



Kenyan Orphan Children's Foundation

Newsletter
December 2010



Dear Friends of Mama Orphans,

Greetings and habari to you all. Once again it is time to thank all our donors for their generous support and to update you all on the activities at Mama Orphans Children's Home in the past year.

In June 2010, the Home and the Foundation agreed that the time had come to employ a full-time salaried administrator to ensure that the home is functioning in an efficient and organized manner. In past years, Mama and her children had been administrating the Home on a part-time voluntary basis, but it had recently become clear that the size and complexity of the Home now required someone to do this on a regular basis. Fortunately, Mama's daughter, Betty Oduor had recently completed her degree from Nairobi University and was willing to relocate back to Busia to take on this position. We are thrilled Betty is on board, as she has been actively involved in the orphanage since its inception, and she knows all the children well. The Swiss Organization, SidEcole, which has been a regular supporter the Home since 2006 has agreed to pay for part of Betty's salary.



Betty Oduor (centre), the new administrator, with girls at Mama Orphans' Children's Home

Activities at The Home

Monica and Betty have worked hard this year to get the orphanage and the children involved in the outside community of Busia. In early 2010, MOCH came together with other charity organizations to form the **Network of Children's Organizations in Busia District**. It is hoped that this network can work together to broaden the activities available to the children and gain more public support for these grassroots projects within the Busia District. So far there are eight members.



Towards the end of last year, on the 20th of December 2009, a **Community Traditional Dance Competition** was held in Busia, with children from MOCH competing for the first time.

The children performed under several categories, including traditional dances, modern dances, singing, drama and poetry reading. The children also participated in a fashion show. They were all very pleased with their second place finish!

On May 7th, 2010 the children participated in **World Orphans' Day**, an event to highlight the challenges faced by orphaned children in Kenya and around the world. They again performed a variety of acts,

including traditional Luo dancing. Since this performance they have been invited to perform at several churches and other events in Busia and beyond.

Volunteers

This year, MOCH hosted a number of volunteers from many different countries, including eight from Germany, three from the United Kingdom, two from the Netherlands and one each from Canada and Switzerland. The volunteers have been involved in small projects, as well as the daily activities that go on in the Home. Volunteers often bring with them skills they can share with the children. Social activities, new games and sports are always highly anticipated when someone new arrives.



Eli and Fidel having a bath in the sunshine

The Home has now renovated a few rooms in a former rental house to accommodate volunteers. It is self-contained and includes a kitchen. Volunteers are always welcome and anyone interested in visiting Mama Orphans Home and/ or volunteering should contact Betty Oduor at mamaorphans@yahoo.com.

Please visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WjbZlnznFW8> to view a moving video made by Jess Barre, a former volunteer for Mama and an active supporter of the orphanage and read our **Volunteer Spotlight** on the following page.

Agriculture

In the new plot of land, purchased through donations from the Foundation in 2008, the Home has now planted a small garden. The children are being taught how to grow vegetables to supplement the food which is purchased for the Home. The most successful crop to date has been the local variant of kale, known as 'sukumawiki'. The children have also been involved in planting and growing maize, tomatoes and peas.

On part of the same plot of land, The Home has also been involved in raising chickens. The project began last year and has already contributed some supplemental meat to the children's diet.

Thank You

Finally we want to send out a very special thank you to all our donors this year. There have been many of you and all have been very generous. Your interest in and support of the orphanage is so gratefully received in Busia. Crossroads United Church in Delta and Calgary's St. Andrew' United have continued to be our strongest supporters. Thank you for continuing to remember us.

Why not sponsor a child?

Providing the full costs of tuition for an individual secondary-school aged child is estimated to be approximately \$360 per year, or about \$30 per month. If you are interested in sponsoring an individual child or just making regular monthly contributions to Kenyan Orphan Children's Foundation please contact us at admin@kenyanorphans.org for further information.

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

**THANK YOU AND
MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!**

Spotlight on Betty Langtry, long-time supporter of Mama Orphans



It seems as if we have been connected with MOCH forever. Until four years ago our connection to Mama consisted of putting extra money in the collection plate on special Sundays for the orphans. Then we began planning for our trip to Africa in 2006. I got in touch with the Foundation and received more information about the orphanage and how I would get there. In preparation we took up special collections and spread the word that we were going to the orphanage. We took what money we had collected to Mama and were treated royally. Our eyes, hearts and souls were opened when we met the orphans and Mama. After we had visited the orphanage and Colleen came to speak to the church everyone, including the children seemed to take the orphanage to heart. Small children would give their birthday gift money to the orphans and a lot of people kept a jar for their pennies /change to send to the orphans.

Mama would send us her wish list and we would let the congregation know. We would ask for a special collection and it just seemed to happen. Leslie, the daughter of another member of our church visited following us and the connection continued. I made up business cards which I pass out to people when I tell them about the orphanage. I do this at every opportunity. Also I have made up gift cards/ memorial cards saying that: To celebrate this occasion/ In memory of ____ a gift has been sent to the Foundation.

As one of the fund raisers for our 2009 trip I took a "Pennies For Orphans" jar around with me to all

our square dances . We usually have a 50/50 draw so I would shake it loudly. We also had a large jar at church. Money from garage sales, pancake suppers, lunches and donations added up . My cousin in Calgary heard about this and wanted to know what her "Stitch Group" could do so I had them make goody bags for Christmas Day. We had so many donations to fill these bags we couldn't take them all. My husband surprised me with a 70th birthday party and instead of gifts, money was donated to the Home.

I have become very good at making people feel guilty about all they have and don't hesitate to ask for donations. When we made our second trip to Africa in 2009, our friends surprised us by asking if they could come with us. People are more generous now that they know they get a tax receipt. At church for Mother's Day we had Mama's Day. We had put up pictures of the orphans all around the church, played African music and we all wore African outfits that Mama has given us over the years. I asked if the orphanage would like a logo as they really didn't have one and my husband's niece designed one for the orphans and foundation to use.

This fall another young member of Crossroads United Church visited the orphanage and Leslie has planned a second trip in February, so it goes on. Thinking about how we connected with the orphanage, George & I and Colleen's family I think God had his hand in this, and that this was supposed to happen. I only wish I was younger and had more years to help the orphanage.

Betty Langtry



Mama Orphans Children's Home

