

Upendo Orphans Project

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Dear all

It has been a while since I last updated you on the Upendo orphans project in Kilifi, Kenya, so here goes.....

Sponsorship and funding

- Seventeen of the 20 orphans are now sponsored by regular donations from individuals throughout the world. This ongoing support is critical to ensure that each child obtains their basic nursery and primary school education.
- In addition to regular sponsorship income, we have had several substantial donations from the Karibuni Trust of the UK, the Methodist Church of Kenya, and Heswall United Reformed Church, UK. This money supports the feeding programme, the salary of one of the nursery teachers, and other ongoing costs of running the project.
- The Mercury Phoenix Trust donated money to run two workshops for the women in the group and the guardians of the children on AIDS awareness, orphan and social issues, counselling, and other related topics.
- Many other donations of money from quiz nights, second-hand bazaars, and other charitable activities around the world (e.g., a fun-run by Will Chadwick, card-making and baking by Geelong Grammar School), as well as donations of toys and clothes, have turned up this year. We are definitely in the minds of many well-wishers around Kilifi and elsewhere.

Main achievements of the year

- Increased the provision of food from 1 meal on weekdays to 2 meals per day and on Saturday.
- Set up the tin shed as a teaching area by providing a concrete floor, tables and chairs, and teaching materials. We now have three nursery classes, and have overflowed back into the church.....
- Provided a salary for one nursery school teacher to assist the two retired ladies who teach voluntarily.
- Constructed a cooking shed next to the church.
- Conducted an outreach programme to identify more orphans in need. These are now on our waiting list.
- Run an educational workshop on AIDS for the project members and the children's guardians.
- Acquired 2 blocks of land next to the church, and architect's plans, for our building project.

Visitors

- We have had many visitors to the project, including the Revd Maureen Jones, Felicity Harwood of Mozambique, Alison Hunter of Australia, Anne-Marie Deans (Edinburgh), Ahmed Raza (Edinburgh), Katie Goodwin (USA), Mary and Barry Elford of Oxford, Mohammed Shafi and his Kilifi football lads, the Rotary Club of Kilifi, the Lions Club of Kilifi, Kate and Bert Nokes, a delegation from Barclays Bank, Karibuni Trustees, Tuinane Women's Group and many more.....
- Jane Platten visits the nursery every week with her toy library and reads books to the children.
- You are all welcome to visit the project at any time. Just be ready to kick a football around.....

Goals for the coming year

- Build a new classroom area, rest area for afternoon sleeps, kitchen, office space, counselling rooms and toilet facilities. It is difficult to obtain the money for this from just one source. Thus we are relying on a series of donations from well-wishers and charitable organisations to which we will apply. If you are able to make a donation to the building fund, however small, it would be enormously appreciated. As the building is being underwritten by a supportive individual, we will not need to wait to raise the money before we start construction.
- Expand the programme to take on 10 more orphans and secure sponsorship for them.
- Secure other forms of financial support for the next 5 years.

Thanks so much for your support.

Margaret Mackinnon (Fundraiser) and Grace Mzungu (Chairwoman)