

UPENDO METHODIST COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATION - 2014 NEWSLETTER

OUR VISION: TO CARE FOR KILIFI'S ORPHANS IN THEIR COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT THEM TO BECOME INDEPENDENT AND RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS



Members of CBO in discussion

This edition of our annual Newsletter presents you with the activities of the Upendo Orphans Support Project and Upendo Nursery and Primary Schools during 2014 in their support of the 56 children under our care. 2014 also marks 10 years since Upendo received a significant injection of funds and external support, thanks to you. We have come a long way and your efforts count a lot. It is our pleasure therefore to keep our supporters and well-wishers updated. The program's of this project were all active during the year under review. Welcome!

Education Programme:



Children preparing to join boarding schools

The education program has children spread in various primary and secondary schools, both day and boarding. The children whose home background is wanting are taken to boarding schools by the project. In 2014 there were 5 children in boarding primary schools. Three children sat for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education and expected to join Secondary School in 2015 having been beneficiaries of the programme for the last 14 years. 2 girls sat for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination, while the rest are in Nursery and Primary schools.

Feeding Programme:



Apart from feeding the orphans, this program has been an income generator for the Orphans Project through sale of food to the children from the community who are admitted at Upendo Nursery and Primary Schools. Serving highly nutritious meals has been a contributing factor to the good health of the children. Orphans taking meals together with the children from the community has reduced the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS.

Children taking lunch during school time

Outreach Program:



Fatuma Chonga, a blind girl, and Aziza Omari are still under our Outreach program which takes care of children who live far from Kilifi but who have been associated with Upendo at some time previously. Each of these children were visited in their homes and at school 3 times in 2014 by Upendo staff. They are doing well at school but in both cases the home conditions were not good. The guardians were given health advice by the visiting staff.

Aziza under our Outreach program collects food and learning stationery from Upendo

Psychosocial Support:

Undertaken every Saturday from 2 p.m. for two hours, this program has seen many of the children in adolescent stage sail through without major drawbacks. It is a program which has had a positive impact on the life of the children who were initially depressed and withdrawn due to the agony they go through after the loss of their parents.

Healthcare:



The project oversees the health of the orphans through health talks, demonstrations and regular health check-ups. This program has had volunteer doctors doing medical camps for the children, guardians and members once in a while. They treat ailments such as asthma, skin diseases and worms. The advice from these doctors has had a positive outcome on the health of children who have chronic conditions such as epilepsy and asthma.

Dr. Joanna Jenkins during a medical camp for orphans & guardians

Skills Empowerment Program:



By the end of December, 2014, this project which aims to give sewing skills to the children, was 8 months old and as can be seen, the children have done a lot so far. After their tutoring on clothes-making each Saturday, some children even use the machines to repair their own clothes.

Tailoring class in progress

Shelter Improvement:

During the year, two brother orphans under our care had their house renovated. The family had been living under fear as the roof was leaking and due to the poverty surrounding them, they could not meet the cost of renovation. A local Organization called Kilifi Gold Triathlon, whose goal is to support development projects within the community teamed up with Upendo children, members and Kivukoni School to raise funds for this work.



Improved house for Eric, Justin and their grandmother



House before improvement

Volunteers&Visitors:



Young volunteers from Australia painting chairs for the nursery school



Volunteers planting a tree at Upendo

family visiting Upendo for swimming and much fun.

There were 22 volunteers and 32 visitors during the year. The number of overseas volunteers dropped because of the insecurity being experienced in the Coast region. Volunteers to the Project are engaged in assignments like teaching, reading class, games and sports, home visits, cleaning and playing with the children.

Young people are now waking up to the spirit of volunteerism. In early January, 2014 two young volunteers from Australia, Hugo and Luke Visscher, spent time painting, playing games, singing and dancing with the children. It was a memorable time. They returned to Australia and raised \$2600 for Upendo.

Upendo children teamed up with local organizations called Mwangaza and KESHO where they planted trees at their homes under the supervision of the volunteers from VSO, Upendo staff and had games together. The children were taken to the beach by the volunteers and a

Reading Club:

The Resource Centre has attracted the attention of our children as they read at their pace in a relaxed atmosphere. The teachers also use the Resource Centre for planned reading using the Bill and Cliff Series. It is obvious that the availability of the facility and books will help the children to embrace a reading culture which will strengthen their learning ability. Children from KESHO Organization and Upendo had a reading competition at the Resource Centre. Our local university, Pwani, donated books to emphasize the importance of reading to the children at an early age.



Reading club in session



Upendo children & staff receive books from Pwani University

Gifts & Donations:



A group of youth from a local church



"I was orphaned at 5 years old and now I am donating food to Upendo"

Gifts and donations were received from within and overseas. The project received clothes, food, learning stationery and materials, toys, toothbrushes and other items.

Special Events:



Some of the children celebrate their birthdays through support from their sponsors. This is a time when there is singing, dancing, feasting and the guardian also attends.

The project closed for Christmas break from mid-December to January. A pre-Christmas party was held to give the children an opportunity to celebrate. The project gives them food for the two weeks to stay with their guardians, relatives, friends to socialize and maintain a bond.

In December 2014 a special day was organized where orphans invited their close friends for a party at Upendo. The objective of this event was for the orphans to reveal to their friends and the community at large that despite their predicament in life they have a place where they have been accepted, loved and cared for. They shared ideas and experiences, danced, ate and played together. It was an event which started at 10 a.m. and ended at 4 p.m. The orphans had stories to tell about their friends and appreciated that one of the sponsors had donated for the party.

Upendo Nursery and Primary Schools:



Nursery school pupils & teachers during morning assembly



Primary school pupils during an education tour

The enrolment for the Nursery School this year stood at 66 pupils including 'babies class' through to Kindergarten 3. Four teachers took charge of the classes.

The Primary School now caters for children in Class 1 to 4 and has 62 pupils. Construction of a classroom for Class 5 was begun in early December ready for use in January, 2015. **Looking forward:**



Margaret planting a tree at her leaving party

In September 2014, with help from our Upendo UK partners, we reviewed our administrative capacity and implemented several tools that will help secure the project's future during two important upcoming changes. First, Grace has decided to retire as Administrator in 2016. Grace was a founding member of the project 16 years ago and has been its driving force ever since. Second, Margaret Mackinnon is leaving Kenya and hence must end her 10-year close

involvement with the Orphans Support Project. To support us through these changes, we have formulated a transition plan to see us through the process of securing and handing over to a new leader by the time Grace retires. We have also overhauled the accounting system with the help of Ted Todd and Anthony Katembe, both experienced accountants living in Kilifi, and oversight from Lucy Beales-Harper from Upendo UK. Also, after discussion with the Women's Group and Upendo Kenya Trustees, it was agreed to split the Orphans Support Project and the Schools into two separate projects run by two separate Community Based Organisations. This is to ensure that both projects are financially independent and individually viable, and to simplify the management of both.



Dr Joanna Jenkins(middle), Lucy Beales Harper(right) of Upendo UK and a relative Hannah Floodpage(left) during a visit to Upendo Project in 2014

Thank you:

On behalf of Upendo Orphans Support Project, Kilifi, Kenya, I would like to express our deepest and heartfelt appreciation to our sponsors, friends, well-wishers and other stakeholders who have supported us holistically throughout 2014. We look forward to your support in the coming year.

Grace Mzungu

Administrator

Upendo Methodist CBO

P.S. Please note the changes to our email address. The new Upendo address (emails to Grace) is uorspk@gmail.com and Margaret's new email address is mmackinnon.mackinnon@gmail.com

