

## **Kericho, Kenya (2024)**

We pray for the Diocesan President and all Mothers' Union members in Kericho.

Kenya is located in eastern Africa, bordering Tanzania to the south and southwest, Uganda to the west, South Sudan to the northwest, Ethiopia to the north and Somalia to the northeast.

Kericho is located within the highlands west of the Kenyan Rift Valley. It is the centre of Kenya's large tea industry and the hills are covered with fragrant tea bushes. Kenya is the world's third largest tea producer. Much of the tea is exported, with the UK being the largest market.

Kericho is home to Kenya's biggest water catchment area, the Mau Forest. Kericho is a very green area with a high altitude and virtually daily rains. However, as part of immediate measures to curb the country's drying water sources, the Governor took the opportunity to issue a notice that all eucalyptus trees along the riverbanks be removed and replaced with indigenous tree species. Kericho joined the rest of the country during a public holiday dedicated towards a mass nationwide tree planting exercise with eyes firmly trained on ensuring that it collectively contributes towards the realization of an ambitious initiative to plant 15 billion trees by 2032. Kericho has so far planted over 508,000 trees covering a total of 201 hectares in Kericho County, translating to 22% tree cover. Their target is to hit the 30% mark by 2032.

Kenya is a country of contrasts. Its ethnic diversity has produced a vibrant culture but can also be a source of conflict. Despite being the most advanced economy in east and central Africa, Kenya is ranked just 145 out of 188 countries in the world in the Human Development Index. Challenges to family life include high unemployment, crime, poverty and food insecurity. In 2024 new passport and immigration offices are due to open in Kericho which will provide additional employment opportunities there.

In 2018 Mothers' Union in Kenya celebrated its centenary. Having started with just one branch in 1918, today there are more than 450,000 Mothers' Union members across the country all engaged in initiatives that are meeting local needs. The challenges that Mothers' Union members have set up projects to deal with include –

- Tackling female genital mutilation
- Peace and reconciliation
- Health awareness programmes
- Eagle (Church and Community Mobilisation)
- Vocational Skills training
- Marriage preparation
- Parenting Programme
- Savings and Credit groups
- Prison ministry
- Hospital visits
- Orphan care programme

Lord, we thank you for all the good works being carried out by Mothers' Union in Kericho and for the commitment of the members there. We pray for positive outcomes to all the hard work they are putting in. We also pray that the national tree-planting programme will be successful and bring much needed water to the country.

**Amen**

*Gill MU / Kericho 2024*