

UPENDO METHODIST CBO and ORPHANS SUPPORT PROJECT

2011 NEWSLETTER



The Upendo Methodist Church Women Group, the implementer of Upendo Orphans Support Project was elevated to a community Based Organisation in March 2011 by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Services. This higher status is in recognition of the expansion of their project and the good work they are doing in the community.

The poverty in this community continues to increase the agony of these children. As we support the 52 orphans in our program we are still left with a lot of questions unanswered. What about the children who have not been absorbed into a similar project? Will they get education and other basic needs in life? Will peace prevail in this community if many orphaned and destitute children are not helped? The list is endless...

It is our pleasure to give you some highlights of the activities which took place within 2011.

Education

We have 81 children in our Nursery school and out of these, 7 are orphans in our support project. These children are fully supported for their nursery, primary and secondary education, health care, meals and psychosocial support. A further 16 children (non-orphans) are under our partial sponsorship programme which means they receive free nursery education and day-time meals from us (see below).



Eleven of our orphans are in this school. Academically they are doing very well.

There are 49 orphans in the local public schools where the Orphans Support Project pays for their school fees, uniforms and levies and supervise their educational progress.

The women's Community Based Organization (CBO) started a primary school this year to boost the income for the Orphans Project.



Two girls from the first lot of orphans admitted into Upendo Orphans Support Project in 2003 did their primary school exam in December 2010 and qualified for secondary school intake in January 2011. They joined different secondary schools in Kilifi and Kaloleni district respectively.

Education Day

Guardians and group members gathered to receive progress reports of their children's academic performance and how the group's Nursery and primary schools are doing. The deplorable standards of education as a result of the free primary education system in Kenya were noted. The meeting resolved that extra tuition should be given to our orphans to get them to perform well and join the paid-for, academically excellent national secondary schools.

Feeding

This program caters for 52 orphaned children with breakfast, lunch and supper. In addition, it sells break-time snacks and lunch to 60 fee-paying children at the nursery school which boosts the income for the orphans project.



Due to limited space the children are served in turns. Our two cooks Grace and Jane have continuously managed to cope with the increasing numbers of children. They are offering exemplary service.

Once in a while the business community donates foodstuffs to the project as part of its corporate social responsibility.



Other Donations

Moreton Methodist church in the UK fundraised for purchase of some items for hire to the community to raise funds for the project.

Health care

Our children use the services of the local government hospital for minor ailments. The group's public relations sub-committee, under which the health element of the children falls, conduct special services like giving deworming tablets to children, demonstration of healthy bathing, etc



Psychosocial support

The circumstances the children go through in life call for regular psycho-social support. Group counseling went on throughout the year. There is marked improvement with the children who previously seemed traumatized. This is an ongoing process if funds are available. Home visits for counseling, prayers and donations of food and clothes are done quarterly by group members for the orphans and their extended families in order to create bonds.



Physiotherapy



The project has one boy called Mwinyi around 17 years who is physically disabled. After corrective surgery 3 years ago he has been kept going by the physiotherapy done once a week. It is worthwhile reporting that if it was not for this service Mwinyi would not be walking. The project also provide a meeting place for two other children from the community to receive physiotherapy services.



Outreach program

Monthly food allocations are made to two families (10 children) living about 23km from the Upendo centre. The group members visit them once a quarter for counseling, prayers and helped these families accept the loss of their parents. They are eager to learn and shape their lives. One-to-one counseling has been necessary for these children aged between 2½ - 17 years old.



Volunteers

The project hosted local and overseas volunteers. This provides the orphans with opportunities to interact and learn more about other people and areas.



Partial sponsorship program

A donor in the UK raised money through a horse race night to provide Nursery school education and daily lunch to 16 destitute children for three years. Its expected that after the 3 years the parents/guardians will have organized themselves to further the educational needs of their children.



Development projects.

Apart from the funds received from sponsorship, these children need more support. To boost the non-sponsored financial needs, the project runs a nursery and primary school. In 2012 a day care centre for children between the ages of 1 ½ to 3 year will be opened to give the toddlers an environment which better matches their young age. Money raised from this will be used to support the orphans.

Crafts day

Children from another CBO in Kilifi joined Upendo children to make Christmas decorations for their sponsors and supporters.

End of year party

Children, guardians and group members gather to wish each other a merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Orphans Retreat

Children and group members visited a crocodile farm in Mombasa. A day out with the children is something unique for these socially deprived children, and helps to strengthen their morale and bonds.



All in all, despite the hard environment that these children grow up in, they are safer, healthier and better equipped to face the future, thanks to the enormous support from our sponsors. Many, many thanks for your support in 2011.

