



***Project goal – To help the youth of Kibera by providing one of the high schools in the slum with the equipment and textbooks necessary to sit for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education.***

### **A very recent school in the heart of Kibera**

Until four years ago, Soweto Baptist High School was a professional school for dress making, carpentry, building etc. Now, Soweto High School, which is located in Kibera, provides secondary education for boys and girls of the slum. It currently has over 268 students -around 50% are girls- and a staff comprising 7 teachers. The school was created in 2004 as a community initiative supported by the Soweto Baptist Church in Kibera. The church is still responsible for the management of the school, as Board of Members of the Soweto Baptist High School have to report to the pastor. The church also sponsors 10 students in the school.



Form 2 students at Soweto Baptist High School.



Kibera slum, as seen from the Form Four classroom at the school.

Since most of the parents and guardians of the Kibera youth are jobless, they are not able to pay the KSH 10,800 (ca. EUR 110) annual fees, which causes the school financial constraint. Additionally, the new Kibera road planned by the city council will require the kitchen, the toilets and part of the Form Four classroom to be demolished. This will increase the financial needs of the school, as it will have to build new toilets and a kitchen. The school will also have to reform part of the Form Four building.

### **Kibera – one of the biggest slums in Africa**

The school is located in the Kibera slum, 5km. south west of the centre of Nairobi. Kibera is the biggest slum dwelling in East and Central Africa, with an area of ca. 260 ha. (2.5 sq. km.) and a population of anywhere between 0.6 and 1.2 million people, from all the major ethnic backgrounds. This multi-ethnic nature has led to many conflicts, the most recent being the post election violence in January 2008. The high rate of crime, together with the lack of building foundations (the ground of Kibera is mostly composed of refuse and rubbish) and the cramped sprawl of the area, slow down any upgrading effort in the slum. Moreover, Kibera slum is an “informal settlement” (i.e., it does not officially exist) and therefore the government provides no basic services such as schools, lavatories, running water, sewerage system, electricity, proper roads, etc.

Very densely populated (ca. 300,000 inhab./sq.km.) and heavily polluted by waste, dust and human and animal faeces, Kibera is home to many illnesses and, according to some sources, to more than 300,000 people infected by HIV.

Right: Laboratory awaiting fixtures and equipment.



Below: Examination room awaiting individual desks.



**Until 2004** – Soweto served as a professional education centre for dress-making, carpentry etc. run by the neighbouring Soweto Baptist Church.

**2004** – The centre is transformed into a secondary school, starting with Form One and Form Two.

**2004-Today** – The school introduces Forms Three and Four as students progress, with the financial support of the Soweto Baptist Church in Kibera.

Students at the Community Outreach Programme of Strathmore University started collaborating with the school in 2008, through motivational talks, assistance with teaching and the channelling of funds to the school from national and international donors. Currently the remaining needs for funding are the following:

Item	Need (Ksh)	Raised
Set of individual desks for KCSE examination	135,000	-
Laboratory equipment	200,000	-
Scholarships for students	165,000	-
Class texts		
- Teachers' books	25,000	-
- Student books	500,000	-

1 EUR = 100 KSH (approx.). For further information on the above items and other needs of Soweto High School please contact the COP at Strathmore University.

Right: Principal's office at Soweto School.



Below: A view of the school from the entrance, with Form One class on the left, Form Two in the back, and Form Three and Form Four on the right, ground and first floor respectively.



### Jeremiah Otuma – One of Soweto's success stories

Jeremiah Otuma, 22, is currently an assistant teacher at the Soweto Baptist Primary School, but his relationship with the school goes further back in the past: "When my father died a few years ago, I didn't think I could finish my secondary education. However, Soweto Baptist Secondary School sponsored my last two years of secondary education and also paid for my Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination fee; additionally, the school also allowed me to spend the nights in one of the offices in the school, as I didn't have a place to stay in Nairobi by then. Now they have given me a job as an assistant teacher, and I am living at the parish facilities, so I can save some money to continue studying." Jeremiah obtained a very good grade at the KCSE and got a place at the University of Nairobi to study a Bachelor in Education. Unfortunately, he could not afford the University fees.

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#### Mission Statement of Strathmore University

"We dedicate ourselves to the advancement of education through teaching, scholarship and service to society by providing an all-round education in an atmosphere of freedom and responsibility, creating a culture of continuous improvement, fostering high moral standards and developing a spirit of service and respect for others"