



Gloria Achieng speaking to children in Kenya



kanthari Quarterly Newsletter 1-2025

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."
— Chinese proverb

I am sitting in my favorite spot, on the balcony of the auditorium. In front of me lies Vellayani Lake, with tall trees in between, where excited palm squirrels are scurrying around, squeaking loudly. The campus is empty. The dogs roam around the abandoned buildings, looking bored. Occasionally, you can hear them barking as they chase after a lonely mongoose. Otherwise, the world seems to be in order... If not for the radio, which bombards us every hour with the grim and unsettling news.

We also receive emails from our kantharis every day. Their situation reports are often quite shocking too, but not hopeless. They provide firsthand accounts of an escape in Myanmar, successful negotiations for peacebuilding in Cameroon, and joint efforts to rescue elderly people from floods in Kenya. In these first months of the new year, I am often re

mindful of a supposedly Chinese curse: "May you live in interesting times!"

Well, we certainly live in interesting times, and no one would disagree with that. So why not turn this curse into a motivating imperative: May you never lose courage in interesting times, and may you always focus on something that you can change for the better - for yourself and your environment.

*Dear Friends,
The new year is just three months in, and we are happy to share uplifting updates from the participants of the 2024 course. Their passion, perseverance, and dedication motivate us to continue training and preparing future kantharis with renewed energy and enthusiasm. And, here they are - some of last year's participants - with updates on what they have accomplished in just*



Above: the kanthari Campus 2025 with a new 'Open Air Classroom' at Lake Vellayani



Left: Susanna Simango - Village Solar brings light to Malawi



Right: Timothy (white T-shirt) with 5 sound engineering students from Uganda in his adiko studio



Solange is supported by village Elders in her important work in Cameroon



Maria informs students about their rights.

the past three months since returning home from Kanthari!

Light for a Better Future – [The Kwathu Kuwale Project](#) – [Susanna Simango](#) – [Malawi](#)

Susanna is making significant progress in empowering women in remote areas. She has already trained 15 women in solar panel assembly, repair, and entrepreneurship. To support this, she created a comprehensive manual that is currently being translated into Chichewa. The response has been overwhelming: 541 individuals have applied as volunteers, and eight have already been selected. The project is gaining momentum.

A Voice for All – [Audio Production Training](#) – [Adiko](#) – [Timothy Munguci](#) – [Uganda](#)

Timothy conducts audio recording and editing courses every Saturday and Sunday. The enthusiasm among participants, mainly school dropouts and financially challenged individuals, is high, but there is a lack of equipment. An i5 laptop is helpful, but it is not sufficient for professional work. Despite these challenges, the project continues to grow—along with the opportunity to amplify unheard voices.

Empowering Survivors – [RISE School Clubs](#) – [Solange Ndir](#) – [Cameroon](#)

Through her R.I.S.E. school clubs, Solange is committed to preventing sexual violence. Survivors also find a safe space to share their experiences and support each other. A newly created WhatsApp group with 48 members enables continuous exchange and support. Together with the Zion Health Foundation, she is now developing a one-year school curriculum—another step toward greater awareness and protection.

Rethinking Education – [Educational Initiative for Indigenous Children](#) – [Swapnistan](#) – [Prakash Dangi](#) – [Rajasthan, India](#)

Prakash is working to introduce alternative learning methods in indigenous communities. However, gaining parents' trust is a major challenge—they are only familiar with the traditional school system. Many families struggle with daily hardships, making education a lower priority. Nevertheless, Prakash remains determined: the official registration of his organization has been completed—a significant milestone!

Sustainable Agriculture – [Eco Alchemy](#) – [Caren Jobita](#) – [Kenya](#)

Caren and her team focus on circular economy principles: they transform organic waste into protein-rich animal feed using black soldier flies and cicadas. Nineteen farmers actively participate in the training sessions. However, the limited capacity of the insect farm and financial constraints make it difficult to expand the project. To bridge the funding gap, Caren restarted her poultry project, but unexpected setbacks led to some losses. Still, her spirit of innovation remains unbroken!

Justice for Youth – [Ikoku](#) – [Maria Opolot](#) – [Uganda](#)

Maria advocates for fair trials for juvenile offenders. She has already helped secure bail for three young people accused of theft. Additionally, she organizes training sessions for police officers and local authorities to improve the handling of juvenile cases and for children to know about their rights. With each new training, she gets closer to her goal: a fairer justice system for young people.

Education in Transition – [Teacher Training](#) – [RICCA](#) – [Kenneth Gitari](#) – [Kenya](#)

Kenneth initially expected 10 participants—but 30 teachers attended his digital education training. The demand for digital teaching methods and child-friendly education is enormous. Insights from this pilot project



Pupils at the alternative Swapnistan school



Caren in her insect farm

and of revisiting his former Kangaru primary school will help make future training even more impactful.

A Safe Space for Women – Support for Women Facing Infertility – [Mufaro](#) – [Jestina Gandawa](#) – Zimbabwe.

Jestina supports women struggling with infertility—often a taboo subject that leads to social exclusion. Her project offers hope and restores self-esteem to affected women. Thanks to corporate partnerships, she has been able to secure additional resources to expand the initiative. The next steps? Economic empowerment programs to provide financial as well as emotional support.

Making Voices Heard – Fashion Initiative for the Deaf – [Mandrill Alert](#) – [Blaise Ngwanoh Gwanah](#) – Cameroon

Blaise has taught himself sign language to better support the Deaf community. He has joined the financial cooperative 'Deaf Motion,' helping him gain the trust of potential participants for his fashion project. A major success: the rapid registration of his organization, Mandrill Alert, as a "Common Initiative Group"—a big step toward economic self-determination for the Deaf in Cameroon.

Hope in Times of Crisis – Humanitarian Work in Conflict Zones – [CEEDECO](#) – [Eric Wa Mwenge](#) – Democratic Republic of Congo

As violence continues in the DRC, Burundi, and Rwanda, Eric's organization, CEEDECO, provides psychosocial support to displaced people. The MOV-HUMANA program helps hundreds cope with traumatic experiences. Despite personal losses—some of his team members had to flee—Eric remains committed to his mission. His work has gained international recognition, and he has been invited to present his findings at the SIDA Forum. (Swedish International Development

Cooperation Agency)

Rehabilitation of Juvenile Offenders – [Okiri](#) – [Gloria Achieng](#) – Kenya

Gloria uses theater as a rehabilitation method for young offenders. In weekly workshops at the juvenile detention center, participants develop their own stories and plays. One of the young inmates, who has been awaiting trial for five months, has started baking classes for others—an initiative that has sparked discussions about vocational training for incarcerated youth. The upcoming Okiri Festival will showcase their talents while also serving as an important fundraising platform.

*Dear friends and supporters,
This is just a small selection of the many positive updates—a glimmer of hope for the future, and an important counterbalance to the disturbing news we often hear. Our kantharis worldwide offer hope for a future with possibilities for peace, environmental protection, and human dignity.*

We are grateful for any support and would appreciate it if this letter were shared with others. THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

*With warm regards,
sabriye tenberken, paul kronenberg,
and the entire kanthari team*

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Pupils at Kenneth's old school in Kangaru primary school in Kenya



Blaise with trainees in Cameroon



Ceedeco — Peace Building in the Democratic Republic of Congo

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