



Building Hope in Kibera: Handdels London's Commitment to Giving Back

Handdels London has always treated its mission as something that goes beyond simple commerce. For **Iain Andre**—our Founder and Chief Executive—success isn't solely measured by profit charts or the reach of our global footprint; it's equally judged by the real positive impact we spark in other people's lives. Driven by a conviction to give back whenever the possibility arises, both Iain and the Handdels team continuously champion community-focused initiatives around the world.

This month Iain travelled to **Kenya**, visiting several **Handdels London** supported projects on the ground—a trip that underscored the firm's push for social impact and sustainable development. One of his stops led him into the slums in and around Nairobi, including **Kibera**, the sprawling settlement that shelters more than a million people.



Unpacking Kibera: a neighbourhood that pulsates with vigour, undeterred, by the challenges it faces

A few kilometres southwest of Nairobi's bustling centre, **Kibera** unfolds as a vivid study in contrasts. Its streets are tightly packed. The neighbourhood pulsates with a lively cultural scene, sudden flashes of creativity, and a gritty, tenacious entrepreneurial spirit—even as it grapples with deep-rooted socio-economic challenges.

Living conditions vary enormously from place to place. In some cases, the houses are little more than a single mud-walled room under a corrugated iron roof, barely larger than a modest shed. A family of five or six must squeeze itself into that cramped interior. Clean water, dependable sanitation, and reliable electricity remain out of reach for many. While NGOs and government initiatives have rolled out some upgrades in the past few years, these infrastructures still reach only a fraction of the inhabitants.

The narrow unpaved lanes that wind through Kibera are constantly slick with mud and choked with traffic, making it nearly impossible for vehicles to pass. Despite those obstacles, **Kibera isn't defined by its hardships**, but by a spirit of resilience, ingenuity, and hope.

Kibera's morning lingered, heavy and thick with the city's breath

During his visit at daybreak, Iain wandered through the pulsing heart of Kibera, watching the ordinary flow of life unfold.

"By six the settlement was already humming with life," Iain recalled. "Teenagers were off to school, parents were pulling open their shop doors, and the scents of charcoal fire and fresh tea mingled together. For me, this was a metaphor for ambition and hope that exists even in this slum—the harshest of places."

In Kibera, the day for youngsters begins before the sun rises. Their homes are cramped—often consisting of a single tiny room—so families rouse in the pre-dawn hush to fetch water, cobble together a modest breakfast, and set the day in motion. Running water is a luxury; most people rely on shared taps or local water sellers. A typical morning meal may be as simple as **tea and bread**, or a bowl of **porridge** when available.



Education: the hinge that swings change into motion

The schooling scene in Kibera feels like a mix of hurdles and opportunities. As public classrooms grow more crowded, both community and church-run schools have started emerging, giving local children and teenagers a more attainable route to education.

Handdels London has long viewed education as the cornerstone of development, and its initiatives in Kenya focus on enhancing learning environments, training teachers, and providing educational resources.

“Stepping inside a community school left me humbled,” Iain remarked. “Even though supplies are scarce, the sheer determination radiating from teachers and pupils is undeniable. You can see the hunger in their eyes—an appetite for learning and a collective yearning to forge a brighter future.”

At the crack of dawn, children trudge along muddy paths, slipping between an unending tide of marketgoers and labourers. Still, they stream into the schoolyard each morning buzzing with resolve. Their midday meal is usually **ugali (maize meal)** served with beans or vegetables—a modest dish that fuels them through the day.

Forging routes to opportunity

Beyond formal education, **Handdels London** supports youth empowerment schemes that grant teenagers and young adults a genuine sense of purpose and belonging. These initiatives span music, dance, and football clubs, as well as entrepreneurship workshops designed to ignite creativity and innovation.

Many young people in Kibera help their families after school—fetching water, cleaning, or running small stalls to sell snacks or second-hand clothes.

“Despite the odds stacked against them, the community radiates an entrepreneurial spark,” Iain observed. “These young people aren’t waiting for opportunity—they’re creating it themselves, one idea at a time. This attitude perfectly mirrors the values we uphold at Handdels London: resilience, initiative, and integrity.”



Life After Dusk: Making Do

As evening arrives, power in Kibera flickers and often drops out, leaving homes to rely on kerosene lamps or candles. Darkness opens a window for study, quiet conversation, and reflection. Families gather around simple meals—beans, rice, sometimes chapati—to share their thoughts and stories.

Outside, the air hums with life, though safety concerns often keep families indoors after dark. Inside these small homes, however, the unity and mutual support within the Kibera community are unmistakable.

Handdels London's promise: exchanging the mantle of responsibility, for the cadence of human connection

Iain's visit wasn't a project audit or photo opportunity—it was an **immersive, empathy-driven experience** that placed human understanding at its heart.

"From my point of view, this trip turned out to be more than a corporate social responsibility exercise," he said. "It became an opportunity to connect with people, absorb their stories, and see how our choices as a company can leave a lasting imprint. Every business has a responsibility to give back positively to the communities that need it most."

Through partnerships with NGOs and local organisations, **Handdels London** extends support across a range of initiatives:

- **Education support:** Providing school supplies, funding teacher training, and covering learning costs.
- **Clean water access:** Supporting infrastructure projects that deliver safe water to underserved areas.
- **Women's empowerment:** Strengthening cooperatives that help women build sustainable livelihoods.
- **Youth engagement:** Sponsoring sports and creative programmes to nurture leadership and teamwork.

These efforts echo **Handdels London's ambition**—to intertwine business success with meaningful, locally focused outcomes.



Final Reflections

Amid the bustle of Nairobi's slums, including Kibera, Iain reflects upon the seam where hardship meets aspiration.

“Every time you turn a corner you’re met with obstacles—cramped alleys, makeshift shacks, a chronic shortage of the basics. Yet the optimism hits you. What this really shows is that progress isn’t measured by concrete or cash—it depends on resilience, community, and the belief that tomorrow can be better than today.”

The visit reinforced **Handdels London’s belief** that charitable work should be woven into its corporate DNA—not added as an afterthought.

A Dream of The Future

Handdels London is deepening its ties in Kenya and continuing to expand its support both abroad and in the U.K.

“These projects aren’t a hand-out; they’re about empowerment,” *Iain said. “We’re not here to give short-term relief. We’re here to build systems that foster independence and opportunity. That’s what sustainable giving looks like.”*

He added: “The real heroes are the community leaders and volunteers who dedicate their lives to improving these neighbourhoods. Our role as a company is to support them, amplify their impact, and walk alongside them.”

Deep in the Core of Handdels London

While **Handdels London** continues to expand globally, it remains rooted in the belief that **business must be a force for good**. From the streets of London to the communities of Nairobi, Iain’s leadership embodies compassion, accountability, and shared humanity.

“Our success as a logistics and events service provider has given us a platform, and we have a duty to act,” *Iain said. “Whether it’s championing education in Kenya or supporting projects in the U.K., our mission remains the same—to create a tangible, positive impact.”*

In communities such as Kibera, where adversity meets hope, solidarity and education cultivate opportunity. As Iain concluded,

“When our days finally come to an end, success isn’t measured by the path we took—it’s marked by the number of lives we’ve helped along the way.”