



# Kenya Children's News

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## Outreach Project Launched

The killings and displacement caused by the violence of the past 6 weeks have created hundreds of orphans and thousands of destitute homeless families. In these critical circumstances, it is not enough for us to provide a home for some of the orphan girls, we want to provide help for other victims too. So we have decided to launch an Outreach project based at the newly built Clinic to provide food, clothing and support to destitute grannies and their orphaned grandchildren in the Central Province of Kenya. We will be appointing a dedicated Outreach Officer to lead this initiative. If you would like to help, we need donations to pay for the food which has trebled in price since the elections).

There are many ways that you can help the children to survive. Would you like to ...

## MAKE A DONATION...?

Please help us to support the children orphaned by the current crisis with our Outreach Project to provide food and clothing to destitute families in Central Province

## The Effects of the Kenyan Conflict in Thika

You are probably familiar with the problems in Kenya since the elections on 27th December 2007. Almost 1000 people have been killed and more than 300,000 have been displaced. Tourism has collapsed, food prices have trebled and at least 400,000 have lost their jobs. These events are creating even greater poverty and homelessness - and more orphans.....

Our project is located in Thika, 40 km north of Nairobi. Alice Jukes speaks to the staff and children in Thika every day. Fortunately, there has been no serious disruption to their day to day lives. The conflict has been mainly concentrated in the western region of Kenya and in the slums around Nairobi but recently there has been some violence and intimidation in Thika. Several hundred Luo families have been forced to abandon their homes and live in tents in the Sports Stadium under Police protection.

The Children Centre staff have been tremendous throughout, explaining everything to the children and reassuring their fears. The girls were concerned about returning to school because they have seen pictures of schools and churches being burnt down but fortunately they have not experienced any problems so far. In fact, four of the girls are very excited because they start their secondary education this month.

The full impact of the conflict is difficult to estimate. According to reports that Alice is receiving from well informed sources, the problems are much deeper than has been reported by the media and we expect a big influx of orphaned and displaced children desperately in need of our support in the months ahead. The first phase of our new Ngoingwa Centre (see below) will provide space for more girls but we desperately need sponsors so that we can take these girls into care as soon as possible.

Children orphaned by the current conflict will have had very different experiences from the other children in our care, who have watched their parents die through AIDS and other poverty related illnesses. In contrast, these girls may have fresh memories of watching their parents burnt alive or hacked to death. They may have been in the centre of the conflict and will always wonder how they survived it and why their parents had to be killed. As well as basic needs, these children will require emotional and psychological support for a long time. This means your support is even more important now because of the huge challenge ahead of us.

## New Girls arrive at the Centre

These two sets of three sisters will be coming to live at the new Centre as soon as it opens. We will also be helping their families through our new Outreach Programme (see sidebar).



Margaret (9)

Ruth (11)

Mary (13)

### BE A FRIEND...?

Find out how you can become a supporter of our Kenya Project

### SPONSOR A CHILD...?

We will rescue as many girls as possible over the next few months and so we desperately need caring people to sponsor them, take an interest in their lives, follow their progress and provide them with a secure future.

Just go to [www.kenyachildrencentres.com](http://www.kenyachildrencentres.com)

### **Project Manager Appointed**

Before we started to plan the new Centre at Ngoingwa, we realised that we needed to appoint an experienced manager, capable of managing a series of construction projects alongside an expanded child care operation for up to 120 girls. We have been very fortunate to secure the services of Rose Makimei, who brings more than 30 years experience of facilities and catering management in schools and further education. She recently managed the construction and operation of one of the largest conference and training centres in Kenya. She was Director of the Limuru Centre for orphan girls, worked with the Bamburi Village for displaced blind families, Vice Chair and Treasurer of the MAWA Centre for AIDS orphans and was a Board member of the Prison Fellowship. Rose loves helping underprivileged youngsters to realise their talents and become confident self-reliant adults. She lives in Thika and has two grown up children.

### **Variety Show in Oxfordshire**

The Corn Exchange Theatre in Wallingford was the venue for "Crossing Continents", a variety show produced by Gay Goodall, on 27<sup>th</sup> January. The show was hosted by Mark McGee, manager of Motherwell FC, ex manager of Reading FC and a member of Aberdeen's European Cup winning team in 1983. The evening started with champagne and canapés for the 175 guests. This was followed by two hours of brilliant song, dance and comedy as well as a brief presentation of Kenya Children Centres work. The evening was a rousing success and we are indebted to all the people who contributed their talents and time to this event. It raised almost £5,000 and this will pay for furnishing the new Home and Clinic in Ngoingwa.

### **Contact Us**

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Mary, Ruth and Margaret lost their mother in 2005 after a long illness and so they went to live with their grandmother, Lucia. Two of Lucia's daughters died later which left her with 9 grandchildren to look after. In spite of her age and ill health, Lucia works as a casual labourer in nearby farms for a pittance in order to pay for food,. Sadly, because she can't cope with such a large family, the children are seriously malnourished. They live in a tiny hut made of mud and wattle. The girls have recently been attending a local primary school and so, with extra tuition and medical attention at the Centre, we will be able to significantly improve their life chances.



Hannah, Margaret and Sarome live with their five brothers. Their mother died last June but they had no relatives to care for them and so their oldest brother does casual work to support the family of eight. But this does not produce enough income to provide adequate food and so they are also suffering from poor nutrition. They live without a proper roof over their heads and have missed out on school. We know that with an intensive nutrition programme and some extra schooling at the Centre, they will have a much better future ahead of them.

## Phase One of Ngoingwa Centre Completed



Construction of the next new home and a health clinic in Ngoingwa, 40 km north of Nairobi, has been completed. The new buildings are on an acre of land that was generously donated by the Ngoingwa Women's Cooperative.

This building will contain 24 bedrooms on two floors, with two wings on each floor either side of the dining, recreation and kitchen areas.

Each wing will be home for 10 girls and their housemother – forming 4 "families" – 40 girls in total. Alongside is the Health Clinic which will provide health care, education and counselling for girls at the Centre and for girls and young women living in the slums nearby.

The official opening of the "Ngoingwa Centre for Good Future" was due to take place on 23rd February. With the current problems, we have decided to postpone the opening until 24th May. But we expect to fill the Centre very quickly and we have started planning construction of the second phase for another 40 girls by 2009.

*Dear Sponsors, Friends and Supporters, thank you very much for your generous support and encouragement. I hope you will not mind if we continue to ask for your help.*

*Wilf Eaton (Editor)*