

MASK

Place  
creativity  
at the centre of ed  
to transform  
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**Art shapes creativity.  
Creativity shapes innovation.  
Innovation shapes the world.**

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**MASK Create**  
Annual Report for 2022-23

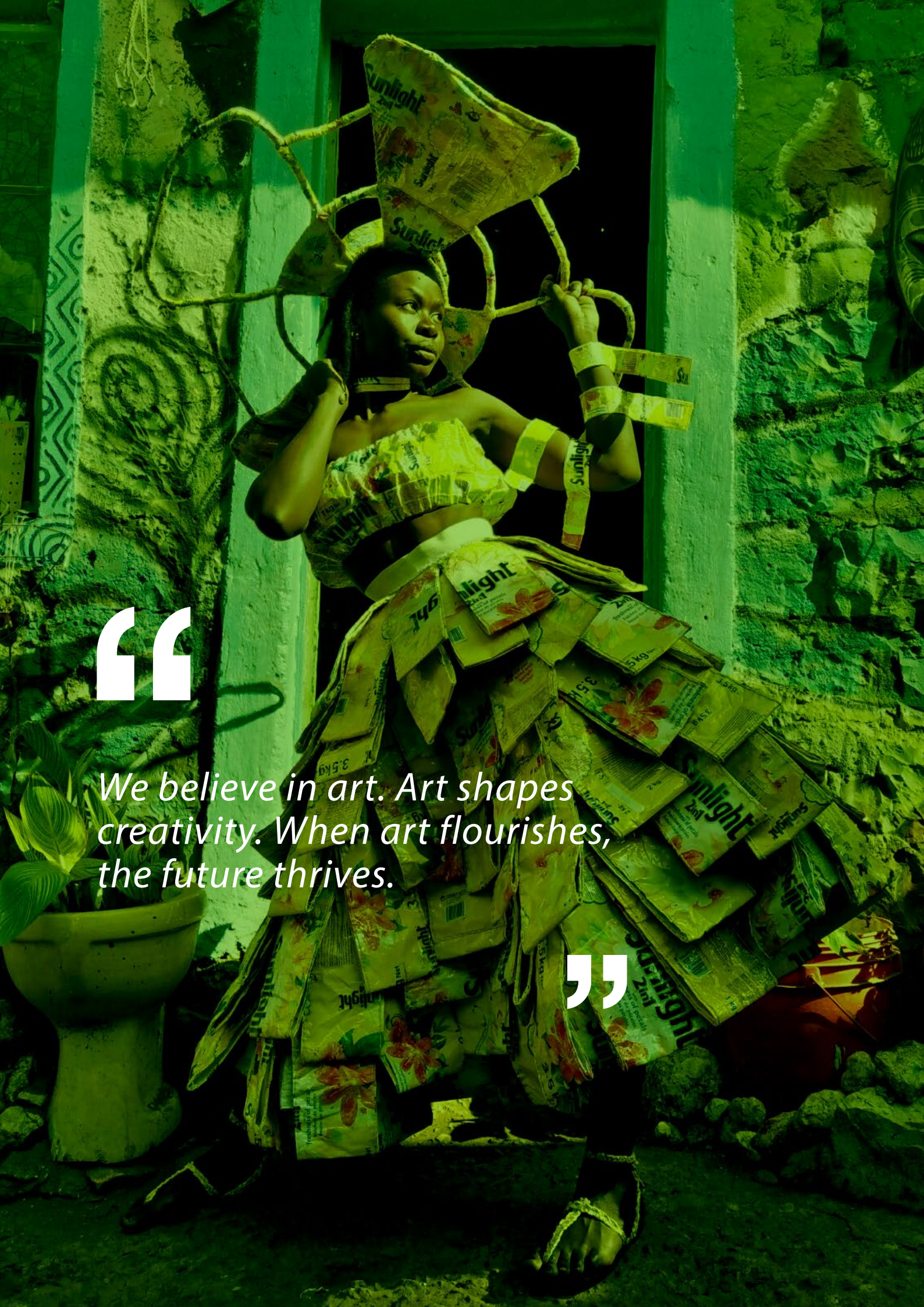
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*Cover image: MASK Awards 2022 prize-giving ceremony in Nairobi*

*Quotation: MASK Create*





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*We believe in art. Art shapes  
creativity. When art flourishes,  
the future thrives.*

”



## Introduction

*'A civilization enjoyed a golden age when it overflowed with first-rate creative minds.'*<sup>1</sup>

Dean Keith Simonton, *Origins of Genius*.

Leading economists such as Paul Romer, John A. List, Alfred Marshall, and Joseph Schumpeter have underscored the pivotal role of creativity in economic development. At MASK, we echo this sentiment by placing creativity at the core of education.

The pressing need for an overhaul in the current education system is evident. In the UK, a third of the working population lacks essential skills, while half of young people emerge from education with a distaste for learning<sup>2</sup>. MASK passionately believes that to address these challenges, education must foster creativity in young people.

Founded in 2007 in Kenya, MASK has evolved from running school Creativity Clubs to spearheading renowned MASK Awards that have reached over 650,000 people worldwide. MASK's model of integrating creativity into mainstream education and broader society not only transforms the lives of its beneficiaries but also facilitates the transformation of education and societal growth.

Recognised by esteemed institutions such as UNESCO and the Kenyan government, MASK now stands as a pioneering force in creativity education. We equip and empower a collective of young creative minds who define new goals, solve problems, and innovate, poised to shape a brighter future for all.

We salute their efforts and stand ready to support their endeavors.



MASK Founder Alla Tkachuk

<sup>1</sup> Dean Keith Simonton, *Origins of Genius. Darwinian Perspectives on Creativity*, Oxford University Press, 1999, p

<sup>2</sup> The Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, member communication, July 2023.

## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees/Directors of the charitable company MASK Create (formerly, Mobile Art School in Kenya, MASK) for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006 present this report with the financial statements for the year ended 31 January 2023. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

## Objectives and activities

### The objects/purpose

MASK's objects, as set out in our Memorandum of Association, are to advance the education of young people and communities in creativity and innovation, through the arts and other means, including by provision of teaching assistance.

### Beneficiaries

Our beneficiaries (target audiences and service users) are:

- young people (YP) aged four to 25, individually and collectively;
- educators and education authorities;
- communities and the public.

### Vision (why we do it)

Our vision is a world where all young people can harness their creativity for personal empowerment and the advancement of society.

### Mission (how we do it)

Our mission is to:

- advance education by developing creativity education (CE) practice and embedding it into mainstream education;
- strengthen YP's creativity for learning, empowerment, meaningful employment, and a brighter future;
- effect long-term changes to communities so creativity can thrive in perpetuity.

### Aims, goals and objectives (what we do) are:

Our aims are:

- to develop teaching and learning resources to support creativity in the classroom;
- to deliver training and development opportunities to our YP to make an impact on their lives and the prosperity of their communities;
- to engage with communities locally, nationally and globally through advocacy and policy dialogue events.

## Where we have reached beneficiaries

MASK's work began in Kenya in 2007. It has since scaled up across borders. We have reached our beneficiaries in:

- Africa (16 countries) – Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe.
- UK – London, Margate, Edinburgh, Romford
- USA – Washington DC, San Diego
- France – Paris
- South Korea – Seoul



**Pink markers** – locations where we have reached YP, teachers and communities: UK, USA, and Africa.  
**Green markers** – locations where we have reached education, policy and business communities: UK, USA, France, and South Korea.

## Awards

- 'Most Innovative Learning Organisation 2020' Award of SME News, UK.
- 'Top Website 2022' Award of Thegoodestate, USA.



MASK Create - the United Kingdom  
 Most Innovative Learning Organisation 2020: MASK

## Our definitions

**Creativity**, or creative thinking, is the capacity to visualise and to connect knowledge into new ideas, guided by strong ethical principles to ensure the best outcomes for all.

**Innovation** is creativity in practice. Creativity is always driven by active implementation.

*In this report we use the terms 'creativity' and 'innovation' interchangeably with to emphasise their inherent unity. When referring to 'creativity' on its own, we mean to encapsulate both its conceptual and practical dimensions.*

The creative process consists of three stages that work in unity and undergo numerous conscious and unconscious revisions:

1. Observation: Gathering information and forming mental images, which serve as the medium of creative thinking. Key properties of mental imagery are: abstraction, structure, and meaning.
2. Connection: Selecting and integrating the mental imagery into new ideas or concepts.
3. Implementation: Putting ideas into practice.

Creativity is not just art. Creativity can manifest itself across all areas of human life.

Creative thinking is a distinct cognitive process of its own, not just a by-product of increased intelligence.<sup>1</sup> Albert Einstein called creativity 'a true intelligence'. Edward de Bono believed it is 'the highest form of intelligence'.

These words are synonyms of creativity and innovation: *improvement, resourcefulness, problem-solving, self-sufficiency, self-efficacy, thinking, inventiveness, imagination, ingenuity, discovery, hypothesis, intuition, independent thinking, excellence, intelligence, adaptivity, initiative, power, emancipation, change, value-creation, vision, individuality, risk-taking, personal effectiveness, genius, inspiration, talent, changing paradigm/status quo, design, 'eureka!' and 'aha!' moment.*

**Creativity education** is education that enables students to acquire the creative thinking capacity. Creative students are those who solve problems by generating innovative outcomes.



<sup>1</sup> John S Allen, 'Creativity, the Brain, and Evolution. Creativity: Adaptation or a byproduct of increased intelligence?', Psychology Today, 2010.



*MASK Awards' Louis Nderi, No matter where you are from your dreams are valid, digital art*

### Ensuring our work delivers our objectives

MASK Trustees review the objectives each year and after major activities to ensure that they remain focused on the stated purpose and benefit our beneficiaries. Trustees refer to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance. They monitor and evaluate these quantitative and qualitative outcomes:

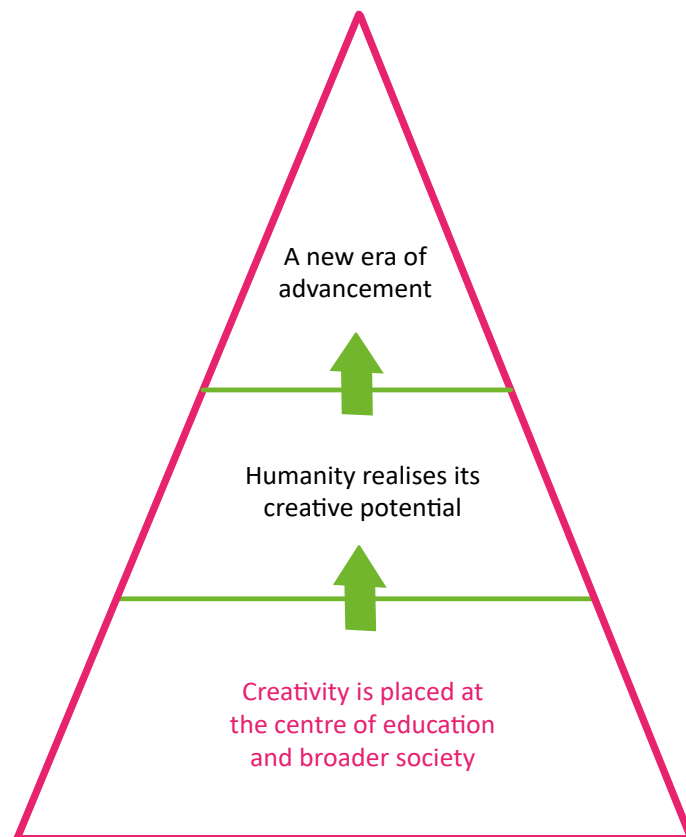
- number of users, their location, age, gender, background, etc.;
- input from partners (e.g. audiences reached via media campaigns or exhibitions);
- quality of services and output (e.g. access, skills, users' feedback and case studies);
- partnerships and community engagement and feedback.



## MASK Theory of Change

MASK contributes to a better world by providing quality education through creativity. We believe that *creativity education* holds the key to unlocking human potential and ushering in a new era of advancement.

MASK creativity education model places creativity at the center of education and broader society, and recognises creative thinking as inherently visual with art playing a pivotal role.



## MASK Theory of Change in the context of human evolution

Creativity ensures the evolution of mankind. Environment affects people, and people affect their environment in a continuous cycle.<sup>1</sup>

Three billion years ago, simple organisms developed sensitivity to light and began to develop a visual system. It acted as the catalyst for the development of a nervous system.<sup>2</sup> Neurons specialised in visual information, which led to organisms' specialisation and increased efficiency.<sup>3</sup> Interacting with the brain, the visual system became responsible for survival. Animals that could recognise colours and 'faces', memorise 'maps', and visualise their prey's movements were more successful in feeding, hunting, fighting and mating.

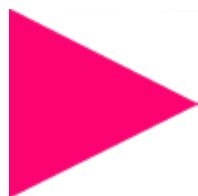
Two million years ago, early hominin species *Homo habilis* invented Oldowan stones for cutting meat and bones, the first historic innovation marking the beginning of human creativity. The brain of *Homo habilis* grew to 700 cm<sup>3</sup> in volume, twice the size of the brain of their ape predecessors.

One-and-a-half million years ago, seeing the benefits of innovation, *Homo erectus* made creativity a conscious behaviour. They invented more effective tools with symmetrical cutting edges. Their brain size increased to 900 cm<sup>3</sup> in volume. Communities recognised the link between creativity and survival. The 'creative gene' passed on to the next generations.

Forty thousand years ago, *Homo sapiens*' ability to imagine helped them to create a whole variety of new tools and art. Their brain size grew to 1200-1500 cm<sup>3</sup> in volume, about the same size as the brain of modern humans.

The human brain is still evolving. Over the last 100 years, there has been a profound increase in human intelligence: the average IQ has climbed 24 points. This increase is not due to biological evolution – the time span is too short for that – but to increasing rates of innovation which alter the ways people live and work.<sup>4</sup>

In this century, technology will continue to transform human civilization.<sup>5</sup> Artificial Intelligence already reasons, plans and solves problems. This will bring new opportunities as well as new challenges. To survive, society needs a new kind of education, an education that ensures that everyone realises their creative potential. Strengthening every individual's capacity to innovate will bring a new era of prosperity for all. How effectively our new education fosters creativity will determine our future.



<sup>1</sup> The Gene-Culture Coevolution Theory.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Arp, Scenario Visualisation. An Evolutionary Account of Creative Problem Solving, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> 'Brain and Culture' lecture, U. Alexandrov, Russian Academy of Science. Kultura TV, 'Academia' series, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Restak, The Naked Brain, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Ray Kurzweil, The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology, 2006.



## Education challenges MASK addresses

*"Survival in the 21st century will be very, very difficult, and without creativity it is not possible."*

Dr Manu Chandaria MBE, Africa's leading industrialist and MASK supporter

MASK addresses these three critical issues of education:

1. We help advance the **quality of education** through creativity education (CE).
2. We help improve **access** and spread **inclusive and fair education for all**.
3. We help ensure that the whole **system works together for learning** by building partnerships.

### Baseline study

Below you will find the results of the Baseline Study we conducted in 2007-09 to determine the scale of the challenges, and MASK's priority areas and approaches with regard to our objectives, target audience and services. We used the study to evaluate our performance, progress and milestones against anticipated levels. It included: questionnaires, focus group discussions and interviews; observational data collected at our programmes and events; and reports published by the Kenyan government and international organisations. Our respondents gave their consent to take part in the study, understood the reason for it and how their data would be used. Our focus groups included: students, parents, teachers, local and national government, media organisations, business, NGO and local communities in Kenya, the USA, UK and France. Obtaining up-to-date education statistics for the study proved difficult in some cases, and some statistics were inaccurate.

## Challenge 1. Quality of education

### Baseline

A major challenge throughout the world is to develop and maintain standards in education and promote quality education. The United Nations pledged greater investment in education. The European Union announced that 8% of its humanitarian budget would be spent on education. The Global Partnership for Education announced that its funds for education projects would be worth \$2bn (£1.5bn) by 2020.

In Kenya, since its independence in 1963, the education sector has witnessed a rapid quantitative expansion. The government began implementing free Primary Education in 2003, and free Day Secondary Education in 2008. Kenya was spending 6.1% of its GDP on education in 2005/06; by 2010 it had grown to 6.4%.

### Low learning

An increase in the number of schools and enrolment did not translate into an increase in learning, which remained low.<sup>1</sup> In Kenya, the literacy rate for 2007 was 72%. Seven out of 10 students in the third grade could not read at even a second-grade level.<sup>2</sup> Globally, more than 600 million school-aged children do not have basic skills in reading and maths.<sup>3</sup> Six out of 10 children are failing to reach basic levels of proficiency in learning.

<sup>1</sup> 'Aligning Education and Training to the Constitution of Kenya and Kenya Vision 2030 and beyond', Policy Framework for Education report, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Kenyan Uwezo survey, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> 'Learning to Realize Education's Promise', World Development Report, World Bank, 2018, file:///C:/Users/maskp/Downloads/9781464810961.pdf

In 2007 in Africa, less than 50% of grade six students were able to go beyond the level of simply deciphering words, and less than 40% got beyond basic numeracy. 'They lack very basic literacy and numeracy skills, let alone the more advanced skills the labour market needs, such as creativity.'<sup>1</sup>

Only 15% of adults aged 15-64 have attained secondary education and above. 'This state of affairs is a moral and economic crisis' (The President of the World Bank, Jim Yong Kim).

## Youth unemployment

Education systems have not kept pace with global changes and are failing to prepare young people (YP) for future jobs.<sup>2</sup> Based on models that were put in place over a century ago, they still emphasised teaching YP to become good 'workers' and perform repetitive tasks, rather than good 'thinkers' who are able to generate original solutions. Outdated 'traditions' and the inertia of institutions create roadblocks to developing talent. Many policymakers believed that literacy and numeracy led to economic prosperity, while creativity did not, and failed to recognise that creativity is central to the success of all STEM-related fields. Low learning trapped YP in low-paid and insecure jobs, failing to break down cycles of poverty.

Business leaders believed that 'economic challenges can be overcome by instilling creativity throughout organisations'.<sup>3</sup> CEOs saw creativity/innovation as a fundamental element of sustainable success and economic growth; 57% of them said that finding 'creative talent' was a priority; only 24% of new workforce entrants with college degrees had 'excellent' creativity/innovation skills.<sup>4</sup>

However, employers had difficulty finding applicants with the relevant skills as schools did not teach creativity. As Ken Robinson stated, 'schools educate children out of creativity, destroying 75% of their innate creative ability; and universities get rid of the other 25%'.<sup>5</sup>

In Kenya, unemployment rates were 67% for youths aged 15-34; over one million young people entered the labour market annually without any skills.<sup>6</sup> In Africa as a whole, young people aged 15-24 made up 40% of the workforce and 60% of unemployed labour.<sup>7</sup>

## Teaching

Teachers often lacked the skills or motivation to be effective. The teaching profession did not attract the best students. In 14 sub-Saharan countries, the average grade six teacher performed no better on reading tests than the highest-performing students from that grade. The lecturing model of teaching was still predominant, with little time spent on practical work or creative problem-solving. The number of teachers was low and teacher absenteeism was high.<sup>8</sup>

In Kenya, there were 31 teacher-training public institutions in 2007. However, teacher education lagged behind most developed countries. The major challenges that faced the profession were the relationship between teachers and learners, and teacher recruitment and career development.

In 2007, the pupil/teacher ratio (PTR) for primary education was 42.9. Almost 80% of the government's education budget went on teachers' salaries. Quality assurance and standards did not function well, suffering from inadequate funding and authority. Schools were not inspected regularly.

<sup>1</sup> STEP surveys, World Bank, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> 'Realizing Human Potential in the Fourth Industrial Revolution' report, World Economic Forum, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> IBM 2010 Global CEO Study surveyed more than 1,500 CEOs from 60 countries and 33 industries worldwide.

<sup>4</sup> 'Ready to Innovate' report, J. Lichtenberg, C. Wook, and M. Wright, The Conference Board, 2008.

<sup>5</sup> Ken Robinson, 'Do Schools Kill Creativity?' video, TED, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> The Federation of Kenya Employers, <https://www.fke-kenya.org/policy-issues/youth-employment#:~:text=Although%20the%20overall%20unemployment%20in,unemployment%20rate%20of%2067%20percent>.

<sup>7</sup> 'Learning to Realize Education's Promise', World Development Report, World Bank, 2018, p.10.

<sup>8</sup> 'Learning to Realize Education's Promise', World Development Report, World Bank, 2018.



## Kenya Vision 2030 and New Constitution 2010

In 2008, Kenya adopted its Kenya Vision 2030 that underscored the importance of education for sustainable development. It placed a greater emphasis on the link between education and the labour market, as well as the need to create entrepreneurial skills and competencies:

**'All citizens will have to embrace entrepreneurship, perform more non-routine tasks, be capable of more complex problem-solving, be willing and able to take more decisions, and assume more responsibility.'**<sup>1</sup>

It declared that education plays a fundamental role in driving the three key pillars, which are: economic pillar (to achieve a 10% GDP growth rate); social pillar (to improve the quality of life for all Kenyans); and political pillar (to move to the future as one nation and envision a democratic system).

In 2010, a new Kenyan Constitution was accepted. It stated that every child has a right to free education and access to affordable tertiary education, training and skills development. Kenya ratified a number of international conventions, including: the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, Article 17; the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Article 11; the International Convention on Social and Economic Rights, Article 13; the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Articles 28, 29 and 30.

## Kenya curriculum

In 2002 the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21), a coalition of business and education communities, began a debate on 'the 21st century skills for all students' and identified six key skills: critical thinking and problem solving; creativity and innovation; cross-cultural understanding; communications, information and media literacy; computing and ICT literacy; and career and learning self-reliance. It identified four 'deeper learning competencies': collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity; and its 'call for action' was: create, connect, collaborate.

In 2007-09, MASK identified that education for creativity (CE) remained elusive in many regions of the globe. There was a lack of CE pedagogy, creativity was often understood as being 'only for artists', 'a luxury', 'leisure', or that it cannot be taught.

In Kenya, the basic education curriculum was reviewed in 2002, 2004 and 2007. In 2007, Kenya's '8-4-4' education system<sup>2</sup> was believed to be 'disconnected from the world of work and too exam-oriented'. Creativity-learning elements were virtually absent.

Although the 'Creative Arts' subject was part of the curriculum in primary education in Kenya, it was not taught because 'the value of the arts has not been recognised.'<sup>3</sup> Even when it was taught, the teaching was limited to formal instruction in lines, forms and light and shade, and focused on imitating, rather than stimulating children's imagination and originality. Art was seen as an 'idle' activity.

In 2009, the East African Community (EAC) protocol was signed, which demanded the development of a new school curriculum that would further 'knowledge and imaginative understanding'.

## How MASK improves the quality of education

We tackled the quality of education challenge through our model for creativity education because we believe that development is linked to how effectively education fosters creativity, which is key to:

<sup>1</sup> 'Aligning Education and Training to the Constitution of Kenya (2010) and Kenya Vision 2030 and beyond', policy Frame work for Education report, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Eight years of primary education, four years of secondary education, and four years of basic university degree.

<sup>3</sup> 'Summative Evaluation of the Primary and Secondary Education Curriculum' report, KICD, 2010.

- *deeper learning*. We believe that inadequate CE in schools is one of the reasons for low learning. Creative thinking is the ability to connect knowledge. If creativity is neglected the ability to learn erodes. According to studies, creativity withers if not nourished: at the age of five, 98% of children display strong creativity; at the age of 10 only 30% do; at the age of 15 only 12%; and at the age of 30 only 2% display strong creativity<sup>1</sup>;
- *employment*. 'Only five hours of creativity training given to unemployed youth increases their employability rate fivefold'<sup>2</sup>;
- *entrepreneurship*. Currently, nine out of ten start-ups fail; a lack of creative problem-solving skills is one of the key reasons for enterprise failures<sup>3</sup>;
- *leadership*. According to the IBM 2010 Global CEO Study, creativity is key to developing leadership qualities, 'more than rigour, management, discipline and integrity is required to successfully navigate an increasingly complex world';
- *stronger citizenship and self-sufficiency*. If young people are denied the opportunity to be inventive, they may become frustrated and disruptive; while encouraging creativity makes them grow into self-sufficient individuals.<sup>4</sup>

Our model integrates policy, curriculum, learning activities and learning environment. Its essence is a concept of **placing creativity at the centre of mainstream education as well as society as a whole**. Its pedagogy is rooted in 'art practices' and 'practical creativity' methods.

In formulating our model, we wanted to anticipate future challenges and opportunities and help innovate education that can enable everyone to realise their creative potential. The outcome of our work has produced results for YP, educators and communities, which have the potential to improve education and therefore the future.

Lack of creativity education leads to these problems:

- It disadvantages YP by stifling their learning, leadership and entrepreneurial skills, increasing unemployment;
- It creates a skills gap and skill mismatches, which pose a real challenge to the economy and stability;
- It hinders communities' ability to solve challenges and achieve a sustainable future for all.

Our model resulted from practical research that involved the following cycle: 1) defining the problems; 2) designing solutions (policy and programmes); and 3) implementing, evaluating and adapting the solutions. Throughout, we committed to innovation for continuous improvement.

We have devised benefits for:

- young people, by improving skills and empowerment;
- educators and policymakers in Kenya and internationally, by developing a) new knowledge that can be of operational significance; and b) creative output in the form of learning materials produced by MASK (exhibitions, seminars, publications), and learning materials produced by our YP (over 15,500 creative artworks and ideas) that can be used by educators and policymakers to develop future policy frameworks and learning resources for schools;
- the economy, via an upskilled workforce; we produced a cohort of young people who became artists, entrepreneurs, leaders and successful professionals employed at top companies and organisations;
- the community, by creating productive citizens, growth, cohesion and transformation.

<sup>1</sup> George Land and Beth Jarman, *Breakpoint and Beyond: Mastering the Future Today*, HarperBusiness, 1993.

<sup>2</sup> Edward De Bono, *Why So Stupid?*, Blackhall, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> E. Griffin, 'Why Start-ups Fail', *Fortune Magazine*, September 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Gail Lewis, 'The need to create: constructive and destructive behaviour in creatively gifted children', Northwestern State University, *Gifted Education International*, Vol. 7, 1991.





## Challenge 2. Access, inclusion and equity

### Baseline

Access, inclusion and equity are the foundations of quality education, which every child should be able to access. Goal 4 of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development is to 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.' Yet, access, gender, poverty and disability continue to limit education opportunities.

In Kenya, the government provided for inclusive and equitable education. Schools were not allowed to exclude, discriminate or stereotype on the basis of difference. They were required to meet the needs of children regardless of gender, social class, ethnicity and ability level. They were asked to identify excluded children and to ensure their enrolment.

### Access

Globally, one in five children are excluded from education. Three quarters of all primary age children may never set foot in school. More than half of the world's children who are not enrolled in school live in sub-Saharan Africa.

In Kenya, the education sector has experienced massive expansion in enrolment due to the introduction of free education and the growing number of schools. Primary schools increased from 6,058 in 1963 to 27,489 in 2009; the number of secondary schools increased from 151 to 7,308 over the same period. In 2009 there were 818 technical, industrial, vocational and entrepreneurial training institutions, and 32 universities.

Access to schooling in Kenya was as follows:

- primary education: in 2007, Gross Enrolment Rate<sup>1</sup> (GER) 59.3%, Net Enrolment Rate<sup>2</sup> (NER) 42.1%; in 2009, GER 115%, and NER 96.7%;
- secondary education: in 2009, GER 48.8%, NER 32.7%; enrolment grew from around 30,000 students in 1963 to 1.7 million students in 2009;
- despite free education, almost 4.7 million children were out of school in 2009 according to the Kenyan Census, as schools began charging various fees, including examination and boarding fees;
- in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) (such as Samburu, Turkana, Maasai and Pokot) and urban slums, education attainment levels were low for lack of schools, the costs, the perceived inappropriateness of the curriculum, as well as local ethnic conflicts, insecurity, migration and displacement challenges. For example, in Turkana primary education NER was 25% compared to the national average;
- access for children with special needs was relatively low: there were 3,464 special needs educational institutions, with 734 in the eastern and 56 in the north-eastern regions. There were only 17 secondary schools for learners with disabilities. These children were two-and-a-half times more likely than their peers never to go to school. Globally, there are up to 150 million children living with a disability – 80% live in developing countries. The main challenges include cultural prejudice and attitude, funding, facilities and teachers.

### Gender parity

Gender parity in Kenya was as follows:

- primary education: in 2007, the gender parity index<sup>3</sup> was 0.94; in 2009, it was 0.98; secondary education: in 2009, the gender parity index was 0.96, an increase from 0.75 in 1990;
- completion rates were better for boys: in 2009, 88.3% for boys and 78.2% for girls;

<sup>1</sup> Gross Enrolment Rate is the ratio between all students enrolled and the population of official primary education age. As over- and under-aged students are included this ratio, it can exceed 100%.

<sup>2</sup> Net Enrolment Rate is the number of boys and girls enrolled, expressed as a percentage of the total population in that age group.

<sup>3</sup> Quotient of the number of females to the number of males enrolled in a given stage of education.

- transition rates from primary to secondary were better for girls: in 2007, 56.5% for boys and 63.2% for girls; in 2009, 64.1% for boys and 69.1% for girls;
- secondary education enrolment: in 2007, 639,393 boys and 540,874 girls; in 2009, 914,971 boys and 786,530 girls; in 2007, GER: 50.9% boys/46.3% girls and NER: 29.8 % boys/27.9% girls;
- at university level: in 2006, 68,345 males and 43,884 females were enrolled; in 2009, 111,050 males and 69,928 females;
- over 23% of Kenyan girls (3% of boys) are married before their 18th birthday and 4% are married before the age of 15.

## Poverty

In 2017, 82% of the global wealth generated went to just 1% of the world's population.<sup>1</sup> According to Global Goal 10 'Reduced Inequalities', 'too much of the world's wealth is held by a very small group of people, leading to financial and social discrimination of the majority.' In low-income countries, an average student performs worse than 95% of the students in high-income countries.<sup>2</sup> Poverty undermines early childhood learning. Deprivations — in terms of nutrition, unhealthy environments, or lack of nurture by caregivers — have long-lasting effects and impair infants' brain development. Even in a good school, deprived children learn less. Poverty is the main reason why young people fail to complete schooling. In Kenya, in 2005-06, almost 46% of the population were poor.<sup>3</sup> Children from those families underachieved because of malnutrition and ill health.

## How MASK improves access, inclusion and equity

MASK improves access, inclusion and equity through its programmes and policies. We identify the barriers to education — access, gender parity, poverty and disability — and work to reduce them by the following means:

1. We place special focus on young people (YP) who may be at risk of marginalisation, exclusion or underachievement: girls, young people with disabilities, victims of violence and conflict, those living in rural areas, and members of marginalised tribes. We have worked in West Laikipia, Samburu, Pokot, Turkana, Amboseli, Maasai, Nakuru, and Naivasha, Kenya, with both school-goers and non-school-goers. MASK Awards reaches participants directly through our partners, a national newspaper, TV and radio (The Star, Citizen TV, Hot 96). We work with YP with disabilities at Sipili School for the Deaf, and celebrate disabled participants in MASK Awards. We collect data about our participants to ensure gender parity.
2. We inform communities about equal access, gender and disability parity through our events.
3. In tackling poverty, we address a deeper underlying challenge, i.e. we help create prosperity, rather than merely reduce poverty. Entrepreneurship is the most powerful force for eradicating poverty and creating opportunity. However, nine out of ten start-ups fail for the lack of creative problem-solving skills.<sup>4</sup> We therefore enable creative problem-solving skills (resourcefulness) and self-sufficiency, as we believe that poverty is not just a lack of resources, but a lack of resourcefulness, too.
4. All our programmes are free. We provide food at all our workshops and events in Kenya.
5. MASK's work in this area is guided by the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), Sustainable Development Goal 4, the Education 2030 Framework for Action, and the Cali Commitment.

<sup>1</sup> K. Hjelmgard, 'Vast majority of new wealth last year went to top 1%', *USA Today*, 2018, <https://eu.usatoday.com/story/money/2018/01/22/vast-majority-new-wealth-last-year-went-top-1/1051947001/>

<sup>2</sup> According to the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

<sup>3</sup> According to the Kenya Integrated Budget and Household Survey (KIHBS), 2005/06.

<sup>4</sup> E. Griffin, 'Why Start-ups Fail', *Fortune Magazine*, September 2014.



### Challenge 3. Making the system work for learning

#### Baseline

To be truly effective, all parts of the education system have to work cohesively with one another. Adopting a new curriculum, for example, is not enough. All stakeholders — policymakers, teachers, families and communities — need to be on board to champion it. The education system and its enabling environment must work together.

In Kenya, not all communities helped young people to reach their creative potential. In 2009 the Kenyan Ministry of Education told us that they were keen to establish partnerships and coalitions between the government and communities, businesses and NGOs, as well as between schools and families to find ways to engage parents in a coherent way. This challenge was later outlined in their key policy document of 2012.<sup>1</sup>

#### How MASK helps make the whole system work for learning

We build partnerships and coalitions with educators, government, businesses, media and communities to:

- promote 'creativity in the classroom' and 'creativity in the community';
- disseminate our outcomes, which we believe have already resulted in substantial gains in learning for students, to motivate others to use our work as a starting point for their own innovations;
- scale up our work to have a wide global impact;
- ensure our sustainability.

**Educators.** More than 25 schools in Kenya have participated in our Creativity Clubs; and 370 schools from across Africa have entered our MASK Awards. Through these activities we have built a cluster of 48 schools that are excellent at creativity education. We intend to facilitate a closer collaboration between these schools through a biennial seminar to increase incentives and motivation, improve school leadership, share best practice, and encourage family involvement.

**Government.** MASK has worked closely with the Kenyan government to support their capacity, and also to quality-assure our work. These government bodies included:

- The Kenyan Ministry of Education (KMoE)
- The Kenyan Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD)
- Teachers Service Commission – Kenya (TSC)
- The Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Kenyan embassies in France and USA
- The Kenyan Ministry of Youth and Sport
- The Kenyan Ministry of Culture and Heritage
- The Nairobi National Museum
- The Office of the Deputy President of Kenya
- Regional and district directors of education (Nairobi, West Laikipia and Naivasha) in Kenya
- Kenyan schools.

We have:

- organised presentations, talks and exhibitions at these institutions (2008-22);
- suggested frameworks for the 'Creative Arts' examination and using art for studying non-art subjects (such as peace building) to KICD (2010-12);

<sup>1</sup> 'Aligning Education and Training to the Constitution of Kenya and Kenya Vision 2030 and beyond' report, the Kenyan Department of Education, 2012.



- presented our outcomes to KMoE in 2017-18; KMoE asked MASK to develop a teacher-training framework and introduced us to TSC in 2019;
- together with TSC, planned to implement the training of teachers' tutors in 2019;
- presented our training model to KICD in 2022; the Head of Evaluation Office at KICD, Mrs J. Mukuhi, asked us to produce a Learners' Book and Teachers' Guidance;
- partnered with KICD's Director of the Creative Arts, Dr J. Wambugu, and with an Inclusion Officer of the Office of the Second (now First) Lady of Kenya, Mr L. Johnstone, to judge MASK Awards entries.

**Business.** Business has the power to shift policy. However, although business supports innovation in the workplace and considers hiring innovatively minded graduates a priority, they often fail to connect it to training in schools. Their attempts to train their existing staff in innovation often fail. This is because children, whose creativity was eroded in schools, struggle grow into creative adults.

For MASK it has been vital to engage with the business community in Kenya for the emergence of the coalitions needed to implement our policy and programmes. We have worked hard to mobilise the support of such organisations as the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), the Kenyan Alliance of Manufacturers (KAM), the American Chamber of Commerce in Nairobi, Unilever, Mabati Rolling Mills, the KICD's Private Sector magazine, and other companies in Kenya.

**Communities.** We engage local, national and international communities in dialogue through our exhibitions, seminars, talks, awards and publications. The aims are to encourage broader society to champion creativity; change perceptions about art and creativity; and embed the value of innovation.

### Endline study - 2007-2017

*'How effectively education fosters creativity is now at the centre of the relationship between education and future economic prosperity.'* World Economic Forum, 2016.<sup>1</sup>

When MASK started its work in creativity education in Kenya in 2007, we were told 'creativity is not for Africa's reality'. However, this did not deter us, as we firmly believed that creativity is fundamental to human development worldwide. A decade later, in 2017, the Kenyan government officially recognised creativity as a 'core competence' of their basic education curriculum. Through our close collaboration with the government, we played a significant role in achieving this recognition.

From 2012 onwards, we observed a growing acknowledgment from numerous policy organizations worldwide regarding the importance of creativity in education and the workforce. These organisations included the UN (the 2015 Global Goals for Sustainable Development; Goal 4 - Quality Education), UNESCO, the World Economic Forum<sup>2</sup>, McKinsey Global Institute<sup>3</sup>, the Confederation of British Industry<sup>4</sup>, Kingston University<sup>5</sup>, LinkedIn, among others. In 2012, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) of OECD started assessing 'innovation'; and 'in 2020, 'creative thinking'.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'New Vision for Education' report, World Economic Forum, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> 'The Future of Jobs', World Economic Forum, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> 'Skill Shift: Automation and the Future of the Workforce', McKinsey Global Institute, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> 'Education and Skill' survey, The Confederation of British Industry, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> 'The Future Skills League Table' report, Kingston University, June 2021.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/innovation/>

## In the UK

In 2013 the UK adopted the new National Curriculum, putting knowledge at the centre of education, stating that the development of human creativity and appreciation of the arts are its goals of a knowledge-rich curriculum and recommended developing 'programmes that celebrate each young person's creative achievements'.

## In Kenya

In Kenya, in 2012 the Department of Education drafted a new Policy Framework for Education.<sup>1</sup> It stated that it should develop the child's ability in critical and imaginative thinking, problem-solving, and self-expression. Teachers should also develop an appreciation of innovations in the field of education and an ability to utilise them.

In 2013, a new Kenyan Basic Education Act<sup>2</sup> proclaimed that 'quality schooling is fundamental to human and economic development, elimination of poverty, disease and ignorance, and the standards of living', and be focused on solving challenges including:

- a shift from knowledge reproduction to knowledge production;
- stimulation of enterprise and innovation;
- improvement of access to education and elimination of inequalities.<sup>3</sup>

The Kenyan Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) was instructed to develop the **Competence Based Curriculum (CBC)** by 2014, which would encourage innovativeness on the part of the students.

### The core skills of CBC were consistent with the skills on which MASK focused, and included:

- thinking skills (the ability to synthesise, evaluate and apply information);
- observation and investigative skills (the ability to find and record information, observe, review and assess);
- application and transferable skills (the ability to make and create things);
- social and ethical skills (the ability to understand, empathise, respond appropriately and to make wise ethical decisions);
- entrepreneurial skills (the ability to take independent and productive action);
- talent potential development at all levels.

### The CBC's philosophy, vision, mission, guiding principles, goals, objectives and performance targets, are all closely aligned to MASK:

**Philosophy:** 'Education in Kenya shall focus on the development of individual potential in a holistic and integrated manner.'

**Vision:** 'All citizens embrace entrepreneurship and perform more non-routine tasks, are capable of more complex problem-solving and decision-making, deeper understanding of work tasks, require less supervision, and assume more responsibility.'

**Mission:** 'To create an education and training environment that equips learners with desired values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and competencies, particularly in technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.'

<sup>1</sup> 'Aligning Education and Training to the Constitution of Kenya and Kenya Vision 2030 and beyond' report, The Kenyan Department of Education, 2012, <https://schoolsnetkenya.com/documents/education-policy-framework-of-kenya.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/94495/117651/F-1505056566/KEN94495.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> 'Aligning Education and Training to the Constitution of Kenya and Kenya Vision 2030 and beyond', The Kenyan Department of Education, 2012, p. 29.

**Guiding Principles** included: an education for all that emphasises quality and equity of access; prioritises innovation; focuses on entrepreneurship; and identifies and nurtures learners' talents and gifts.

**National Goals of education** included: to promote skills for the country's development; individual development and self-fulfilment; moral values, social equality and responsibility; and development of cultures.

**Objectives of primary education** included: to acquire creativity and communication skills; develop aesthetic values and appreciate own and other people's cultures; develop individual talents; and promote social responsibility.

**Objectives of secondary education** included: to acquire knowledge/skills/attitudes for the development of the self and the nation; gain respect for own and other people's cultures; develop ability for enquiry, critical thinking and rational judgement; enhance enjoyment in learning; and identify and develop individual talents.

**Performance Targets** included:

- improve the quality of education and training so that Kenya's measurable learning outcomes are in the upper quartile on recognised international standardized tests by 2017;
- ensure access and equity across all levels of Basic Education by 2020; and eliminate gender and regional disparities by 2017;
- in partnership with TSC, orient teachers to the new curriculum by 2014 and implement a continuing teacher professional development programme; ensure that all schools meet minimum quality standards of teaching and learning by 2017.

In 2017 the new CBC pilots were introduced in Kenyan pre-primary and primary schools. Just a year later, in 2018, the Kenya literacy rate grew to 81.54%, a 2.8% increase from 2014, and a 9.54% increase from 2007. However, the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) reports that grades in 2020 need further improvement (Grades of primary school students were: 44% of children achieved minimum proficiency in reading; 29% in mathematics; 44% in English; 37% in Kiswahili; 37% in science. The percentage of secondary students who scored D<sup>1</sup> or lower was also high: in 2013, 47% of secondary school graduates scored D or lower; in 2017, 70%; in 2018, 68%; in 2019, 61%<sup>2</sup>; and in 2020, 55%<sup>3</sup>.)



<sup>1</sup> KNEC uses a 12-point grading system for Secondary Education ranging from A to E (A, A-, B, B-, C, C-, D, D-, E).

<sup>2</sup> Table 5, 'Overall National Grade Summary for 2019 KCSE Examination', KNEC, <https://kneac.ac.ke/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/DOC-2-2019-KCSE-EXAMINATION-ESSENTIAL-STATISTICS.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Table 5, 'Overall National Grade Summary for 2020 KCSE Examination', KNEC, [https://africacheck.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2021-07/END\\_OF\\_2020\\_KCSE\\_MARKING\\_STATEMENT\\_-\\_May\\_7\\_2021-1.pdf#page=12](https://africacheck.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2021-07/END_OF_2020_KCSE_MARKING_STATEMENT_-_May_7_2021-1.pdf#page=12)

## MASK Creativity Learning Model - what sets us apart

Over 17 years, MASK has developed a creativity education model through its Creativity Clubs and Entrepreneurship and Leadership Clubs in Kenyan schools. This model has the potential to advance mainstream education by addressing key issues such as quality, access, and partnerships for improved learning. It also can serve as a foundation for schools to foster their own innovations.

The model comprises the following elements:

### **Principles:**

Creativity should be at the core of both mainstream education and broader society.

Creativity is primarily visual thinking, with art practices playing a crucial role in learning creativity.

Creativity is a skill that can be taught directly, beginning at an early age.

Creativity must be ethically guided.

Accessibility to creative education should be universal.

### **Curriculum framework** includes:

Creative personality (beliefs and behavior)

Creative skill (visualising connections)

Creative practice (learning how to apply creativity in real life using the MASK Five-Step Practical Creativity framework).

### **Learning activities** consist of:

Art practices

Creative thinking exercises

MASK Five-Step Practical Creativity framework exercises

### **Learning Environment** requires:

Creativity in the classroom (training facilitators through MASK Facilitator Training Framework)

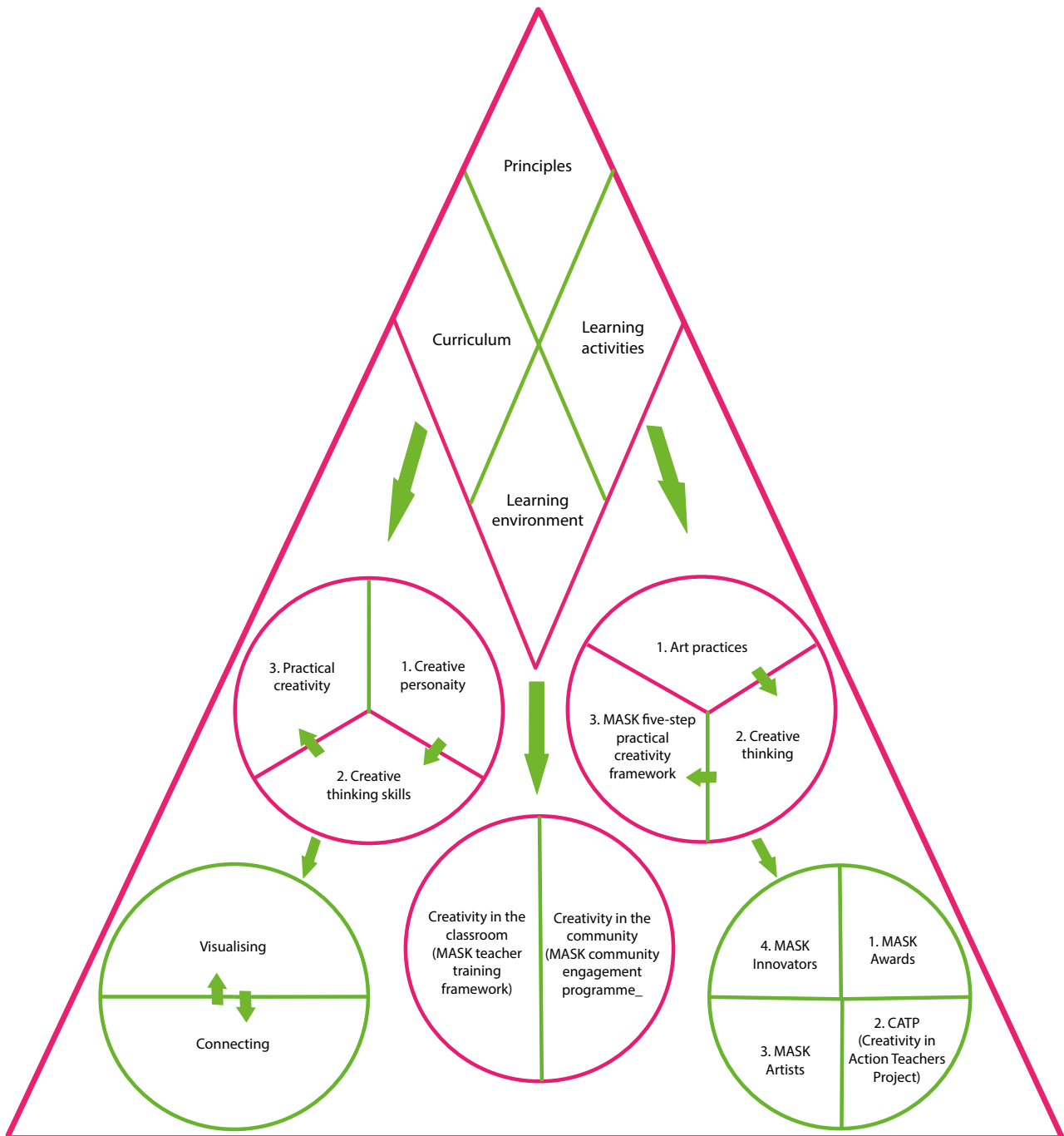
Creativity in the community (engaging communities through MASK programme of exhibitions, workshops, seminars, and publications).

Our Creativity Education Model stands out as the highlight of our work, as it has positively impacted the lives of many young people, as evidenced by their testimonials:

- 'Before I started with MASK, I did not know I was creative. MASK helped me to become an entrepreneur and a leader.' - Joel
- 'Thank you, MASK, for your amazing work and the great effort you put in to ensure the growth and nurturing of creativity in Kenya. You are indeed the driver of change in our society.' - Stephen
- 'The MASK experience is an absolute game-changer for my creative occupation.' - Agnes
- 'I am grateful to MASK for giving me the opportunity and making me believe in my potential as a creator, innovator, and entrepreneur. MASK has changed how I think. I see myself now not only as an upcoming doctor, but as a medical entrepreneur. I have ideas that can potentially transform the medical sector in Kenya.' - Danielle
- 'MASK Awards make us more innovative and lead us to inventions that can make the world a better place.' - John
- 'MASK developed my habit for innovation and empowered me beyond my dreams.' - Hellen.



The following section presents our model through simplified descriptions and diagrams . The diagram below describes our model in its entirety.



Below, each element of the model is explained in more detail.

## Principals framework

Our creativity education (CE) principals can be summarised in these groups:

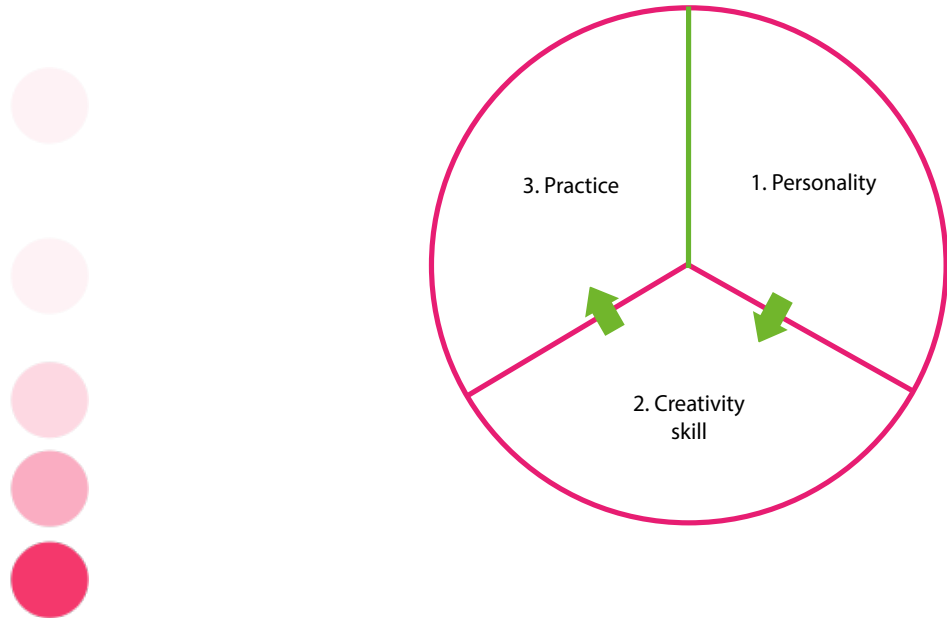
1. Creativity should be at the core of mainstream education and broader society.
2. Creativity is primarily *visual* thinking; with art practices playing a pivotal role.
3. Creativity is a skill that can be learned directly, beginning at an early age.
4. Creativity must be ethically guided for the best outcomes for all.
5. Accessibility to CE must be universal; only when everyone is creative will the entire world prosper.



MASK Awards's Melissa Joe, 23, Black Barbie, digital

## Curriculum framework

Our curriculum includes these behaviours, skills, and practice elements.



### 1. Personality

Key factors essential to creativity include:

- Joy: Embracing positive beliefs about creativity and deriving great enjoyment from the creative process.
- Futureness: Upholding ethical standards to ensure that solutions contribute to a brighter future and serve the common good.

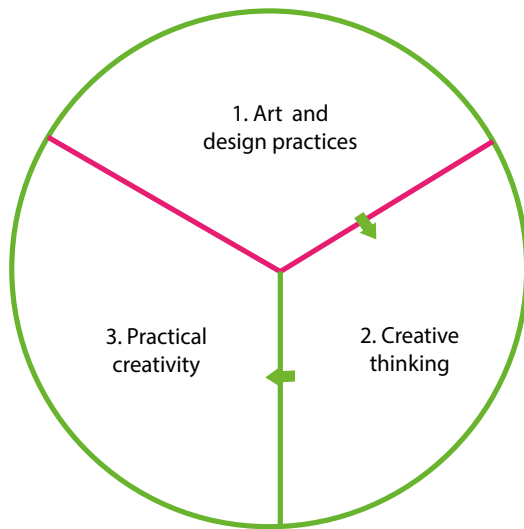
### 2. Creativity Skill

Creativity skill involves *visualization*—the capacity to form and transform mental imagery—while *connecting* knowledge or information across domains into original solutions.

### 3. Practice

Students acquire practical creativity skills through the MASK Five-Step Practical Creativity framework. This approach enhances problem-solving abilities, leadership qualities, entrepreneurial mindset, readiness for the workforce, and proficiency in visual communication.

## Learning activities



Our learning activities consist the following workshops:

1. art practices;
2. creative thinking exercises;
3. MASK Five-Step Practical Creativity.

We offer them at our **Creativity Clubs** in primary schools, and **Creativity for Entrepreneurship and Leadership (CEL) Clubs** in secondary schools.

### 1. Art practices

By the arts, we refer to imaginative, experimental, and playful activities centered on the use of various materials (not only fine art by recycled and found materials) and techniques, improvisation, hypothesis testing and prototyping. These activities span across various art categories, including:

- paintings, drawings, sculptures, installations, films, videos, digital technologies, and writing;
- designing and making objects (such as toys, clothes, furniture, jewellery, architecture, etc.) using recycled and found materials;
- music, singing, and performance.

### How art shapes creativity

All creative individuals are highly visual, meaning they think primarily with the help of their visual system, i.e. in *mental images*. The ability to imagine/visualise things, concepts or events that do not yet exist is called a *visual cognition/visual thinking/visualisation*. Discoveries begin as images.<sup>1</sup>

Visual thinking is the *working mechanism* that underlies creativity. The more visual individuals, the better they are at generating original ideas. 'Innovation begins with an eye,' said IDEO Founder Tom Kelley.

Mathematician Jacques Hadamard surveyed 100 of the leading physicists of his day on how they think.<sup>2</sup> Their responses mirrored his own and confirmed the creative thinking process is largely wordless and accompanied by mental images. Albert Einstein described his thought process as this: 'The words or the language ... do not seem to play any role in my mechanism of thought. The physical entities which seem to serve as elements in thought are certain signs and more or less clear images which can be "voluntarily" reproduced and combined'.<sup>3</sup>

•

<sup>1</sup> Michael Michalko, *Cracking Creativity*, Ten Speed Press, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Jacques Hadamard, *The Psychology of Invention in the Mathematical Field*, Dover Publications, 1945.

<sup>3</sup> Jacques Hadamard, *The Psychology of Invention in the Mathematical Field*, Dover Publications, 1945.



**The creative process** consists three stages that work in unity and undergo numerous conscious and unconscious revisions; each stage is equally important. These stages are:

1. *Observation*: Gathering information from the environment and forming mental images (visualisation stage). Mental images are the *medium* of the creative process, possessing key properties such as abstraction, structure, and meaning.
2. *Connection/Integration*: Integrating mental imagery into new ideas or concepts and selecting them against specific goals (idea-generation stage).
3. *Implementation*: Putting ideas into action (innovation).

Within these stages of the creative process, **art practices** engender the ability to:

- observe visual information;
- understand dynamics between structures, shapes, lines, colours, textures, sizes, distance, and movement;
- fuse images with meaning;
- form mental imagery;
- transform mental imagery into new identities;
- art practices also engender curiosity for deeper learning and stronger leadership<sup>1 2 3 4</sup>; aesthetics; emotional intelligence; and self-efficacy.



*Illustration by MASK volunteer Yunhan Yang*

<sup>1</sup> Adelma Roach, 'Living the Arts through Language + Learning: A Report on Community-Based Youth Organizations', Americans for the Arts, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> 'The Ready to Innovate' report, The Conference Board, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> James Catterall, Susan Dumais, Gillian Hampden-Thompson, 'The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies Research Report', National Endowment of the Arts, 2012; Richard Deasy, 'Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development', Arts Education Partnership, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Michael S. Gazzaniga, 'Learning, Arts, and the Brain', The Dana Consortium Report, 2008.

## 2. Creative thinking

To connect images/ideas, creative individuals deliberately force their thinking patterns into modes that differ from the norm, using various 'provocation' tools and tactics. With enough experience and practice this process becomes available 'at will'. It is this process that Steve Jobs meant when he said, "Think different."

Our students practise these tools and tactics:

- forming analogies and associations;
- making connections and combinations;
- reversing assumptions;
- resemblance thinking;
- collective thinking;
- Edward de Bono techniques (six hats technique).

## 3. Practical creativity

Using our *Five-Step Practical Creativity framework*, a step-by-step guide to the innovation process, our students practice problem solving that affect their daily lives.

*MASK Five-Step Practical Creativity framework:*

1. *Identify a problem.* Learning the principles of problem-statements that encourage creative solutions.
2. *Brainstorm solutions.* Forming teams, setting goals and directions for specific innovations, learning idea-generation strategies, and brainstorming solutions.
3. *Evaluate.* Learning decision-making strategies and evaluating solutions against specific goals and criteria.
4. *Communicate.* Practising the principles of overcoming resistance to change, and the rules of visual communication.
5. *Implement.* Implementing solutions and exercising entrepreneurial and leadership skills.

## Structure

Our students can be grouped by age/class or learning activity. We often take training beyond the traditional classroom into the outdoors, galleries and communities.

A typical workshop structure includes:

- displaying learning materials (e.g. posters)
- performing a learning activity;
- exhibiting/sharing learning outcomes;
- revising skills learned and planning next workshop's activity.



“

*Before I started with MASK I did not know I was creative. MASK helped me to become an entrepreneur and a leader.*

Joel

”

## Learning environment

The conducive-to-creativity environment requires:

- Creativity in the classroom: Through the MASK Facilitator Training Framework, we have trained facilitators drawn from various professional and community backgrounds, including our former students.
- Creativity in the community: MASK engages with communities through exhibitions, workshops, seminars, and publications.

### ***MASK Facilitator Training Framework***

The diagram below describes our training framework.





We train our facilitators to deliver experiences that are structured, practice-led, and interactive.

These are the roles of facilitators:

- **Enjoyment.** Facilitators ensure that learning is enjoyable. At the beginning of every workshop they outline the Koinonia principles<sup>1</sup>: maintain friendship and collaboration; be curious and express ideas openly and honestly; suspend judgement, do not belittle ideas, welcome 'crazy' ideas. They ensure friendliness, playfulness and good humour; and the ability to see the powerful skills to be learned behind the fun is essential. Facilitators build trust so students feel supported and accepted without any hint of judgement or harsh criticism, and give praise and acknowledge efforts. Students are active, move freely during the workshops, work individually or in temporary 'task forces', and learn from each other.
- **Support.** Facilitators provide opportunities for success at an early stage of training to increase students' enthusiasm and satisfaction and build their confidence and self-esteem. Learning activities must be clear, challenging, focused, dynamic and visual. Facilitators give students time to develop their creative responses and do not intervene in their creative processes too early. They help students to cope with the creativity versus conformity conflict by asking them to explain what they wish to accomplish and providing constructive feedback.
- **Reward and share.** Facilitators celebrate and reward creativity. They help students share their creative output with each other and with their communities, since creativity can be 'caught' as well as taught. They organise displays and exhibitions.
- **Experimentation.** Facilitators enable students to experiment and discover, challenge their own ideas, and take evaluated risks. They speak about role models and demonstrate their own inner dialogue during the creative process. They motivate and challenge students by asking stimulating questions such as, 'what can be?' and 'what if?' They encourage a positive attitude to 'half-baked' ideas. They help students understand that new ideas are delicate as they form, can be killed by a sneer, a yawn or a frown, and need to be evolved quite far before their practical use is apparent.

As part of 'Reporting', facilitators track the progression of our students, negotiate the criteria for success with them, and help them self-assess where they are and what they need to do to get to the next level. They keep photographic and video logs, and help students to record their learning experiences.



<sup>1</sup> The Koinonia principles, which means 'spirit of fellowship', were the Greek philosophers' principles of debate.

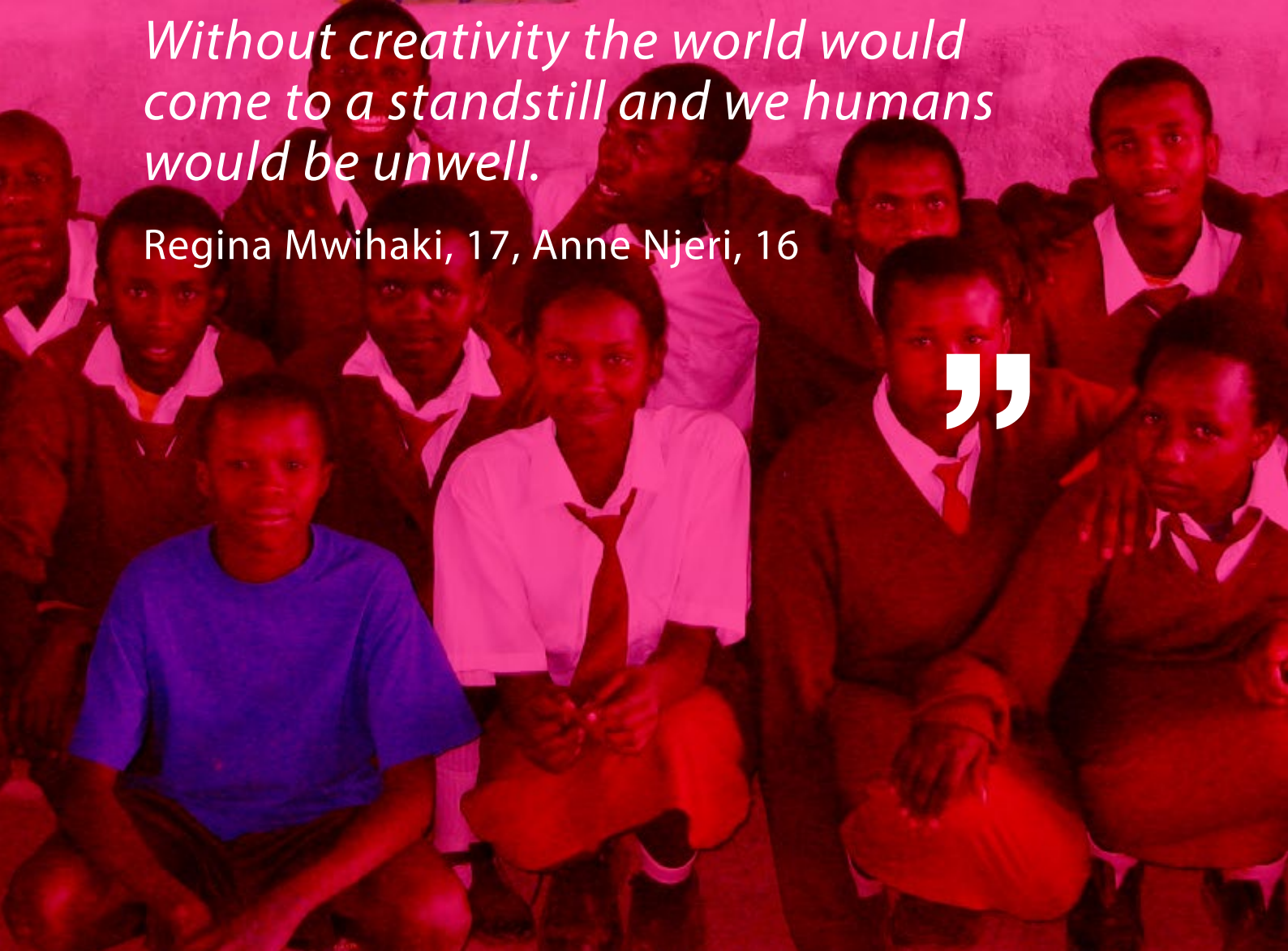


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*Without creativity the world would come to a standstill and we humans would be unwell.*

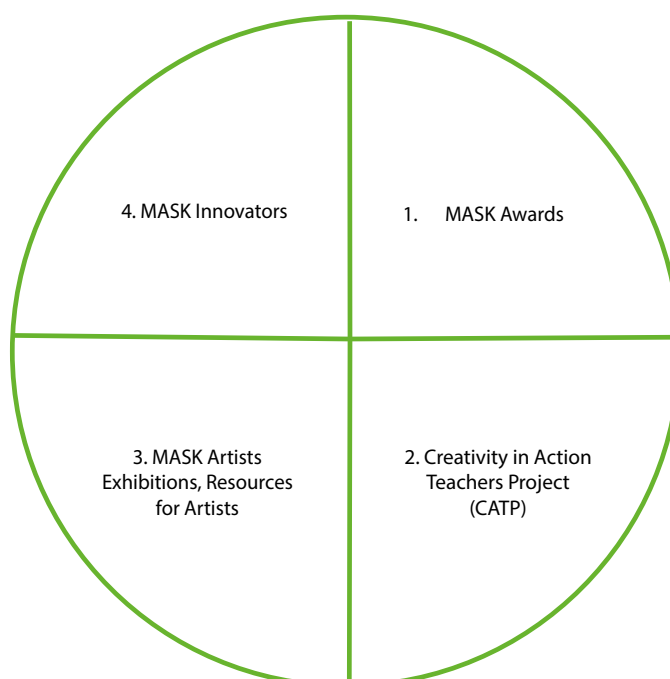
Regina Mwihaki, 17, Anne Njeri, 16

”



## Programmes

MASK's ongoing main programmes are:



1. **MASK Awards**, a national and international platform for schools and young people, motivates young creativity and enhances recognition of creativity and its benefits within society.
2. **Creativity in Action Teachers Project (CATP)** produces and disseminates MASK's teaching and learning materials based on the MASK creativity education model.
3. **MASK Artists** online assists young people in developing their creativity through art, exhibitions, and accessible resources.
4. **MASK Innovators** online assists young people in applying their creativity in socio-economic realms and connects MASK's innovators with employers.

The overall experience of our users is that:

- our young people receive training and development opportunities;
- teachers and educators receive training and teaching resources support;
- communities have the opportunity to engage with creativity and innovation.

Each programme is outlined below.





“

*Thank you, MASK, for your amazing work and great effort you put in to ensure growth and nurturing of creativity in Kenya. You are indeed the driver of change in our society.*

Simon Kariuki, 24

”

*A winner of the 'Under 15' category in Art receives her prize on the stage*



## 1. MASK Awards

*"MASK Awards makes us more innovative and leads us to the inventions that can make the world a better place."* John Mutahi, 20 (participant)

MASK Awards is a national and international platform that aims to encourage young creativity and innovation. It supports governments' agenda 'to celebrate each young person's creative achievements' and 'to support talent, innovation, and entrepreneurship'. It engenders creativity skill which is recognised as a 'core skill' for future jobs and economic transformation (WEF Future of Jobs 2023 Report).

Schools and young people (YP) under 25 enter their best art and brightest innovations online. Panel of judges selects winners and awards prizes at a prize-giving ceremony. Participants are reached directly through our media partners, such as The Star in Kenya.

In its first year in 2013, MASK Awards received 700 entries from Kenya; the inaugural exhibition was held at the Nairobi National Museum and travelled to the Saatchi Gallery in London and the US Li-brary of Congress in Washington DC.

In 2022, we received more than 6,000 entries. Over almost a decade, the Awards have attracted 15,500 entries from over 6,500 individuals and 370 schools from 58 regions in Kenya and 15 other African countries – Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Congo, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. It awarded 350 prizes (including to 48 schools). MASK Awards exhibited over 20 times, accessing 650,000 people globally (for our exhibitions, please see APPENDICES).

The programme impacts on our beneficiaries in ways that include:

- It provides YP with a safe and supportive environment for being creative. Participants gain expo-sure, get mentored by us and connect with each other and potential employers. They learn, net-work and getting more creative by learning from each other. Cash prizes facilitate the purchase of materials or equipment, while internship prizes kickstart young careers.
- Teachers are motivated to support the creativity of their students. Schools are rewarded for outstanding creativity education; schools share their best practices.
- The wider community has the opportunity to engage with creativity and appreciate its outcomes.

MASK Awards alumni have gone on to exhibit internationally, like visual artists Staice Shitanda, Louis Nderi, Margaret Ngigi, Churchill Ongere, Onesmus Okamar, and Purity Mwede; or to launch music albums like the Cr3w Teflon group; or to make a difference as entrepreneurs like MASK Awards 2019 winner, medical student Danielle Wijenje, who said:

*"MASK Awards has changed how I think. I see myself now not only as an up-coming doctor, but as a medical entrepreneur. I have ideas that can potentially transform the medical sector in Kenya."*



## MASK Awards case study: Danielle

*"MASK Awards has changed how I think. I see myself now not only as an upcoming doctor, but as a medical entrepreneur."*

Danielle Wijenje, 21, won MASK Awards in 2019. She recollects her MASK Awards experience: "I have been participating in MASK Awards since I was 15. MASK Awards motivated me to create entrepreneurial solutions that can transform the world.

I submitted my first entry in 2017, an idea for a cupboard that I built out of Styrofoam. Being nervous, not knowing what the judges would think of it, I gave it a shot, and before I knew it I won a cash prize, 3,000 Ksh. The next year I was motivated to think even bigger and better, and entered an idea that earned me a bigger cash prize, 5,000 Ksh. The idea was called THE VITALACE. It was a necklace with a microchip that can detect health problem signs and connect patients to doctors, chemists or hospitals to help them avoid congestion in hospitals, minimise the risk of contagious diseases, and improve quality of care.

The following year, my entry was an idea for satellites that can improve internet connectivity and enable young people to act as mental therapists to each other. This idea earned me a prize – a three-month paid internship at the Heroes for Change, Unilever's social leadership programme. There, I was paid 90,000 Ksh in total and worked for their social media platform, teaching young people about community hygiene.

It never occurred to me that I would get a paid job at a top company without a university degree.

The skills that I learned there now enable me to work as a marketing and social media consultant while I am studying for my medical degree at university. I have become confident in my writing skills, team work and leadership. My creativity has spiralled up.

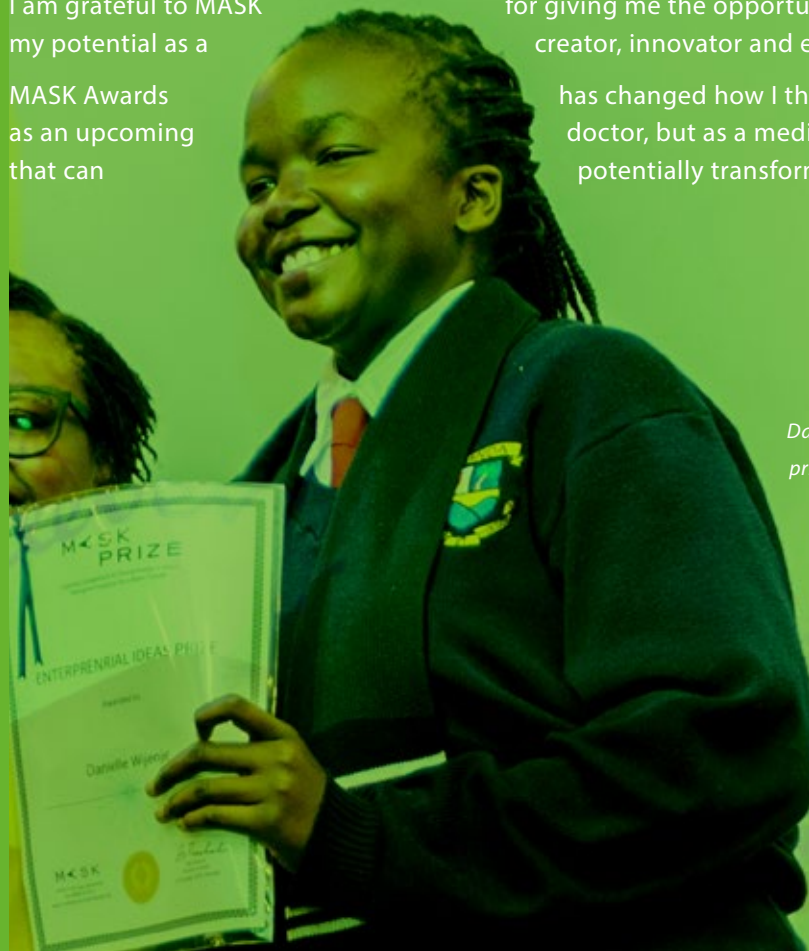
I would like to share this message with my peers. I started from the bottom. I did not wait for a perfect moment to be creative. I just went for an opportunity. Because creativity activates and grows every time you use it. Creativity is the intelligence that has fun. And when it does, you innovate and make the world a better place; you lead and become successful.

I am grateful to MASK  
my potential as a

for giving me the opportunity and making me believe in  
creator, innovator and entrepreneur.

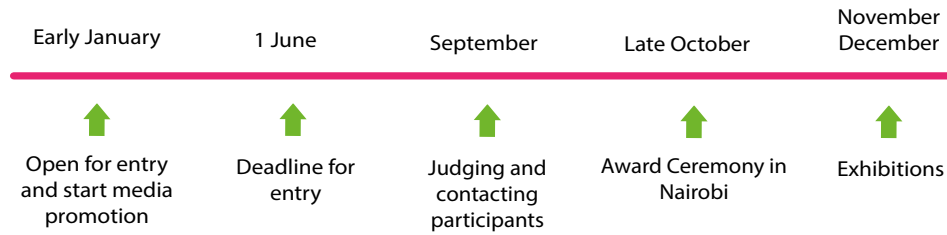
MASK Awards  
as an upcoming  
that can

has changed how I think. I see myself now not only  
doctor, but as a medical entrepreneur. I have ideas  
potentially transform the medical sector in Kenya."



*Danielle Wijenje, 18, receives her internship prize at MASK Awards 2019, Nairobi*

MASK Awards timeline



*"The MASK Awards experience is an absolute game-changer for my creative occupation."*

Agnes Mwandawiro, 21

Alan Rivers awards a prize to MASK Awards 2022 winner Felicity Mudis for her poem *The Revolution*



A group of students in school uniforms are working on a project at a table covered with various materials like paper, paint, and brushes. They are in a classroom setting with a chalkboard in the background. The entire image has a red color overlay.

“

*"... the ability to think creatively... is developed and nurtured through a creative education."*

Rick Haythornthwaite

*"Creative skills drive business transformation and growth and have a tangible impact on local communities."*

Professor Steven Spier

”



## 2. Creativity in Action Teachers Project (CATP)

Throughout, MASK has closely collaborated with the Kenyan government through consultations and quality assurance work. This collaboration had contributed to the recognition of 'creativity' as a 'core competence' in the Kenya's basic education curriculum in 2017.

In 2019 and 2022, the Kenyan Ministry of Education (KMoE) requested MASK's support in developing a teaching-training framework and teaching materials based on our model and expertise.

Following discussions with KMoE, the Kenyan Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), and the Teachers Service Commission - Kenya (TSC), we initiated CATP.

CATP will achieve its objectives through two stages:

Stage 1:

1. Writing the material (reference books and teachers manuals).
2. Consulting with end-users such as students, teachers, tutors, and the above agencies to ensure the materials meet the needs of the Kenyan Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC).
3. Accrediting the material by the KICD for distribution in schools.

Stage 2.

1. Publishing the material for dissemination.
2. Training 150 tutors from 30 teacher-training colleges and 50 TSC staff members, coordinated and monitored by TSC.

CATP's potential long-term impact includes:

- scaling up MASK's work by distributing the materials to Kenyan schools (28,000 primary school in Kenya in total );
- utilising the materials in the East Africa Community (EAC) as EAC adopts the Kenyan CBC approach;
- increasing MASK's sustainability by training teacher-training tutors (potentially benefiting 12,000 graduates annually) and the TSC staff;
- influencing the teacher-training curriculum and school inspection manuals in Kenya.



## 2. MASK Artists and Innovators

The MASK Artists and MASK Innovators are online platforms. They support our young beneficiaries in strengthening their creativity through art and innovations.

MASK Artists platform: <https://maskcreate.org/MASK-Artists/>:

1. Promotes 'The Artist of the Month'.
2. Organises art exhibitions, both online and physical.
3. Builds a collective of artists (currently it has 63 artists).
4. Offers accessible 'Resources for Artists' to help develop professional art practices. These include documents, advice and templates, such as how to write artist statement, CV and exhibition history, prepare an art portfolio, and price works of art.
5. Our social media promotes 'Art of the Week' and the 'Resources'.

MASK Innovators: <https://maskcreate.org/MASK-Innovators/>:

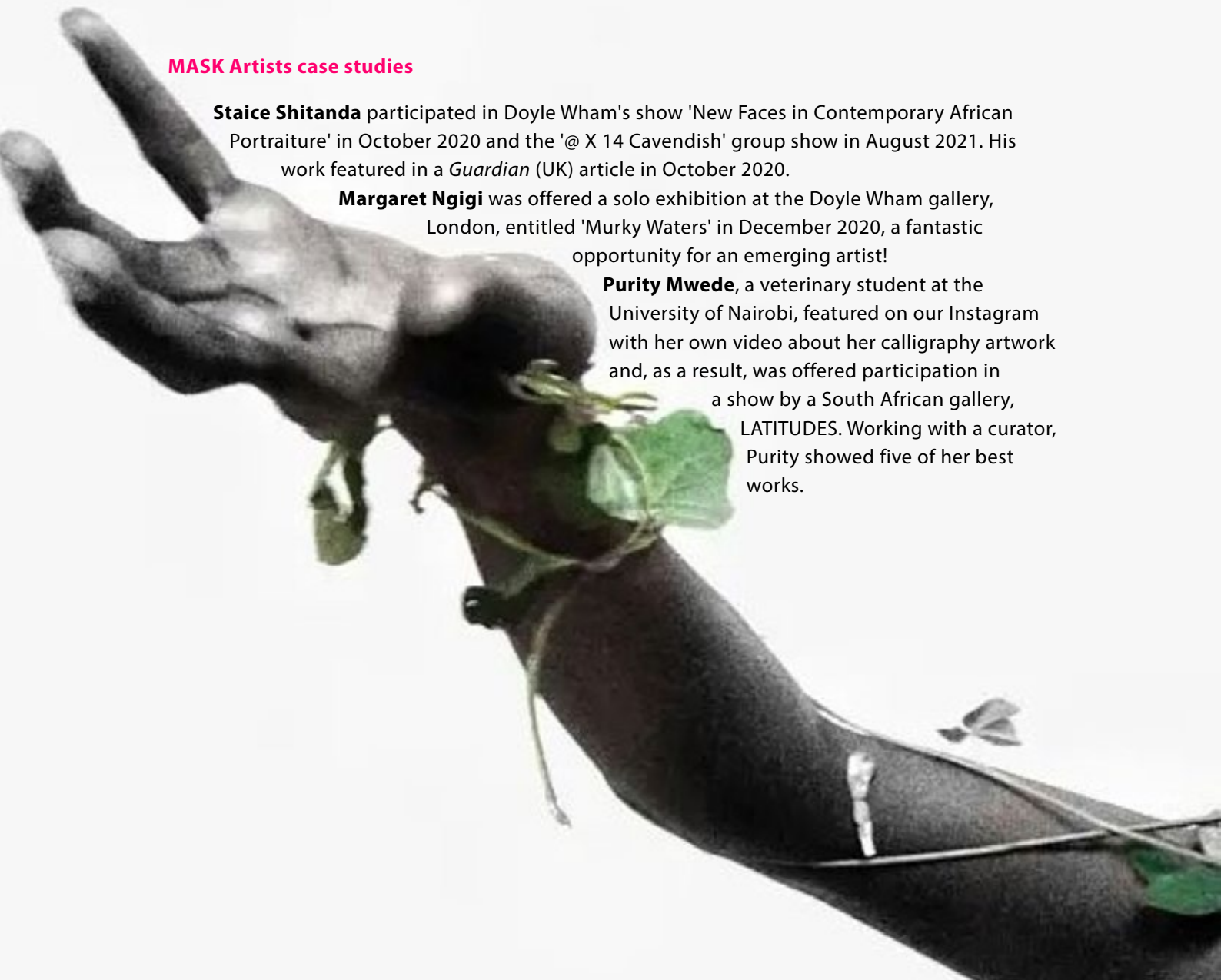
1. Helps our youth to become business and social innovators, entrepreneurs and leaders, and realise their creativity on practice.
2. Builds a database of young innovators that enters MASK Awards with their innovation to connect them with employers (currently it has over 200 individuals).
3. Our social media promotes our innovators' stories and ideas weekly.

### MASK Artists case studies

**Staice Shitanda** participated in Doyle Wham's show 'New Faces in Contemporary African Portraiture' in October 2020 and the '@ X 14 Cavendish' group show in August 2021. His work featured in a *Guardian* (UK) article in October 2020.

**Margaret Ngigi** was offered a solo exhibition at the Doyle Wham gallery, London, entitled 'Murky Waters' in December 2020, a fantastic opportunity for an emerging artist!

**Purity Mwede**, a veterinary student at the University of Nairobi, featured on our Instagram with her own video about her calligraphy artwork and, as a result, was offered participation in a show by a South African gallery, LATITUDES. Working with a curator, Purity showed five of her best works.



## MASK's other online resources

### Press articles

We have published education articles in specialist and national press, such as:

- Newspapers: *The Star* and *The Standard* (Kenya);
- Magazines: *Childhood Education: Innovations* (USA); *AD* (National Society for Education in Art and Design, NSEAD, UK); *Private Sector* (Kenya Private Sector Alliance, KEPSA, Kenya);
- Blogs: Results for Development Institute (USA); Royal Society for Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (UK);
- Web podcasts: The US Library of Congress (USA);
- Reports: for the UNESCO IIEP and UNESCO KNC conferences.

The articles are usually grouped into these themes:

- 'What is creativity?' Articles about the nature of creativity and what it means to be creative.
- 'Art for creativity'. Articles about the essential role of the arts in creativity learning.
- 'Creativity and society'. Articles about the positive outcomes for society.
- 'Creativity and business'. Articles about the role of creativity in the workplace.
- 'Young people – the creative nation'. Articles that promote our young people as role models.

*Image by our artist Amos Kibet*



## Case study: Joel

**“Before I started with MASK I did not know I was creative. MASK helped me to become an entrepreneur and a leader and to think outside the box.”**

Joel joined our Creativity Club at his school in a remote Kenyan village when he was 16 and stayed with us for three years. At the very first workshop Joel surprised both himself and us. Having painted a great picture, he exclaimed in disbelief, “I did not know I could do this!” Inspired by his unlocked talent, Joel soon became actively involved in the running of the Club. In fact, due to him, the Club became almost entirely student-run.

In 2010 Joel attended the MASK Creativity Camp, which encourages students to continue learning creativity after they have left school. Campers received a masterclass from renowned Kenyan artist, Kivuthi Mbuno, and attended an exhibition at the Nairobi Gallery. Attendees got to meet the Kenyan Minister for Culture, William Ole Ntimama, and his Culture Director, Gladys Gatheru, and discuss the need to practise art in school. Some time later, we received an email from Joel telling us that he had painted a mural in Nairobi, and had been commissioned by a local restaurateur to paint murals in his establishments. With the money he made, Joel rented a room outside Nairobi where he gave local children free art lessons.

Joel eventually had to go back to his village to look after his mother. “When I returned to the village, I noticed an unused borehole and land that belonged to a school. I offered the school’s headteacher to start a vegetable farm on the land where pupils could learn farming, the vegetables could be sold to the school for lunches, and the money raised used to take the children to the Nairobi Museum.” The headteacher agreed and began paying Joel a small salary. Joel wrote: “People would be more creative if they took risks.”

Joel also began teaching art to the children at the school. But he began by teaching the parents first: “I gathered the parents to tell them about the goodness of art. It is important to explain to parents how art, and the creativity that art develops, improve their children’s chances.”

Over the years, Joel started several small businesses, including a gym and a motorbike delivery. He faced many obstacles along the way, but he is resilient and persistent. His persistence paid off. His village elders invited him to their meeting and asked him for ‘good ideas’ on how to improve the community. This is a rare privilege, as young people are excluded from such meetings, often making them feel unvalued, and voiceless. Joel felt empowered and engaged: “I am respected now! I feel I make a difference.”

In 2012, Joel represented MASK at UNESCO’s International Institute of Educational Planning (IIEP) ‘Planning With Youth’ policy forum in Paris. From a podium, he spoke to a conference of 200 people from around the world. The forum’s organizing committee wrote: “Joel put an important issue on the agenda in terms of the role of creativity and art in education. It was great to see how Joel interacted with policymakers and academics to get his point across.”

“Creativity keeps my mind, spirit and emotions always engaged,” says Joel.

For more inspiration, read [MASK Stories](#) on our website.





### Case study: Hellen

Our students have gone on to become high-performing employees at top global companies such as Unilever. Be inspired by Hellen's story.

**"MASK developed my habit for innovation and empowered me beyond my dreams."**

Hellen attended MASK training at her school in a remote village in Kenya for three years. After finishing school, Hellen became a MASK volunteer, running a Creativity Club at a local school for deaf children.

Continuing her education, Hellen studied analytical chemistry at college, where she invented a new drug that her college intends to patent. After graduating, Hellen secured a job at a pharmaceutical company in Nairobi and, within months, was promoted to a supervisory role "to lead an all-male team that has been at the company for ages", aged only 22. She credits her success to creativity: "Coming to the job, I suggested more effective ways of doing things and got noticed."

Shortly after, Hellen moved to a large company where she was responsible for the design of new analytical procedures. In her spare time she bought some land where she tries out some of her agricultural innovations. Because, she says, "MASK developed in me a habit of innovation."

A few years ago, Hellen secured a job with Unilever in Nairobi after a highly competitive recruitment process with over 200 candidates. She explained that, "80% of the questions asked by the interviewers were about problem-solving. They wanted to know how candidates approach it." When offering the role to Hellen, Unilever's Human Resources Manager noted that she stood out for her 'creative attitude'.

Hellen is now confident about her future.





## MASK's School of the Future

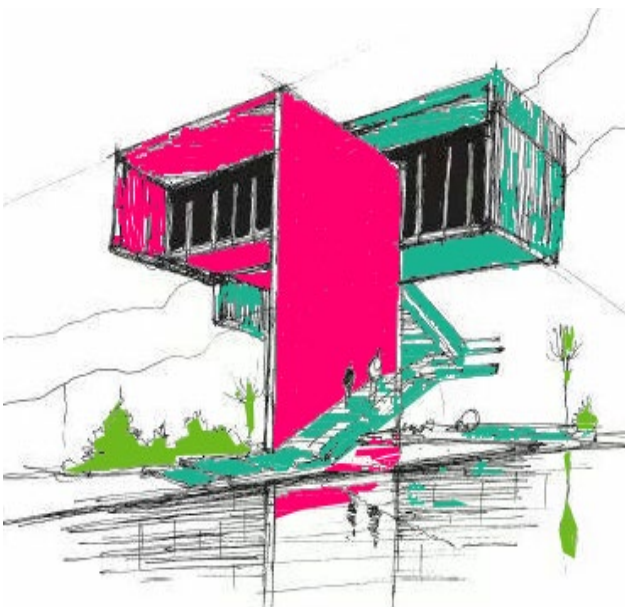
In line with Kenya Vision 2030, there is a call for 'centres of excellence for skills development' to revolutionize the education system in Kenya and beyond.

To envision the future, we tasked our young beneficiaries with conceptualising the School of the Future, a hub providing year-round access to creativity education for all.

The School of the Future should encompass:

- A spacious exhibition/conference area for art and innovation showcases and seminars.
- Dedicated art and innovation training studios.
- An inviting outdoor café accompanied by a sculpture garden for networking opportunities.
- Offices and multiple artist and innovator residencies.
- A garage to accommodate 'artmobiles' for delivering training sessions in local schools.
- Comprehensive training programs tailored for young people, communities, and educators.
- Establishment of partnerships with international organizations (aligned with Global Goal 11.4).
- Commitment to elevating educational standards in Kenya and beyond (Global Goal 4).

The School of the Future must inhabit an inspirational structure to ignite the aspirations of future generations. Here are some envisioned designs for the Hub crafted by MASK's young talents from Kenya, David Mwai, 23, Leonard Kimathi, 21, Derrick Shitote, 24, and Mike Blake, 22.



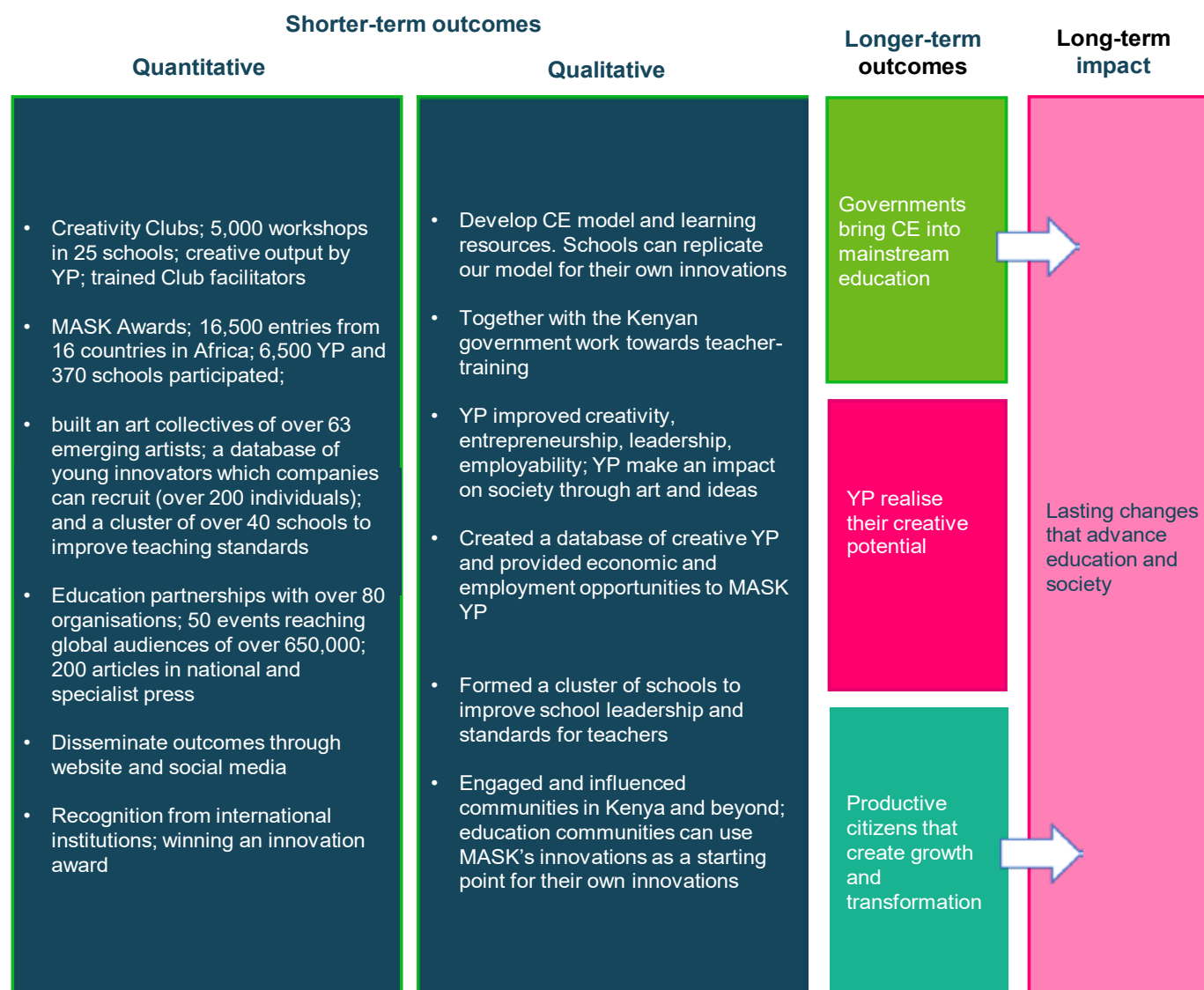
Above: MASK 'artmobile' to deliver training in schools



## Public benefit

MASK helps embed creativity in mainstream education and broader society. MASK's outcomes have the potential to revolutionise education and pave the way for a brighter future.







## Transformation - MASK's greatest achievements

MASK has achieved the following quantitative and qualitative outcomes.

### Quantitative outcomes – MASK has:

- 
- run Creativity Clubs in 25 schools in Kenya and over 5,000 workshops; directly benefited 15,000 children and young people (YP) and, indirectly, an estimated 90,000 (as direct beneficiaries pass on their skills to up to six others in their family or community); facilitated the creative output of 5,000 works by our schools; trained 60 Club facilitators;
  - pioneered international MASK Awards; awarded 350 cash prizes; received more than 15,500 entries from 15 countries in Africa; more than 6,000 YP and 370 schools participated; 48 schools received awards; MASK Awards' exhibitions reached over 650,000 people globally; its promotional campaigns in national media reached over nine million people in Kenya;
  - through MASK Awards, built an art collectives of over 63 emerging artists based in Africa; a database of young innovators which companies can recruit (over 200 individuals); and a cluster of over 40 schools to improve creativity teaching standards for teachers;
  - collaborated with over 80 organisations; held over 50 exhibitions (including 20 MASK Awards exhibitions), seminars and talks; and published over 200 articles in national and specialist press in Kenya, France, South Korea, UK and USA;
  - gained recognition from institutions such as UNESCO IIEP and UNESCO KNC, the Kenyan Government, Global Education Innovation Initiatives at Harvard University, Center for Education Innovations at the Results for Development, HundrED, SOAS University of London, The US Library of Congress, Woodrow Wilson Center, Saatchi Gallery, Turner Contemporary, and from Barack and Michelle Obama; and featured in academic dissertations<sup>1</sup>;
  - been awarded the 'Most Innovative Learning Organisation 2020' title by *SME News* (UK); 'Best Website' by TheGoodEstate, USA; become an Affiliate Member of InSEA.

### Qualitative outcomes – MASK has:

- 
- developed innovative Creativity Education Model; and a teacher-training framework;
  - through close collaboration with the Kenyan Ministry of Education, contributed to the government recognising creativity as a 'core competence' of basic education curriculum in 2017;
  - worked with the Teachers Service Commission-Kenya (TSC) to develop a teacher-training of tutors and TSC staff members based on MASK creativity education model;
  - improved YP's creativity, entrepreneurship and leadership; they became innovators, artists and entrepreneurs; they secured quality jobs at companies (such as Unilever and the Nyandarua National Polytechnic); they have made an impact on wider society: their art develops contemporary culture, and their ideas help to solve social and ecological challenges;
  - partnered with the business community in Kenya through articles in *Private Sector* magazine, Kenya, and MASK Awards internships (at Unilever's Heroes for Change);
  - engaged and influenced communities in Kenya and beyond through media outputs and exhibitions.

### Our long-term outcomes:

- governments bring creativity into mainstream education;
- younger generations realise their creative potential and a new era of prosperity;
- creativity is embedded in broader cultural and socio-economic systems.

Our **long-term impact**: Lasting changes that advance education and society.

<sup>1</sup> Including 'The impact of art education in the developing world: a case study of an NGO in Kenya' by B. Glen, Institute of Education, University of London, 2011.



## Sustainability

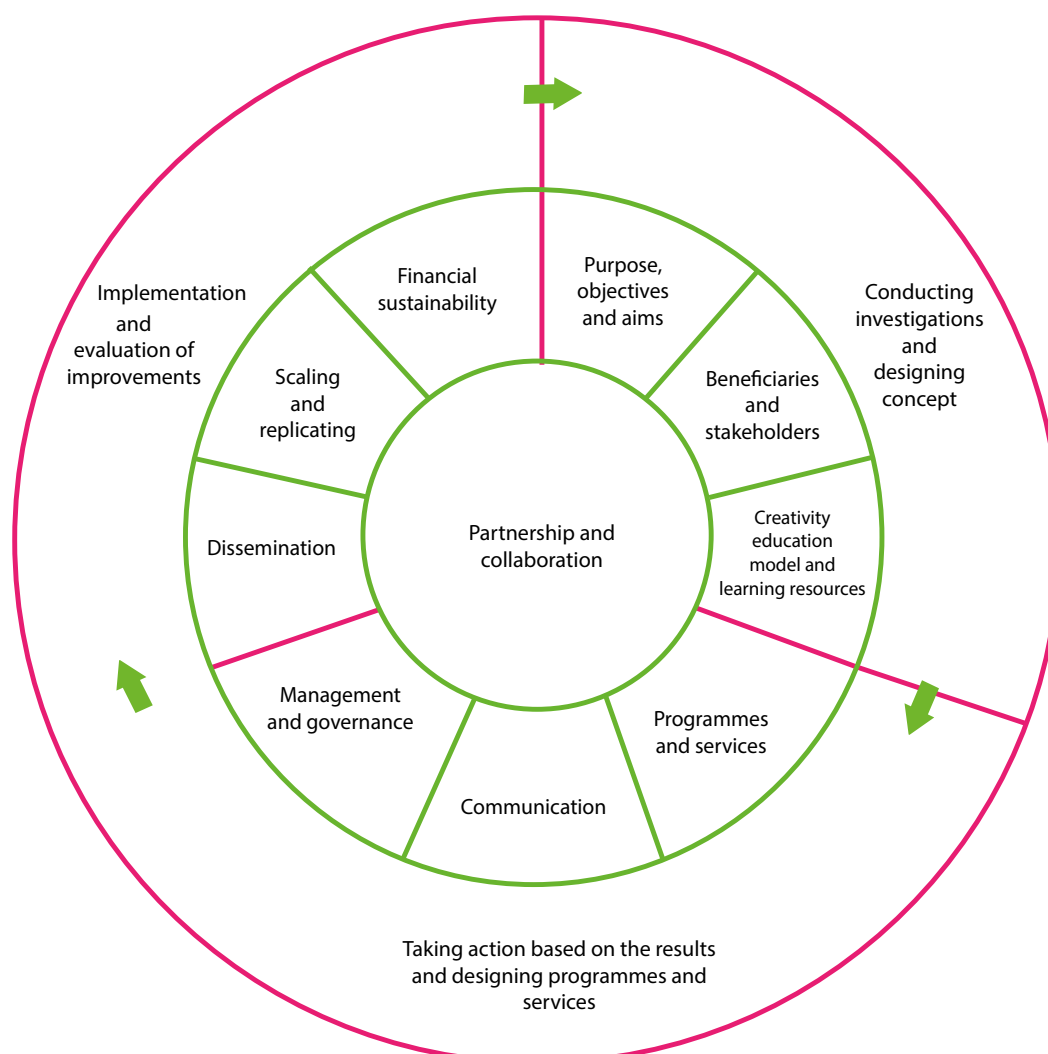
### Business model

Our business model is 'creativity and collaboration'. Since 2007, we have collaborated with over 80 organisations in Kenya, UK, USA, France and South Korea to reach beneficiaries, deliver and scale up our programmes and opportunities, increase organisational capacity, and ensure our financial sustainability, transparency and accountability. Collaborations include:

- governmental organisations;
- press and media;
- learning institutions, such as schools, universities and galleries/museums;
- companies;
- volunteers; t
- trusts and foundations.

The table in the APPENDICES details MASK's main partnerships.

The MASK business model diagram below describes how we create and deliver our value.



## Scaling and replicating

MASK's work has been successfully scaled up. We have demonstrated our potential to impact across Africa and beyond. Having begun our work in a remote village in Kenya, we have now reached beneficiaries in 15 countries in Africa, as well as the UK, USA, France and South Korea.

In the next five years we will focus on these main priority areas:

1. Expand MASK Awards worldwide.
2. Produce learning and teaching materials, disseminate them to schools in Kenya and upskill teachers (CATP).

The diagram below summarises our priorities, partnerships and expected outcomes.



## Wider impact

### Global Goals for Sustainable Development

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development challenges can be resolved only if the next generation of YP can come up with new solutions. MASK's work in embedding creativity within mainstream education contributes to the Global Goals agenda. Goal 4 ('Quality Education') which states that education should 'unlock the imagination' clearly aligns with MASK's vision and existing methods. [Find out more on our website: https://maskcreate.org/about/mask-global-goals](https://maskcreate.org/about/mask-global-goals)

### Kenya

Kenya Vision 2030 aspires to transform Kenya into a newly industrialising, middle-income country providing a high quality of life to all its citizens. Kenya, by launching the Competence Based Curriculum in 2017, which is firmly rooted in creativity, has a real chance of succeeding in this Vision.

### UK

In the UK in 2013, the new National Curriculum put knowledge at the centre of schooling (and replaced the pupil-led ways of working with a teacher-centred educational culture), arguing that 'shared knowledge is the best way to achieve social justice in society', and 'a knowledge-rich education is a driver of true meritocracy'.

The Government has clarified that a knowledge-rich curriculum considers the development of human creativity and appreciation of the arts a vital goal. In the Houses of Parliament in 2017 School Standards Minister Nick Gibbs said, in his speech titled 'The importance of knowledge-based education', and quoting Hywel Jones of West London Free School: "We believe that independence of mind, not compliance with socio-economic expectations, is the goal of a good education."

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the Department for Education recommended developing 'programmes that celebrate each young person's creative achievements' and 'provide training and development for teachers'.

*Nicole Riziki, Flying from all my worries, photograph*



## Achievement and performance, 2022-23

### MASK Awards

The number of MASK Awards entries tripled last year, from 1,600 in 2021 to 5,000 in 2022. Amongst the entries were over 4,000 artworks, 250 videos, 140 poems and more than 200 innovative ideas.

The number of participating schools increased almost six-fold, from 24 schools in 2021 to 131 schools in 2022; these included 20 universities and colleges in Kenya.

In 2022, the Awards reached 58 Kenyan regions, as well as 11 other countries on the African continent: Cameroon, Congo, Ethiopia, Malawi, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

We reach participants through our promotional media campaigns facilitated by our partners, the national Kenyan newspaper *The Star*, Citizen TV and Hot 96 (exclusive TV and radio partners).

The judges declared the standard 'amazing'.

Cash prizes totalling 300,000 Ksh were provided by our partners: Rivers Foundation (UK), The Linbury Trust (UK), The Nobility Project (USA); and Mabati Rolling Mills (Kenya). An Internship Prize – a 3-month fully-paid job placement – was supported by the Heroes for Change, a social leadership programme of Unilever – East Africa.

A School Prize was awarded to three schools: Light International School Primary in Nairobi, Children in Freedom School, Nakuru, and the Children of God Relief Institute in Nairobi.

Art Prizes were awarded to these young artists: Lourine Ochieng, Risper Omongo, Baraka Joseph Mutukua, Ian Banja and Felicity Mudis, all from Kenya. The Judges' Prize was shared by Jonathan Songolo from Congo and Baraka Shamia from Kenya.

The Innovation Prize went to a sociology student, Wendy Moraa, for her vision of a 'School of the Future'.

The MASK Awards Ceremony took place at the Kenyan Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) of the Ministry of Education in Nairobi on 15 October 2022. The Ceremony was opened by Dr Samuel Obudho who officially represented the Director of the KICD, Professor Charles Ong'ondo. Dr Obudho said: "The government's vision is to nurture talents and we share this vision with MASK. MASK has been highly successful nationwide in supporting young creativity and imagination, a core curriculum competence in Kenya. It is because of MASK we can celebrate your creativity here today."

Margaret Lesuuda, a Deputy Director at the Kenyan Ministry of Education, joined the ceremony via Zoom and said: "At the Ministry of Education we remain committed to supporting MASK that empowers our youth." Mrs Lesuuda is an old friend of MASK. She opened several MASK exhibitions in London in 2013-16 while working as Education Attaché at the Kenyan High Commission.

The ceremony was hosted by Jeff Koinange, leading Kenyan broadcaster. Alan Rivers, the Rivers Foundation Founder and a long-standing supporter of MASK, travelled from London to award prizes.

A specially produced film, 'Create Through the Ryes of Danielle Wijenje' was shown at the prize-giving ceremony. Danielle won the MASK Awards Internship award in 2019. She spoke at the event about the impact the MASK Awards had on her life.

Alla Tkachuk gave an interview about MASK Awards on the Citizen's leading life programme, 'Daybreak', on 14 October. The ceremony was highlighted in *The Star* newspaper on 19 October.



## **MASK Art**

We have:

- continued to build a list of MASK Awards artists we represent;
- continued to mentor our artists to build their portfolios;
- continued to promote our artists and their work on our social media;
- curated a second edition of the exhibition 'Early 21st century young African artists'; the press release can be found here: [https://maskcreate.org/art-gallery/early21yaa\\_press-release](https://maskcreate.org/art-gallery/early21yaa_press-release);
- planned two more shows: 'Africa: Black and White', a collection of drawings, graphic works and photography; and 'African Political Art', a series of paintings that represent socio-political statements in 2023-25;
- continued looking for galleries to partner with or host our exhibitions.

## **MASK Innovators**

We began promoting our MASK Awards innovators. In 2021 and 2022 we received more than 500 ideas, out of which we shortlisted 56, based on the challenges that we set:

- 'School of the Future'. We asked entrants to imagine a new type of education that empowers young people for life in the 21st century;
- 'Young Entrepreneur'. We asked young people to consider entrepreneurship as a career option to overcome the dire state of youth unemployment in Africa and to create their own opportunities;
- 'Environmental Activist'. We asked competitors to think of innovative ways that humanity can preserve the planet for future generations.

Our ambassadors, former participants and volunteers interviewed our innovators, producing reels and articles that we promote on our social media and bring to the attention of the Kenyan Ministry of Youth, Sports and the Arts and the Kenya National Innovation Agency.

The 2022 winner of the MASK Awards Innovation Prize, Wendy Moraa, is currently undergoing the internship at Heroes for Change that she won, and we feature her weekly updates on our Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/maskcreativity>

## **Other achievements this year**

### *MASK Ambassadors*

We have continued building and training our ambassadors. The team meets weekly online, run our social media, plans the next MASK Awards ceremony and a Youtube show promoting MASK talents.

### *MASK teaching and learning resources*

We have continued to develop CATP materials in consultation with KMoE, KICD and TSC. In October and November 2022 we held several work meetings with KICD to discuss the needs of a reference book and a teachers' manual that we have been developing.



## Financial review

### Financial review

Against the backdrop of limited resources and insecurities over funding, it has continued to be difficult to plan or develop services. Nevertheless, MASK with the aid of sound financial support and management generated a positive financial outcome for the period with a net increase in funds of £2,556.

Income: **£21,517,**

Expenditure: **£18,961**

In-kind donations worth: **£152,560.**

### Principal funding sources

Trusts and Foundations:

The Linbury Trust, UK, £3,500 (2021/22 £3,000)

Rivers Foundation, UK, £10,000 (2021/22 £9,000)

The Nobility Project, USA, £2,661.84 (2021/22 2,415)

Companies:

Mabati Rolling Mills, Kenya, 850,000 Ksh (£5,326) (2021/22 £4,892)

Other:

Personal donations, £0 (2021/22 £2,570)

### Reserves policy

The Trustees have examined requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the charity. It has established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be between three and six months of the expenditure. Budgeted expenditure for 2022/23 is estimated at £50,000 and therefore the target is £25,000 in general funds. The reserves are needed to meet the working capital requirements of the charity and the Trustees are confident that at this level they would be able to continue the current activities in the event of a significant drop in funding and the present level of reserves available to the charity therefore meets this target level.

### Future plans

The charity plans to continue the objectives and activities outlined above in the forthcoming year subject to satisfactory funding arrangements.

## Structure, governance and management

MASK's governance model ensures we are transparent and accountable to all stakeholders. This chapter details all aspects of the governance model.

### Governing document

MASK is a UK charitable company limited by guarantee. It was incorporated on 28 January 2008 and registered as a charity on 23 March 2009. It was established under a Memorandum of Association, which lists its objects and powers, and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the charity being wound up, members are required to contribute £1.

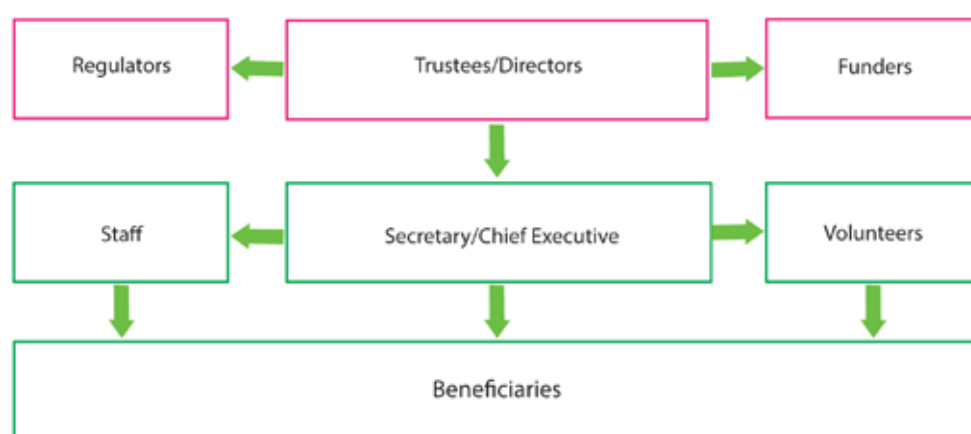
## Governance structure

The Trustees serve as the governing body responsible for overseeing the charity's operations, strategic direction, and policies. They ensure adherence to the charity's mission as outlined in its governing document, submit reports to regulatory bodies, foster staff development while maintaining clear boundaries to prevent conflicts of interest, and cultivate income streams and partnerships.

Membership within the charity consists of the Trustees and one non-governing member, the Secretary/Chief Executive. With the exception of the Chairman of the meeting, who holds a casting vote, each member is granted one vote on every issue.

Strategic and operational leadership of the charity is entrusted to the Secretary/Chief Executive. Their responsibilities include defining strategic objectives, ensuring the delivery of services aligns with key performance indicators, overseeing day-to-day operational management and the supervision of staff and volunteers, and providing guidance to the Trustees when pivotal decisions arise

The diagram below shows MASK's governance structure:



## Appointment of Trustees

All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits (financial or otherwise) from the charity. MASK seeks to ensure that the group of Trustees is diverse and reflects a wide range of skills. All new Trustees must familiarise themselves with the charity and the context within which it operates, which includes:

- The governing documents which set out the operational framework for the charity, including the Memorandum and Articles;
- The obligations of Trustees (The Charity Commission publication "The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do");
- The MASK Code of Conduct for Trustees, and organisational policies (Data Protection, Privacy, IP, Confidentiality, Expenses, etc);
- Resourcing and the current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts;
- Future plans and objectives (Theory of Change, Public Benefit, Strategic Plan, Business Plan, Impact Report).

**Safeguarding.** The charity obtains a standard DBS check on all trustees, employees and volunteers who are in roles that are eligible for these checks.

## **Related parties**

In so far as it is complementary to the charity's objects, the charity is guided by the national policies of the countries in which it operates.

## **Risk management**

The Trustees have conducted a review of the major risks the charity is exposed to. A risk register has been created and is updated annually. Where appropriate, procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. External risks to funding have led to the development of a Strategic Plan to diversify MASK's range of funding and activities. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of authorisation procedures. There are no current legal or regulatory threats to the charity.

## **Financial controls**

The charity has appropriate financial controls in place which are reviewed annually to ensure that they are up to date and effective. The Trustees have reviewed the financial controls during the financial reporting period and are satisfied that the charity's risk management policies and procedures adequately covered activities and spending outside England and Wales.

## **Reference and administrative details**

Registered Company Number 06484985 (UK Companies House)

Registered Charity Number 1128734 (The UK Charity Commission)

The charity is registered for Gift Aid with HMRC Gift Aid number: XT17874

Registered Office: 3A Alderney Street, London, SW1V 4ES, UK

Website: [maskcreate.org](https://maskcreate.org)

### **Trustees**

Mr T J Dann BA(Hons.) FRSA (Chair)

Prof J H Gruzelier

Mr B K Wambui

### **Secretary/Chief Executive**

Ms A Tkachuk MSc FRSA

### **Independent Examiner**

Ms M E Ryan FCCA Chartered Certified Accountant, Ark Accountancy, 31 Cheam Road, Epsom, Surrey, KT17 1QX, UK

### **Team**

Six volunteer-staff based in the UK

14 MASK Ambassadors based in Africa

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on 8 May 2023 and signed on its behalf by  
T J Dann – Chair



## Independent Examiner's Report

### Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of MASK Create (MASK) ('the Company')

I report to the charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 January 2023.

### Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's Trustees of the Company (and also its Directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

### Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Mary E Ryan  
ACCA  
Ark Accountancy  
Chartered Certified Accountant  
31 Cheam Road  
Epsom  
Surrey  
KT17 1QX  
UK

Date: 12 April 2023

## Statements of financial activities

	Notes	31.1.23 Unrestricted funds £	31.1.22 Total funds £
<b>Income and endowments from</b>			
Donations and legacies		21,488	21,899
Investment income	2	29	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>21,517</b>	<b>21,899</b>
<b>Expenditure on</b>			
Charitable activities			
Programmes		18,961	7,084
<b>Net Income</b>		<b>2,556</b>	<b>14,815</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>			
Total funds brought forward		41,031	26,216
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>43,587</b>	<b>41,031</b>

## Balance Sheet

On 31 January 2023

	Notes	31.1.23 Unrestricted funds £	31.1.22 Total funds £
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash at Bank		43,587	41,031
<b>Net current assets</b>		<b>43,587</b>	<b>41,031</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<b>43,587</b>	<b>41,031</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>43,587</b>	<b>41,031</b>
<b>Funds</b>	6		
Unrestricted funds		43,587	41,031
<b>Total funds</b>		<b>43,587</b>	<b>41,031</b>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 January 2023.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 January 2023 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 8 May 2023 and were signed on its behalf by T J Dann – Chair.

## Notes to the financial statements

### 1. Accounting policies

#### Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019); Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

#### Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

#### Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

#### Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

#### Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees. Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes. Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

#### Donated goods

Donated goods are measured at fair value (the amount for which the asset could be exchanged) unless impractical to do so.

### 2. Investment income

	31.1.22 £	31.1.21 £
Deposit account interest	29	-

### 3. Trustees' remuneration and benefits

There were no Trustees' remuneration, expenses, or other benefits for the year ended 31 January 2023 nor for the year ended 31 January 2022.

#### 4. Comparatives for the statement of financial activities

	Unrestricted funds £
Income and endowments from	
Donations and legacies	21,899
Investment income	
Total	
Expenditure on	
Charitable activities	
Programmes	7,084
Net Income	14,815
Reconciliation of funds	
Total funds brought forward	26,216
Total funds carried forward	41,031

#### 5. Donated goods, facilities and services

	2023 £	2022 £
Seconded staff members	42,000	33,000
Use of property	110,000	1,200
Other	560	500
Total	152,560	34,700

#### 6. Movement in funds

	At 1.2.22 £	Net movement in funds	At 31.1.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	41,031	2,556	43,587
Total funds	41,031	2,556	43,587

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Income resources	Resources expended	Movement in funds
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	21,517	(18,961)	2,556
Total funds	21,517	(18,961)	2,556

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.2.21 £	Net movement in funds	At 31.1.22 £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	26,216	14,815	41,031
Total funds	26,216	14,815	41,031

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Income resources	Resources expended	Movement in funds
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	21,899	(7,084)	14,815
Total funds	21,899	(7,084)	14,815

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.2.21 £	Net movement in funds	At 31.1.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	26,216	17,371	43,587
Total funds	26,216	17,371	43,587

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movements in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	43,416	(26,045)	17,371
Total funds	43,416	(26,045)	17,371

#### 7. Related party disclosures

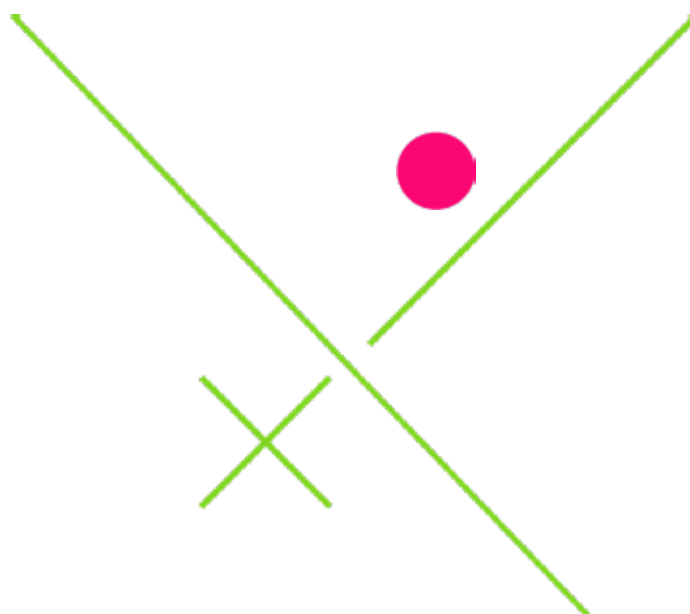
Donations in kind were received from the company secretary of £30,000 in the year (2021/22 £34,700), from Volunteers £12,000 (2021/22 £nil), from *The Star* advertising space £54,000 (2021/22 £nil), for Citizen TV and Hot 96 Radio £56,000 (2021/22 £nil) and from Heroes for Change £560 (2021/22 £nil).



## Detailed statement of financial activities

*This statement does not form part of the statutory financial statements*

	31.1.23 £	21.1.22 £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS</b>		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	21,488	21,899
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	29	-
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	21,517	21,899
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Charitable activities		
Postage & stationery	7	48
Communication	1,318	428
Sundries	48	56
Programmes	11,223	552
Bank charges/exchange diffs	(353)	25
Consultancy	6,318	5,625
	-----	-----
	18,561	6,734
<b>Support costs</b>		
Governance costs		
Independent examination	400	350
<b>Total resources expended</b>	18,961	7,084
Net income	2,556	14,815

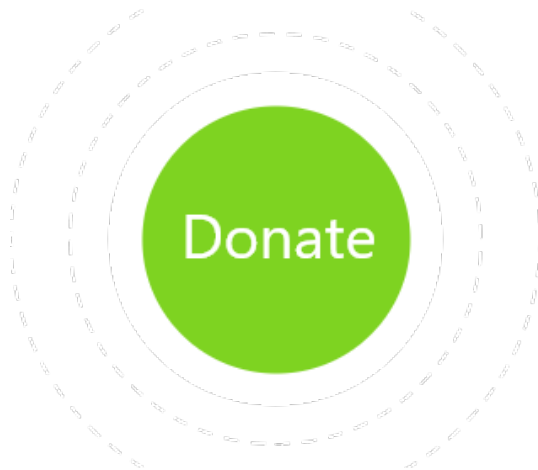


## How you can support MASK

MASK is a UK registered charity (No 1128734). In our work we rely on donations of funding, time and resources. Please continue to support MASK and help us to advance the education of young people and communities.

You can make cash donations on [MASK Total Giving page - https://www.totalgiving.co.uk/donate/mobile-art-school-in-kenya](https://www.totalgiving.co.uk/donate/mobile-art-school-in-kenya) - to support:

- MASK Awards cash prizes. We hope to increase the total cash prize to 1 million Ksh (£7,000);
- production of learning and teaching manuals;
- Creativity Hub in Nairobi, or an 'artmobile' for our school outreach in Kenya.
- If you represent a company, please make us a part of your Corporate Social Responsibility policy; or let us use your space to hold exhibitions;
- Follow us on social media and help spread the word. MASK is on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).



## Acknowledgements

MASK Trustees extend a warm thank you our ambassadors in Africa; our UK volunteers Irog Olarou, Cheryl Lanyon, Guna Freivalde, Purity Mwede, Matthew Dewhirst, and many others; our MASK Awards judges; and the following organisations that gave us their financial and in-kind support which has enabled us to do our work:

Rivers Foundation (UK)  
 The Linbury Trust (UK)  
 The Nobility Project (USA)  
 Citizen TV and Hot 96 Radio (Kenya)  
*The Star* (Kenya)  
 Mabati Rolling Mills (Kenya)



## Appendices

This table details MASK's main partnerships.

	PARTNERSHIP										
	Kenya										
Kenyan schools	<p>We collaborated with these Kenyan schools in Sipili, Naivasha, Giglil, Narok, Samburu, and Amboseli. They provided rooms and teachers for our workshops and exhibitions:</p> <p>           Baawa Nursery School            Bishop Githirwa Secondary School            Bishop Ndingi Secondary School            Eburru Secondary School            Elkong Narok Inchurra Primary School            GG School for Mentally Challenged Children            Green Park Nursery            Hanne Howard Trust            Kaharati Primary School            Kekopey School            Kio Primary School            Kio Secondary School            Kongoni Primary School            Lake Naivasha High School            Lariak Day Secondary School            Lariak Primary School            Makutano Primary School            Mirera Primary School            Mirera Secondary School            Naivasha Children's Shelter            Naivasha Safe House            Naivasha Unity School            Rubiri Primary School            Shining Stars Primary School            Shompole Primary School            Sipili Secondary School            Sipili School for the Deaf            Soysambu Primary School            Unity Primary School            Young Roses Primary School         </p> <p><b>Exhibitions:</b></p> <table> <tr> <td>January–February 2006</td><td>December 2008</td></tr> <tr> <td>January–February 2007</td><td>March 2009</td></tr> <tr> <td>January–March 2008</td><td>March 2010</td></tr> <tr> <td>August 2008</td><td>June 2015</td></tr> <tr> <td>October 2008</td><td>July 2016</td></tr> </table>	January–February 2006	December 2008	January–February 2007	March 2009	January–March 2008	March 2010	August 2008	June 2015	October 2008	July 2016
January–February 2006	December 2008										
January–February 2007	March 2009										
January–March 2008	March 2010										
August 2008	June 2015										
October 2008	July 2016										





*MASK workshops at schools*



*MASK first art exhibition in a Masai village in Narok*





*MASK walking exhibition in Naivasha*

District Education Authorities

The collaboration with the Ngarua Division Education Officer, West Laikipia, and the Naivasha District Education Office, Naivasha, led to authorisation letters, school introductions, and provided quality assurance for MASK's school activities. MASK participated in the West Laikipia Education Day in 2008 and 2009, and delivered talks to community leaders and teachers.








*Alla Tkachuk addresses community leaders and teachers at the West Laikipia Sipili Zone Education Day*





<p>Local NGO Centre for Conflict Resolution-Kenya (CCRK)</p>	 <p>Mask exhibition on the walls of the CCRK office in Sipili, West Laikipia</p> <p>This collaboration was key at the early stage of our work. It provided MASK with resources, information and know-how that helped us to deliver training to schoolchildren and communities in Samburu, West Laikipia and West Pokot. It led to a number of local exhibitions and partnerships with schools, authorities and media.</p>
<p>The Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>The Embassies of Kenya in Paris and Washington DC, and The Kenya High Commission in London</p>	<p>The collaborations facilitated MASK exhibitions at the High Commission in London in 2008, and the Embassy in France in 2010. The Education Attaché of the Kenya High Commission in London, Margaret Lesuuda, opened the exhibitions at the Saatchi Gallery and ROSL in London in 2013 and 2014. A further collaboration with the Embassy in Washington DC and the Woodrow Wilson Center resulted in a seminar at WWC in 2011, opened by the First Secretary of the Embassy.</p>   <p>Ambassador the Hon. Elkanah Odenbo opens the exhibition at the Embassy of Kenya in Paris in 2010</p>
<p>The Ministry of Education (KMoE)</p>	 <p>Senior Assistant Director of Quality Assurance of the KMoE, Mr Majani Alex Tom, opens the ceremony and awards a prize in 2017</p> <p>MASK closely collaborates with the Ministry of Education (KMoE). The KMoE authorised MASK's work and promoted it to KICD and TSC. In 2017 and 2019, KMoE Senior Assistant Director of Quality Assurance, Mr Majani Alex Tom, and the Regional Director of Education – Nairobi, Mr Obiero Jarred, officially opened MASK Awards as representatives of the Cabinet Secretary and Permanent Secretary of the KMoE.</p>
<p>The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD)</p>	<p>MASK has collaborated with KICD since 2007. Together with the KICD Director General, the Director of the Creative Arts, Dr Jennifer Wambugu, and the Director of Science, we discussed the importance and nature of CE and the role of the arts; the 'Creative Arts' examination; and using arts as part of peacebuilding in schools, all of which were implemented in a number of schools. We also organised displays at various KICD events. Dr Jennifer Wambugu is one of our MASK Awards judges.</p>
<p>The Teachers Service Commission Kenya (TSC)</p>	<p>We have been collaborating on production of a tutor manual and training.</p>
<p>School of Art and Design at Nairobi University</p>	<p>SAD and MASK collaborated on organising the MASK Awards prize ceremony at the University in 2014. Alla Tkachuk also gave two training workshops for SAD students in 2015</p> <p>'You gave us an amazing talk on creativity that made me rethink my whole strategy on how I approach my work.' Brian Jangima, student at SAD.</p>













	 <p><i>Student workshops at SAD</i></p>  <p><i>MASK and SAD lecturers discussion</i></p>
Maasai community in Amboseli National Park	 <p><i>Alla's tent in a Maasai village in Amboseli</i></p>  <p><i>Art workshop with Maasai ladies</i></p>  <p><i>Creating Maasai contemporary art</i></p>  <p><i>Building art gallery/shop with the community in 2010-11</i></p>
The Nairobi National Museum	<p>This partnership facilitated a MASK Awards exhibition of more than 700 artworks in 2013. As well as the venue, the Museum provided technical support and promotional assistance.</p>     <p><i>First row: MASK Awards exhibition at Nairobi National Museum. Second row: (left) winners James Kungu, Margarita Onyango and Jaini Hitesh Shan with UK High Commissioner; (right) Founder of Rivers Foundation, Alan Rivers, with students of Children of God Relief Institute Art Club</i></p>

<p>Rahimullah Museum of Modern Art (RAMOMA)</p>	 <p>Exhibition at RAMOMA</p>	<p>The Museum organised a large retrospective exhibition of MASK's works in 2010. It was well attended by the public and MASK students, who travelled from their villages to see it.</p>
<p>The Ministry for Culture and Heritage</p>	 <p>The Hon William Ole Ntimama; Director of Culture, Gladys Gatheru; Alla Tkachuk and MASK students</p>	<p>The collaboration led to a meeting between MASK students and the Minister William Ole Ntimama in 2011 where students presented their works and discussed the need for creativity education through art in Kenyan schools.</p>
<p>The British High Commission in Nairobi</p>	<p>The Commissioner, Dr C. Turner, opened the MASK Awards 2013 prize-giving ceremony at Nairobi National Museum in 2013.</p>	
<p>The Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Kenya</p>	 <p>MASK exhibition at the Embassy; MASK Director is interviewed for the Kenyan Television Network</p>	
<p>The American Chamber of Commerce, Kenya</p>	<p>MASK gave a talk on the link between CE in schools and economic growth for the members of the Chamber in Nairobi in 2013.</p>	
<p>NTV Kenyan national TV channel</p>	 <p>MASK Director interviewed by NTV</p>	<p>MASK was invited by NTV to speak about art and creativity in Kenya on NTV Live in 2011.</p>
<p>A community in West Pokot</p>	 <p>Carting art supplies up dusty tracks in Kenya</p>	<p>The community facilitated MASK workshops in the community in 2009.</p>

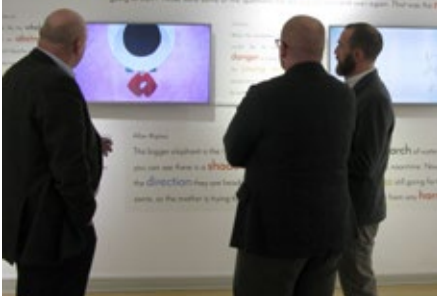






<p>Kenyan Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) and the <i>Private Sector</i> magazine</p>	<p>MASK organised a talk for KEPSA staff members in 2014 and published six articles in their <i>Private Sector</i> magazine. 'Thank you for the great presentation on Innovation and Creativity. It was a very insightful reflection and we all benefited from it. Look forward to continued collaboration.' Ehud Gachugu, KEPSA.</p> <p><i>MASK workshop at KEPSA</i></p>	
<p>Unilever East Africa and its social mobilisation programme Heroes for Change</p>	<p>Collaborating with Unilever, we secured two internships for MASK Awards winners in 2019. The CEO of Unilever's Heroes for Change awarded the prizes.</p> <p><i>The CEO of Unilever's Heroes for Change presents award to John Gift, 20</i></p>	
<p>Mabati Rolling Mills</p>	<p>Our partnership with MRM has provided vital funding for our programmes for the last four years. In 2021, they donated six three-month, fully paid internships for MASK Awards winners.</p>	
<p>The Royal Media Services (Citizen TV, Hot 96 radio, Viusasa TV)</p> <p>Radio Africa Group (the national newspaper <i>The Star</i>)</p>	<p>These decade-long productive partnerships help promote MASK programmes and opportunities to a large number of YP, teachers and the public across 58 regions of Kenya and beyond. <i>The Star</i> and Citizen TV offer MASK free advertising space worth over £100,000 annually.</p> <p><i>MASK Awards advert in The Star, Citizen TV, and Radio Hot 96</i></p>	
<p>Dr Manu Chandaria MBE and the Chandaria Foundation</p>	<p>Dr Manu Chandaria MBE, Africa's leading industrialist and philanthropist and MASK supporter, opened our MASK Awards ceremony at Nairobi University in 2014, introduced MASK to KMoE and other key Kenyan institutions, and made donations.</p> <p><i>Dr Manu Chandaria awards prizes to Ben Vic, winner of a music prize, and to Rubiry Primary School</i></p>	



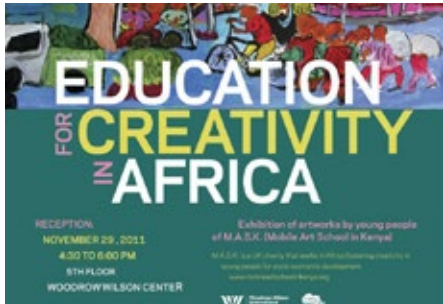



<p>The Parliament of Kenya</p>	<p>Member of Parliament the Hon. Steve Kariuki opened the MASK Awards ceremony in 2015. In his opening remarks the MP told the audience of children, their parents and teachers that creativity empowers young people.</p>  <p><i>The Hon. Steve Kariuki and MASK Awards winner Alan Kipto, 4</i></p>
<p>Michael Joseph Centre at Safaricom</p>	<p>This partnership ensured free venues for MASK Awards prize ceremonies and exhibitions from 2015 to 2019.</p>   <p><i>The view of the stage at the MASK Awards 2019 ceremony</i></p>
<p>Volunteers</p>	<p>Dr Francis Appolos, Teresia Ngina, John Ngumo, Watson Mwangi, Mutisya Raymond and Elsardt Kigen; 54 MASK Ambassadors; and many more.</p>  <p><i>MASK Ambassadors at MASK annual meeting in Nairobi in 2019</i></p>




	United Kingdom	
<p>The Centre of African Studies at SOAS, University of London</p> <p>Institute of Education, University of London</p>	<p>Collaborated with the Centre of African Studies and Institute of Education on a seminar 'Art Education in Kenya', held at Brunei Gallery on 10 March 2011.</p> <p>Speakers were: Alla Tkachuk, Donald Maingi (Birkbeck College), Mercy Kagia (Kingston University), Dr Nicholas Addison (Institute of Education). The Chair was Professor Chege Githiora (SOAS).</p>	 <p><i>Image of the seminar</i></p>
<p>The Saatchi Gallery</p>	<p>Collaborated with the Saatchi Gallery's Education Department and organised eight MASK exhibitions from 2011–19, including the highly acclaimed 'Early 21st Century Young African Artists' show in December 2018-January 2019.</p> <p>The exhibitions were opened by celebrated artists Michael Craig-Martin and Ibrahim El-Salahi, and Saatchi's Directors of Education. They were visited by an estimated 720,000 people.</p>	  <p><i>MASK's 'Early 21st Century Young African Artists' exhibition was attended by Sotheby's Director of African Art, Hannah O'Leary; Vice-Chair of the African Centre, Oba Nsugbe QC; Founder of ArtLabAfrica; collector Robert Devereux; and the Education Director of Saatchi Gallery, Nadine Wright</i></p> 
<p>Turner Contemporary, Margate</p>	<p>In partnership with the gallery, MASK organised three exhibitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MASK exhibition in 2016;</li> <li>• 'Every Day is a New Day' group show. MASK exhibited alongside Phyllida Barlow and Michael Armitage and the Turner Contemporary's art competition 'Portfolio' in 2017;</li> <li>• 'All Art Should be Social Art', a five-year retrospective exhibition in 2018.</li> </ul>	 <p><i>'Every Day is a New Day' show</i></p>  <p><i>MASK's 5-year retrospective exhibitions at Turner Contemporary</i></p>








<p>University for the Creative Arts (UCA)</p>	 <p><i>Vice Chancellor of UCA, Professor Simon Ofield-Kerr, at the Private View</i></p> <p>Communicating through online blogs, eight MASK artists and eight UCA computer animation graduates produced a series of animated paintings.</p>	<p>The blogs, paintings and animations were exhibited at the 'Transformation/ Mabadiliko' show at the Zandra Rhodes Gallery in 2016. This exchange gave our YP the opportunity to work with UK young artists, collaborate in online space, and create new cutting-edge pieces of art. For MASK, this was an opportunity to integrate ICT into our CE practice. Terry Perk, MA Curatorial Practice, and his students curated our Saatchi Gallery show in 2017. Brian Johnson, Leader at MA Design Innovation and Brand Management, and student Yujia Huo facilitated the design of our new logo.</p>
<p>University of the Arts London</p>		<p>This collaboration helped MASK develop a virtual interactive exhibition of our retrospective show at Turner Contemporary to give a more meaningful experience to our YP in Africa. The collaboration was facilitated by Sophia Phoca, Dean of Art at Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon Colleges, and MA Collection student Jie Qiu.</p>
<p>The National Gallery</p>	<p>Collaborated on our advocacy project, 'The Great WALK of Art', in 2015–16.</p> <p data-kind="ghost"></p>	
<p>Doyle Wham Gallery Afrikan Gallery The Viewing Room</p>	<p>Collaborated on five exhibitions of MASK artists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Visual Tapestry'. Group art exhibition, including MASK artists Louis Nderi, Margaret Ngigi, and Staice Shitanda, 20 July to 7 August 2020 at Afrikan Gallery.</li> <li>• 'Murky Waters'. Solo art exhibition by Margaret Ngigi, London, November to December 2020, and 'New Faces in Contemporary African Portraiture'. Group show with Staice Shitanda, October 2020, at Doyle Wham Gallery.</li> </ul>	
<p>Rivers Foundation</p>	<p>This partnership has been crucial to the establishment of MASK Awards, MASK's success, and the lives of our YP. The Founder Alan Rivers supports the MASK Awards cash prizes and travels to Kenya to open its prize-giving ceremonies. "MASK does an important job in showing young people the joy of creativity," he commented.</p> <div>   </div> <p><i>Alan Rivers awards prizes to winners at MASK Awards 2018, Nairobi</i></p>	
<p>The Linbury Trust</p>		<p>This partnership lies at the foundation of MASK. The generous support by Lord and Lady Sainsbury has been pivotal to MASK's success.</p> <p><i>Lady Anya Sainsbury and Alla Tkachuk at MASK exhibition at Saatchi Gallery in London, 2013</i></p>



<p>The Royal Overseas League (ROSL)</p>	<p>Together with the ROSL, MASK organised three exhibitions in 2013, 2014 and 2015, including 'Incognito' at ROSL. The exhibitions were opened by the Kenyan Education Attaché, Margaret Lesuada, and the Founder of the 1:54 African Art Fair, Touria El Glaoui. ROSL's magazine <i>Overseas</i> featured articles about MASK and used an image by one of our artists for its cover.</p> <div data-bbox="477 367 920 665">  </div> <div data-bbox="935 367 1377 665">  </div> <p><i>The Attache Margaret Lesuada, Director of ROSL Roddy Porter, and Director of 1:54 Touria El Glaoui</i></p>
	<p>United States</p>
<p>Woodrow Wilson Center (WWC)</p>	<p>MASK, WWC, and the Kenyan Embassy in the USA organised an exhibition and a seminar called 'Creativity Education in Africa' in 2011. The exhibition was opened by the Director of African Programmes, Steve MacDonald, and the First Secretary of the Embassy, Nairimas Ole-Sein.</p> <div data-bbox="477 983 920 1285">  </div> <div data-bbox="935 983 1377 1285">  </div> <p><i>Poster and a display in the seminar</i></p>
<p>The African Division of the US Library of Congress, Washington DC</p>	<p>Collaborated with the African Division to present MASK Awards in 2013 and 2014. "MASK is a fantastic programme. The level of creativity and the standard of the artworks submitted to the MASK Awards by Kenyan children and youth is very high." Eve Ferguson, Director of African Division.</p> <p><i>MASK Director presents at the Library of Congress</i></p> <div data-bbox="935 1337 1377 1641">  </div>
<p>The Embassy of the Republic of Kenya in Washington DC</p>	<p>The collaboration helped to engage and present MASK work to the Kenya Desk at the US State Department, and to the Special Assistant to the President on Africa, Grant Harris, at the White House in 2013. We gifted the President paintings by MASK students and received a thank-you letter from Michelle and Barack Obama that said, 'We are looking forward to working together.'</p> <p><i>Michelle and Barack Obama letter to MASK</i></p> <div data-bbox="935 1662 1377 2067">  </div>

<p>Graduate School of Education and Human Development, George Washington University (GWU)</p>	<p>The collaboration facilitated MASK's talk 'MASK: engaging creativity for human development' in 2013. "When creativity is placed at the centre of education and personal, organisational and societal development, growth and effectiveness follow. Neglecting creativity leads to a stunting of human development. MASK's model can be a model for education reform that can meet today's socio-economic challenges." Alla Tkachuk.</p>  <p><i>MASK's talk at the GWU</i></p> <p>'Dear Alla, a special thank you for the very lovely presentation at George Washington Graduate School of Education and Human Development. The role and use of creativity in education settings for children and youth is a most interesting and important policy and practice topic. We are very grateful to have had the opportunity to learn more about the role of MASK in Kenya as demonstrated by the incredible stories you shared about the developing and ongoing work.' Maxine B. Freund, Associate Dean for Research and External Relations.</p>
<p>The Smithsonian Folklife Festival</p>	 <p>In 2014, Alla Tkachuk and the Curator at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife, Preston Scott, presented a workshop discussing the nature of creativity. At the workshop, Mongolian and Kenyan musicians improvised together connecting their compositions into new musical ideas.</p>
<p>The Nobility Project</p>	<p>The Nobility Project is a non-profit organisation based in Austin, Texas, USA, which was founded by Turk and Christy Pipkin in 2006, while producing their film Nobility. Turk and Christy were building infrastructure in schools in Kenya when they came across MASK and contacted us. They subsequently met our Director and offered their support. Since 2014 they have been funding the MASK Awards School Prize, opening our award ceremonies and encouraging our YP and educators. The partnership has improved the lives of our beneficiaries across Kenya and beyond.</p>  <p><i>Turk Pipkin presents prizes to MASK Awards 2019 winners at Michael Joseph Center in 2019</i></p>
<p>Global Education Elite, San Diego</p>	<p>Through this collaboration on the online seminars: 'UN Sustainable Development Goals: Quality Education' and 'UN Sustainable Development Goals: Gender Equity' in 2021, our YP had a chance to develop their voices and leadership skills.</p>

	South Korea
UNESCO, Korean National Commission (KNC)	<p>The MASK Director presented MASK's report 'MASK: creativity education is a driving force of sustainable development' at the 2014 UNESCO (KNC) 'International Forum on Development Cooperation in the Field of Culture' in Seoul in October 2014.</p> <p>"I have been involved in many development projects throughout the world. What you have done in Kenya is very important for development to stimulate people's creativity." Professor of International Economics, Won-Gyu Hwang, Gangneung-Wonju National University.</p>  <p><i>The speakers at the conference</i></p>
	France
UNESCO IIEP	UNESCO IIEP (International Institute of Educational Planning) Summer School in Paris hosted MASK's peace-building exhibition in 2009.
UNESCO	<p>The MASK Director and MASK student Joe Gathua presented MASK's report 'MASK: engaging young people for development through creativity education' at the IIEP Policy Forum 'Engaging Youth in Planning Education for Social Transformation' at UNESCO HQ, Paris, in October 2012, and organised a MASK exhibition at the Forum.</p>   <p><i>The Permanent Secretary, the Minister of the Kenyan Ministry of Youth Affairs, and MASK Director at UNESCO Policy Forum; MASK exhibition at UNESCO HQ main conference hall</i></p>
The Embassy of the Republic of Kenya in Paris, France	<p>MASK and the Embassy exhibited MASK students' work at the Embassy in 2010. It was opened by the Ambassador, the Hon. Elkanah Odembo.</p>   <p><i>MASK students exhibit their works at the Githirwa School in Kenya</i></p> <p><i>Exhibition of MASK students' work at the Embassy</i></p>





## Contact

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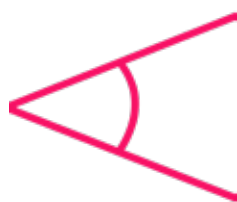
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Art shapes creativity  
 Creativity shapes innovation  
 Innovation shapes the world