

Two Kenyan teachers nominated for The Global Teachers fete

By **Molly Wasonga** - January 21, 2019



Mr Peter Mokaya, Keriko School with two of his students showcase their winning Maths project

That technology is a tool to make better just about everything cannot be overemphasized and as one Nancy Kassebaum, Former US Senator would put it, "There can be infinite uses of the computer and new age **technology**, but if teachers are not able to bring it into the classroom and make it work, then it fails."

It is against this backdrop that the Verkey Foundation – whose motto is changing lives through education – in conjunction with the Global Education and Skills Forum and Global Teachers Award annually organizes a fete of Global Top 50 Teachers with outstanding story in changing lives through education.

This year, two Kenyan teachers have been nominated for the award that would see the winner receive a sum amount of \$ 1 million. The two; Peter Tabichi of Keriko Day Secondary School in Nakuru and Maina Gioko of Aga Khan Academy in Mombasa have been listed among the exceptional teachers making exceptional contribution to their profession.

"Our top 50 finalists include teachers developing peace-building skills and advocates for inclusivity of teachers changing curriculum in their countries and integrating migrants into classrooms – they are all champions for change and are inspiring students and communities around them." *globalteacherprize.org*.

In congratulating the two, Sunny Varkey, founder of the Varkey Foundation and the Global Teacher Prize, said: "I hope their stories inspire those looking to enter the teaching profession and highlight the incredible work teachers do all over the world every day."

Mr Tabichi's is a story of extra-ordinary contribution in two folds. He is praised for his impact by donating 80 per cent of his income earned through teaching to the Franciscan Brothers- where he is a member- to help the needy. He is also lauded for starting a talent nurturing club, which has seen 60 per cent of the students projects qualify for the Kenya Science and Engineering Fair.

Tabichi integrates ICT into 80 per cent of his lessons, along with science quizzes, low-cost apparatus and fosters collaboration by incorporating peer-to-peer learning, with students identifying topics, generating questions and working in groups. His Mathematical Science team has qualified to participate at the INTEL International Science and Engineering Fair 2019 in Arizona, United States!

If awarded the Global Teacher Prize, he says he will use the money to promote and expand the talent nurturing club, the Science Club and Inter-School Science Project Competitions and put up a computer laboratory with internet connectivity in the school, which currently has one desktop computer shared between the secretary, teachers and students.



Maina Anthony Gioko discussing with his MYP Design Class Student at Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa

Second in the list is Mr Gioko Maina, a Microsoft Innovative Educator and a runner-up in the Innovative Content category of the Microsoft Teacher Awards, who together with his students, conducts a deworming exercise every year, combined with community education on hygiene and environment care.

The results have seen his study projects grow tenfold over the last five years, having begun with two students out of a class of 30 and now grown to 25 students in a class of 65. He frequently broadcasts about educational issues on local radio and has been a keynote speaker at six Kenya Primary Headteachers Association conferences.

Gioko's practical orientation is attributed to his lessons on energy usage, where he has influenced his students to engage their parents to evaluate the energy consumption in their homes, leading to families changing to energy-saving bulbs and movement sensors or timer-controlled security lights.

"His school has been recognised as a Microsoft Showcase School, partly due to his influence and class practice. Student projects have been recognised by the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Project Zero, which resulted in Maina being invited for a fellowship there," says the organisation.

He wishes develop a pedagogy resource centre fer trying out new teaching ideas, as well as replicating evidence-based practices in other parts of the country through mentoring, print and online means if awarded the Global Teacher Prize.

The winner of this prize will be chosen by the Global Teacher Prize Academy that composes of head-teachers, educational experts, commentators, journalists, public officials, tech entrepreneurs, company directors and scientists from around the world and will be announced at the Global Education and Skills Forum in Dubai on March 24th 2019.

Molly Wasonga