



# Aaron Stanbury

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**Location:** Kenya



**What I do:** Connecting with children and helping them with basic literacy, setting them on a path for an education that will help them out of poverty

To my wonderful friends and family,

Thank you very much for your continued support. It has been a privilege to talk, worship and pray with you all. You have all played an integral part in my growth and development in the past year and especially during my time of training in preparation for moving to Nairobi, Kenya. I have been encouraged through your warm hospitality, your love for God and your inspiring testimonies. Words can't explain my gratitude.

### Who am I?

I would like to share a little bit about who I am and my passions. My name is Aaron Stanbury, I am 25 years old and I am from Plymouth, Devon. I love sports and I love people and I have a deep passion to develop relationships through sports. For the past seven years I have been a support worker looking after adults with various disabilities. Alongside this, for the past three years I have been studying theology, ministry and mission at St Mellitus College. I spent last autumn living in the CMS Oxford house doing training as preparation for my mission.



Coaching football in Rwanda.

I have a deep passion to support and care for both adults and youth, helping them to grow and flourish. Since my teens I have been involved in various ministries. Myself and my parents ran a church youth club in a deprived area of Plymouth, where I took an active role in heading practical activities and sports. I have helped lead in Christian sport camps in Bristol and Bath for World Sports Ministries, where hundreds of youths were in attendance. In more recent years, I have been involved in leading Kids Church, where I lead practical activities and usually lead a group aged seven to 10. I also enjoy my current role as a support worker, caring for individuals, supporting and enabling them to live a joyful and fulfilling life. My passions consist of supporting people and using activities and sports to build relationships and share faith.

### Why Africa?

When I was 13 years old, I went to a large Christian festival called New Wine. A few days into the conference I was intrigued by a particular marquee, where I was stopped by a man who told me, "God has told me, you will be used in Africa." After this, feeling shocked and excited, I decided to leave the marquee. However, before I could leave a lady stopped me and said, "This may sound odd, but God has told me that you are to be used in Africa." At that point, I was confused and very excited and decided I needed to tell my parents what happened. To my surprise, Mum told me that she had a dream of me, "happy in Africa." From this point, I felt a strong calling for Africa and a clear sense of purpose.

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**With Jesus  
With each other  
To the edges**



When I was 18, I went with my Rwandan pastor on a month-long mission trip to Rwanda, to coach football and other sports to street children. It was the most amazing experience! And for the first time, I felt "at home". I went again the following year for another month and this confirmed to me that this is where I needed to be.

I knew that Africa was where I wanted to be, but I was aware that I wasn't ready. So I sat at my dining room table and said, "God I know this is where I'm called to be but I know I'm not ready. Tell me what I need to do." I heard a voice, which I believe was God, saying, "Go to Bible college". Within the next couple of hours, I applied to St Mellitus College and have now completed my degree. This coincidentally led me to Church Mission Society.

### Training

In December, I completed my CMS training in Oxford while living in the CMS community house. I found my training enlightening and enjoyable. It has helped me to look at subjects such as practical mission, communications and inter-cultural mission, as well as having more intimate times of prayer and worship with other mission partners in training. This helped me to reflect on my context, gain more knowledge on cultures and customs and has given me a new-found excitement for the journey ahead.

### Kids to Kids

What will I be doing in Nairobi? I am going to be involved in a Christian outreach programme called Kids to Kids, run through the local church, ACK Christ Church, Westlands. Kids to Kids is a programme designed to confront the challenges of education and nutrition. Around 1.2 million primary-school-aged children in Kenya do not attend school and 23 million children go to school without anything to eat. These challenges lead to an increase in chronic undernutrition, child abuse, child labour and child pregnancies. This programme provides 60 children each year, from the local slums, with nutrition and education, then integrates them into the national education curriculum.

Kids to Kids provides two meals a day, taught life skills, a basic induction to school subjects, counselling and opportunities to engage in various games, sports and crafts.

My role will be as a teaching assistant, helping children on a one-to-one basis and occasionally teaching when needed. I will also be a part of a team engaging with local communities by visiting villages. In addition, as a football coach, I will be coaching football and other various sports, which I am very excited about!

I'm expecting to be leaving in the second half of the year, as I spend the coming months raising finances, visiting supporting churches and continuing my support work until funding is in place for my time in Kenya.

### Prayer points:

- ▶ Pray for God to direct me and use me through my work in Kenya.
- ▶ To form good relationships with the people I work alongside with and serve.
- ▶ For support, both financially and through prayer.

Aaron



**Photos from top to bottom:** Spending time in prayer and worship as well as sport, Rwanda; Learning about the solar system at Kids to Kids, Kenya; Eating together at the CMS house during training.



## Going further with Church Mission Society

**Stories from the edges:** Find out how God is meeting people on the edges around the world through CMS people in mission. Go to [churchmissionsociety.org/stories](http://churchmissionsociety.org/stories)

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