

CA Charity Helping Special Needs Education in Africa: Expanding one of Kenya's highest performing schools

The Global Uplift Project, a CA nonprofit, is working with the Irigithathi Primary School in Kenya to extend its unique educational formula.

LIVERMORE, CA, UNITED STATES, September 9, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A California nonprofit is helping influence Special Needs education in Africa. [The Global Uplift Project](#) (TGUP) is working with the Irigithathi Primary School in Naro Moru, Kenya to extend its unique educational formula.

The school is one of only three schools in Kenya (population: 56,000,000) that educates Special Needs and mainstream students in the same setting. It is one of the highest performing schools in the nation.



Special Needs Classroom

Its chess team is ranked #4 in the nation. It's Scrabble team is #1. Neither of those facts are accidents.

According to Josephine Gitonga, principal at the school, "We hold the same expectations for Special Need students that we do for all students." If the Special Needs students require additional services, those are provided, she said. But the standards remain the same.

James Kahuthu, head of Special Needs Education at the school related that, "In much of Kenya, Special Needs students do not get the extra help they need. Many are denied education at all."

Kahuthu says that the children's disabilities are physical, not mental. Once the physical limitations are overcome, the children excel.

“For the first time in their lives they are “seen” for who they are, not for what they are. Even though their bodies have deformities, they are human beings, with all the potential any other human being has,” he said.

Githonga says that expecting the same performance from Special Needs students as from all other students gives them a dignity they have never experienced before. She says that it is the Special Needs students who lead the school’s nationally-ranked teams.

The Global Uplift Project is working with the school to expand its capacity to serve Special Needs students.

It has built [a new classroom](#) that can serve fifty students. It is in the process of constructing a new dormitory to serve 30 girls from around the country. Once that is complete, it will then build a dormitory to house 30 boys, and a kitchen/dining hall to serve 60 children.



Special Needs Student

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If Kenya can liberate the potential in 8% of its students like they do at Irigithathi, it would explode the human capital available to the country.”

Robert Freeman, Executive Director, TGUP

TGUP and the school are working with the Kenya Ministry of Education to validate the Irigithathi model for export to other primary schools in the country. It is estimated that as many as 8% of Kenyan children have some level of disability that impedes normal education.

Mr. Abdikadir Haji, Kieni Sub-County Director of Education says, “We are working closely with the school to understand how it is that they get the performance that they do from their student population. This could be a game changer for schools all over Kenya.”

The school has 297 students. The number of Special Needs students fluctuates, but has recently been as high as 52.

Robert Freeman, Executive Director of The Global Uplift Project observed that, “If Kenya could liberate the potential in 8% of its students like they do at Irigithathi, it would explode the human capital available to the country.”

The Global Uplift Project is a 501c3 non-profit located in Livermore, CA. It is a global leader in building educational infrastructure for the developing world. It has built more than [470 small-scale, high-impact infrastructure projects](#) in 25 of the world's poorest countries. Over their lives, those projects will help more than 2.9 million of the poorest people in the world have just a slightly better chance in life.

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