



# Kenya Children's News

[www.kenyachildrencentres.com](http://www.kenyachildrencentres.com)

**Stop Press – Drought and Famine crisis in Kenya**  
*Please help us save more children*

July 2011

Charity No. 1103868

## In This Issue

- A very long school day
- Trustees visit the Centre
- Meet our Volunteers

*We would like to sincerely thank everyone that has raised funds for the children in recent months.*

*Here are just a few examples:*

### *Birthday presents ...*

Rachel wanted to celebrate her fifth birthday with her family and friends, but she decided she had lots of toys and dressing up clothes, so she asked her party guests to make a donation to charity instead of getting a birthday gift. She said she wanted to support children in Africa, so her mother, Jess, asked for donations to Kenya Children's Centres

### *Kaplan Mountain Challenge*

Congratulations to Nuzhat Saeed for completing the 26 mile trek over Carneddau and Glyder mountain ranges before ascending Snowdon and finishing in Llanberis on 20th June - and for raising lots of money for the girls in Kenya.

### *Hugo's triathlon*

As part of his DofE Volunteering Award Hugo decided to organise a Personal Triathlon in 24 hours to raise money for Kenya Children. He completed the task on 4th June by running 5.5 miles around Uppingham, then cycling 17.5 miles around Rutland Water and finishing with 64 lengths of the school pool (1 mile). Wow he must be fit! His fundraising has paid the school fees for a child for a year.

### *Donating Professional Fees*

A neighbour asked Lyn, an architect, if she would design an extension for their house in Chiswick. Lyn agreed to manage the project on the understanding that her neighbour would donate her fees to Kenya Children Centres. Lyn's generosity will pay for the care of four children for a year.

## A very long school day

Children arriving home from school always look happy but in Africa they have a very long day. Our children wake up between 3.30 am and 4.00 am in the morning to get ready for school. They travel in a school bus for 2-3 hours and start lessons at 7.30 am. They spend 8 hours in school and arrive home on the bus between 5.30 pm and 7.00 pm – and then do their homework!

After love and care, education is the most important thing we can give our children. School is very competitive and there is national testing every term. Fortunately most of our children are doing well in their tests. But this gruelling 14 hour daily routine leaves the children too tired to concentrate on their school work.

We would like to have our own school bus because this would save several hours of travelling time each day and allow the girls to have enough sleep and time to play and be children! *So acquiring a bus is our next project – have you got any ideas?*



## Trustees Liz and Wilf visit Ngoingwa

We visited Kenya again in May - you can see photos of our trip on the Kenya Children Centres Facebook Page. *Please visit the page and click "Like" to show your support.*



It was great to spend time with the girls and enjoy their fun and mischief! It felt different now Jerusha is at university and Ann, Margaret and Alice have left to start their first jobs - but it was a joy to meet little Jane and Grace who were rescued in March! We also enjoyed seeing our carers, Alice, Rose, Teresina, Salome, Patrick and John who look after the girls so well.

The girls entertained us with a show on Saturday evening: each one sang a song for us - even the 3 year olds! We are always amazed by how talented and self confident they are in spite of their traumatic start to life. We are also surprised at how well informed they are: they wanted to know about Kate and Will's wedding, why Chelsea bought Fernando Torres, Lady Gaga's latest antics etc. There was almost a riot when we gave them the latest copies of Hello and OK magazines!

We also had work to do: reviewing projects, monitoring finances, visiting the schools that our girls attend and meeting community workers. We were reminded why we MUST rescue more orphans when we visited a desperately poor mountain hamlet to assess a destitute 3 year old orphan girl.



Like the majority of Kenyans, these families have to survive on less than 60p a day – hardly enough for a meal a day....

## School Bags



Proud owners of new school bags! The children would like to thank MGJ Jewellers of Wallingford who donated all these bags. They absolutely love carrying their books in them - it makes them feel as good as other kids at their school.

## Computers

We are creating a computer room to train our children and people in the local community. It will help develop their IT skills and make a big difference to their employment prospects. David and Nicky donated five computers and Jan gave another – so we are on the way!

## Nursery School

Caroline, Anastacia, Ann, Mary and Gladys are under 6 yrs and they are taught at our Centre. The children are



assessed individually and provided with tailored support. We plan to build a proper nursery school in one of the buildings at the Centre and eventually open it up to local infants. We are raising money for this at present and hope to have it running by the end of the year.

## Would you like to help us educate the girls?

It would be wonderful if you could help by making a regular monthly donation.. Any amount, however small would help to secure their future. [Click here](#) to sign up online

Visit Kenya Children Centres on

**facebook**

## Annabel tries Ngoingwa instead of Lewisham

Taking a break from my job in local government I left England in December, amidst travel chaos and thick snow to spend ten days with the girls, before setting off on a three month trip across Africa. Whilst with the girls we had all kinds of fun including; sewing felt dolls, learning Rounders, making decorations and performing songs and dancing. I was struck by how close the girls are to each other and impressed with the way the older ones tailored activities to include the youngest girls and care for them.

My absolute highlight was New Years Eve. We'd planned a party of balloons, fizzy drinks, sweets, nail decorating and music. At midnight the girls let off party poppers and streamers (brought from England), toasted the New Year with 'sodas', sang, danced and prayed. We all agreed it was one of the best New Year's Eves we'd had. Next morning, despite a late night for the older girls, I got up to find the lounge immaculately clean and everything ready to throw a mini party for the younger girls who'd been put to bed before midnight.

I'd say rather than me teaching them new skills, I was the one that learnt the most. Such as: how to braid hair, new songs, how to speak Swahili, the knack of hand washing clothes and how to make chapattis... My residing memory of the girls is their amazing love and care for each other, their incredible hard work and sense of pride - and their humour: I don't think I've ever laughed so much!



## Meet Sarah and Clare – our marketing team

Clare and I both work in educational publishing in marketing. I work with schools all around the World – from affluent International Schools in developed countries to the local schools in more deprived areas. The one thing I have learnt from my work is the importance to help every child have the opportunity to learn.

Once finding out about Kenya Children Centres, we were both eager to help as much as we can. The prime thing that drew us to KCC is the personal and caring approach. We know all the girls by name, know what they do on a day to day basis and know what their ambitions are. We also know that the girls like to sing!

We are currently working with the other volunteers on making our facebook page and website as effective as they can be, and to allow us to show some of the good things we are doing and as well as outlining a few ways donors can get involved.

If you have any ideas for us please [join our facebook page](#) and tell us more.

## Fighting against the odds



Damaris is a great writer and performer and intends to become a journalist. She studied very hard to pass her high school entrance exams but she had a tough time during her first year at Mumbi Girls High School. Within weeks of starting, her left leg swelled up enormously. She couldn't wear proper shoes and could hardly walk without support. Doctors tried everything but couldn't discover the problem. She had to miss school and couldn't play her favourite sports. But Damaris remained positive through it all, even during a spell in hospital! Fortunately, after almost 12 months, a treatment has been found that works and she has made a complete recovery!!

*Thanks to all our Sponsors, Patrons and Supporters Wilf Eaton*