

Connecting Classrooms : Kenya

In 2015 four Crofting Connections schools in Scotland including Kinlochbervie High School formed a partnership with four NECOFA schools in the Eastern Rift Valley in Kenya.

A key focus for this initial project was learning outdoors about soils, water, compost, crops, seasons, using the harvest; finding out about what pupils can learn from each other about gardening in very different climatic conditions.

I was able to visit our high school's partnership school (Sachangwan) and whilst there visit a feeder primary school (Nguzu). During the visit we discussed a partnership between our schools that would extend to the primary sector.

In 2017 we applied for British Council Connecting Classroom funding which involved our high school and primary schools of Durness, Kinlochbervie and Scourie.

The funding allowed two HS teachers and two primary teachers to visit our Kenyan partnership schools in February 2018.

While there we spent time in the schools working on environmental projects and in the primary schools working on mental maths games.

As a follow up project we chose the Global Goal on Gender Equality. The target group for this project was 9-14 year olds. The project aimed to promote the teaching of citizenship by providing our learners with the opportunity to understand the importance of equal rights, develop a feeling of belonging and help to develop skills that will bring about positive change.

We shared learning through drama, music and poetry- all via videos on WhatsApp.

This year we have been granted further funding through the British Councils Connecting Classroom cluster application. A key part of this round of funding is reciprocal visits.

In April we hosted a visit from four Kenyan teachers. The visit involved spending time in all our cluster schools from early years to the high school. We included an evening programme hosted by a different village each evening ; including a sports night, Scottish dancing and music evening . This opened up the project to our three communities.

Our current project explores the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The main elements have been learning about rights, learning for rights and learning through rights. We have agreed on this project with our Kenyan partners.

Through our continued partnership we have established a professional relationship between our school communities.

It has helped us to establish an international teaching community where teachers and pupils are working together across age and stages. We aim to build a strong relationship between our partner schools which seeks to create supportive and reflective dialogue.

In October four of our teachers visited our partnership schools again. They spent time in both schools teaching and observing lessons.

Moving forward :

- We will be applying for further funding from the British Council Connecting Classrooms programme in June 2020. To do this we need to partner with another school cluster.
- We have met with Paul Galletly from Outlook Expeditions to discuss a student trip (S4 upwards) for Oct 2021. This is one option and we have others to look into next.
- Lion's Den- This will be a *Dragon's Den* style apprentice challenge to develop a small scale business with Sachangwan students.
- Connecting Cultures : Student group to start in Jan 2020
- Learn Swahili- Starting in February, a 6 week evening course (open to S4 upwards, parents, teachers, members of the community.)

Katy Lee

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North West Sutherland Schools Group

Desired Outcomes for Connecting Classrooms Kenya for our NWSS

- Through global citizenship education empower young people to be active citizens, willing and able to contribute to the development of a fair, sustainable society, locally and globally.
- To develop skills that enable children and young people to participate in their communities, to think critically, to challenge discrimination and stereotyping and to value all human beings as equal.
- To join together two associated schools groups in Kenya and Scotland through a collaborative global citizenship projects.
- Through the context of the British Council core skills work together towards the development of a professional network to support teacher learning and practice in global citizenship.
- To further extend and embed the partnerships between NW Sutherland and Molo District, Nakuru County school communities.

