

Newsletter

Harambee For Kenya



No.4 February 08

How things change in such a short space of time! We had a wonderful Christmas as did the children in the safe house. We ensured that money was sent to buy the younger ones Christmas presents and enough to treat the older ones. (They decided they wanted food). We also sent enough money to buy 4 chickens, sweet potatoes, vegetables and cakes so that they could have a lovely Christmas meal. On Christmas morning we telephoned Thomas to see how they were and were very pleasantly surprised to be able to speak to some of the children as Thomas was there with his family ensuring they were well. The youngsters sounded so excited. It was great to hear their voices. We really wished we were there to join in with their excitement.

Then the trouble started. What a terrible shame. The Kenyan people are such lovely people and have always treated us well and cared for us when we visit. Our children are safe in the house in Kisii and Thomas has kept us posted regularly. Unfortunately we heard at the beginning of February that one of the older ones, Rasta, was killed. He was in his late teens and still went into town to earn pocket money. We don't know what exactly happened but we do not believe it was directly due to the tribal problems Kenya has been experiencing. But all the children who have remained in the house are very safe.

We heard some amazing news at the end of January. When all the problems started in December, between 27th December and 5th January, there were 75 children in our safe house. 45 more arrived to stay safe during the problems. Once things started to calm down they returned to the streets. It is sad that they returned but to be honest we would have struggled to keep them there had they stayed. But we do consider ourselves honoured that our children felt comfortable inviting them in and that the extra youngsters felt they could come to the safe house. But it certainly shows the needs there are. In fact Thomas has said that since all the troubles there are many more orphans. So there is still plenty of work to be done.

We have started a fostering scheme and have three children safely fostered. Hudson was our first and you can see a picture of him here in his school uniform. Two others, brothers, Alex and Eric are also with a family. They had to be fostered because poor Alex has a very serious wound to his leg which is infected and he still needs treatment at hospital. So there was a need for him to be cared for more closely in order that his leg could be treated and cleaned regularly. It cost £10 per month per child to cover the food costs. We give this to the foster parents in order that they do not struggle with one extra mouth to feed. We need help with this so if you would like to sponsor a foster child then please contact us and we will keep you informed of their progress.



In the UK, there is a government initiative of "Every Child Matters".

It is when you see the plight of some of the children in Kenya it makes you appreciate the help we have in the UK....even if we don't think it works too well. Every child **does** matter. Help us to help them.

Meet Dennis

Dennis is 11yrs old. His mother and father were married and went tea picking. His father died and so his mother returned with her two boys to their village where they had land and she was described as "loose living". Their mother then became sick and died. Dennis ended up on the streets and his younger brother who is about six, was sent to a children's home. Their mother and father had land but their Uncle sold it so the children were left with nothing. Dennis likes it at the safe house. He says 'it is safe and I can eat'. Dennis would like to go to school. He was at school before but left at 7yrs old.

Our thanks go to the following people for their support.

Imberhorne School

Oathall School Ashdown Park Hotel

Lewisham Manor District Scouts

Mark & Vicky Dann



Eric (9) and Alex(6). Alex has a badly infected leg and needs hospital treatment.

Help us to raise money at no cost to you!

Go onto our website. If you click on one of the adverts that you are interested in, Google will pay us a few cents. (Look for cheap flights here before you surf the net) Every penny/cent helps and this should help us to raise extra funds. And while you are on the website, please leave us a message in our guestbook. Thank you.

Thank you for your support.

If you have any ideas for this newsletter please contact us at

info@harambeeforkenya.org

Malloy Nyakwama is a Volunteer Children's Welfare Officer who is helping us find the children who need help the most. The first night we met Malloy we were impressed. He has earned the trust of the street children and has a terrific insight into their lives. This is what he told us:-

The authorities are pleased with what you are doing because if the boys are removed from the streets, this helps to stop the girls being on the streets as they tend to be there at night.

There are three families on the streets, street boys, street girls and street families (parents with kids).

The boys control territories called "bases". Each base does something different. These include, selling old plastic bags found elsewhere; pick pocketing; finding pieces of charcoal and selling them; begging; baggage carrying; robbery. The boys are not allowed to change bases once they are in one, as they all have different territories and roles.

The boys have to contribute between 5/- and 10/- (shillings) per day to the base commander. (this is worth about 4p to 8p. To give you a guide, the cost of a bread roll is about 5/-) If they do not contribute in this way they are **bitten**.

Within the bases the boys look for leaders; advocates; counsellors; a welfare person; a spiritual leader (this boy is usually one who attends church); a mediator (a good communicator); a commander (usually wary of him and use him wisely). They also have a social person who encourages music, dance, & poetry within their base.

Sometimes they have an "exchange program". This is when they send a boy into another base area to "sus" out what others are doing. They are very wary of new people as they can give them a bad name.

It can take as long as 2 years to stabilise the children.

We will have more news from Malloy soon.

Trustees; Roger Dann (Chairman), Lesley Dann, Patricia Musgrave, Chloe Durow, Michael Wilding, Jackie Cooper
21 Cuckmere Rise, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 8PG 01435 865502.

www.harambeeforkenya.org

Charity Number 1121597