to provide mentorship and academic coaching.



Equity Group Foundation Managing Director Dr Helen Gichohi (right) presents Jacqueline Maina her air ticket to Costa Rica. The former Bishop Gatimu Ngandu Girls Secondary school Wings to Fly scholar is admitted to EARTH University. Jacqueline is among 65 Equity scholars who secured scholarships to global universities in 2015.

## Scholars Voices

**Kevin Muriuki**

I go to Harvard College. I mentored last year and I am proud that one of the students I mentored gained admission. I study stem cell biology and I am hoping to go into bio-tech industry probably as a lawyer. It has been an amazing program it has really been a great growth cycle.

**Teresia John**

By inspiring the young ones, we are putting a seed in them which will germinate and finally transform the society.

**Kevin Lochum**

I anticipate to be part of sober and goal oriented leaders that Kenya needs

**Nellie Kamau**

My greatest motivation lies in my belief that with the dawn, comes a new assignment for each of us. Some are pre-planned whereas others are impromptu. It is our duty to serve and share the joy with others.

**Wambui Kamau**

Everything I do is preceded by the "Wh" questions of 'why am I doing this?', 'what do I want to achieve from doing this,' and 'who will I positively impact by doing this'.

**Elijah Koome**

Opportunities are not lost, they are missed. In my case I had the opportunity of talking to the President. I thank God for the kind of character He gave me because once I decide to do something, I don't envision failure or obstacles.

## Let's fight corruption

Dear Mr President,

I am going to Johns Hopkins University to pursue Neuroscience and in the long run Psychiatric Medicine.

I would like to thank you for your contribution in education in general and I

think all my peers will agree with me that Kenya has come a long way since you came into office. There's a lot of change that has taken place.

For one, corruption used to be a part of the Kenyan lifestyle but at least now it is recognized as a vice and it



**Walter Mukira**  
Johns Hopkins University

is a vice that is diminishing. Mr. President there is still much to be done. I hope that you can continue to push. There is no reason why

President Obama should come back here and talk about corruption again. Let us just be honest and be people of integrity

I have big dreams and I know my peers also share in some of these big dreams. I realize when you start one good thing it just spreads out. I was a former teacher at a school in Nyagatugu.

As I taught there I

realized that the same practices that we started implementing in Nyagatugu, other places started picking them up. I know if we do the right thing here in Kenya, or in Uganda or Tanzania it will spread all over the continent and we will have massive change.

I pray that one day the 'dark continent' will be the light of the world.

## I fought hard to get to school



**Abdinur Jirrow Hussein**  
Arizona State University

studied at Wajir High School in Wajir County. Most of you probably know it because North Eastern Province is associated with some terrorist activities.

When most of you were joining school, I was busy grazing cattle and goats for my family because I was born in a pastoralist family which considers education as alien.

I didn't get an opportunity to be taken to school by my parents. I ran away from my family just to go to high school because I was fascinated by education.

To be away from my family, in a temporary settlement in a village, was a really difficult life and it took me five years to complete my primary school education.

I joined primary school in 2004 and when I got to Wajir High School, life wasn't that easy because I didn't

have parental support for school fees.

So, when I got low self-esteem, I would look back to see the life, the torrid journey I had gone through, to derive motivation from it.

I remember when I was sent home for school fees I would use firewood to study because there was no electricity. In fact, the first time I saw electricity was in 2010.

Due to my impressive performance in 2013, I got enrolled into the highly selective Equity Leadership Programme which provided me with an opportunity to apply to unthinkable world class universities abroad and gave me the opportunity to mentor the students from my school so they could see education as a tool for change and as a tool to fight marginalization and poverty.

## People are a resource



**Christine Kendi**  
Duke University

My journey to Duke was a bit challenging. I was deferred to regular decision pool and for a while I wasn't sure about whether I was getting into

that school or not.

I have learnt to work hard and not to give up easily because not everything comes on a silver platter. I have grown through the whole application, I am sure everyone who has applied will tell you that it is a process of learning about yourself and even as we go we know who we are than we did when we started.

I have also learnt that people are important. They are a resource you won't find easily. I thank you all for celebrating this chance with us.

## ELP alumni working in Blue Chip companies abroad

Scholar	University	High School	Employer	Field/Sector
Daniel Nyakora	University of Pennsylvania	St. Patrick's High School, Iten	Morgan Stanley	Wealth and investment management
Grace Njuguna	Harvard University	Moi Girls' High School, Eldoret	Dalberg	Strategy and policy advisory
Brian Mwitii	Yale University	Mang'u High School	JP Morgan	Largest bank in the United States
Doris Mbabu	Williams College	Precious Blood Secondary School, Kilungu	Wellington	Investment management
Kush Patel	Yale University	Uasin Gishu High School	Bloomberg	Financial software, data and media
Mary Kiarie	Yale University	St Anne's Lioki High School	Wellington	Investment management
Anthony Siloiy	Harvard University	Moi High School, Kabarak	EMC Program for NASA	IT storage hardware solutions, data backup
Denver Ogaro	Harvard University	Alliance High School	Google	Technology company, internet-related services and products
Gideon Too	Wesleyan University	Nairobi School	Ernst & Young	Assurance, advisory, transaction advisory services, tax, legal
Leonard Ng'eno	Duke University	Starehe Boys Centre and School	Social Science Research Institute	Research on social problems
Martha Obasi	Harvard University	Mary Mount Secondary School	Morgan Stanley	Wealth and investment management
Evans Molel	University of Pennsylvania	Olkejuado High School	University of Pennsylvania Research	Research-critical human and social problems
Duncan Ng'enda	University of Bath	Mang'u High School	Ernst & Young	Assurance, advisory, transaction advisory services, tax, legal



# President Uhuru flags off 65 Equity scholars as they leave for global universities



**P**resident Uhuru Kenyatta recently urged Equity scholars proceeding to universities abroad to come back and build Kenya.

The President was speaking when flagging off 65 Equity Leaders Programme scholars admitted to leading universities abroad this year when they paid a courtesy call on him at State House, Nairobi ahead of their departure.

“Don’t get lost there. You will be exposed to so much. Don’t be derailed. Keep your eye on the ball. Your country needs you,” he said.

The scholars were accompanied to State House by the Executive Chairman of the Equity Group Foundation Dr James Mwangi; Equity Bank Chairman Peter Munga and Equity Bank Company Secretary and Director of Corporate Strategy Mary Wamae as well as their college counselling mentors.

On listening to presentations by a number of scholars the President said it was heart warming to hear young people speak on education, infrastructure, agriculture and other critical issues that affect the Kenyan community.

“What Equity is doing is in its own way transformational. You are focused and know where you want to be. Keep focused,” he said.

The President called on the scholars to be the country’s ambassadors. “People will see Kenya through you. If you see things not representing your country properly, don’t fear putting records straight,” he said reminding them that Kenya ought to be seen as a country of entrepreneurs, doctors and heroes and not a country seeking handouts.

The President commended the scholars for having travelled thus far in their quest for academic accomplishment.

He expressed hope that the departing class would acquire skills and global exposure, and apply the knowledge for the empowerment of the country.

He said that Africa sits

# 265

The total number of Equity Leaders Programme scholars in global universities

on the cusp of greatness, significantly because the population is getting younger compared to the rest of the world, especially developed countries, that are aging.

“It is not what lies beneath that will make us rich, but our ability to invest in our people,” said the President decriing the contention that Africa is hurting from a youth bulge.

“We know there is great bulge. It is a hotbed of opportunities for this continent.”

President Uhuru, who studied at Amherst College in USA, advised the students to remain grounded, shun negative influence that might derail their dreams, and to use the international exposure and come back to apply some of the best practices that have shaped the developed world.

“Go and get the intellectual experience. Absorb it like a sponge and bring it here to implement,” said the President.

1. Departing ELP scholars with President Uhuru Kenyatta and First Lady Margaret Kenyatta at State House. 2<sup>nd</sup> left to right: Mary Wamae, Equity Bank Company Secretary and Director of Strategy; Equity Group Chairman Peter Munga; Equity Group CEO Dr James Mwangi and Chief of Staff and Head of Civil Service Joseph Kinyua.

2. First Lady Margaret Kenyatta addresses the scholars

3. ELP scholars (left to right) Edwin Rono (University of Nairobi), Elizabeth Mwangi (Moi University), and Hillary Tonui (University of Nairobi). The three are among 8 students from various Kenyan universities under ELP, selected to pursue their clinical electives abroad.

4. Bior Leek, a South Sudanese national joining McGill University in Canada engages President Uhuru

5. The scholars follow proceedings

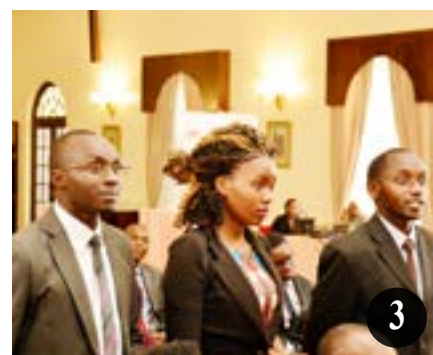
Addressing the issue of local opportunities for Kenyan Diaspora returnees, the President said that the government is working to incentivize foreign-skilled Kenyans to be part of Kenya’s growth.

He added that returning ELP scholars would be offered internships in government and public service offices to get a feel of how a country is run.

The President advised the students to work as a bloc, pooling their acquired skills to form a formidable workforce guided by citizenry and not sectarian interests. “Nations do not become great by thinking small,” he said.

The First Lady Margaret Kenyatta, who commissioned the 650 ELP 2015 cohort in April, congratulated the scholars, and thanked the mentors who groomed the outgoing class.

“Together we can do



wonders. Together we can create a great nation,” she said.

Bidding the scholars farewell the President expressed his pleasure to see

them off as they start another academic journey. “This is a start of an incredible journey with new experiences in new lands and different people.

You had dreams backed with determination. Don’t forget to pack the same determination in your bags,” the President advised.



# A chance at greatness

Allan Chege (in photo 7) an ELP scholar currently studying at Cornell University, was hosted by the President at State House. Here he shares his experience of the memorable day.

**T**hursday, 13th August started off like any other day: The sun was fully out and the city air was bustling with the commotion characteristic of a normal

weekday in Nairobi. However, this was a day with a difference, and we knew this for a fact. This was the day we would meet H.E the President of Kenya, the honorable Uhuru Kenyatta in person. The day started with a networking cocktail on the

9th floor of Equity Centre, which quickly escalated into selfies with the Equity Bank Directors and staff. The scholars were seemingly readying themselves to meet with their leader of State and Government. There was then an address by the CEO of the Bank, Dr

James Mwangi, who prepped the Equity Leaders Program scholars on how to conduct themselves before a Head of State. The journey to State House then began. On arrival, it was clear that this was no ordinary visit. From the security checks at the

gate to those in the House, to the ban on mobile phones and cameras within State House—ironically on the one day when most cellphone cameras were fired up and ready for use—; to the entrees served inside as we awaited the President.

It was truly amazing the kind of people we had the chance to interact with, as the Chairman of Equity Group, Mr. Peter Munga, embraced me like a grandson, and called us by name. Dr Mwangi was beaming at us the whole time.

If there ever was a day to brush one's shoulders off, this was it. We were kings for a day. The moment the President stepped in, we knew we were going to have a great evening.

He was jovial and engaging to the point that comments were made on the air of ease he exuberated. Seated on the front row, I felt like I was looking at my father, or a close uncle, rather than the President of the Republic of Kenya.

The fact that his wife was in tow made the event a family affair to an even greater extent as she looked at and addressed us all with love and respect, like a mother would.

The MC of the day, Dr Mwangi was truly up to the task. Through his careful planning of the event, 6 scholars, I being one of them, gave reports on our journeys through the Equity Leaders Program.

The President and First Lady's comments on the eloquence of the speakers went a long way to show the kind of growth and exposure the scholars have been experiencing within the program.

There was a strong focus on integrity, entrepreneurship and giving-back to the country, we so love throughout the speeches, with a few humorous interjections from both the President and Dr Mwangi.

There was also talk of the Vision 2030, and what better time to have discussed that dream than in the presence of the Chairman of the Vision 2030 Delivery Board Dr Mwangi himself.

It was awe-inspiring to see the scholars discuss current issues, initiatives and steps being taken by the Government to secure a better Kenya.

"We want you back here when you are done studying abroad," the President told us.

The message from the President could only be summed by the word: wow!

The debrief by Dr Mwangi back at Equity Centre showed just how proud he was of us, and we also got a chance to show him how thankful we were for all he had done for us.

We had just been granted audience by the President, the First Lady, and Dr Mwangi himself! By the time we left the Equity Centre at 9pm, all that could be said had been said, and all that could be done had been done. What a great day.

Thursday 13th August 2015: The day we got, "A Chance at Greatness".



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**“**Equity Group has established itself as an organisation powered by vision, innovation and fresh thinking. For decades to come, the Equity brand will live up to the meaning of the word.  
- President Uhuru Kenyatta



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- 6. Dr Mwangi with President Uhuru
- 7. ELP scholar Allan Chege, a student at Cornell University, addresses the President during the State House visit
- 8. ELP mentors with President Uhuru Kenyatta and First Lady Margaret Kenyatta at State House. 2<sup>nd</sup> left to right: Mary Wamae, Equity Bank Company Secretary and Director of Strategy; Equity Group Chairman Peter Munga; Equity Group CEO Dr James Mwangi and Chief of Staff and Head of Civil Service Joseph Kinyua.
- 10. First Lady Margaret Kenyatta addresses the scholars
- 11&12. President Uhuru interacts with the scholars



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# Equity emerges preferred GES development partner

**E**quity Bank signed a string of funding commitments with a number of development partners during the 6th Global Entrepreneurship Summit (GES) held in Nairobi in July, 2015.

Buoyed by its market positioning and profile as the entrepreneurs' financial institution, the Group won big during the summit going by the multi-billion funding commitments now at its disposal.

With its regional banking subsidiaries ranking high as reliable onward lending channels, Equity Group Holdings, emerged as the preferred partner.

Speaking when he

confirmed the signing of the funding commitments, amounting to more than US\$525million, Equity Bank Group CEO Dr James Mwangi, acknowledged that the Group's positioning as an end to end entrepreneurs hub and financial literacy proponent, helped the Bank to secure the funding commitments for onward lending.

Within its flagship banking subsidiaries, Equity accounts for more than 10million account holders with more than 50% of its overall loan book comprising of MSME entrepreneurs.

At the end of the GES, Dr Mwangi had successfully managed to sign a US\$200million with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), US\$150million



Dr Mwangi (centre) addresses delegates.

with the African Development Bank (AfDB) US\$100million with the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and US\$75million with the European Investment Bank.

During the signing ceremony at Villa Rosa Kempinski Hotel, Nairobi, with OPIC President and CEO Elizabeth Littlefield and witnessed by the US Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker, Dr Mwangi pledged to capitalize on Equity Group Holdings capacity to support entrepreneurial delivery

capacity using its diversified subsidiaries across the region.

Within its business strategy and commitment to support entrepreneurs across East Africa, Dr Mwangi said the Group has earmarked more than US\$450million, in foreign currency and Ksh400billion for onward lending to entrepreneurs.

He said the funds will also be available for onward lending to youth and women enterprises, entrepreneurs pursuing green energy solutions, agro-processing,



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retail and wholesale, manufacturing among others.

"With the level of funding that we have managed to attract, we are humbled that global development partners recognize Equity's mission and are very excited that we shall manage to keep the

GES fire and spirit up," Dr Mwangi said.

"Our ultimate objective is to break the poverty cycle by funding entrepreneurial ideas and opportunities that accelerate job and wealth creation for our youth and women," he added.

"Already, the Group has trained over 1.3 million women and young people in financial literacy through the Equity Group Foundation, in partnership with The MasterCard Foundation and support of International Labour Organization," Dr Mwangi said.

The Group has also trained more than 12,000 micro-businesses in entrepreneurship skills.

During the summit, US President, Barack Obama, confirmed that the US Government, is committing significant new resources to advance entrepreneurship in sub-Saharan Africa.

Among other commitments, President Obama confirmed that OPIC will support up to US\$200million for Equity Bank Group lending, with a focus on youth and women, to small and medium enterprises over the next five years.

**“We are humbled that global development partners recognize Equity's mission and are very excited that we shall manage to keep the GES fire and spirit up**  
- Dr James Mwangi

## Equity Bank hosts GES delegates

**K**enya was the host nation of the 6th Global Entrepreneurship Summit co-hosted by President Obama and his counterpart Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta.

This was the first time the meeting was held in Sub-Saharan Africa since President Obama elevated entrepreneurship to the forefront of the United States' engagement agenda during a historic speech in Cairo, Egypt in 2009. GES is the gathering of entrepreneurs at all stages of business development, business leaders, mentors, and high-level government officials. Since 2010, when the US hosted the first Summit in Washington DC, GES has expanded to a global event, subsequently held in Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia and Morocco.

Thousands of delegates and the public

attended the Pre-Global Entrepreneurship Summit expo held at KICC grounds. The guest of honour President Uhuru Kenyatta



Deputy President William Ruto addresses delegates at a dinner hosted by Equity Bank

urged Kenyans to showcase their innovation adding that Kenya is leading the way in innovations and entrepreneurship.

"You are part of a network of people some of who support you because of their personal relationship to you; some who seek to invest in your products; others who work for you and yet others whom you hope to eventually become your customers," President Uhuru told the delegates.

The GES delegates were



hosted to an international dinner by Equity Bank. The chief guest Deputy President William Ruto said Kenya is ready for business.

"A wave of infrastructure that is being rolled out is the single most critical factor that makes Kenya competitive," he said.

Dr Mwangi, who is also the Chairman of Vision 2030 Delivery Board welcomed the delegates to Kenya encouraging them to use the meeting opportunity to network for their businesses.

## Equity Bank plays role of official GES Banker

**E**quity Group Holdings was the title sponsor for the Global Entrepreneurship Summit (GES) held in Kenya in July 2015.

Equity also played a key role as the official GES Banker providing end to end banking solutions at all GES locations for the delegates.

The Bank showcased entrepreneurship opportunities touching on the convergence of the banking and telecommunication sectors soon after the launch of the Equitel mobile telephony solution launch. This placed Equity Group as the first organization to deploy such a solution in the commercial banking space globally.

And following Equity Bank's intervention in agriculture, Equity Bank CEO Dr James Mwangi was invited to share



The Equity Bank stand at the Pre-GES expo 2015

experiences at the main GES gathering in Gigiri, Nairobi.

The bank has transformed the lives of close to 500,000 smallholder farmers lifting them from subsistence to commercial farming through inclusive financial intermediation.

Earlier at the Pre-Global Entrepreneurship Summit, Dr Mwangi participated in panel discussions on accelerating entrepreneurship in Kenya.

"We wouldn't be where we are if the Government

was not building on enablers and the largest enabler I would say is infrastructure," Dr Mwangi said.

In Kenya, Equity Bank, enjoys a differentiated position as the preferred partner for American Express, Visa, PayPal, MasterCard and China Union Pay.

The Bank served discerning international delegates through its strategic partnerships with SWIFT, JCB, VFX, Diners Club and MasterCard.

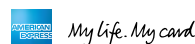
# Jambo!

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# Pope Francis addresses youth in Kenya

## 500 *Wings to Fly* scholars among guests at the meeting

In November 2015, Pope Francis visited Kenya in his maiden visit to Africa. The Pontiff addressed thousands of young people who thronged the Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani in Nairobi eager to see and listen to the Holy Father live. Among them were 500 students invited to represent the 10,377 *Wings to Fly* scholars.

Here is an excerpt of the Pope's address:

### War and death

Why do divisions, wars and death occur? Fanaticism and divisions among young people? Why is there that desire to destroy? In the first page of the bible, after all those wonderful things that God had done, a brother kills another brother. The spirit of evil takes us to destruction. And the spirit takes us to a lack of unity.

It takes us to tribalism, corruption and drugs; it takes us to destruction. What do we do so that fanatical idealism doesn't rob us of a brother or sister? There is a word that might seem uncomfortable to the ear but I don't want to avoid it.

A man or a woman loses their humanity when they forget how to pray. Because they feel powerful. Because they don't feel the need to ask the Lord for help in the face of so many tragedies.

### Choice is yours

Life is full of difficulties. Are there different ways of looking at difficulties? Does it stop you, or do you regard them as real opportunities? The choice is yours. Is this a path of destruction or an opportunity to overcome this difficulty for me, my family or my country? Young people: we don't live in heaven, we live on earth.

And earth is full of difficulties and invitations that will lead you astray to evil. But there is something all of you have. The capacity to choose. Which path do you want to choose? Which of these two do I want?

There are some other difficulties worth mentioning. Do you want to overcome challenges or be overcome by them?

### Tribalism

Tribalism can destroy. It can mean hiding your hands behind your back. And have a stone in each hand to throw to others. Tribalism can only be overcome with your ear, your heart, and your hand. Ask yourselves: What is your culture? Why are you like this? Why do your cousins have these customs? Do they feel inferior or superior?

Once we've heard the response in our ears then it passes to our hearts and then I extend my hand. If you don't dialogue with each other then you are going to have division like a worm that grows in society.

Yesterday was pronounced as a day of prayer and reconciliation in Kenya. I want to invite you all to stand up now, and we hold each other's hands together as a sign against tribalism. We are all a nation, that's how our hearts must be. Tribalism isn't just raising our hands today, it's an expression of our desire, our hearts, and this tribalism is a tendency we must work against every day. You have to listen to others, it's a work of opening your heart.

### Corruption

Can we justify corruption just for the mere fact that everyone is corrupt? How can we be Christians and overcome this evil of corruption? In my country (Argentina) a young 20 year old dedicated himself to politics. He studied with great vigour he went here and there and he obtained a job. One day he had to decide: about which things he had to buy. He asked for three quotes. He studied these three quotes and chose the cheapest, the easiest, and he took it to his boss so his boss could sign-off on it and he asked: "Why do you choose this one?" He answered, "Because you have to choose what is easiest for the finances of our country." "No, you have to choose that which gives more money in your pocket" the boss said. "But I came to carry out politics for the good of the nation!" said the young man. And the boss replied: "I do politics to rob".



Pope Francis waves as he arrives at Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani Photo: Samuel Waweru

And it's not just in politics, in all areas of life, also in the Vatican there are cases of corruption. Corruption is something that eats inside. Like sugar, its sweet, we like it and then we end up in a bad way. We take so much sugar that we end up being diabetic or our country ends up being diabetic. Each time when we accept a bribe and we put it in our pockets, we destroy our hearts. We destroy our personalities, and we destroy our country. Please, don't develop that taste for that sugar which is called corruption. You might say "but Holy Father, I see many who are corrupt. Just for a little bit of money without worrying about the livelihood of others." And I say in everything you have to make a start. If you don't want corruption in lives, hearts and country, start now, yourselves because if you don't start then the person who's beside you won't start.

Corruption moreover takes away our joy, our peace. Corrupt people don't live in peace. What I'm about to tell you really happened. In my city, my home town, a man died and we all knew that he was corrupt. I asked a few days after, "how did the funeral go?" and a lady with a great sense of humor replied, "they couldn't close the coffin properly because they wanted to put inside all the money he had robbed."

What you rob through corruption will stay here. But also, what will remain in the hearts

of many men and women are wounds from the corruption. What will remain behind is the lack of good that could have been done. It will remain in children to suffer. Young people: corruption is not a path to life. It is a path to death.

### Communication

How can you use means of communication to spread the message of Christ, and to promote good initiatives so that you can make a difference? The first means of communicating is the words, the smiles and the gestures. The first gesture is being close to others. ...trying to look for friendship with others.

If you speak well among yourselves then you can accept each other as brothers and sisters, even if you are from different tribes. If you are closest to the poor and to those who are abandoned... to those who are completely rejected, those gestures of communication are much more contagious than any channel on

injustice of having an economic system where the person is not the center but rather the god of money.

Pray! But do it really hard. God is much stronger than any recruitment campaign. And then, speak with tenderness, understanding and love and with great patience to invite them to come watch some football, to walk with you, to be together in your group. Don't allow them to remain on their own.

### Things that destroy us

How can we understand that God is our father? How can we find God's peace in the tragedies of life? This is a question men and women all over the world ask themselves. And they can't find the answer. And there are some questions that you can turn around in your minds over and over again and never find the answer. How can I see the hand of God in tragedy? There is a path. To look at the Son of God. God endured death to save all of us. God became a tragedy. God allowed himself to be destroyed on the cross.

When you don't understand something, when desperation hits you then look at the cross. That is the great failure of God, that is the destruction of God, and it's a challenge to our faith. And this is hope, because history did not end in that failure. Rather it's in the resurrection of Christ that renewed all of us.

I am going to tell you something personal...something private. In my pocket I always carry two things: a rosary to pray and a small booklet on *Way of the Cross*. The *Way of the Cross* is the history of God's failure, as Jesus suffered and when they condemned Him right up to where He was buried. With these two things I do the best I can. And thanks to these two things, I never lose hope.

### Love and the family

Everywhere, there are abandoned children, either at birth or as life progressed they were abandoned and they don't feel love from their families.

This is why family is so important. Defend the family, defend the family always. Everywhere there are not only children who are abandoned but also elderly are abandoned with no one to visit them, with no-one to love them.

How do you come out of this very negative experience? There is one remedy, one remedy alone, to come out of these experiences. To do that which you did not receive. If you didn't receive understanding, then be understanding with others.

If you felt pain of loneliness come close to those who are alone, flesh is cured by flesh and God became flesh in order to cure us, let's do the same ourselves.

I thank you from my heart, first that you came, second that you allowed me to speak in my mother tongue. I am really grateful you prayed so many Rosaries for me. And please, I ask you to pray for me, because I too need those prayers and very much so. I count on your prayers. Let us stand now and pray to our heavenly father.

God bless you all, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Thank you very much.

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These questions and these thoughts can help you. But ask Jesus from your hearts, pray to the Lord. So that He can give you the strength to destroy tribalism and hold each other's hand as brothers and sisters so that you have the courage not to be corrupted. Offer yourselves to others, by offering a gesture, a word and a smile as your expression of closeness.

### Radicalization

Why do young people full of ideals allow themselves to be radicalized? They leave their friends, their tribe and their country. They leave their lives behind in order to learn how to kill. This is the question which you must pose to all people in authority.

If a young woman or man has no work, cannot study, what can he or she do? A life of delinquency, falling into drug abuse, or even into suicide. They get involved or seduced into an activity which leads them into a bad path. The first thing we have to do to stop a young person from being recruited (to radicalization) is education and work. If a young person has no work then what future awaits him or her? And that's where the idea of being seduced or recruited comes in. That is the danger. It's a social danger which is beyond us and it's even beyond the country because it depends on an international system that is unjust. It's the

## Wings to Fly scholars join Pope at podium for prayers



Two of the 500 *Wings to Fly* scholars, Annet Kemunto Kebokero (left) and Simon Omari Mwangi (right) were among students privileged to share the podium with the Pope as he prayed for unity and cohesion in Kenya.



Annet, a student at St. Josephs Girls High School-Kibwezi, comes from a family of four. Her father was paralyzed after he was involved in a road accident. Her mother works as a casual laborer and her income supports her father's

medication and therapy. Any other supplementary support comes from the good will of well wishers. Annet performs extremely well in school and her average grades have been straight As. She is always focused in school and



Photo: Samuel Waweru

serves as the class secretary and dormitory assistant. Annet aspires to become a dentist.

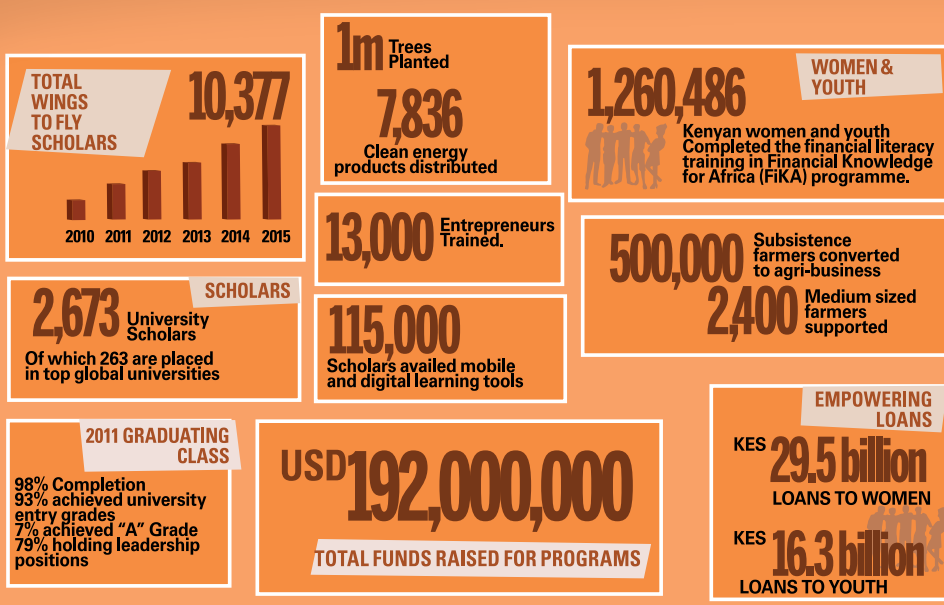
Simon, schooling at Nakuru High School, is the second born in a family of four. His brother attends Koel High School with the support of Equity Bank, Nakuru Branch. His other siblings live in Saidia Children's Home.

His mother lives in an informal settlement and supports herself through the sale of illicit liquor. Due to the despondency in their family, Simon ended up living on the streets but was rescued by a well wisher who introduced him to a Catholic priest, who helped him secure sponsorship for his primary education.

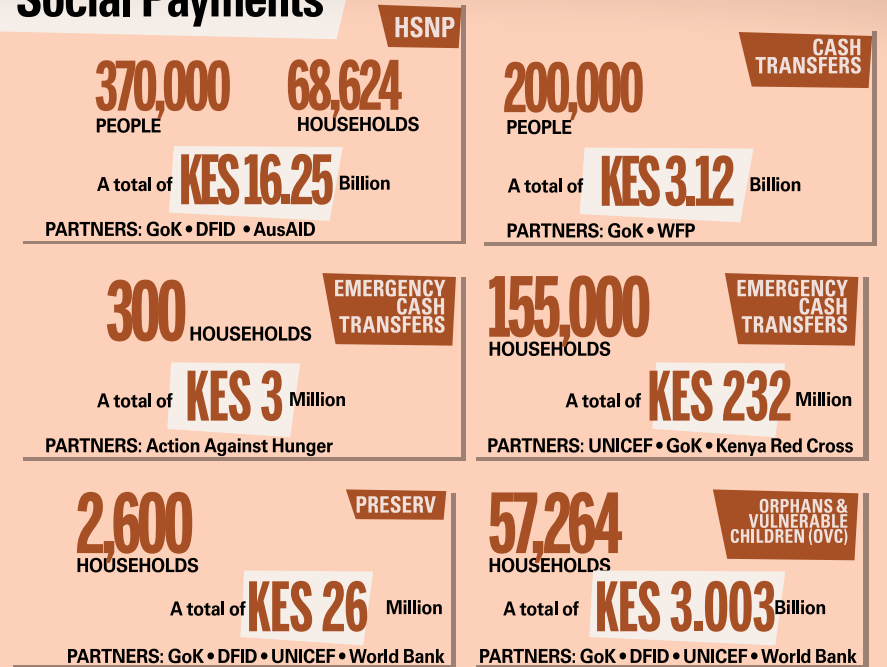




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