2017 Digital Essay Competition Report
For:  Kenya Ministry of Education
March 2018
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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

eKitabu is Kenya’s leading distributor of ebooks with over 350,000 titles from local and international publishers including KICD-approved educational content for the Kenyan 8-4-4 curriculum.

In 2017 in accord with eKitabu’s mission to achieve transformative and inclusive educational outcomes through the use of digital content, eKitabu invited over 8,000 public and private schools across Kenya to submit essays online at http://essay.ekitabu.com for the 5th annual eKitabu Digital Essay Competition (DEC).

The Competition ran from April to August for two categories of students: Upper Primary (Class 5 - 8) and all Secondary School pupils.

The title of the essay was: “How is technology changing your school?” or “Ni vipi teknolojia inabadilisha shule yako”?

The 2017 Competition registered 5,305 students from 177 schools from 41 counties of Kenya. For the first time in the competition we had 76 students from 5 special needs schools from 4 counties participating. We also received French Essays from one school. The purpose of this document is to summarize the results, process, and lessons learned in 2017.

eKitabu warmly thanks Kenya’s Ministry of Education for its support in 2017, and we look forward to more collaboration in 2018.
II. PRIMARY BENEFITS OF THE DIGITAL ESSAY COMPETITION

1. Encourages students to develop and use digital content.
2. Enhances creativity and critical thinking amongst students.
3. Gives students and teachers an opportunity to reflect on how best they can use technology to enhance education.

III. 2017 GOALS

In 2017 our goals focused on reach:

1. Reach the highest number of schools possible.
2. Reach and recognize winning students from special needs schools in Kenya hence achieve inclusivity.
3. Collaborate with teachers and schools.
4. Generate essays from all 47 counties of Kenya.
5. Achieve measurable impact through students’ and teachers’ participation in the Competition.
IV. ORGANISATION OF THE COMPETITION

The organization of the Competition begins with seeking approval from the Ministry of Education, which we were glad to receive for the 5th year. Also of significant importance to DEC 2017 were partnerships with regional Ministry offices, the new Directorate of Special Needs Education (DSNE), schools, ICT champions, teachers, and regional eKitabu DEC agents we have recruited over the years to reach remote schools. The following are among the steps we undertook in 2017:

- Two main official launch events in Nairobi and Machakos; one in a primary school and one in a secondary school respectively.
- A total of 12 regional kickoff events throughout the country.
- Digital Essay Competition posters widely distributed throughout the country.
- Systematic distribution of Digital Essay Competition posters at every school event.
- Social media and SMS updates at every stage.
A. DEC PARTICIPATION 2017: A MAP REPRESENTATION

Entries were from 41 Counties, over 1,000 from Nairobi.
B. DEC 2017 SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

2017 Sponsors and partners included leading Kenyan educational publishers Moran Publishers, Longhorn Publishers, Oxford University Press East Africa, Kenya Publishers Association (KPA), Kenya Primary School Heads Association (KEPSHA), and Kenya Private Schools Association (KPSA). We thank University of Nairobi Library for their collaboration and for hosting the Final Judging of essays.

The Competition was approved by:

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

REPUBLIC OF KENYA
Ref: QAS/VETT/621
C. DEC 2017 TEACHERS

As observed since the start of DEC in 2013, teachers in the schools play a key role in this program. It is true to say: without the teachers we won’t have achieved much, and in 2017 we worked with over 250 teachers.

The teachers we have been able to coordinate with are:

- School head teachers
- School language teachers either of English or Kiswahili, both from mainstream and special needs schools
- School ICT champions as well as Computer Studies teachers
- eKitabu DEC field agents who are also teachers

The eKitabu team has always tried to engage with the teachers through industry events and school visits among other means.
Several teachers were awarded during the DEC Prize Giving Day for their tremendous contribution to DEC
The diagram below illustrates the partnership:

The team’s strategy in 2017 was to recognize teachers’ efforts through awards and certification: over 60 teachers received awards in 2017, with special attention to ensuring regional balance. We were happy to note that teachers appreciated receiving feedback from the judges’ comments for their students’ essay writing as well as their schools’ overall performance.
D. PLANS FOR DEC 2018 TEACHERS

1. Find an easy and structured way of working with language teachers nationally for both primary and secondary schools.
2. Involve teachers from partner organizations with whom we are already working: create an award scheme for these teachers.
3. Work with pre-existing teacher professional development agencies under TSC, for example CEMASTEA and KISE, to strengthen and expand the teacher award scheme we already have (iTOYA).
4. Engage ICT/Computer teachers more from the start and grow DEC through their ideas.
5. Involve teachers more in planning of regional events.
E. DEC 2018: STRATEGIES FOR IMPACT AND GROWTH

1. Focus on maximizing the number of schools to maximize county reach and student participation.
2. Proper planning. The DEC is a cycle that spans the whole year, hence good planning is necessary for good results. DEC 2018 budget to be done well in advance, for example, agents’ logistics.
3. Recruit more agents for scale.
4. Raise awareness among special needs schools early.
5. Targeted approach: recruit agents to reach remote areas such as Kilifi, Lamu, Kwale, Mandera, Turkana, Marsabit, Isiolo, Samburu, Homa Bay, Garissa and West Pokot.
6. Assess performance per school: the number of winning and finalist students per school is the best way.
7. Securing the prizes on time is critical.
8. Ensure all DEC 2018 teachers receive written qualitative and quantitative feedback.
9. Communication: Calls, posters, emails, bulk SMS and follow-ups for 2013 to 2017 DEC schools as well as new schools from needs assessment forms.
10. Events: Regional Kick Off (RKO) events to target repeat schools.
11. Incentives: Regional teacher and school recognition targeting repeat schools.
12. Partnerships: Formulate ways of working with and using existing structures of network partners including iTOYA 2019 with particular focus on Primary level.
13. Training: Equip agents with relevant information on DEC.
14. Add sponsors for increased exposure and leverage. Sponsors may sponsor different categories, for example, French or Art.
15. Recruit more agents from the special focus/target counties to ensure we improve reach.
16. Work out plans to have sponsors involved with poster distribution through co-branding, exclusively-branded posters, banners.
17. Emphasize bringing on board more language teachers.
18. Continue to assess the quantitative impact of DEC on schools and students.
19. Explore and enhance partnerships with teachers and schools’ ICT champions.
20. Drive more traffic to the DEC website via Newsletter and Blog links.

V. PROCESS & ANALYSIS

The eKitabu team and other stakeholders collaborated closely throughout to develop and deliver a program that had integrity. The 2017 Competition process flow was sound, well-planned in advance and in general well executed. Changes along the way were mainly changes in dates, for example, we extended the closing deadline by three weeks to allow more submissions, as we had planned to do from previous years.

The sections below describe in detail the stages of the 2017 Competition process.
STAGE I. DISCOVERY/AWARENESS

eKitabu created awareness of the Competition through:

a. Regional Kick-off (RKO) Events

eKitabu saw the need to have events in different regions of the country to re-engage schools that had participated in the program before. The purpose of the events was to raise awareness among teachers and students on the benefits and timeline of the Competition. We worked with regional education offices and school administrations to have neighboring schools attend RKO events.

b. Bulk SMS to Schools

eKitabu’s presence at national events, conferences and expositions such as KSSHA, KEPSHA and Book Fairs in 2017 helped to grow school contacts, especially with school head teachers and teachers who visited our stands.

We also contacted the 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 DEC schools through the contact information we had. With these contacts we reached schools with information about the Competition using bulk SMS. The information we delivered was, in chronological order:

- Launch of the Competition
- Registration instructions
- Sponsors
- Number of days to go
- Deadlines for essay submission
- Essay prizes
- Prize giving
• Final results

c. Posters to Schools
Since the 2013 Digital Essay Competition, we have tried as much as possible to ensure the program achieves and sustains national reach. In 2017 we increased our targeting with more posters to areas we have not reached before through local agents in those areas. We also sent posters to 1,200 Nairobi schools through the City Education Director’s office.

d. Emails and Calls to Schools and Schools’ ICT Champions
With the support of the Ministry we worked with the network of schools’ ICT champions through both calls and emails. They helped raise awareness of DEC in their schools and regions. We also sent emails to 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 DEC schools to make sure they participated in 2017.

e. Social Media
Throughout 2017 the eKitabu team kept major social media platforms up to date with DEC activities. They helped as a constant reminder and as well a call to action to the growing number of followers.

f. The Media
The team was able to develop a good working relationship with various media houses in 2017. They helped create awareness for the project from the official launch at Nairobi Primary. They have been good partners who have helped build students’ and teachers’ enthusiasm for the Competition.
STAGE II. PARTICIPATION

Entrants were encouraged to use the online essay submission platform at http://essay.ekitabu.com. We kept the online registration and submission process simple to minimize barriers to online submission.

a. Registration
Students registered to participate in the Competition by creating an account with their personal and school details. The system issued unique user IDs to all users on completion of the registration process.

b. Essay Submission
On completion of the online registration, entrants could type in or paste in their essays. The platform allowed entrants to update or make changes to their essays at any time until they were satisfied with the final version, so long as they made changes prior to the final essay submission deadline.

The platform also allowed students to upload Word documents, PDF, scanned copies of handwritten essays, or art.

Some schools called to request other means by which their students could submit essays as they faced ICT equipment constraints. Not all schools had access to internet nor enough computers for students to type their entries. In light of these facts we accepted all submissions whether electronic or on paper.

In 2017 we also allowed students to submit essays through field agents from the different regions. These agents received essays in hard copy from the different schools within their areas, they then sent them via courier services to our offices.
STAGE III. JUDGING
Two rounds of judging were necessary:

   a) First Round Judging
Before the essay submission deadline eKitabu recruited a panel of teachers recommended by publishers, partner organizations and teachers from top performing schools. These were teachers with high levels of experience in essay marking, most of them national examiners in primary or secondary school categories. In advance of the Competition, the judges sat together as a team to review and validate marking criteria (see below).

The first round judging grouped the essays into two categories: Upper Primary (Class 5 - 8) and Secondary (Form 1 - 4). The essays were then read and marked. The essays that received the highest marks, at least fifteen from each category (Finalist Essays), were selected to proceed to the second round judging.

   b) Second Round Judging
The judges in this stage were a group of eminent persons: CEOs of Kenyan publishing firms; School Directors/Heads; and University Professors. The second round judging took place at the University of Nairobi. Judges read the Finalist essays and scored them to select the Winners in each of the categories.

   c) Judging of Special Needs Students’ Essay
Since the essays received in this category were mostly braille, we engaged judges from Kenya Institute for the Blind.
FIRST ROUND JUDGES’ PROFILE

Judging Coordinators
1. Hezekiel Gikambi Peter
2. Stephen Mwangi Macharia

Hezekiel Gikambi holds a Bachelor of Education (Arts) Honours degree (Kiswahili & History and Government) from the University Of Nairobi; a Post Graduate International Diploma in Sales Management and Marketing from Cambridge International College (UK); a professional development course in Research Methods & Project Cycle Management with Eastern Institute for Research and Training; a Certificate in Digital Media Management from Rhodes University in South Africa; and a Post Graduate Diploma in Journalism and Mass Communication from Kenyatta University. He is currently pursuing a MA-Swahili Studies course at the University of Nairobi. He was the Project Manager of Swahilibu, a digital project of Taifa Leo and Mwananchi publications (Tanzania) of Nation Media Group, which produces a world class daily Swahili news site. He has been the Education Features Editor and pioneer columnist and editor of the weekly Mbwembwe-Jarida Kabambe la Wasomi Chipukizi, a two-page student/school buzz magazine on Taifa Leo every Wednesday. He has taught Kiswahili and History and Government at high school level and in colleges for over 15 years, subjects which he also examined.

Stephen Macharia holds a Master of Arts degree in Linguistics and a Bachelor of Education in Linguistics and Literature from the University of Nairobi. He has taught and examined students at high school level for 5 years. He currently teaches Communication Skills at Strathmore University and consults for the Strathmore Writing Centre.
High School Examiners

**Henry Ngure** holds a Bachelor of Education degree from Moi University. He is currently a teacher of Kiswahili and Geography at Kenton High School in Nyandarua County. He is also a marker of national examinations.

**Margaret Wanja Githu** is a trained teacher holding both Bachelor and Masters degrees in Education from Kenyatta University. She has wide experience in teaching and learning from various schools including Kahuho Uhuru High School, and currently she teaches English and Literature at Muguga Wa Gatonye Secondary School in Kiambu County. She has been a KCSE English and Literature examiner and marker for the Kenya National Examinations Council for the last since 2005. In her career she has worked for The National Educational Services facilitating capacity building workshops for Teachers of English nationwide, and for Kenya National Bureau of Statistics inducting supervisors and clerks and overseeing census activity. She has a passion to work with youth as a Guidance and Counseling teacher among other responsibilities. Apart from teaching, Margaret has been involved in preparing students for national exams and she takes part in Music and Drama festivals.

Primary School Examiners

**Violet Nkatha** is a teacher at Milimani Primary School. She has been teaching for the last fifteen years. She graduated from Kamwenja Teachers College and later the University of Nairobi having attained a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English and Literature. She has taught English and Literature at the International Teachers Training College where she did her attachment. She has also been teaching English at Milimani Primary where she prepares candidate classes in English language as a subject.
James Mbaria Njire holds P1 Teaching Certificate from Kilimambogo Teachers College. He has 15 years of teaching experience. He is currently a teacher at Forest One Primary School in Nyandarua County. He is also an examiner of English Compositions with KNEC.

Beatrice Kagai Kikuyu is a graduate of Eregi Teachers College. She holds a diploma in Education and is currently pursuing a B.Ed degree from Africa Nazarene University. She has 28 years of teaching experience and has taught both English and Kiswahili in the following schools where she has posted good results: 1. Magadi Soda Primary in Kajiado County, 2. Utawala Academy, 3. Baraka Primary, 4. Mwangaza Primary, and 5. Kwa Njenga Primary, in Nairobi County. She has vast experience in preparing learners for KCPE and is a competent examiner. She is also a member of the Parents Association Forum at both sub-county and county levels. Her expertise in the area of languages makes her very resourceful. Currently she is a teacher at St. Monica Primary and conducts administrative responsibilities with great zeal in Kakamega County.

Judges for the Special Needs Students’ Essays

1. Celine Mutisya
2. Martin Obiero
3. George Musyoka
4. Lydia Kyalo - Chief Judge

All from Kenya Institute for the Blind.
JUDGING CRITERIA (ACTUAL FINAL CRITERIA)

Each essay must reflect the contestant's own research, writing and original thinking. Any essay that the judges deem to have been written by someone else will be disqualified.

a. Factors to weigh in assessing overall quality of essays

The final winners should reflect regional, gender and social balance, but not to the exclusion of overall essay quality according to the criteria below which should be the major determining factors in deciding winners. Received essays will be categorized in two groups: Upper Primary School and Secondary School essays.

The following characteristics will be noted as factors to consider in judging each essay:

   a. Private/public schools
   b. Urban/rural schools
   c. Gender of the writer: male/female
   d. Grade level

The essays will be judged using five criteria as indicated on the scoring sheet below. Rate each of the five tested skills on a scale of 1-20, with 20 as the highest score. Add the five categories to reach the candidate's final score.
Essay Number ______________

I. Comprehension (1-20 points) __________
   How well does the essay reflect a thorough comprehension of the issues indicated by the essay question? Essays may be approached in unusual ways (questions can be answered as essays, stories, dialogue). They should still respond to the essay question.

II. Organization (1-20 points) __________
   Does the argument follow a logical and easily understood progression? Does corroborating evidence support the essay's main points?

III. Conclusions (1-20 points) __________
   Do the conclusions follow logically from the argument? How compelling are the conclusions?

IV. Creativity (1-20 points) __________
   Portrayal of an innovative and creative angle on the question.

   Writing (1-20 points) __________
   Correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Concise language.

Final Score

_______
Marking schemes: criteria related to grade bands

80 – 100       A
70 – 79         B
60 – 69         C
50 – 59         D
Below 50        Fail

The individual judges will present the essays they categorized in grade A to the lead judge who will allocate them to different judges to do the grading again and identify the best among them.

b. DEC 2017 results

For both Primary and Secondary school categories at least the 10 best Kiswahili and 20 best English Essays will be selected and presented to the second round judges.

VI. DEC 2017 FINAL RESULTS & ANALYSIS

DEC 2017 received 5,305 Essays. This number was the second largest number in the five-year history of DEC. Given the fact that it was a national election year and schools closed early in Term 2 2017, it was not surprising that many DEC numbers were lower in 2017 than in 2016.
The essays came from:

- 177 Schools
- 108 Primary Schools and 69 Secondary Schools
- 5 Special Needs Schools (4 Primary Schools and 1 High School)
- 92 Schools new to DEC (52% new/unique schools)
- 2,163 Kiswahili Essays (30.5% of the total number of Essays)
- 41 counties registered
- 76 Special Needs Students’ Essays
- 5 French Essays

The charts that follow summarize DEC 2017 results.

1. ENTRIES PER CATEGORY SINCE 2013: PRIMARY & SECONDARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESSAYS PER CATEGORY SINCE 2013</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRIMARY</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>1397</td>
<td>1366</td>
<td>4876</td>
<td>3719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECONDARY</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>2226</td>
<td>1586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>2062</td>
<td>2120</td>
<td>7102</td>
<td>5305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUMULATIVE</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>2780</td>
<td>4900</td>
<td>12002</td>
<td>17307</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observation:

- DEC 2017 registered a drop in the number of essays for both primary school and secondary school compared to the previous year.

2. 2013 TO 2017 ENTRIES BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENTRIES BY GENDER</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>969</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>3665</td>
<td>2410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>1093</td>
<td>1152</td>
<td>3437</td>
<td>2895</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observation:
- Although females outnumbered males in 2017 as in most other years, DEC 2017 registered 34% decrease in number of male students and 15% decrease in the number of female students compared to the prior year.

3. ESSAYS BY CATEGORY SINCE 2015: ENGLISH & KISWAHILI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESSAYS IN ENGLISH, KISWAHILI</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGLISH</td>
<td>1690</td>
<td>4939</td>
<td>3748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KISWAHILI</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>2163</td>
<td>1557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>2120</td>
<td>7102</td>
<td>5305</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observation:
- Since 2015 the number English Essays compared to the Kiswahili Essays has always been higher by at least 39%.
4. SCHOOLS BY CATEGORY: PRIMARY & SECONDARY SINCE 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOLS BY CATEGORY: PRIMARY, SECONDARY</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRIMARY</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECONDARY</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observation:
- The number of registered schools for DEC 2017 fell compared to 2016.
5. NEW SCHOOLS, RETURN SCHOOLS, AND TOTAL SCHOOLS SINCE START

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NEW SCHOOLS</td>
<td>85(100%)</td>
<td>216(80%)</td>
<td>112(65%)</td>
<td>208(80%)</td>
<td>92(52%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RETURN SCHOOLS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL NO. OF SCHOOLS</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observation:
- New schools in DEC 2017 were 52% of the total number of schools, indicating that the return schools grew from 2016 to its highest level ever both as an absolute number and as a proportion of the total.

6. MEAN SCORE BY GENDER SINCE 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>50.77</td>
<td>49.94</td>
<td>44.56</td>
<td>49.34</td>
<td>37.97</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>34.13</td>
<td>51.27</td>
<td>35.23</td>
<td>50.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>52.51</td>
<td>47.27</td>
<td>50.24</td>
<td>40.28</td>
<td>60.07</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>53.29</td>
<td>36.16</td>
<td>53.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observation:
- Female students have maintained their lead in mean score since 2013.

7. FINALISTS BY GENDER 2013 TO 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESSAY COMPETITION FINALISTS FROM 2013 TO 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observation:

- Since 2013 the number of female finalist students has always been higher than males; DEC 2017 was no exception.
### 8. COUNTIES WITH MULTIPLE FINALISTS 2013 TO 2017

#### COUNTIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF FINALISTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
<th>NO OF FINALISTS</th>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
<th>NO OF FINALISTS</th>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
<th>NO OF FINALISTS</th>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
<th>NO OF FINALISTS</th>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
<th>NO OF FINALISTS</th>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
<th>NO OF FINALISTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAIROBI</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>NAIROBI</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>NAIROBI</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>UASIN GISHU</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>NAIROBI</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KERICHO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>HOMA BAY</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>SIAYA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>NAIROBI</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>VIHIGA</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIAMBU</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>MAKUENI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>UASIN GISHU</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>SIAYA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>MACHAKOS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYAMIRA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>KILIFI</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>TRANS-NZOIA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYANDARUA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>KIAMBU</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>KAKAMEGA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SIAYA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KILIFI</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>KAKAMEGA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MACHAKOS</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>KILIFI</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>BUNGOMA</td>
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<td>BUNGOMA</td>
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<tr>
<td>KERICHO</td>
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<td>ELGEIYO MARAKWET</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMBU</td>
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<td>KISII</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>KISUMU</td>
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<td>ELGEIYO MAR</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOMA BAY</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>MOMBASA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Observation:
- DEC 2017 saw Nairobi county registered the highest number finalists, regaining its position from Uasin Gishu which led in 2016.

9. WINNERS BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPETITION WINNERS BY GENDER 2013 TO 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ESSAY COMPETITION WINNERS BY GENDER 2013 TO 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observation:
- Since 2013, the number of female winners has always been higher than their male counterparts, DEC 2017 was no exception.
10. COUNTIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF WINNERS 2013 TO 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
<th>NO. OF WINNERS</th>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
<th>NO. OF WINNERS</th>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
<th>NO. OF WINNERS</th>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
<th>NO. OF WINNERS</th>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
<th>NO. OF WINNERS</th>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
<th>NO. OF WINNERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KERICHO</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NAIROBI</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>NAIROBI</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>UASIN GISHU</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>KIAMBU</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAJIADO</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ELGEIYO MARAKWET</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>UASIN GISHU</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>NAIROBI</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>MACHAKOS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMBU</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>HOMA BAY</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SIAYA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NYERI</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>KILIFI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAIROBI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>KIAMBU</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ISIOLO</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>KIAMBU</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NAIROBI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NANDI</td>
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<td>KILIFI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>KERICHO</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NAKURU</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>SIAYA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>KILIFI</td>
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<td>NYERI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>KILIFI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ISIOLO</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>VIHIGA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samburu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NYERI</td>
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<td>KAKAMEGA</td>
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<td>KAKAMEGA</td>
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<td>KILIFI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>KISUMU</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MURANG'A</td>
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<td>MAKUENI</td>
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<td></td>
<td>NYANDARUA</td>
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<td>MOMBASA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SIAYA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NYANDARUA</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NYERI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>TRANS-NZOIA</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UASIN GICHU</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observation:

- Kiambu was the leading county in terms of the number of winners (3 winners).
11. NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO HAVE SUPPORTED DEC SINCE 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NO. OF TEACHERS</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RETURN TEACHERS</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW TEACHERS</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observation:
- Since 2013, we have kept building partnerships with teachers of various schools, and 2017 involved the highest number of teachers in any year to date.
VII. SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS’ PARTICIPATION IN DEC 2017

In 2017 in accordance with eKitabu’s mission to achieve transformative and inclusive educational outcomes through the use of digital content, eKitabu invited Special Needs Schools in Kenya to participate in the 5th annual eKitabu Digital Essay Competition (DEC).

We were delighted to receive 76 Essays from 5 Special Needs Schools from 4 Counties of Kenya. This was possible through the help of Kenya Institute for the Blind, the head teachers and teachers of these schools.

The table below gives a summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>PARTICIPANTS</th>
<th>FINALISTS</th>
<th>WINNERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THIKA HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND</td>
<td>KIAMBU</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST. ODA PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND</td>
<td>KISUMU</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIKONI PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND</td>
<td>MOMBASA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>KIBOS PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND</td>
<td>KISUMU</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST. LUCY’S PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND</td>
<td>MERU</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were 45 Essays in braille from totally blind students and 31 hand-written Essays from students with low vision. These essays were judged by judges from Kenya Institute for the Blind (KIB) who went through the essays and awarded marks using the Digital Essay Competition’s marking criteria.
VIII. AWARDS

All the 70 Finalists, including six for special needs and six for the Art category, submitted outstanding work per the judging criteria. All received awards and Finalist certificates during the Nairobi International Book Fair on 27th September 2017.

Prizes awarded:

1. For 1st prize winners in both Primary and Secondary categories, English and Kiswahili: scholarship money of Kenya Shillings 40,000 and Kenya Shillings 10,000 for uniform.
2. For 2nd prize winners in both Primary and Secondary categories, English and Kiswahili: scholarship money of Kenya Shillings 20,000 and Kenya Shillings 5,000 for uniform.
3. For 3rd prize winners in both Primary and Secondary categories, English and Kiswahili: uniform money of Kenya shillings 10,000.
4. Five computing devices for the five winning students in the Special Needs category.
5. Five computing devices for the top five students, Primary School category, and five computing devices for the top five students, Secondary School category, both English and Kiswahili.
6. One computing device for the top student in Primary and one computing device for the top student Secondary in the Art category.
STAGE V.  RELEASING OF RESULTS

The eKitabu team posted official results on the DEC website the next day after the awards ceremony. Feedback forms for individual students as well as their schools are sent to the schools after the official results are published.
DEC 2017: HIGHLIGHTS

1. This year saw the entry of 5 Special Needs Schools registering a total of 76 entries. The five schools were:
   - Thika High School for the Blind
   - St Lucy School for the Blind
   - St. Oda School for the Blind
   - Likoni School for the Blind
   - Kibos School for the Blind

2. This year saw 5 special needs students receive awards from Primary and Secondary schools.
3. This year saw the National Schools Moi Girls High School register and submit the first French Essays in the Competition.
4. DEC has engaged 713 unique schools since 2013.
5. 18 out of 28 winners were female students in 2017.
6. 48 out of 70 DEC 2017 Finalists were female students, 22 were male.
7. DEC 2017 winners were generally spread through the country. They came from Uasin Gishu, Nairobi, Nyeri, Kiambu, Machakos, Vihiga, Trans Nzoia, Kisumu, Kakamega, Kilifi, Makueni, Nyandarua and Siaya.
IX. DEC 2017 VOICES AND IMAGES

• “Great deeds have been done under the face of earth and technology innovations and inventions are one of them. Technology is rapidly dominating every aspect of our lives. For instance, technology has not only brought about a lot of changes in the education sector but also in the country at large. Today I am proud of technology and can boast of how it has changed my school.”

• “In our school, learning has been enjoyable and more interesting since our teachers use modern technology while teaching. This is especially in the use of machines such as computers and projectors. For instance, in social studies, we are able to watch videos on the process of faulting and sinking, and see photographs of different types of vegetation in Africa.”

• “Due to technology, the world has been reduced to a small village. This is because I am able to communicate with my relatives who are currently studying overseas through electronic mails, mobile phone and social media like WhatsApp and Facebook.”

• “Planning, socializing, communicating and banking – just some of the things that we now tend to do through our gadgets. However, there is one particular group for which technology has had a beneficial and profound impact – students. Going back to my family dinner, and chatting about high school life, it didn’t take too long for the phrase ‘you kids have it so much easier these days’ to feature. While we still have all the same
educational benefits as those of the previous generation, we have so many more as well.”

• “We still have libraries available to us, but we also have countless virtual libraries that exist on the Internet, with services such as Emerald Insight. Studying used to be a process of sitting in the library with as many books from your reading list as you could get your hands on. Yet, while some students still prefer to do this, now a simple search for your chosen study topic on the Internet can produce inspiration and provide access to huge numbers of resources. I urge the government of Kenya to invest more funds in the laptops project for all pupils to acquire digital skills and literacy. Long live technology!”

• “Much as we may appreciate the benefits of advanced technology in school, we must be on our guard against it dominating our lives. If we can use it for improving the quality of our lives and enhance relationships we shall enrich our minds positively and it will lead us to the right direction. But if it makes us selfish, passive and self-centered, then it’s not worth the time, money and energy devoted to its development and acquisition.”
X. PLANS FOR 2018 eKitabu DIGITAL ESSAY COMPETITION

The 2017 Digital Essay Competition will be held from April 2017. The submission period will be open from 11th April 2017 and will close on 21st July 2017. Winners will be announced at the Prize Giving ceremony on 22nd September 2017.

Students will register and submit their essays through http://essay.ekitabu.com/

The Digital Essay Competition gives students in Kenya the chance to contribute their voices and visions to the integration of ICT in learning and teaching. It helps them develop critical thinking and innovative minds. DEC also provides a vehicle for research into ICT integration for learning and teaching in Kenya.
XI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

eKitabu thanks the Ministry of Education for its support in 2017, and looks forward to more collaboration in 2018.

We thank the DEC 2017 sponsors for supporting this worthy cause, and we look forward to doing more in 2018. Thanks to our partner organizations, our judges in the 1st round and 2nd round judging, and Kenya Institute of the Blind Judges for supporting the program. We thank University of Nairobi Library for for hosting the Final Judging of essays.

We thank the Schools head teachers and teachers for the great support they gave the program in 2017, we look forward to more partnership in 2018.

Thanks finally to the eKitabu team for the planning, support and teamwork in the execution of DEC 2017.

Tunaenda Digital!
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