



Mama Orphans Children's Home Busia, Kenya

Newsletter
December 2007



Dear Friends of Mama Orphans,

The last year has seen a lot of activity at Mama Orphans Children's Home. The construction of new dormitories, which began in December 2006 have now been completed and after some final work on plumbing the children will be ready to move in. The new dormitories will house 110 children on two floors. Both floors have bathrooms and showers. The upper floor houses the two girls' rooms and accommodation for a live-in matron and the lower floor houses the two boys' rooms. The new dormitory will be a wonderful home for the children. It will provide them with more space, windows, electricity, their own bed and cupboard space and private indoor plumbing. While we take much of this for granted none of these things were available to the children in their previous rooms. More pictures of the new dormitories will be posted on the website for people interested in seeing the new building.

The Swiss organization Pro Victimis has sponsored the building of the dormitories. One of their representatives visited the site in May and was very happy with the progress of the building and with the running of the orphanage. Pro Victimis has agreed to provide some additional funding for new furnishings for the dormitory, but is looking for other partners to share in the costs. We are therefore currently seeking donations to fund our contribution to the project. Mama Orphans' has submitted a second project proposal to Pro Victimis to build a small school on the site. The school will provide preschool education for the young orphans and will also be an income generating activity for the home as children

from the general public will be attending the school as well.



**The new dormitory nearing completion in
September 2007**

Another Swiss organization, Sidecole, has also been providing support for the orphanage this year. Presently they are covering nursery and primary school expenses as well as the cost of morning and mid-day meals. This support has allowed the home to provide at least a minimum number of meals for all the children and greatly relieved the stress of finding cash to pay for school uniforms and other school expenses at the beginning of the school year. We hope that Sidecole and their donors in Switzerland will continue their support into the future.

One of our main goals this year has been to get the orphanage registered as a charity with the Canadian Revenue Agency. While the home has always been registered in Kenya, we have not yet obtained charity status in Canada. Our application was submitted in August and we hope to have our registration confirmed in six months. As part of the registration process we signed an Agent Agreement between the Foundation and Mama Orphans' Children's Home which outlines five areas in which the Foundation donations should be spent. They include 1) meals, 2) education expenses 3) medical expenses, 4) child care/maintenance staff, and 5) an administrator's salary. Money donated to the Foundation will generally be directed to one of these areas, unless otherwise specified by the trustees or the donors. We will keep you all posted on our registration status.

We have had several visitors and volunteers to the orphanage this year as well. The volunteers have come from Canada, Germany and the Netherlands, have stayed for a few weeks to a few months and have supported Mama and the children in a number of ways. Volunteers provide a wonderful diversion for the children by injecting some new fun



The balconies of the upper floor of the dormitory

and social interaction to their day. The volunteers have been able to help with cooking, cleaning, child care as well as odd jobs around the home. Some of the volunteers have written about their experiences at the orphanage and we will post them on the website for those interested in finding out more.



Children inspecting the stairwell of the new dormitory

Vocational programs have also been put in place at the orphanage. Richard Oduor, husband to Monica, is a contractor and carpenter by trade. In order to provide some job training for the older children he has set up a workshop on the site which provides income generation for the home and a place to teach interested children carpentry skills. Sidecole also provided funds for three sewing machines for a similar income generating and vocational training program. Expensive school uniforms can now be made at home by trainees! Monica has also recently borrowed some money to open a small shop in order to generate more income for her family and (hopefully) the Home.

The orphanage received a very generous donation from a Calgary family this summer. Monica was able to use some of the money to purchase, in the name of the orphanage, a plot of land adjacent to the dormitories. The location of the land is exceptional and the extra space will be used as a much needed playground area for the many children at the home. This is a wonderful gift for the children as they now have a safe space for recreation and are close to home. Funds from this donation have also allowed the Foundation to begin to provide regular money transfers to Mama Orphans every 3 months. This will greatly help the orphanage plan their activities and expenses, so that school fees can be paid on time and a complete diet can be maintained throughout the year. We will be currently providing \$900 per month and while this is still not nearly enough to cover all the unfunded food, clothing and education expenses for the orphanage, it does provide Mama with much needed, regular and ongoing support. We encourage more people to think about providing regular donations so that our quarterly transfers can grow to meet the needs of the home.



The new plot of land adjacent to Mama Orphans Children's Home purchased from a very generous donation from Calgary (Picture taken from dormitory balcony)

While there has been much to celebrate at the home these last few months there have also been some very difficult times. In August there was a chicken pox outbreak and many children grew very ill. Faith, a girl of 16, who was already in compromised health, very sadly, died from complications arising from her chicken pox. Medical care is very expensive in Kenya, and supporting the needs of all the children, especially during an outbreak of this kind is very challenging.

Providing nutritious meals three times a day is, as well, both a logistical and financial struggle. We hope that if regular donations to the Foundation increase, we will be able to provide all the support that the children need and assist Monica to develop more income-generating activities to support the Home in the future.

We are always happy to hear from those of you interested in the orphanage and we are happy to answer questions or listen to comments or suggestions that you may have. Please have a visit our website for more information or to make a donation.

Those wishing to donate online can go to our website at www.kenyanorphans.org or send a cheque to: Kenyan Orphan Children's Foundation #303 1450 Laburnum St. Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6J 3W3

On behalf of Mama Orphans Children's Home, we would like to thank you for all your generous support in the past year

