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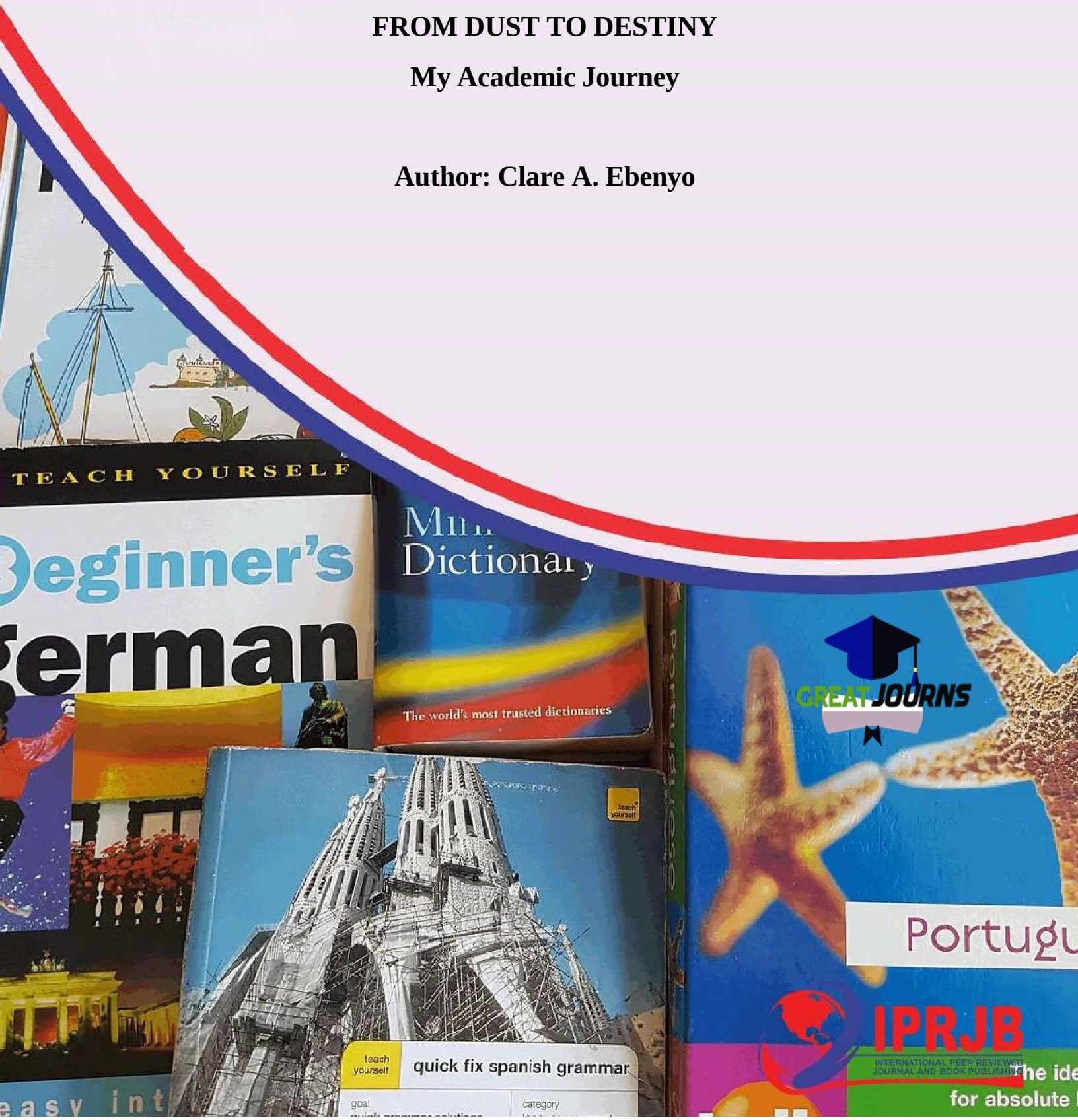
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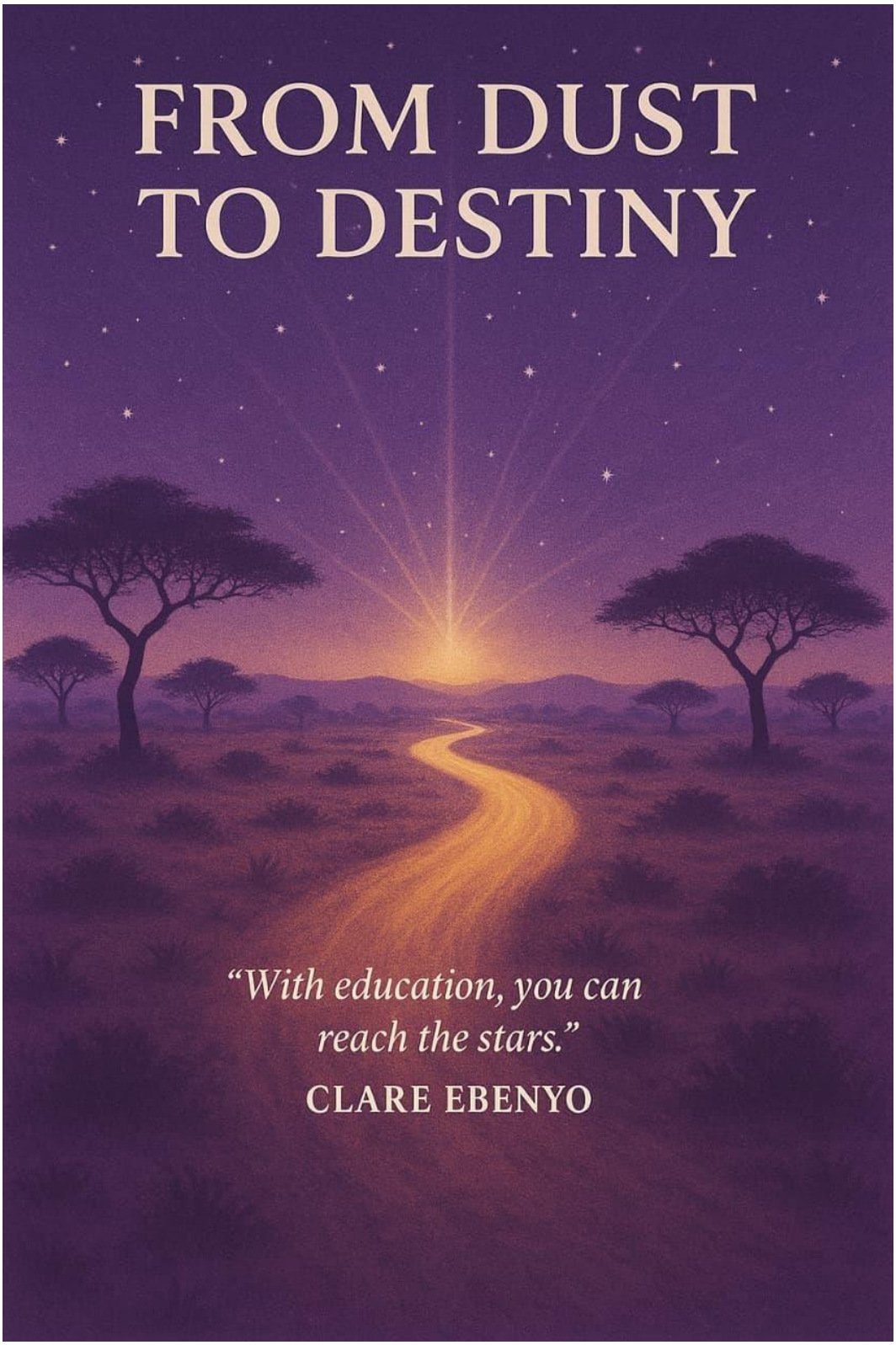
Vol.1 No.3, November 2025

FROM DUST TO DESTINY

My Academic Journey

Author: Clare A. Ebenyo




FROM DUST
TO DESTINY
"With education, you can
reach the stars."
CLARE EBENYO

TITLE:

Author: Clare A. Ebenyo

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DEDICATION

To my beloved parents,

Mr. and Mrs. Ebenyo,

who believed in education even when the journey was hard,

and taught me that discipline and faith were non-negotiable.

To My Dad,

Today,every achievement I make in academics

And beyond carries the fingerprints of your

Guidance,love and belief in my potential.

Thank you for being the light that led me ,

Through the classrooms of life.

Be,blessed Dad

To My Mother,

my first teacher, my role model,my discliplinarn,

your firm hand and guiding voice were never meant to break-

They were meant to build me.

Your tough love taught me that boundaries are a form of love,

And that discipline is a seed that blossoms into a purposeful life.

Today , I walk with confidence and your gentle prayers shaped my destiny.

Be blessed, Mum.

To my children,

biological and adopted—

you are my daily inspiration,
proof that love, leadership, and legacy live on.

To my love,

your encouragement, patience, and unwavering support have been the pillar that carried me through the writing of this book.

To my friends, students and every soul from a humble background,

you are not forgotten.

May you rise, learn, and lead with courage.

And above all,

To God,

the Author and Finisher of my faith

Thank You for carrying me from the dust to destiny.

Clare Ebenyo -

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This journey has never been mine alone.

I give all glory to God, my sustainer, protector, and provider the One who lifted me from humble beginnings and continues to write my story with grace.

To my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ebenyo thank you for raising me on a foundation of faith, discipline, and vision. You gave me the strength to dream and the courage to pursue it.

To my mum, my first teacher you lit the first candle. Your lessons followed me from nursery to leadership.

To my dear children thank you for giving me purpose beyond titles. You are my joy, my future, and my constant reminder to keep building.

To my siblings your support, prayers, and presence through each chapter of my life has made the journey lighter and brighter.

To all my teachers and mentors from Lokichar to Solian Girls, Moi University,Mount Kenya University to Kenya School of Government thank you for shaping my intellect and character.

To my former and current students you gave me a reason to teach with passion. Every essay, every insha, every poem, every performance you made the mission meaningful.

To my colleagues, Boards of Management, and leadership in education—your trust and partnership helped me grow into the leader I am today.To the Turkana community—thank you for embracing me, supporting my vision, and walking with me in mentorship and development.

To the many hands behind **CEMP, PAMOCES Ventures, and Clare Ebenyo Foundation**—this is your legacy too.

My love- thank you for your unwavering support and encouragement that made this book possible.

And to every girl and boy child who feels unseen, unheard, or unsure this book is for you. You matter. You are enough. Your destiny is valid.

With deep gratitude,

— Clare Ebenyo -

FOREWARD

Clare Ebenyo is an accomplished educator, mentor, poet, and transformational leader from Turkana County, Kenya. Born and raised in **Lokichar, Turkana South**, she is the second-born in a family of eight children. Grounded in Christian values and discipline, her educational journey began under the watchful eye of her mother her first teacher.

Clare is a graduate of **Moi University** with **a Bachelor of Education (Arts) in Kiswahili and History**. She also holds a Master's degree in Educational Planning, Management, and Administration, alongside professional certifications **in Computer Studies, Guidance & Counseling, Disaster Management, Senior Management, and Strategic Leadership from the Kenya School of Government.**

She has served as a teacher, Deputy Principal, and now proudly serves as Principal of AIC Kang'itit Girls Secondary School, an extra-county school in Turkana. Her leadership is distinguished by school transformation, academic excellence, and girl-child advocacy.

Clare is the founder of:

- **Clare Ebenyo Mentorship Program (CEMP)**
- **Clare Ebenyo Foundation**
- **PAMOCES Ventures Limited**

She is also a **KNEC Examiner, award-winning poet**, and **adjudicator for drama and music festivals.** Her Swahili **mashairi such as Watisapu, El Nino, Dijitali, and Twende Mbele Masomoni** have been performed across schools and regions in Kenya.

As **KESSHA** Chairperson for Turkana East, **KUPPET** Nominee, and active member of various county and regional committees, Clare continues to mentor, lead, and inspire.

Above all, she is a proud mother of two sons and guardian of two daughters, a woman of faith, and a believer that with education, you can reach the stars.

PREFACE

"Every step I took from the dusty roads of Turkana to the corridors of national leadership was guided by God, grace, and grit."

This book is not just about me, Clare Ebenyo. It is about every young girl and boy from a humble background,every reader with a dream, every student walking long distances for knowledge, every teacher planting seeds of greatness, and every woman breaking ceilings in leadership. It is a journey of hope, faith, and impact. May these pages inspire you to rise from your own dust and touch the stars.

INTRODUCTION

From Dust to Destiny

An inspiring journey of hope, resilience, and purpose

From Dust to Destiny: Arise and Shine is an uplifting and empowering memoir that tells the story of Clare Ebenyo, a determined woman who rose from **the dusty plains of Turkana to become a distinguished educator, mentor, and leader.** This motivational book captures the emotional, academic, and spiritual journey of a girl once overlooked who dared to dream, fought to rise, and chose to shine despite overwhelming odds.

It is more than just a personal story it is a call to every reader: you are not your past, you are your potential.

Themes Covered:

- Triumph over adversity
- The power of education
- Leadership from the ground up
- Faith and spiritual growth
- Empowering the girl child
- Finding purpose in pain
- Mentorship and giving back

Key Highlights:

From Dust:

A vivid recollection of Clare's humble beginnings growing up in hardship, facing challenges, yet holding onto hope.

The Turning Point:

Her breakthrough moments especially in school, faith, and mentorship showing how education and determination shaped her destiny.

The Climb:

From Solian Girls to university and beyond each academic and professional achievement unfolding against odds.

Leadership & Legacy:

Becoming a principal, a published poet, and founder of mentorship and community programs like **CEMP and PAMOCES Ventures.**

Arise and Shine:

A call to action to readers: no matter your starting point, you too can rise, lead, and live a life of purpose.

This book can be read by:

- Young girls facing hardship
- Women seeking motivation
- Professionals
- Educators and mentors
- Youth leaders and students
- Anyone who needs to believe in second chances and divine purpose

Purpose of the Book:

To inspire, educate, and empower others especially young girls and boys in marginalized regions to realize that destiny is not reserved for the privileged, but for the persistent. Through Clare's

honest, heartfelt storytelling, readers are encouraged to reflect on their own journeys, embrace their worth, and rise up to fulfill their God-given potential.

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Chapter One

Born of Dust: Dreaming Big

'Long before I took my first breath,God already knew my name ,my journey and my destiny.As Jeremiahb1:15 reminds me,Before I formed you in the womb I knew you;before you were born I set you apart.''

My life has been a testimony that no matter where you are born,Gods plan for your future will always prevail.

I was born in **Turkana County, Turkana South—Lokichar** to be specific—the second born to **Mr. and Mrs. Ebenyo.** I come from a vibrant Christian family of eight children, raised on values of faith, discipline, and service. Sunday school wasn't optional—it was the foundation. Singing in the church choir was part of our spiritual growth. We were raised not just to survive but to stand out.

I was lucky to start **my academic journey under the care of my mother, a gifted teacher and a firm disciplinarian, together with Chief Josephine Akiru** . "Be blessed, Mum," I often say. Her early lessons were more than ABCs she sowed the first seeds of resilience in me.

My academic journey was diverse, with many transfers as my parents sought the **best education**. I moved from **Lokichar Mixed primary school to Jack and Jill primary school in Kitale**, where Dad wanted us **to polish our English** because of the **visitors** we often hosted. Later, I joined Lokichar Girls for Class Eight. I was a top performer Index 3 leading in different exams including Sirikwa Mock with 331 marks, becoming the first girl in the district in that exam.It was exciting and encouraging.

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My dad was a source of inspiration since **my childhood**. He kept encouraging me to work hard while in school. My performance encouraged him and he kept on reminding me that hard work pays. At **class eight**,he wanted the best from me to an extent of promising me that if **I perform well,he will take me to any school as per my KCPE results**. Through his actions, he taught me the value of **hard work, discipline, humility, and perseverance.** Even in difficult times at school, he remained steadfast, offering guidance with patience and love. He kept on encouraging my siblings and I to value **education for its fruits were sweet.**

At school, I loved languages. **Compositions and insha** came naturally to me. My confidence grew through poetry and performance. I remember reciting poems with fire and grace at regional competitions, taught by the likes **Mr. Mark Erot and Mr. Otita** teachers who didn't just teach, but transformed.

Even at that **young age**, I knew education would open doors no one else could close. My parents never doubted my potential. They didn't push me to change school when I was called to **Solian Girls** a provincial school outside the county. They simply said, **"Go shine."**

And shine, I did.

''There are no shortcuts to any place worth going''-Beverly Sills

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CHAPTER TWO

Battles in: silence, resilience and smile for the quench of education

‘’Success is not a destination,it’s a journey involving many thing’’

Leaving home for high school was a defining moment. I had never traveled that far before.My father was away ,seeking greener pastures for the family.He gave the responsibility to my mum after ensuring that the requirements for high have been catered for. My mother, determined and hopeful, took the journey with me to **Solian Girls High School** in **Koibatek District now Baringo County**. I was both excited and anxious, knowing this would be the beginning of a new life chapter.

Solian was not just another school it was an awakening. **The journey to report was humbling**. **We arrived with only half of the required school fees**. The pressure was immense; many parents were arriving fully equipped, while we came with hope and faith. Thanks to my uncle the District Commissioner of Koibatek and my mother's courage, I was admitted.

That first night, we slept at the **DC's residence**. The security personnel welcomed us warmly, a sign that God's hand was guiding us. The following day, after a brief stop in Nakuru, we reported to Solian Girls High school,in Eldama Ravine. I remember feeling slightly overwhelmed, but determined. **I had traveled too far from Lokichar to waste this opportunity,I must work work hard and utilize the opportunity.**

The truth is, **my background was humble**. Sometimes, pocket money wasn't enough. Shopping meant choosing between a bar of soap ,vaseline or a pair of socks. Communication with home was rare, and school life demanded more than I thought I could give. But I reminded myself daily: **You've come from far. You must go further.**

At Solian, I found my rhythm. I joined the Christian Union worship team, where my voice blended with others in praise. I was also the netball captain, and I enjoyed handball. My leadership began to emerge strong, visible, and consistent.

Academically, I stood out. I loved Kiswahili and History subjects taught passionately by Mr. and Mrs. Wanyonyi, who became mentors. I led discussions, inspired classmates, and wore my academic and leadership badges with pride. I was not just a student; I was a girl on a mission.

My time as a prefect dorm captain of Nyayo Dorm was tough but rewarding.At Solian, prefects were chosen based on academic merit and discipline. Leadership came with responsibility: we

were to inspire others by working hard in academics,maintain discipline, enforce school rules,promote cleanliness,ensure order,support welfare,coordinate activities and be role models. In return, we received gifts, motivational trips, and most importantly, the confidence to lead.

I still remember the gift I was given at the end of Form Four. It is proudly present to date at my parents' home, with my mother fondly saying, "**Hii ni zawadi ya Clare ya Solian Girls."**

It was at Solian that my dream to become an **educator and leader was solidified**. I realized that my purpose **was bigger than passing exams** it was about impact.

''Hard work pays and the best person will always be rewarded positively''

And when the **final bell rang and KCSE results** came out, I had done well. I received an admission letter to **Moi University**. The dream was alive.

But the journey was far from over.

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CHAPTER THREE

Books and Burning Candles: My academic climb

‘’Whatever your hand finds to do,do it with all your might…’’Ecclesiastes 9:10

Solian Girls High School **wasn’t just a stepping stone** it was the fire that refined me. It turned a determined village girl into a disciplined, confident leader. In the heart of **Koibatek, miles away from my roots in Turkana,** I found another home, another family, and another version of myself.

At Solian, I wasn’t just a student reality had to take place.

We were girls from all walks of life, gathered in one place with dreams bigger than our challenges. I realized early on that to stand out, I had to show up—not just physically, but mentally and spiritually. I did just that.

Faith at the Center

The Christian Union (CU) became my spiritual anchor. Worshiping in song and prayer wasn’t just routine it was a lifeline. I learned to trust God more deeply, to rely on Him when I missed home, when I had little to spend, and when classes got overwhelming. The CU helped build my

confidence as a speaker and singer. I could lead sessions, read the Word aloud, and speak life into others.Faith built my fire.

A Captain's Courage

Solian allowed me to stretch my wings not just in books but on the field too. As a netball captain and a handball player, I discovered the power of teamwork and discipline. Sports taught me something classrooms couldn't: that leadership means sweating with your team, lifting them up when they fall, and pushing them to believe in their strength.

Whether on court or in dorms, I carried myself with purpose. I knew where I was going.

Books, Badges & Boldness

Academically, I never took a back seat. Kiswahili, History and CRE were my favourite subjects, and I was fortunate to have excellent teachers like Mr. and Mrs. Wanyonyi, Mr. Tanui and other teachers. They nurtured not only my grades but my curiosity and courage. I became a leader in group discussions, a confident contributor in class, and a lover of God's word and analysis.

I remember walking with my tie full of badges symbols of discipline, excellence, and service. Every badge was a story, a reminder that I was becoming someone greater than my circumstances.

Leadership in the Making

Solian took leadership seriously, and so did I. My appointment as a dorm captain was based on performance and discipline. As a prefect, you had to shine inside and outside the classroom. I learned to balance firmness with fairness, to lead with empathy and strength.

We were not only recognized we were rewarded. Prefects were taken for motivational trips, given gifts, and encouraged to dream bigger. I still remember the parting gift I received at the end of Form Four. It was more than an object it was a gift of honor, a testament to years of commitment.

Today, it remains kept safe at my parents' home proof that even the daughter of a Turkana man could make her mark in Koibatek.

Preparing for What's Next

As Form Four approached, I knew the stakes were high. **I wasn't just studying for myself I was studying for every girl from a marginalized area,** every student whose parents had sacrificed to educate them, and for a future that demanded greatness from me.

The exams came and went, and I gave them my all. When the results were announced, I had made it. **Moi University** opened its doors to me. A bigger world awaited.

But before I left Solian, I looked back at everything **I had become a singer, a netball and hand captain, a prefect, a top student, a mentor, a servant leader.**

Solian had not just educated me it had transformed me.

And I was ready for the world.

CHAPTER FOUR

A Girl: Girl with a Voice and a Dream

‘Commit to the Lord whatever you do,and He will establish your plans’ Proverb 16:3

Moi University was a dream come true.

After years of **effort, prayer, and persistence**, I had finally earned my seat at a university—a place I had only imagined **growing up in Lokichar**. I walked onto that **campus** not just as a student, but as a young woman who knew the weight of the journey behind her, and the **promise of the future ahead**. I remember joining the university not accompanied by the parent during reporting. My dad had worked on the requirements on admission letter. Mine was to report and present myself to the institution as a first year student.I had always wished to pursue a course in Law ,but due to unavoidable circumstances ,I couldn't .Therefore,I opted for education instead.

My course of choice was a **Bachelor of Education Arts, majoring in Kiswahili and History**. It wasn't just academics that drove me it was a **passion**. These subjects had been my strength since high school, and now I was ready to shape minds with them. My dream of becoming a teacher, a mentor, and a voice of change was taking form.

Beyond the Lecture Hall

While others saw weekends as time to rest, I saw them as an opportunity to grow. I enrolled in computer classes and earned my certificate. I understood the power of digital knowledge long before it became a necessity. I also took on peer guiding and counseling, knowing I needed more than academic tools to reach young people I needed empathy, strategy, and psychological insight.

My weekends became mini-seminars of growth. Every extra course I took became a building block in my leadership journey. I wasn't just preparing for a career I was preparing for impact.

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A Campus Leader in the Making

Even in campus, leadership continued to pursue me—or perhaps I pursued it. I vied for leadership positions, not for popularity, but for service. I had seen what real leadership looked like. My upbringing, faith, and school experience had shaped me into a leader who could listen, inspire, and guide others.

At campus, I had great friends who were more than just classmates-they became my second family. We laughed, cried, studied and grew together. They challenged me to dream bigger, supported me during tough time, and made the journey unforgettable. Each of them brought something unique into my life: wisdom, humor, encouragement and love. Our group discussions, group projects, shared meals and spontaneous adventures created memories that still warm my heart. I'm forever grateful for the bond we built and the impact they had on my academic and personal growth.

Teaching Begins: The Seeds of Purpose

My teaching practice was at Goseta Boys High School in 2009. Stepping into the classroom for the first time felt natural almost like coming home. I stood before boys who looked up to me, listened to me, and grew under my guidance. That moment confirmed everything I had hoped for: this was my calling.

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My lessons were not just in the curriculum. I taught through story, song, poetry, and real-life wisdom. My students respected me, and I respected them. I saw the beauty of growth, the power of connection, and the miracle of influence.

I eventually completed my degree and proudly received my certificate in Education Arts. But my thirst for knowledge was still unquenched.

I pursued a **diploma** in **Disaster Management and successfully graduated**. I knew that being a teacher and leader in Kenya required me to be prepared for any crisis—from school fires to droughts to social unrest. Education, I believe must go hand in hand with preparedness and wisdom. Also **remembered coming from Turkana County**, a place that was prone to disasters and required experts with disaster management skills.

Every **certificate I earned was not just a paper** it was a reminder that I had overcome odds and kept moving forward. I was becoming the woman I had prayed to be.

From this chapter, Clare Ebenyo steps into her professional journey with both **strength and grace poised to transform education, one learner at a time.**

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CHAPTER FIVE

The Campus Climb: Pursuing my Dream

‘See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.’Revelation 3:8

The **gates of Moi University** had opened to me, but the real climb began the moment I stepped inside.

Campus life was **both liberating and demanding**. No one followed you around to tell you what to do you had to lead yourself. That was where my discipline, faith, and vision set me apart. I wasn't there just to study. I was there to rise.

Learning with Purpose

I immersed myself in **my Kiswahili and History studies**. These weren't just subjecting to me they were identity and culture. I saw in Kiswahili the rhythm of a people, the voice of a nation, the pride of heritage. In History, I saw patterns, **leadership, mistakes, and triumphs**.

I didn't read to pass exams; I read to understand society and how to change it.

Even in class, I was a leader. I contributed, I asked questions, I engaged deeply. Lecturers noticed me, not for noise, but for insight and clarity. I knew my path was education but not just in classrooms. I was preparing to lead in systems, to shape institutions.

Multiplying My Talents

While pursuing **my degree,** I didn't stop learning. I enrolled in:

Computer studies: I knew the digital world would shape the future. I wanted to be ready. I got my certificate and started helping others type, organize and format their work.

Peer Counseling and Guiding: I became a listener. A safe space. Many students faced issues—homesickness, relationships, stress and I was there to support, counsel, and pray with them.

Diploma in Disaster Management: I saw the need for leaders to understand crisis. Whether it was school unrest, drought, or trauma leaders must be prepared. I studied and earned my diploma.

While others were spending weekends unwinding, I was **rewiring my destiny.**

Voice of the Future

I participated in forums and student meetings. I used my voice, not to shout, but to shape. When I vied for student leadership, it was because I knew I could speak for others, especially young women from marginalized backgrounds like mine.

Graduation & New Beginnings

My graduation was a moment of deep pride. Not just for me, but for my parents who had walked this journey with me. I had become the first girl from our home to graduate from university—and not just graduate, but thrive.

Throughout my academic journey, I have held the truth of **Galatians 6:9-''Let us not become weary in doing good,for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give**

up''.This degree is the harvest of years of hard work,prayers and perseverance.To God be the Glory.''

I **walked out of Moi University** not just with a degree, but with purpose. I knew teaching was my calling, leadership was my path, and service was my heartbeat.

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Chapter Six

Stepping fully to the world: My Career Journey

‘’Whatever you do,work at it with all your heart,as working for the Lord,not for human masters,since you know that you will receive inheritance from the Lord as a reward.’’

After my graduation, it was time to step fully into the world I had been preparing for: **the classroom**. Armed with a degree, **a strong voice,** and a passion for education, I began sowing seeds that would bear fruit in countless young lives.

My first official station was Goseta Boys secondary school, where I had previously done my teaching practice. This time, I was no longer a trainee I was a full educator. The boys remembered me. I picked up **where I left off, building on the relationship, respect, and trust I had already established.**

Teaching With Impact

At Goseta, I did not just teach; I inspired. I poured **my energy into Kiswahili and History**, using real-life examples, storytelling, and poetry to make lessons come alive. I created an environment where students were not just cramming they were connecting with the content.

I also set **mashairi** that spoke to their world. My pieces like "**El Niño,**" **"Watisapu,"** and "**Dijitali"** became classroom favorites and festival masterpieces. My students didn't just recite themthey felt them.

Teaching wasn't just a job. It was a **ministry.**

A Call to Lead at St. Patrick's Makunga

Soon after, I was called to **St. Patrick's Makunga Mixed Secondary School**, where the school administration saw my leadership skills and gave me a responsibility serving as an Acting Deputy Principal while I was **a BOM teacher under the leadership of Mr. John Ndirangu**. Here, I was entrusted not only with teaching but also with administration, student discipline, and curriculum implementation.

It was at St. Patrick Makunga secondary school, that I learned the weight of leadership in education. I made timetables, mentored staff, resolved conflicts, and coordinated exams. I was young, but I earned respect through performance and integrity.

Leadership, I learned, is not about position it's about purpose.

Writing the Future

Back and forth between **Goseta and Makunga,** I refined my teaching, expanded my influence, and prepared for the next level. My results in Kiswahili and History remained among the best. I

attended workshops and earned certificates. I was becoming known as a **strong performer and innovative educator.**

Later, I **returned** to Goseta boys secondary school under **BOM terms** this time with even more resolve. I made friends,taught, coached handball, coordinated guiding and counseling, and handled library and language departments. I was no longer just a teacher **I was a builder of systems.**

And during this time, I began writing poetry that reached beyond classrooms. Poems that spoke truth, that addressed social issues, that told stories of my people and students. These poems would eventually reach regional music festivals and inspire hundreds.

A Master's Journey Begins

As I balanced **responsibilities** at school, I made another bold decision: to start my **Master's degree** in Educational Planning, Management, and Administration at **Mount Kenya university**. I knew I needed to prepare for bigger platforms. If I was to influence policy, leadership, and change at higher levels, then I had to keep growing.

That was my mindset: Never settle. Always sow. Always stretch.

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From the chalkboards of Goseta to the assemblies of Makunga, Clare Ebenyo was not only teaching—she was planting leadership, purpose, and transformation.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Arise and shine: Serving, leading, mentoring and inspiring

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Isaiah 60:1 -'Arise ,shine,for your light has come,and the glory of the Lord rises upon you''

When I received **my posting** to **Katilu Boys Secondary School** under the Teachers Service Commission (TSC), I felt a new level of responsibility settle in. This was no longer trial or training this was full-service leadership. Katilu was not just another station. It became a proving ground for my passion, discipline, and drive.

Teaching with Fire

At Katilu, I was more than ready. My lessons in Kiswahili and History were crafted to stir thought and inspire excellence. My classes were alive with stories, poetry, and critical thinking. Students didn't just pass they thrived.

As HOD Languages and Library, I took ownership of curriculum implementation. I organized department meetings, prepared schemes of work, and ensured our library became a resource hub, not just a storage space.

I didn't come to Katilu to fill a gap I came to build something.

- Coaching, Counseling, and Mentoring
- I wore many hats at Katilu boys secondary school:
- Class teacher and student mentor
- Handball coach with passion and presence on the field
- Guiding and counseling teacher, helping boys navigate life's challenges with strength and faith

I was also selected as a **County Kiswahili Mock Examiner and an adjudicator for Kiswahili mashairi in schools**. **My poems, like Watisapu, Dijitali, and El Nino,** were regularly recited at

music festivals to regional level. They had power because they carried real-life stories, emotion, and connection.

Even now, former students still recite those verses. That is the power of words, of teaching, of legacy.

Focused on Results

The school began seeing results academic and behavioral. My performance in Kiswahili and History became benchmarks. I was driven not by comparison but by a deep desire to serve students with excellence.

Workshops, National Examiners Seminars (NES), and training sessions became part of my routine. Every certificate I earned added value to what I gave back to my students.

A Master's On Hold For a Mission

During this time, I had already enrolled in **my Master's degree** in Educational Planning, Management, and Administration. But leadership, as always, called. When I was appointed as **Deputy Principal at one of the schools Girls in Turkana East,** I made the hard decision to defer my studies and take on the new challenge.

Some would have hesitated, but I knew: Service requires sacrifice.

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Katilu molded me further not just as an educator, but as a mentor, coach, and leader who was now ready to shape not only students but entire institutions. Katilu became **a home to me and a place to be for academic achievers.**

Leadership Triumph Chapter Eight

Becoming a Deputy Principal at Lotubae Girls Secondary School in Turkana East marked a powerful shift in my journey. I was no longer just leading from the classroom I was shaping school culture, steering systems, and walking the tightrope of discipline, administration, and mentorship.

It was time to rise. And rise I did with faith, firmness, and vision.

Starting with Order

When I reported to the institution, one of the first things I noticed was there a lot to be done particularly in discipline. Girls wore short rounded skirts, and the general environment needed focus and firm direction. I spoke to the Principal and parents. Together, we re-imagined discipline not through fear, but through dignity.

We introduced new, decent school uniforms, restored student pride, and instilled routines that mirrored excellence. The students responded positively. They appreciated guidance and rose to meet expectations.

The institution began transforming into a place of vision.

Planting Trees, Planting Hope

I didn't want to just change behavior I wanted to leave a lasting legacy. I wrote a proposal on tree planting and implemented it at the institution. The trees became a symbol of growth of girls taking root and rising strong. That green vision lives on today.

As Deputy Principal, I did the following:

- Providing academic leadership by supervising curriculum implementation,monitoring teaching and learning process.
- Supporting school principal in daily school operations,took charge during the principals
- absence and also preparing duty rosters and TPAD is operational.
- Championing discipline and student welfare by working closely with teachers and discipline committees.

- Leading staff coordination and support by acting as a link between the school administration and teaching staff.
- Enhancing school-community relations
- Promoting Girl Child Education by advocating for retention and performance of students
- Initiating motivational and mentorship programs for learners.

‘’**As Deputy Principal**, I learned **to lead with integrity and service.** I was not just managing a timetable-I was shaping lives.Every challenge in that position prepared me for higher leadership, especially in championing girl child education and mentoring the next generation of leaders’’

I was not just an administrator. I was a mother, guide, and example.

The Examiner in Me

While working,, I attended and completed the KNEC Kiswahili Paper 2 Examiner training. I received **my official 102/2 Examiner Certificate**, a milestone I had long desired. It empowered me to approach teaching and exam preparation with more insight and authority.

I was also appointed as KNEC KCSE supervisor for:

- Katilu girls Secondary School (2015)

- AIC Kang'itit Girls (2017)

- RCEA Lokori Boys (2018)

These were moments of trust and honor. I represented TSC and the government, ensuring integrity and excellence in exam administration.

Managing Transitions, Embracing Change

During my time as Deputy Principal, I had the unique opportunity to work under two distinct principals. Each had a unique leadership styles, values and approaches to school management. This experience shaped my own **philosophy** as a leader and deepen my understanding of people, purpose and performance. I learn to adapt while staying anchored in my own values. It wasn't always easy, but I saw it as a leadership lab. Every conflict was a chance to grow. Every challenge was a classroom.

''From these contrasting leaderships styles, I discovered that, true leadership is about copying a method-but about understanding the people, adapting with wisdom and leading with both firmness and compassion. These two mentors gave me the lenses to shape my own identity as a transformational leader''

Eventually, my workload, especially in administration, forced me to **defer my Master's degree.** It was painful but purposeful. I needed to fully give myself to the work God had placed in my hands. My dad kept on encouraging me continue with my masters journey.

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New Horizons: Nariokotome Girls

My next promotion brought me to Nariokotome Girls Secondary School in Turkana North—as a Principal. Now, the buck stopped with me. I had moved from supporting leadership to becoming the leader.

When I took over as principal, the school was still in its early stages of growth .I saw not just buildings, but untapped potential-in the learners, the staff and the surrounding community. I knew my purpose was not only to manage but to lead with vision and heart.

Institutional development, whereby the population steadily increased as we improved enrollment and retention.

Infrastructure development: construction of twin laboratory, teachers quarters, erecting of school sign posts, gate painting and labeling.

Staff management and morale: Involving staff in decision making, building trust, team spirit and open communication played a vital role.

Student motivation and discipline: Student confidence grew through mentorship programs, spiritual nourishment and leadership training.

Stakeholder engagement and support: The school received vital support from NG-CDF, BOM, County government, religious institutions, Ministry of Education, Teacher Service Commission, well-wishers, local leaders and community.

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‘’Nariokotome girls did not grow because of me alone-it grew because the dream was shared. Staff worked tirelessly. Students believed in the vision. Stakeholders stood with us. I only lit the torch-they carried the flame forward’’

I introduced not only academic reforms and leadership structures-but also environmental consciousness through a simple but powerful act of tree planting.

In the heart of Turkana, where dust and dryness are familiar sights, each tree planted symbolized hope, growth and resilience-mirroring the journey of every girl who passed through our gates.

‘’Each tree planted was more than a green shoot in dry ground-it was a declaration that life can flourish even in forgotten places. As girls watered their trees smiling, they were reminded to water their dreams with discipline, prayers and courage’’

I was no longer building a classroom I was building an institution.

And God saw it fit to elevate me even more because soon, a bigger door would open.

From Lotubae’s discipline reforms to Nariokotome’s development initiatives, **Clare Ebenyo** wasn’t just stepping into **leadership** she was leaving footprints of transformation.

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CHAPTER NINE

A New Dawn : Nurturing minds, Transforming lives

Isaiah 43:19-'See,I am doing a new thing!

Lamentation 3:23-They are new every morning;great is thy faithfulness.Each day is a fresh chance to rise,learn and move closer to destiny'

On my journey, the key to success can always be achieved by :nurturing self-awareness, having passion in what you are doing,collaborating with others,being yourself and working towards achieving your goals.

‘’The dream of my master’s degree never left my mind.Though I had once deferred, my heart burned with the desire to finish what I had begun-because unfinished dreams have a way of calling you back.’’

I went back to Mount Kenya University for permission to proceed with my masters. The team was supportive,welcoming and encouraging.I had done defense before and it was easy for me to proceed.

‘’Always go for your dream and work towards making it, to be a real dream’’

I had now gained the momentum to finally accomplish my master’s degree.Turkana North remained part of me as my research topic was based on: ‘’Assessment of family factors on girl child education in public secondary schools in turkana north sub-county,turkana county,Kenya.

After years of dedicated service, transformation, and growth, **I received a life-changing transfer** from Nariokotome Girls to a larger, more demanding institution**: AIC Kang’itit Girls Secondary School an extra-county school in Turkana.**

This was not just **a promotion**. It was **a calling** to influence at scale, to lead beyond the local, and to represent excellence as **a woman, mother, and mentor in education**.

Taking the Baton

At Kang'itit Girls, expectations were high. Stakeholders, parents, students, and the TSC were watching. I didn't just arrive with a title I came with a vision. I wanted to:

- Build a school culture rooted in respect and responsibility
- Improve academic performance
- Strengthen teacher capacity and discipline
- Empower girls to dream and lead

I approached leadership with firmness and love. I created systems, guided my team, and led by example.

A Principal with Passion

I continued to teach Kiswahili and History. I didn't want to lose touch with the classroom it's where leaders connect to the heartbeat of a school. My results remained strong. Students respected my dual role as a principal and teacher, and they knew I lived what I preached.

I also revived co-curricular activities, including drama and music. **My poems like Elimu, Twende Mbele Masomoni, Shukurani, Madaraka, and Ikwiti** were performed passionately at festivals helping students connect with culture, identity, and purpose.

Role Model for Girls

Many of our girls came from humble backgrounds. Some were orphans, others from difficult family situations. I became more than just a principal I became a mother figure, a counselor, and a living testimony that where you start doesn't limit where you can go.

Girls looked at me and believed again. They started seeing possibilities in their own lives.

We talked about leadership, faith, character, and career paths. Every assembly was a platform to plant a seed of confidence. I also ensured girls received proper mentorship starting structured talks, **life skills programs, and guiding them spiritually through Christian Union support.**

Leadership on Many Fronts

While leading Kang'itit Girls, I served in many capacities:

- KESSHA Chairperson for Turkana East
- KUPPET Nominee

- Chairperson, Drama Turkana County

- Co-opted Member, Rift Valley Region Drama Committee

- Grievance Committee Member, Turkana Professionals

- Chairperson, Ladies P Turkana Page

And beyond all, I remained Director of **PAMOCES Ventures Ltd and Founder of Clare Ebenyo El Mentorship Program (CEMP).**

These roles weren't distractions they were extensions of my mission: to lift, lead, and light the way.

From the dust of Lokichar to the leadership of an extra-county school, this chapter in Clare Ebenyo's story reflects a season of impact, visibility, and legacy. Kang'itit Girls didn't just gain a principal they received a purpose-driven reformer.

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CHAPTER TEN

The Legacy of Mentorship & Impact

'As an educator and mentor,I embrace the calling of Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he or she should go and when he or she is old,he\she will not depart from it'.My mission is echoed in 2 Timothy 2:2-to impact knowledge and values that will be carried forward,shaping not just minds, but generation.''

By the time I stood tall as Principal of AIC Kang'itit Girls, I had become more than an educator I was now a nation builder, a voice of reason, and a mother of many dreams.

But I knew my calling didn't end at timetables, reports, or KCSE results. It extended beyond school gates into communities, homes, and the hearts of young people across Turkana and beyond.

💗 Mentorship at AIC Kang'itit Girls: Nurturing Minds, Transforming Lives

At AIC Kang'itit Girls, my role as a Principal extended far beyond academic oversight. I saw a deeper need in the hearts of my students a need for guidance, motivation, and vision. That is why I intentionally initiated and led a CEMP mentorship program that targeted the whole girl: academically, spiritually, emotionally, and socially.

What the Mentorship Involved:

1. Personal Growth Sessions

- ❖ Empowered girls with confidence, goal setting, and self-awareness.
- ❖ Tackled topics like self-esteem, discipline, responsibility, and purpose.

2. Academic Mentorship

- Helped learners set performance targets, develop study routines, and overcome academic fear.

- Provided group and one-on-one academic coaching.

3. Spiritual Nurturing

- Integrated prayer, devotions, and moral teaching into the mentorship space.

- Encouraged students to live with faith, integrity, and hope.

4. Leadership Development

- Identified and trained student leaders through prefect mentorship and leadership workshops.

- Instilled servant leadership values among the girls.

5. Career Guidance and Life Skills

- Exposed students to career options through talks, career days, and mentorship forums.

- Equipped them with communication skills, decision-making, and emotional intelligence.

6. Peer Mentorship Program

- Encouraged senior students to mentor junior ones, building a strong sisterhood and mentorship culture.

- Impact of the Mentorship:

- Improved self-confidence and boldness among learners.

- Strengthened student discipline and goal-oriented behavior.

- Sparked higher academic aspirations and increased KCSE target performance.

- Nurtured responsible and visionary student leaders.

- Created a positive school culture anchored in hope and dignity.

"**Mentorship is not just a program** it is a lifeline. **At AIC Kang'itit Girls**, I witnessed timid girls turn into bold dreamers. I saw **pain turn into power**. My greatest joy **is not only in seeing high grades, but in seeing rising** stars who now believe in themselves."

So I stepped fully into mentorship the calling that had followed me since childhood. That's how CEMP was born.

The Birth of CEMP – Clare Ebenyo Mentorship Program

The **Clare Ebenyo Mentorship Program** (CEMP) wasn't just an initiative it was a movement founded on the belief that mentorship is the bridge between potential and power. Through CEMP, I have mentored:

- Primary and secondary school girls
- Young professionals
- University students
- Youth groups
- Women seeking direction and identity

We cover career **guidance, leadership, personal growth, spiritual grounding, and resilience**. CEMP isn't just about speaking it's about walking with people, equipping them to walk their journey with confidence and faith.

I have trained mentors, created programs, written workbooks, and spoken on stages both small and grand with one goal: to elevate lives.

Mentoring the Forgotten

In Turkana, many girls still walk miles for school. Others suffer in silence, without guidance, role models, or direction. Through **my Clare Ebenyo Foundation**, I have supported needy girls with books, mentorship, and hope. I've also adopted two girls who now call me mum and who remind me daily why we must keep lifting others.

My own sons, both leaders in their own right, have joined this movement. One is a university student, the other a school leader. Leadership runs in the blood, but it grows through example.

CEMP has now evolved into a national mentorship platform, and I plan to take it even further creating training centers, expanding digital mentorship tools, and establishing county-based chapters.

Writing, Speaking, Transforming

Through poetry, I continue to impact the nation. My mashairi are used in schools, festivals, and radio:

- El Nino

- Watisapu
- Dijitali
- Changamoto yatukumba
- Twende Mbele Masomoni
- Madaraka
- Shukurani
- Ikwiti
- Elimu

I'm also a trained **KNEC Examiner (Paper 102/2), a Drama and Music Adjudicator**, and have spoken in leadership forums and workshops. I have authored academic journals, position papers, and done extensive research **on girl-child education and CBC policy.**

I completed my **Master's Degree** in Educational Planning, Management & Administration (2023) Mount Kenya University

With masters in educational planning, management and administration I can provide strategic leadership in education, conduct data-driven planning and decision-making, strengthen institutional governance and accountability, coordinate educational programs and stakeholders engagement, mentor and manage staff effectively, champion equity, access, and quality in education.

‘’This master degree was not just a paper-its mantle. It gave me the tools to transform institutions, empower educators and impact learner’s lives with intention and strategy’’

Senior Management Course (2024) Kenya School of Government, Baringo Campus

Strategic Leadership Development Program (2024), Kenya School of Government Baringo Campus

All this has equipped me not to impress but to impact.

A Life of Gratitude

Everything I am, everything I’ve done it’s by grace. From Lokichar to Kang’itit, from the dusty roads of Turkana South to graduation stages **I owe it to God, to my parents, to every teacher, and every student who believed in me.**

Psalm 23:6 says it best:
“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.”

I am living proof.

And my message to every girl in Turkana, and every youth in Kenya:

You can come from anywhere and go everywhere if you believe, work hard, and trust God.

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CONCLUSION

From Dust, I Rose And So Can You

Philipians 1:6-'He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion'The same God who brought me this far willl see every dream to its fulfillment.

As I close this journey between the pages and proceed with my PHD, I reflect on where it all began a dusty village, a little girl with dreams far bigger than her environment. I did not have wealth, connections, or certainty but I had faith, resilience, and a quiet fire that refused to be quenched.

From walking long distances to school, to standing in front of classrooms as a leader, mentor, and builder of dreams, my story is a testament that destiny is not defined by your past but by your purpose.

I rose not because the road was easy, but because I refused to stop. Every challenge became a stepping stone. Every scar became a symbol of strength. Every humble beginning became a foundation for greatness.

But this book is not just about me.

It is about you the girl reading this in a remote school, the woman battling doubt, the young man questioning his path, the teacher wondering if your labor is in vain.

To you I say: Arise and shine.

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Your destiny is not in a faraway place. It is already within you. All you need to do is keep showing up, keep believing, keep fighting and keep rising.

"**From dust I came, to destiny I rose**. And now, I stretch out my hand not to wave goodbye, but to lift another. Because rising alone is survival. Rising with others is legacy."

Clare Ebenyo -

Appendix: Achievements, Publications & Projects

Academic Qualifications

- Master of Education – Educational Planning, Management & Administration (2023)
- Bachelor of Education (Arts) – Kiswahili & History, Moi University
- Diploma in Disaster Management
- Certificate in Computer Studies
- Certificate in Guidance & Counseling
- Senior Management Course – Kenya School of Government (2024)

- Strategic Leadership Development Program – KSG Baringo Campus (2024)
- Professional Certifications
- KNEC Examiner – Kiswahili Paper 2 (102/2)
- Drama and Music Festival Adjudicator – Primary & Secondary School Levels
- Kiswahili Mock Examiner – Turkana County
- Publications & Creative Works
- Academic Research & Papers:
- Influence of Family Factors on Girl-Child Education in Public Secondary Schools
- Influence of Parental Factors on Girl-Child Education
- CBC as a Strategic Approach to the Education System in Kenya (Position Paper)

Swahili Poetry (Mashairi):

- Watisapu
- Dijitali
- El Niño
- Elimu
- Changamoto yatukumba
- Twende Mbele Masomoni
- Madaraka
- Ikwiti
- Shukurani

Performed and adjudicated in regional and national music and drama festivals.

Leadership & Service Roles

- **Principal –** AIC Kang'itit Girls Secondary School
- **Former Principal –** Nariokotome Girls Secondary School
- **Deputy Principal –** Lotubae Girls Secondary
- HOD Languages – Katilu Boys Secondary

- KESSHA Chairperson – Turkana East
- KUPPET Nominee – Turkana County
- Chairperson, Drama Committee – Turkana County
- Co-opted Member – Rift Valley Regional Drama Committee
- Grievance Committee Member – Turkana Professionals
- Chairperson – Ladies P Turkana Page

Foundations & Initiatives

- Founder – Clare Ebenyo Mentorship Program (CEMP)
- Founder & Director – Clare Ebenyo Foundation
- CEO & Director – PAMOCES Ventures Limited