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DECEMBER 2016



Online edition

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Driving Excellence



OUR VISION

To be the leading publisher and printer of quality knowledge materials.

MISSION STATEMENT

To publish and print quality educational and knowledge materials at affordable prices, whilst promoting excellent authorship and creating customer and shareholder value.

OUR CORE VALUES

- Superior Customer Service
- Transparency and Accountability
- Competency
- Integrity
- Innovation

OUR QUALITY POLICY

Kenya Literature Bureau is committed to and shall always endeavour to reach the highest level of quality in publishing and printing educational and knowledge materials as stipulated by the ISO 9001 : 2008.

WE WILL

- Comply with regulatory and statutory requirements.
- Continually improve the effectiveness of our Management Systems.
- Achieve and ensure that our customers receive the highest quality service.
- As a team, be guided by strict adherence to laid down procedures and strive to be competitive and independent; and will protect and uphold our customers' interests without compromising the quality standards set.

Our quality objectives shall be established and reviewed at the regular management review meetings.



Marsabit County MP Hon. Nasra Ibrahim shares a light moment with KLB MD Mr. Victor Lomaria when she visited the Bureau's Head Quarters



KLB MD Mr. Victor Lomaria and Chairman Amb. Francis Bayah with staff members at the KLB stand during the 2016 Nairobi International Trade Fair.



Mr. Sammy Chepkwony plants a tree at Sugoi Girls High School.

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Published by:
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Esteemed readers,
We are happy to connect with you through this issue of the Publisher newsletter. This particular edition is a welcome break from the past, helping us tap into the mind of our new Managing Director Mr. Victor Lomaria, who guides the strategic direction of the Bureau.

With it, we walk you through the bane of our operations which is in strategy, business development and sales practices in order to understand what goes on behind the scenes. It is the hope of the editorial team that, you, our readers enjoy and appreciate the activities that drive our core values.

Key stakeholders are at the centre of all our operations and as such we aim to interact with them as much as possible. This quarter, we participated in corporate social responsibility in Taita Taveta and Uasin Gishu Counties. Response to this, as you shall read, was warm and we continue to grow our customer bases.

Kenya Literature Bureau has had the pleasure to work with great team of some staff who have now proceeded on retirement. This issue comes at a time when we bid farewell to five (5) members proceeding on retirement. This issue taps into the mind of former Publishing Manager, Mrs. Khasiani who dolls out advice, in her characteristic style to old and new staff alike.

Keep reading and happy holidays.

Diana Olenja



We welcome articles or any feedback from readers on education and publishing. Please include your name, address and telephone number. Letters/articles may be edited for clarity and space.

E-mail: klbpro@klb.co.ke

My vision for Kenya Literature Bureau

A chat with the MD

by Jacinta Munyigula

Who is Victor Lomaria?

I am a results-oriented person who is confident in his proficiency. I always strive to perform the necessary work so that the best results can be achieved. I have a firm determination and solid resolve to perform well at my job and build a successful career, while at the same time making the Bureau more competitive. I am positive about everything and I am keen on executing difficult tasks. I like to discover a problem and resolve it. I am a team player and I endeavor to bring the best out of the people I lead. I will do the best I can for the bureau by generating highly competitive workers globally, nationally and regionally.

What motivates you and who has had an impact on you as a leader?

My parents brought me up in a good environment and saw me through my education. They always motivated me to do my very best. My teachers taught and gave me advice. They also found inspirational speakers who talked to us and motivated us to always strive to be and do the best. The society has also had an impact on me. It has shaped me to be who I am today. You know you look at the success stories of others and you decide to be like them or even do better.

What motivated you to join the Kenya Literature Bureau?

I was motivated by the fact that I knew about the Bureau, its history and business strategy and the printing and publishing industry. I have had years of relevant experience and thus I knew I would be able to infuse best practice into the Bureau. I would like to make a difference at KLB, make it a successful organisation with a sturdy vision and strong leadership. Having held leadership positions before, I am confident of my capacity to unite staff at the Bureau and encourage them towards excellence, fully aware that I need not insist on something more from them than what I would expect from myself.

What are your goals, in the short and long term?

First, I want to make sure we increase our market share. Currently we control 70 per cent of the secondary school market. My target is to increase this to 80 per cent. I want to make sure the Bureau does not rely on book revenue alone. So, we are moving aggressively into building non-book revenue. Achieving customer sensitivity would be another goal for me. This would be through improving our turn-around and response times so that any time a customer asks for our services, we ensure that they get served within the timelines set out in our Service Charter. I would love to delight our customers every time they are served.

What would you wish to be remembered for, five years from now?

My most memorable success would be to see the Bureau expand its product range by bringing book titles that are not currently in the market. I want to see to it that the Bureau increases its presence in the digital space by coming up with e-books, e-learning materials and e-platforms. We are working on various strategies to convert our physical books into digital books and market them so that they are available on our platforms.

There is no publishing, which is KLB's core business, without paper. How will you ensure that the organization maintains a sustainable ecological footprint in its operations?

To control usage of paper, so we do our printing back-to-back. Pushing most of our books into digital platforms, that is, converting them into e-learning materials, will also save us a lot of paper, helping to conserve the environment.



We would love to partner with other lovers of nature, especially the Kenya Forest Service and other institutions geared towards creating a sustainable ecosystem. We can establish a “KLB Corner” at our premises where we can plant trees in a bid to fight desertification and stop land degradation. We shall encourage staff to take part in planting and caring for trees and conserving such spaces as a way of having them learn the importance of conserving trees and forests in the country.

Does that imply that this is something the Bureau has not been doing before?

True, we have been participating in tree planting activities across the country. Creating a corner here at KLB, where we will all participate in planting trees, is just another way of spicing things up!

What values do you hold dear to help you achieve the vision of success you have outlined?

Belief in oneself and the drive and zeal to accomplish what I am supposed to do are important to me.

Strong work ethics is equally valuable because it guides an organisation into pulling efforts so that it can achieve a high performance culture. Integrity is another value that I hold dear. We want to do everything with a lot of transparency for decisions have to be guided by objectivity and transparency in order for us to achieve our strategic objectives.

What do you do, during your leisure time?

Whenever I have time, I go to church and spend time with elders, discussing church issues. My hobby is listening to gospel music. I love gospel music and any time I am driving, I listen to Hope FM. I am a member of various school Boards of management. I assist them in making strategic management decisions, Book purchase and putting up learning facilities and mentoring students.



Mr. Victor Lomaria is interviewed in his office by one of the writers.

Kenya Literature Bureau

Unveils Vocational Training Books

By Ronald Kibaron.

Kenya Literature Bureau recently unveiled its *Innovator* series of books targeted for vocational institutions in Nakuru, Bomet and Kiambu Counties.

The launch whose theme was **“Imparting technical skills towards realization of accelerated economic growth and entrepreneurship”** sought to address vocational training instructors on current best practices in youth training in various counties across the county.

Nakuru County’s launch was unveiled at the Kenya Industrial and Technical Institute by the CEC Education, Youth and Vocational Training, Mr. Francis Mathea. Mr. Mathea welcomed participants from the counties of Baringo, Laikipia, Narok and Samburu and implored

them to forge stronger ties with the Bureau. He acknowledged the timeliness of the workshop saying that it worked towards Kenya attaining its Vision 2030.

Mr. Mathea said that focus on vocational training would have a positive impact on society and assist youth earn their daily living thus reducing the burden on the economy.

Speaking at the same function, the Bureau’s Managing Director, Mr. Victor Lomaria, stated that numerous challenges bedeviled Kenya’s youth and technical training served as a pathway to build their career. He told participants that the onus fell on them to attract these youth to vocational training institutes. “Kenya Literature Bureau has played its part in ensuring there is quality, relevant and affordable knowledge material



Kenya Literature Bureau’s Managing Director Mr. Victor Lomaria presents copies of *Innovator* books to Nakuru County’s CEC Education, Mr Francis Mathea.

for use. It is up to us now, to, open our youth's eyes to opportunities around them," he said.

Mr. Lomaria called on the participants to champion desire for technical education and promised that KLB would support them with the necessary classroom content.

During the unveiling at Bomet, the County Executive Committee member of Education for Bomet, Mr. Sammy Barchok acknowledged the huge role early childhood and vocational training plays in development. He called on participants to make necessary proposals to be shared with County officials in these areas. Mr. Barchok, thanked the Kenya Literature Bureau for organising the workshop and promised to forge lasting partnerships.

Mr. Barchok was accompanied by other county officials, whilst Mr. Evans Nyachieng'a, the Business Development Manager represented Kenya Literature Bureau.

The workshops saw participants taken through the new approved artisans' course, syllabus requirements and emerging issues. The topics were covered by KLB authors Geoffrey Mageni and Alex Lubang'a. They

also benefitted from a motivational talk by Mr. Erastus Sorobi.

The Innovator Series launch at Kiambu County was unveiled at Kiambu Institute of Science and Technology by the Kiambu County Education CEC Mrs. Esther Ndirangu. Mrs. Ndirangu underscored the role played by Vocational Centres in Kiambu County. She laid bare the need of investing much in the polytechnics and confirmed the willingness of Kiambu County in supporting Vocational Training. She added that vocational Training is expected to drive the country's economy towards the realisation of vision 2030. The CEC thanked KLB for producing **The Innovator** books which she said will guide the students towards achieving a common goal.

Speaking at the same function, Kiambu County Director for Youth Polytechnics Mrs Emily Nkoro, praised KLB for the good work they have done in producing the books which she said will help produce well rounded artisans. She added that the new resource material availability be in the market will go a long way in helping the artisans.

The launch began in the month of August 2016 and is anticipated to be carried out in other counties to sensitise the public of the new resource in the market.



Mr Evans Nyachieng'a, Business Development Manager and Kiambu's CEC of Education Mrs Esther Ndirangu displays copies of *The Innovator* Series

KLB Wins Big at the 19th Nairobi International Bookfair



Prof. Kithaka wa Mberia awards the certificate for 'Best Corporate Identity' to the KLB marketing team.

By: Bernard Mwaniki

The theme of this year's Nairobi International Book Fair was *"Inspired to Read"*, and Kenya Literature Bureau, the leading publisher in the region, and an annual participant during the exhibition, showcased various products and services in tandem with the same.

This year's exhibition attracted participants from as far as Turkey and USA. Speaking during the official opening of the exhibition, CS for Education Dr. Fred Matiang'i, The Chief Guest, emphasised the importance of nurturing a reading culture from as early as the ECD level. "The publishing industry will not thrive if we don't buy books," He said. He went on to commend KLB for their continued prominence in the text book sector and urged publishers to work with the government in creating a new book distribution system that would

improve the child to book ratio by reducing misuse of free primary education funds.

KLB's Managing Director, Mr. Victor Lomaria, spoke of his confidence that KLB is able to satisfy the demand for digital content, having been the pioneer publisher to begin conversion in 2010.

The resident author at the KLB stand was Mrs. Elizabeth Madoka, author of *Miss Uhuru 1963: Working for Mzee Jomo Kenyatta*, who recently launched the book published by KLB at the publishing house's Head Quarters in Nairobi. H.E Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya was the Chief Guest during the event.

Gatundu South MP Hon. Moses Kuria, Makini Schools Director Dr. Mary Okello and Authors Ken Walibora and Wallah Bin Wallah were among the stand which



Former MD Mrs. Eve Obara introduces incoming MD Mr. Victor Lomaria to staff at the NIBF KLB stand.

als emerged 1st runners up in the 'Overall Stand'. The awards were presented to members of staff during the Wahome Mutahi Literary Prize Award ceremony held at Pride Inn Hotel.

Westlands Primary School hosted the Children's Activities which included writing competitions

for pupils and instructional seminars for teachers sponsored by Kenya Literature Bureau in conjunction with the Kenya Publishers' Association. ACK Kariokor emerged overall winners in the contest in which numerous primary schools from Nairobi participated. KLB also donated library reference learning materials to all participating schools.



The Bureau's stand at the Nairobi International Book Fair

What's up, dear customer!

let's link up anytime, anywhere

By Joseph Ndegwa

After 69 years of publishing and printing, we, at Kenya Literature Bureau, are of age in producing books and other curriculum support materials. That is the reason we are reshaping and using the right technology to set new standards in the industry.

Kenya Literature Bureau has aligned its business objectives with the strategic plan, which lays emphasis on digital publishing and growth of the print segment of the business. It has, therefore, gone big on marketing, expanding KLB's network of potential customers by striving every time to not only communicate well, but do so with speed, taking into account what our customers and potential clients want.

By embracing a channel-neutral strategy, KLB's products are available and accessible anytime, anywhere, and on varied devices as per the taste of its increasing customers of digital content. KLB e-books are on *World Reader*, *amazon.com* and *eKitabu* online bookstores.

"We have taken advantage of technology to reach out and engage our customers," says Sales and Marketing Manager, Bernard Obura. "The bulk short message service (SMS), email, WhatsApp and our corporate website have enabled us to effectively communicate," he adds.

"Our books are read everywhere," says Obura, giving credit to the integrated market strategy, giving a more

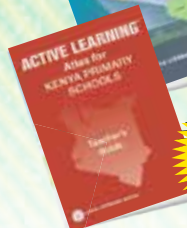
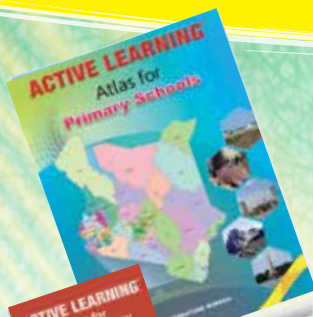


Kenya Literature Bureau's Marketing duo of Ms. Marjoriey Mukui (left) and Gichuru (Standing) take school children through our e-books platform

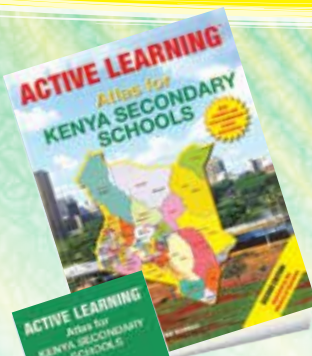
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WORLD



Political map also available

AFRICA



Physical map also available

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Pupils read a KLB book during the KPA Regional Book Fair at the Machakos Stadium.

consistent message to booksellers and schools.

Kenya Literature Bureau has sales personnel at the regions who visit schools, consolidate customer information, pitch and collect orders and give general after-sale service. They conduct forums which bring together teachers and authors, thereby empowering them to better unpack the curriculum to learners.

In the fiscal year 2015-2016, KLB achieved a gross turnover of 2.05 billion shillings, up from 1.76 billion shillings in 2014-2015. The Bureau sales revenue has consistently grown by an annual average of 15 percentage points since 2010.

As part of their annual promotions, the Sales and Marketing Department has held several events this year, including exhibitions at the annual Nairobi International Book Fair (NIBF), Kenya Secondary School Heads Association (KESSHA), Kenya Primary School Heads Association (KEPSHA), Kenya Publishers Association (KPA) regional book fair in Machakos County and at the Madoka Half Marathon in Wundanyi, Taita Taveta County.

At such events, they showcase technical books, recently launched for use as instructional materials for Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

institutions among other materials.

The Bureau held a Children's English Writing competition in the 2016 NIBF fete at Westlands Primary School, where top talents in story telling were recognised. In addition, the Bureau donated books to Kangemi Children's Home together with other members of KPA.

Meanwhile, KLB's new Business Development Department is working overdrive to market print services. Established as part of the diversification strategy outlined in the Strategic Plan 2016-2021, the department, which is headed by Mr. Evans Nyachieng'a has in the first four months of this financial year, secured Sh118 million business deals, surpassing its annual sales target of Sh101 million. The rosy performance has pushed the target to Sh250 million for 2016-2017.

KLB is marketing the **"Innovator" books**, published for use in TVETs. So far, the technical book titles have been launched in Kakamega, Bomet, Nakuru and Kiambu counties in the presence of technical school tutors and county officials.

KLB Greens Mauche Ward

In Njoro Sub-County

By Diana Olenja

Kenya Literature Bureau recently took part in a treeplanting exercise in Mauche, Njoro Sub-county. The tree planting exercise was hosted at Taita Mauche Secondary School and saw various primary and secondary schools benefit from tree seedlings and book donations.

Kenya Literature Bureau's Board member Mrs. Charity Chepkwony, while officiating the function, implored the teachers and pupils to strive for excellence in all spheres of life. She said, "We all must take an oath to protect our environment to keep it safe for us and generations to come." Mrs. Chepkwony added that it was important for the adults to chart a way forward for the children in their custody to ensure excellence and societal role models are moulded.

Mrs. Chepkwony also spoke against early marriages which had greatly affected the youth of Mauche Ward. She assured parents and teachers that she would join

them in the fight against this vice in Mauche Ward.

Mr. Paul Kinyanjui, Njoro Deputy County Commissioner, was present and he was grateful to the Bureau for helping champion environmental sustainability. He asked the people present to tie activities to sustainable development goals. Mr. Kinyanjui asked parents to ensure their children get educated stating that, "the best wealth one could ever give a child is an education." He asked that all stakeholders hold hands to make sure the success of the children and youth of Mauche is resounding.

Speaking during the exercise the Quality Assurance Officer in the sub-county, Mr. Shem Obonyo, appreciated the Bureau's efforts to train Primary school teachers in English and Social Studies. He told those present that without a healthy environment there can be no focus on the future. "Taking good care of the environment should be instilled in the minds



Left: Board member Mrs. Charity Chepkwony(right) waters a tree assisted by the Principal and Njoro-subcounty Forest Officer

Right: Mrs. Charity Chepkwony is joined by KLB staff and students of Taita Mauche when she donated seedlings to Mr. Shem Obonyo QAO Njoro County

of our children,” he added. Mr. Obonyo also appealed to the students to focus on knowledge acquisition.

The function attended by various KLB staff, county education officials, county government and Kenya Forestry staff among them Deputy Head of Conservancy Mr. Sam Waweru, saw three thousand seedlings

distributed to fifteen primary and thirteen secondary schools. The best school in maintaining tree seedlings would be rewarded.

Kenya Literature Bureau spearheads calls for environmental sustainability and seeks to pass the message through donation of tree seedlings to public schools throughout the country.



Students drawn from various schools around Taita Mauche participate in a tree planting exercise spearheaded by Director Mrs. Charity Chepkwony.

Bureau Transforms

To The Novel ISO 9001:2015

by Ronald Kibaron

The greatly anticipated revision of ISO 9001:2008 is in its ultimate stages after Kenya literature bureau senior managers underwent training on the new edition ISO 9001:2015 standards recently. The training was held at the Bureau's training room and conducted by Anita Patel of Management Consultants Limited.

The Bureau has continuously excelled and complied with the requirements that have seen it certified to ISO 9001:2000 in 2007 and later upgraded to 9001:2008 in 2008. In its desire to continue excelling, the Bureau has embarked on a six-month certification plan and intends to have the ISO 9001:2015 certificate by December 2016.

Currently, Kenya Literature Bureau has allocated resources towards transition Plans for ISO 9001:2015. A secretariat has been appointed by the management to update the Quality Management System. Furthermore, a consultant has been appointed to provide appropriate training to both staff and management, and also Lead Auditors, Management Representative and Internal Auditors have been trained on the transition to ISO 9001:2015 Standard.

The key changes in the proposed Standard Implementation consist of the emphasis on leadership commitment with top management in KLB aligning it to the organization's goals and objectives. It focuses on risk based thinking which requires KLB to identify opportunities to reduce risk failures. In addition, the proposed Standard Implementation addresses supply chain more effectively and provide measurements of effectiveness of the Quality Management Services to Management. Further, the proposed Standard Implementation is user friendly for service and knowledge based with fewer prescriptive requirements.

The new standards have seen a great shift from involving staff to now engaging them in each and every procedure. It allows for greater recognition of people's contribution, learning and improvement in order to offer excellent products and services.

The ISO standards are re-viewed every five or so years and it is important that it remains relevant to the current market requirements. The new standard has been harmonized to high level structure with other ISO Management Systems Standards making it easier to integrate to multiple management systems. In addition, there has been an increase in expectation from customers and other interested parties and with more access to information today.

Today, citizens and stakeholders demand fast, accurate, and consistent answers from government agencies and they will clearly express their dissatisfaction if the expectations are not met. Kenya Literature Bureau therefore will find it easier to incorporate Quality Management System into core business process and gain greater business benefits with the new standard in place.



ISO Internal Auditors with Anita Patel of MCL after training

KLB Donates Books to Taita Taveta

By Bernard Kibui.

Kenya Literature Bureau co-sponsored the 11th Edition of the Madoka Half marathon held in Wundanyi, Taita Taveta County.

Sales and Marketing Manager Mr. Benard Obura, Warehouse Officer Mr. Gideon Mjambili presented book donations to the community that would benefit eight secondary and four primary schools, in order to promote literacy and boost learning in the area which hosted the races. The donation was contributed through our Corporate Social Responsibility Programme dubbed *Imarisha Kimasomo*. This is in line with the Sustainable Development Goal to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by providing learning and reference materials.

One would not associate the expansive terrain with producing athletes and the Madoka Marathon has a vision to change that. "My dream is that this area will one day produce a world record runner." Maj. (Rtd.) Marsden Madoka proclaimed during the competition that attracted over one thousand participants from

across the country.

Taita Taveta County Governor Hon. John Mruttu and British Deputy High Commissioner to Kenya Mr. Andrew Bowels both attended and participated in various category races. "As an athlete, I am glad to have been invited to this competition." The Deputy High Commissioner said. They both received copies of *Miss Uhuru 1963: Working for Mzee Jomo Kenyatta*, autographed by the author.

"Because of our friendship with the people of Taita Taveta through the Madoka family, we will continue to support you, KLB Sales and Marketing Manager Mr. Benard Obura told the crowd.

The winners were also rewarded with autographed copies of her book. She expressed her gratitude to KLB for the commitment and service they have made towards ensuring that books reach every corner of the country.

Other sponsors of the event were Brookside Dairies, Kenya Ports Authority, Safaricom and Kenya Revenue Authority.



KLB Sales and Marketing Manager Mr. Benard Obura after handing over donation books to Maj. (Rtd.) Marsden Madoka.

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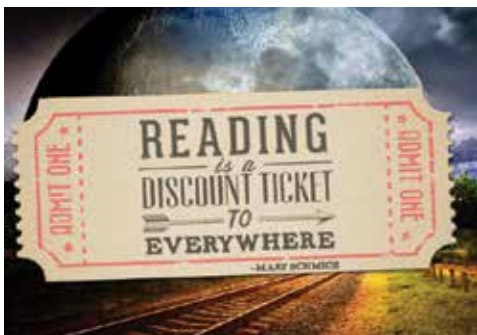
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KENYA
VISION 2030



Reading makes all other learning possible. We have to get books into our children's hands early and often.

— Barack Obama —

Boosting Libraries, One School at a Time

by Diana Olenja

The Kenya Literature Bureau recently took its **Imarisha Kimasomo** drive to Sugoi Girls' Secondary school in Turbo, Uasin Gishu County.

Sugoi Girls' is a county school, one of 78 secondary schools, found in Uasin Gishu. Started in 1993 as a single stream day school, its student population has since grown to about 350 students with three streams per class. The girls' school sitting in the quiet village of Sugoi, is headed by Mrs. Miriam Bor, a passionate girl child mentor and Swahili and History teacher. Sugoi Girls competes against some giants in that county including Moi Girls Eldoret. It, however, serves children from the neighbouring villages who are not able to make it to national schools.

Kenya Literature Bureau's Managing Director, Mr. Victor Lomaria, was invited as Chief Guest to help boost their book drive. This was a need that could not be ignored for a school that is in the process of putting up a library. Mr. Lomaria donated books worth Kshs. 180,000 to

enthusiastic students who could not hide their joy.

Speaking during the drive, Mr. Lomaria urged the girls to give their best in all they do. Just as the school motto states **"strive to be the best"** so should the girls yearn for greatness. He asked them to embrace hard work and learn to dream big, only then would they achieve the fruits of their labour.

Mr. Lomaria was accompanied by KLB's Board Member, Mr. Sammy Chepkwony. Mr. Chepkwony told the parents and teachers that they needed to form networks with like-minded organisations such as the Bureau. Only then would they be able to succeed. He told them, "Uasin Gishu County is renowned for producing great athletes and being a bread basket for the entire country. We want to add to this by producing the best students this country has ever seen. This can only be achieved if we invest in quality knowledge materials such as the ones produced by KLB."

The book donation drive was attended by Uasin Gishu KESSHA Deputy Chair Mr. Michael Kirui, Members of the school's board of management, Parents Association Chair Mr. Abraham Sang, PTA members, teachers and students of Sugoi Girls.



KLB Managing Director presenting books to Sugoi Girls Principal Mrs. Bor
Looking on is the Board Member Mr. Sammy Chepkwony. (Right)

Mrs. Bor, the Principal, appreciated the Bureau's efforts stating that no other book publisher had ever visited and gifted them the way KLB had. She hoped that the relationship would continue being mutually beneficial not just to her school but to the entire region. The Principal extended her deepest gratitude to Mr. Chepkwony for impacting the community positively.

Imarisha Kimasomo program seeks to equip public school libraries with reference materials in order to boost the quality of education in the Country.

Keep it here for the next corporate social responsibility activity.

On The Radar!..... Mary Khasiani,

Former Publishing Manager

The former Publishing Manager, Mrs. Khasiani retired from service in June 2016. She had been at the helm since 2002, having risen from the position of Chief Editor.

She gives us a candid insight into her times as a Bureau employee and what she envisions for the future.

How did you first hear about KLB?

I heard of KLB while still a student. I was not, however, keen on it until I started working at Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, where the Managing Director, the late Mr. Lang'at of KLB, served on the Board. In 1992, he approached me and asked me to consider working for KLB as an Editor for English.

Looking back, the perks at KLB were attractive. I was now going to earn a house allowance! *(Laughs)*.

I remember being interviewed alongside the late Marjorie Oludhe MCGoye, a renowned author but well, I aced the interview and my journey at KLB began!

What was your first impression of the organisation?

The team at KLB was very welcoming. There was such a warm reception from everyone, including my direct report who had been sent to head-hunt me, a Mr. Githinji. Over time, I came to appreciate the close-knit community, full of support of each other.

This, I attribute to the then C.E.O, the Late Mr. Lang'at, who did not entertain rumour-mongering.

Anything that may have surprised you?

There were a number of things that were quite surprising such as the fact that we had no medical scheme. Claims were paid at discretion. I remember once having to give out KSh500 for a member of staff who had fallen ill on the production floor to be taken to hospital. I walked into Mr. Lang'at's office to ask for a medical policy. He was non-committal though. Once, during a staff meeting, I stood and spoke on behalf of the members of staff and the CEO summoned me to his office and said, "Mrs. Khasiani, you do realise that you are in Management and you shouldn't be talking."

What were some of the challenges you faced during your tenure?

Ooh... Short deadlines to submit titles to the then Kenya Institute of Education were a nightmare. We would have, say, a month to prepare new titles. It forced us to work around the clock. We were even forced to buy mattresses for the Publishing team to sleep on!

I am glad that the Management was pretty understanding, under Mr. Karauri, and agreed to give staff dinner and breakfast allowances.

The joy would come in books being accepted by the curriculum body and sales reflecting positive growth.

Your best memory...

I joined in 1992, soon after the government had adopted the 8-4-4 system of education. I remember JKF had initially been given the tender to print books. but they could not manage. The second port of call was KLB. That is how we got the job to print on behalf of KIE.

The accolades from Mr. Lang'at warmed our hearts. He truly appreciated his team. He would host end-year parties outside the Bureau. This came to a stop though, when some members of staff misbehaved and caused the shift to end-year luncheons.

The purchase of a KBA Rapida machine is another great development. It allowed us to run many prints within a short time, thus greatly improving turnaround time.

If you were to change one thing about publishing, what would it be?

The crazy deadlines! *(Laughs)*. Publishers need to be given enough time to make revisions where necessary and to manage their stocks. This cost us with the Social



Studies titles which we had to issue as book donations, because changes were effected immediately and the Bureau was left with so much dead stock.

Given a microphone, what would you tell a general audience about the publishing industry?

Well, the publishing process is quite tedious. Publishing is definitely not printing (*Laughs again*). That, there is a complex process from the moment a manuscript is received, right through the copy-editing process to typesetting and finally printing.

I wish writers would know that once an editor receives a manuscript, he puts himself/herself in the shoes of the target audience and has to adopt a language and tone suitable for them. Say, for example, a Professor writing a Primary school book. He would use a lot of professorial lingo which may not be easy for that particular age group. So we have to internalize and adapt, for a book to be relevant.

By the way, KLB has made such great strides since I joined. We used to type using manual typewriters. Any changes to a book would have to be done afresh and previously typed work discarded. We then moved to photo-setting machines and later, computers which helped ease work and by the time I was leaving, we were using iMacs. The computers were not designed for publishing unlike the Macintosh. This new technology has really improved the quality of books released to the market.

Who are some of the people who give you fond memories of the Bureau?

I would say everyone played their role in ensuring work processes flowed smoothly. Everyone, right from the cleaner to fellow Managers.

But there must be those who stood out.

Oh, yes! Take an example of George Ouma. I remember when one day we had to beat a deadline at KICD. He drove so fast, giving competition to *matatu* drivers, and made sure that we were at the Institute in good time to submit our material. Imagine if he had not put in that effort, the Bureau would have lost a great deal in terms of revenue and time taken to put our proposals together!

Anyone else?

When I first joined, I met Beth Mulwa who worked as a secretary in the Publishing department. Her brother, David Mulwa, a renowned thespian, had been my lecturer.

There is also the former Production Manager who is currently in Rwanda, Joseph Madanji who was widely experienced and very supportive.

What did your friends and family say or ask when they learnt that you were now working at KLB?

Most often, they wanted free books (*Laughs*). That, and the constant confusion about my being a printer and not a publisher. There was also confusion between KLB and KIE, maybe because KLB would publish lots of materials on behalf of KIE.

Aren't Publishing and Printing intertwined?

It may seem so but they are not. Publishing involves assessing manuscripts, copy-editing, typesetting and finally producing material. Printing is a final stage process for published works.

What advice can you give to anyone looking to join the Bureau?

I would ask them to make sure their hearts are in the job. Publishing is tedious. It involves a lot of frayed nerves from outsiders who have submitted their material to editors who have not slept for days on end. Should their hearts not be in it, then they would easily quit the job.

I would encourage them to wait for the finished product. There is plenty of joy in knowing that one worked towards information and material that shapes millions of minds out there. They also have an opportunity to work on all manner of topics, making them more knowledgeable.

Currently, the publishing world has become more attractive to the youth. What with e-publishing, a favourite of the millennials! Technology has made the publishing processes far much easier as compared to early years. There is need to catch up with current publishing trends through constant training.

Where do you see KLB in, say, the next five years?

Hmmm...there is going to be a major shift from print to electronic books because the world is going digital. However, printed materials are not going to be phased out anytime soon. I mean, even the US still uses printed material and production is still at par with digital content.

Had you not ended up in the publishing world, what would you be doing?

I am a trained teacher. I am at ease dispensing

knowledge. So I would be in a classroom, chalking up on chalk dust, teaching English.

Any plans now that you seem to have lots of free time on your hands?

Well, I planned to rest for about six months before undertaking any project. Once well rested, I intend to set up a consultancy in education.

As I said earlier, I am comfortable in class, so I will also be looking at lecturing opportunities, probably in the publishing field.

Someone proposed that I should be a counsellor but I think that most probably, I will take up teaching.

Final take?

The Bureau has got so much potential. All that it needs is commitment from the staff to grow it from strength to strength. The firm enjoys nationwide goodwill and that should not be eroded.

There is need to look at other business opportunities that will not interfere with the core business, for example, setting up a publishing school.

What would be sad would be to undertake business that would negatively affect the firm.

I wish you all well.



1. KLB Managing Director hands over a sponsorship cheque to Mrs Harriet Chiggai towards the East Africa Young Lawyers Society Conference.
2. KLB Managing Director with the former Managing Director join the PS Dr. Belio Kipsang and other Ministry officials during the opening ceremony of NIBF
3. KLB Board member Mrs. Charity Chepkwony hands over tree seedlings to Taita Mauche Ward schools
4. Sales and Marketing Manager (in black) converses with Mrs. Madoka during the Madoka Marathon in Taita Taveta County.

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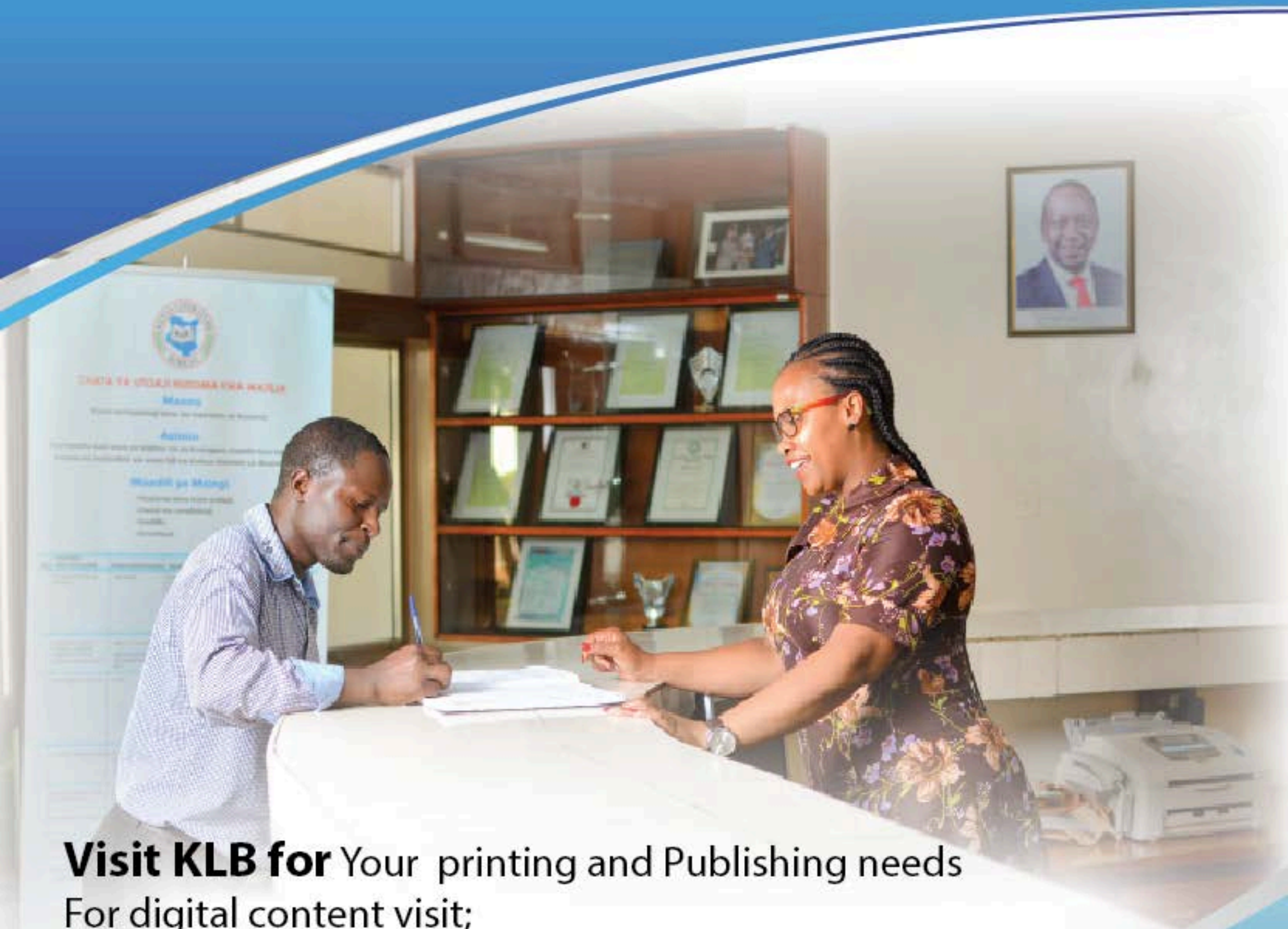
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