

Action for Children in Conflict in Kenya



Action for Children in Conflict (Linus, 7 yrs , focusing on beadwork at our Interim Care Centre)

Annual Report 2007

Action for Children in Conflict

Action for Children in Conflict (AfCiC) works to break cycles of violence, hatred and despair by providing psychological, emotional and educational support for survivors of conflict to enable these survivors to come to terms with their past experiences, make the most of their present and build a better future.

Our work focuses on children and young adults as often they are the most vulnerable during and after conflict and the most able to overcome the conflicts in their communities and to bring about change in the future.

Executive Summary

2007 was another great year for Action for Children in Conflict in Kenya. We continued to be a very effective organisation in both prevention and rehabilitation of street children, contributing to a 40% plus reduction in the numbers of street children in Thika Town since we started our programmes in 2004 (Street Census 2007).

Our programmes continued to grow and play a crucial role in protecting and assisting vulnerable and at risk children in Thika. We now have 173 children successfully rehabilitated from our residential Interim Care Centre for street children back in the community; in school, with their families, in skills training or employment. We have a further 114 doing well in local public primary schools from our Day Care Centre for street children and 20 older street youth in skills training or employment.

We also have 12 former street children now attending Secondary School with our support and performing well. We have set up over 25 small businesses for the parents of the children we assist and have more loans planned. We are supporting 7 families through our new family sponsorship programme, providing initial financial support to families following the completion of rehabilitation at our centre and plan to support more. We are actively involved with the communities in Kiandutu, Kiganjo, Omoja and Kiangombe slums and in Thika Town, providing free training and support to enable communities to support themselves.

Demand for our legal services at our Kenya Children's Legal Aid Work (KCLAW) programme has never been greater and we took on 135 new cases in 2007, dealing with child abuse, neglect, maintenance and rape. We also took our services into rural communities in Thika District and provided free specialised training on children's rights and child abuse to police officers, prison wardens, teachers, social workers, hospital staff and community leaders and elders. Our legal provision is unique, dynamic and extremely effective with a success rate of 67% in our family mediation work since 2004 and 61% in all cases we undertake. These are phenomenal figures in the highly controversial work we are involved in, particularly in relation to child abuse.

2007 was also a year of farewells and new beginnings. AFCIC-Kenya saw the departure of Anne McClure, our Country Director for the last two years for a new posting with the International Rescue Committee in Sudan. Anne brought a wealth of knowledge and expertise to AFCIC-Kenya, particularly in relation to Human Resources, and left the organisation in a much stronger position than when we started. We also said a fond farewell to Freddy Njau Nyambura, our wonderful Teacher at the Interim Care Centre for a scholarship to study an education degree in the United States and of Dave Rooney, a long term Australian volunteer who played a key role in the development of Michezo Youth Initiative.

We welcomed our new Country Director, Eleanor Harrison in July, bringing with her skills, knowledge and expertise from other parts of Kenya, Uganda, Bosnia and the UK in education, human rights and advocacy, alongside project management and development. We also welcomed Margaret Juma as our new teacher at the Interim Care Centre, bringing with her fresh ideas, new teaching styles and a passion to help the most in need.

Everyone in the AFCIC-Kenya team has been working hard in 2007 to take the organisation forward and build on our strengths so that we are able to share our success and expertise with other organisations

working with street children and on children's rights and also to expand our programmes to assist more in need.

As I write, we are experiencing the aftermath of post election violence that has destroyed the social fabric of Kenya. Many lives have been lost, property and homes destroyed and hundreds of thousands displaced. We are witnessing ethnic animosity on an unprecedented scale and the future appears uncertain. We hope for a positive peace that not only addresses the direct violence that we are experiencing but also the structural violence that unfortunately permeates Kenyan Society, linked to endemic poverty, high youth unemployment, unequal land distribution, lack of women's and children's rights and lack of access to genuinely free education. AFCIC-Kenya has a key role to play in assisting the over 2000 displaced children that have now arrived in Thika District and in promoting peace and reconciliation in the community. Amongst our staff we have expertise in helping traumatised children, in providing legal redress on issues relating to the violation of rights, in family tracing and reunification and in the provision of income generating loans, school feeding programmes and school assistance. With our new country Director we also have invaluable experience in running peace and reconciliation programmes.

So far we have assisted over 100 families with food relief, basic items, legal advice and school assistance and expenses. We have 16 displaced children (additional beneficiaries) currently on our feeding programme at St Patrick's Primary School. We have also run educational activities for the hundreds of children being temporarily accommodated at the Internally Displaced Persons Camp located in Thika Stadium, and have been able to rescue girls at the camp who were being sexually molested.

The challenge is to raise the necessary funds to continue this good work. Tragically in the NGO sector currently, it is not always those who provide the best services for and with the community, but those who shout the loudest who secure funds. We must work to raise our profile locally, nationally and internationally and advocate more strongly for our programmes. We also have a duty to share our best practice with other organisations to ensure that as many vulnerable street children as possible receive high quality care and assistance.

Finally I like to express my appreciation and thanks to Anne and Eleanor, alongside our excellent managers in Josephine, Danny and Evans, the other trustees who have showed continued commitment and selfless dedication to AFCIC-Kenya in 2007 and all the wonderful, hardworking staff that we have. The strength, professionalism and passion of our team makes AFCIC-Kenya the success we are in helping the most disadvantaged and ostracised, vulnerable children. Let us strive to do even more in 2008.

Charles Mwiha
Chairman
Action for Children in Conflict in Kenya

1. Day Care Centre for Street Children, Thika, Kenya



Action for Children in Conflict
Maina, 15 yrs, happy after lunch at the Day Care Centre

The Day Care Centre has been operating since 2004, meeting the needs of vulnerable street children and their families throughout Thika and the surrounding areas. Our primary objectives at the centre are the identification and rehabilitation of street children. We also conduct advocacy and awareness raising work, parental training and support and act as a referral unit for our 6 month residential rehabilitation programme for severely at risk children (Interim Care Centre).

In summary, the main purposes of the Day Care Centre are:

- Identification of street children in Thika Town and other areas of Thika (Makongeni, Kiandutu slum, Kiganjo slum) through weekly outreach work and on-going monitoring and evaluation work.
- Rehabilitation of street children through home visits, non formal education (basic literacy and numeracy), skills training and counselling,
- Referral of severely at-risk and abused children to our Interim Care Centre
- Advocacy and awareness raising
- On-going support for former street children who are back with their families, in school or in work

The main activities at the Day Care Centre are:

- Provision of a structured routine for street children (10am- 4pm: children must attend throughout the day) with non-formal education (basic literacy & numeracy), individual and group counselling, hygienic washing facilities, life skills lessons, sport and recreational activities and on-site skills training in Barbership, Tailoring, Beadwork & Football Making
- Weekly street outreach work
- Provision of skills training placements in the community with local tradesmen
- Provision of life skills lessons in poor public schools since November 2007

- Follow up work on rehabilitated street children
- Home Visits & School Visits for current and former street children

Key Achievements January-December 2007

Statistics

- We provided over 4500 services to street children
- We provided direct support to 81 parents through counselling, home visits and income generating activities)
- We conducted 32 Home visits and with street children to understand their family life and facilitate reunification where appropriate
- We conducted 23 school visits to ensure former street children are settled in school & address any ongoing issues
- We provided over 5500 meals to street children in our Day Care Centre
- We provided over 450 hours of Non-Formal Education
- We successfully reunited 6 children with their families
- We successfully assisted 5 children to go back to primary school
- We helped 2 older street youth to set themselves up in employment
- We supported 3 older street youth in skills training
- We facilitated the development of 8 new Income Generating Activities enabling parents and older street youth to lead successful, independent lives. These include the Boda-Boda Business (Bicycle Transport), Bead-making & Jewellery, Vegetable Selling, Shoes & Cloth Selling & Farming.
- 3 former street children will be starting Secondary School this month (January 2008)
- We continue to support 114 former street children in public school through assistance with school uniform, books, pens, feeding & counselling & positive encouragement
- We continue to support 3 former street children in Secondary School (Martha, Anthony & Loise)
- We have provided free life skills lessons at poor public schools since November 2007
- We have coordinated 4 parent and community training days to provide education and an open space for parents to learn and share about their children
- We assisted 5 older street youth in obtaining National Identity Cards which are essential in gaining employment in Kenya. This was a significant achievement and required successful liaison between our social workers and the Chief's office in Thika.

New Activities since January 2007

- Acrobatics – it was identified through our children's evaluation in October 2007 that the children are keen to learn new skills and need to be kept active. Acrobatics was identified as a key interest alongside other activities and has proved very successful.

- On-site skills training in Tailoring, Football Making, Barbership/ Hairdressing, Painting and Drawing following our in-depth evaluation with staff, volunteers and children in September and October 2007.
- Life skills lessons in poor public schools on HIV/AIDS, STDs, Drug Abuse, Environment, street life etc. as a prevention and early intervention measure to stop vulnerable children from moving into the street.
- Savings partnerships with older street youth to enable and foster self-reliance, ownership and responsibility amongst the youth and also introduce the concept of management of finance.

New & On-going Challenges: DCC & ICC

In September 2007, Action for Children in Conflict coordinated a Census on Street Children in Thika with the local government, local council, police and local children's organisations. The data collected through the census indicated that Action for Children in Conflict has played a key role in reducing the number of street children in Thika Town since 2004 (a 40% reduction). An analysis of the data also indicated that there are new challenges, new areas of concern and new bases for street children in the Thika area that need to be addressed to ensure that we continue to be an effective organisation and fully meet the needs of the children we aim to serve.

New areas of concern

- Increase of street children working at the markets in Makongeni (industrial area near Thika)
- Increase in street children working with scrap metal dealers in Thika
- Increase in numbers of children attending school and then coming to the streets in the evening in search of food or money for food
- Increasing numbers of street children on the street because of family problems and abuse rather than in search of food. This fact makes family mediation, support and reunification much more complex.
- Increasing number of older youth who feel that they cannot go back to school and would rather access skills training
- Increasing number of "street adults" preying on and manipulating children on the streets

Finally, we are beginning to experience the fall out and humanitarian crisis caused by the post election violence that has rocked Kenya in the last two months. There are now approximately 4500 displaced persons in the area in search of security and means of survival. We are preparing ourselves to meet this need and serve these traumatised children and their families in the most effective way, providing early interventions to stop children from being forced to the street in search of survival.

One other challenge which has been caused by our success in rehabilitating street children is that we now have former street children successfully completing Standard 8 in Primary School and wanting to attend Secondary School. This is an incredible achievement but requires additional school fees (despite various promises secondary school fees are not free) which we must now solicit funds for. These children now have dreams and aspirations and that is a wonderful thing, and we have a responsibility to help them continue to access education and to realise their ambitions.

Vision 2008: Meeting the needs of street children

- A new outreach service in Makongeni for street children (an area where our services have not traditionally been available but where there is a desperate need and demand for our work).
- Research on prevalence of street children in Ruiru, Juja, Wiathiere – extremely deprived areas of Thika.
- A follow up Street Census in September 2008 – to monitor our progress to date and to assess whether we have been successful in achieving the aims we set ourselves after the 2007 Census.
- More structured and diverse skills training opportunities for older street youth.
- A new School Drop Out Prevention Project for teachers (using our expertise to train them to respond effectively to children with problems) and children, particularly those in Standard 4 and below.
- More income generating activities for impoverished, but capable parents.
- A Business Plan and business support to address the particular needs of street adults on both an individual and group basis.
- Supported teacher training diploma for former street children.
- 3 Educational Tours to: a vital contribution towards personal development and education of the young people we work with.
- Internet & computer access & training for street children so that they are not left behind by their peers in this crucial field.
- Support for former street children successfully completing Standard 8 in primary school to access secondary school education, enabling them to secure decent work in the future and support themselves and their families.
- Sharing expertise and best practice with other agencies to assist street children in other areas of East Africa.
- Child exit strategies for each child: a tailored plan for long-term rehabilitation and reintegration of each individual child, particularly focusing on the small stagnant group older youths.
- Expansion into Youth Services for vulnerable children in Thika, including youth clubs in the early evenings, assisting in the early detection of child abuse, neglect and school problems.

Summary

The staff and volunteers at the Day Care Centre: Evans (Manager), Daina (Teacher), Anne (Social Worker), Peter (Social Worker), Margaret (Cook), Newton, Mark and Alan (volunteers) worked extremely hard to deal with our most difficult and challenging children and parents in 2007 and succeeded in achieving the above mentioned successes. The lessons learnt have fostered new innovations in terms of dealing with more vulnerable children in the year 2008 and we look forward to a busy, but successful year ahead.

2. Interim Care Centre for Street Children, Thika, Kenya



Action for Children in Conflict
Interim Care Centre Children & Staff October 2007

The Interim Care Centre has been operating since 2005, meeting the needs of vulnerable street children and their families throughout Thika and the surrounding areas. Our primary objective at the centre is the rehabilitation of street children who require more in-depth or intensive therapy/rehabilitation. We also conduct advocacy and awareness raising work, parental training and support and community mobilisation.

In summary, the main purposes of the Interim Care Centre are:

- Rehabilitation of street children in Thika Town and other areas of Thika (Makongeni, Kiandutu slum, Kiganjo slum) through an intensive six month residential programme. Children are referred to the centre through our Day Care Centre, other street children's organisation and the local District Children's Officer.
- Re-unification of street children with their families through home visits, individual and family counselling and income generating activity loans to parents.
- Enabling of children to return to school through intensive non formal education lessons daily (basic literacy and numeracy).
- Enabling of children to enter sustainable employment where appropriate through provision of skills training.
- Advocacy and awareness raising.
- On-going support for former street children who are back with their families, in school or in work.

The main activities at the Interim Care Centre are:

- Provision of a structured routine for street children with a timetable including non-formal education (basic literacy & numeracy), individual and group counselling, hygienic washing facilities, life skills lessons, sport and recreational activities.

- Provision of skills training placements in the community with local tradesmen where appropriate
- Follow up social work on rehabilitated street children
- Home Visits & School Visits
- Family Sponsorship for reunited families since December 2007

Key Achievements January-December 2007

Statistics

- We directly assisted 213 children through our centre either in residence or as Day Scholars.
- We provided protected shelter/residence for 52 vulnerable street children during this period
- We provided direct support to 70 parents through counselling, home visits and income generating activities)
- We conducted 96 Home and school visits and with street children to understand their family life and facilitate reunification where appropriate and source suitable schools for children to return to.
- We provided over 1500 meals to street children in our Interim Care Centre
- We provided over 600 hours of Non-Formal Education
- We successfully reunited 39 children with their families
- We successfully assisted 31 children to go back to primary school
- We supported 4 older street youth in skills training
- We facilitated the development of 12 new Income Generating Activities enabling parents and older street youth to lead successful, independent lives. These include Vegetable Selling, Shoes & Cloth Selling, Cake Selling & Farming.
- We continue to support 1 former street child in special school for deaf and mute children (John Chege)
- We continue to support 22 former street children at St Francis Children's Village School in Meru with fees, food, clothing, support and counselling.
- We successfully coordinated 4 innovative parent and community training days to provide education and an open space for parents to learn and share about their children

New & Ongoing Activities since January 2007

- Acrobatics
- Rabbit Keeping, Goat Keeping & Chicken Rearing – helping to develop nurturing skills in the children and to build their sense of responsibility & ownership in activities producing positive results.
- Community Participation: children clean and volunteer at local Police Station – leading to improved relations between the street children, police and Action for Children in Conflict.
- Visits by residents of ICC to Kiangombe & Thika District Hospital: providing support to impoverished & vulnerable communities in Thika, teaching children to give something back to the community.

- Income Generating Activities for parents.
- Family Sponsorship for children who successfully complete rehabilitation but who, without follow up financial support, are at risk of falling back to the streets because of poverty in their family.
- Bead making to improve skills in concentration, numeracy, patience and art and as a means of income generation for the centre (beads are sold locally, nationally and internationally).
- Street Census in September 2007: residents of the ICC helped with the coordination(?) of the Census.
- Staff visits to Arusha, Tanzania & Uganda to share best practice and increase our knowledge of different programmes.

Vision 2008

- Networking with other street children's organisations to improve referrals to our rehabilitation programme.
- Follow up Street Census in September 2008.
- More structured skills training opportunities for older street youth & assistance with accessing the labour market.
- More income generating activities for impoverished, but capable parents.
- 3 Educational Tours to develop the young people we work with
- Internet & computer access & training for street children
- Support for former street children successfully completing Standard 8 in primary school so that they can attend secondary school.
- Sharing expertise and best practice with other agencies to assist street children in other areas
- Symbolic graduation ceremonies for those children who successfully complete our rehabilitation programme
- Staff de-briefing sessions to improve links between our day and night services.
- Have our own land thereby providing security, safety and a better environment for our children and to make us more cost-effective (money saved from high rents)

Summary

2007 was a very busy year for the Interim Care Centre. As we continue to support our children back in the community with their families, our numbers have continued to grow – currently standing at 173. This is both an incredible achievement and incredible challenge. We have worked hard to develop new links with other organisations, raise our profile and assist the communities in Thika through free training, empowerment, counselling and regular activities. We are excited about 2008 and very much look forward to obtaining our own land. Land will make us more self-sufficient and economically sustainable. It will also enable us to build a facility for ICC that is child friendly, responsive to the needs of disabled children, encourages educational learning and creates a productive environment for both children and staff.

Finally, our staff and volunteers worked extremely hard to achieve all this and a note of thanks is essential to Josephine (Manager), Elizabeth (House Mother), Edward (House Father), Florence (Senior Social Worker),

Margaret and Freddie (Teachers), Catherine (Counsellor) and Newton, Mark, Anne, Jane, Paul and Ester (Volunteers). These successes are only possible through your dedication, professionalism and passion for our work and the most vulnerable children in Thika.

3. KCLAW (Kenya Children's Legal Aid Work)



Action for Children in Conflict (KCLAW Client)
Cecilia Wangari & Son, being supported through family sponsorship (KCLAW Client)

KCLAW has been operating since 2004 to meet the needs of vulnerable children and their families in Thika. Its services are guided by the following framework:

- Provision of legal aid.
- Community education programmes.
- Advocacy on Law and Policy reform/research.
- Public interest cases.

Provision of legal aid

- The demand for KCLAW's services by the community continued to rise. In 2007 we received a total of 152 new cases. This is an increase from the 137 cases in 2006, and is a clear indication that the community sees our services as a great help to vulnerable children. This high demand also reflects the total absence of other vital legal aid services provided by NGOs or government structures in the Thika District.
- The majority of our case load continues to be child neglect, support & maintenance, but we have also handled a variety of other cases including child abuse, succession, medical, sponsorship, custody and family reintegration.
- We noted a significant rise in cases of child sexual abuse and plan more dynamic advocacy programmes to effectively address this problem in 2008.

Whilst we have two excellent qualified and experienced Legal Advisors, the KCLAW project is unable to employ a full time solicitor to represent cases in court on our behalf. In providing legal aid, we have continued to draw assistance from pro bono lawyers within Thika and these have become a most valuable component of our programme. We plan to increase the number of pro

bono Lawyers as finances permit, to help us respond to an ever increasing case load and to improve court intervention and to increase prosecution rates, particularly in cases of child sexual abuse.

As part of AFCIC-Kenya's in-depth evaluation and analysis of programmes in September and October 2007, we conducted an impact assessment on KLCAW's work. From this we can report that 67% of our cases since our inception in 2004 have been successfully resolved through our family mediation approach. This is a high rate of success for family mediation work by any standards (local or international).

Community education programme

- Children's Rights Workshops provided at St Patrick's, Garissa Road and Thika Memorial Primary Schools to Standard 7 & 8 Pupils, educating them on their rights and responsibilities.
- A Children's Rights programme and competition was run at St Patrick's Primary School on preventing child abuse. Posters, bookmarks and leaflets were produced by the children for distribution.
- We ran a highly successful Child Sexual Abuse Workshop (April) for key stakeholders in Thika, including: the District Children's Officer, Charitable Children's Institutions, Community Workers, staff from Thika District hospital, teachers, social workers, the police, and probation.
- We then ran a series of follow up workshops in rural areas in Central Province. We focused mainly on the area of child sexual abuse but also included a component of poverty reduction & income generation which made the workshops more wholesome and nourishing. These communities kept crying for more but our limited resources stood in the way. It became quite obvious that the public are hungry for information that can help improve their lives. We have received written request to conduct more workshops this year.
- We developed a new programme "*Cops and Kids Conflict Resolution Dialogue*" to address the need for constructive dialogue between street children and the police and the need for positive educational and vocational role models. This has proved to be very successful in building relations between our street children, the police and between the police and AFCIC.
- We developed English and Kiswahili leaflets on the Children's Act and Parental Responsibility for distribution.
- During the year a civil case was filed in Court against St. Patrick Primary School to stop the construction of a multi million project for the special unit which was being funded by Lions

International in partnership with the Lions of Thika. Kclaw provided free legal advice and support and the case was thrown out.

Research & Advocating for Law and Policy reform.

- Our KCLAW Project Manager was nominated by the Provincial Children’s Officer, to represent the whole of Kenya’s Central Province at the UNICEF-funded national *World Fit*
- We provided free legal training for members of the Area Advisory Council (AAC) for Thika District on the “Orphans & Vulnerable children” cash transfer program. AFCIC was also elected to represent the NGO sector in the core committee appointed to implement the project. The project targeted families from the slums and other locations with high poverty levels within the district. The project has so far benefited over 276 households with orphaned children in their care.
- KCLAW was called upon & continued to play an active, guiding, advisory & crucial role in the Thika District Area Advisory Committee. This committee has a duty & authority over all child-related matters in the district.
- KCLAW in partnership with the Leadership for Development Centre was involved in conducting several workshops in Thika District to create awareness on human rights & to prepare them to present their suggestions both written and oral to the Kenya Human Rights Commission.
- KCLAW developed a good working relationship with the media, leading to positive articles and features on AFCIC’s activities in the print media and broadcast on radio & television. We have had a very fruitful working relationship with local radio station Inooro FM, who have been referring children to us for help.

Working with other programmes

- KCLAW continues to work well with the other AFCIC programs and in particular the Interim Care Centre (ICC) & Day Care Centre (DCC) by drawing on each other's strengths & abilities.
- With support & guidance from the Country Director, KCLAW has developed survey forms which our clients are filling up to enable us assess & evaluate our services.
- KCLAW was engaged in creating a child protection policy together with other representatives from the ICC, and DCC, including volunteers and an elected child representative. This was an exercise that demanded close attention to detail and thorough deliberation. The project was a success.
- KCLAW's clients have benefited from invaluable counselling services, food support and income generating activities from the ICC & DCC building the links between our respective programmes.
- KCLAW organised to have the Thika District Children Officer visit St. Francis Street Children village in Meru where 22 of our children receive shelter & quality education. The Children officer was very impressed and was of the opinion that it was a golden opportunity for our children. She hoped AFCIC would one day in the near future build and own such an institution.

Internally Displaced People

- KCLAW has visited 2 camps for the victims of the recent violence in Kenya to assess the situation & see how we can intervene. We visited Kirathimo in Limuru, Tigoni & Thika stadium where we held discussions with victims of the violence. We have already received and intervened in a couple of cases of the internally displaced people. This area will receive our attention in the coming months

Challenges

- Lack of sufficient funds to take all cases that required court action to the courts
- Lack of suitable office equipment – we continue to function with only one old desktop computer
- Lack of transport to visit clients in remote parts of Central Province
- Lack of sufficient personnel to handle the level of client demand.
- Ongoing balance between casework and our advocacy work._

Achievements & Success stories:

- KCLAW continued to record good progress and success in its mission to make this world a better place for our children. We faithfully stayed the course in speaking for many voiceless children & intervening for the needy and vulnerable among them.
- We carried out successful mediations between warring parents for the welfare of their children. Our success rate in mediation was about 67%. As a result children started to receive support & maintenance from their parents who had there before neglected them.
- We stood by children who had survived physical, sexual & other abuse, supported them and did our best to bring the culprits to justice. We gave the children and their parents/guardians counselling, legal & other advice, wrote to the police, confronted perpetrators etc.
- We presented and pleaded the cause of children in local & national forums.
- Following are a sample of cases KLCWA faces on a daily basis (names have been changed).
 - Helen was 3 ½ years old when a 35 year old man raped her. She did not report it to her mother as he had warned her of dire consequences if she did. More than that she didn't even know what it was that he had done to her except that it was painful. Her mother only came to know about it when she was changing Helen's inner clothes and Helen complained of pain. Initially the police were unwilling to investigate and arrest the man, advising Helen's mother to settle it with him for a small payment. KCLAW stepped in and now the man is facing the full force of the law reserved for such criminals in a Magistrate's Court.
 - Lora and her elder sister were abandoned by their Father 13 years ago. Their parents went separate ways and their father got himself a new wife. Their mother struggled to raise them and give them an education. It was a hard task as she was unemployed, living in a rented house and sickly. When Lora was admitted to secondary school, her mother could not raise the fees and other necessities for Lora. Lora came to KCLAW for assistance. KCLAW moved in and put its mediation skills to full use. In less than a month Lora was in secondary School with her father paying the school fees. In another 3 months, the father was also paying fees for Lora's elder sister. Lora is now in her 2nd year and her elder sister in her 3rd secondary school. The father is still faithfully discharging his parental responsibility to his said daughters.
- We know there is urgent need to intervene before these tragic situations become the norm in society and the inhumane treatment of our children grows.

- Rosemary, a child, was raped in 2005 whilst coming home from school. At that time she was in class 3. The rapist was well known to her, and all the evidence needed for the case was available. The rapist came from a wealthy & influential family. They were determined use their resources & influence to defeat justice. KCLAW initially referred the matter to one of our pro bono Lawyers, Catherine, who helped prepare the child and her family for the court process & cross-examination. At one point the Court gave one last adjournment to the prosecution on account of the fact that the Doctor did not turn up in Court to give evidence on 4 occasions although he had been summoned. This created a high risk of the case being thrown out for lack of medical evidence. KCLAW instructed and facilitated Waithira Mwangi & Co. Advocates to hold a watching brief in Court for the child. This intervention made the Doctor attend Court and give evidence. The rapist was convicted & has now been sentenced for 20 years in prison. The child, Rosemary is now in class 5 and is doing well.
- Through the experiences & challenges we have encountered in our work, KCLAW has been growing & developing its programme to improve & increase our services to the ever-increasing numbers of children who so urgently need and cry out for our services.

Vision 2008: Legal access and Justice for the most vulnerable

- To continue to be the lead provider of high quality, free legal advice and support in Thika District
- To focus on key areas of need in children's rights and lobby on these key issues: child abuse, family mediation and child labour. Doing so will ensure that many of the problems which cause children to break ties with their families, to leave home and drift to the streets, will be addressed and resolved.
- To provide an opportunity for our female clients to share their stories and advocate for change through AFCIC's forthcoming performing arts project *Hear Our Voice*.
- KCLAW will coordinate AFCIC's Child Labour sensitisation campaign with scrap metal and plastic dealers in Thika area to reduce or end their exploitation of young children for economic profit.
- Specialised Police & Prison Warden's training on street children issues – no other organisation or body is currently providing this service in Central Province.
- Specialist training for Children's Magistrates and officials at Children's Courts – no other organisation or body is currently providing this service in Central Province.
- Investigate accreditation for our courses with Law Society of Kenya – thereby potentially enabling us to charge lawyers for attending our training and generate some small income for court cases.
- Unique Legal outreach surgeries in rural areas, enabling access to justice for the poorest communities. Those with the highest rates of child abuse and neglect will be targeted first.
- Expansion of the team to incorporate a new Legal Assistant to enable good management of the case load, finances allowing.
- Publishing of paper on our successful Family Mediation Work in Legal Journals in Kenya.

Summary

KCLAW continues to go from strength to strength and plays a key role in Thika District in the promotion and protection of Children's Rights. The programme is both innovative and unique and should be championed by AFCIC-Kenya and AFCIC UK. There is no reason why KCLAW could not expand to other provinces in the future, thereby assisting thousands of children in critical need of justice. Danny (KCLAW Manager) and Peris (Legal Assistant) work incredibly hard to make KCLAW the asset that it is both to AFCIC-Kenya and to the wider community and their knowledge, talents and dedication must be commended.

5. Director's Activities

2007 saw the departure of Anne McClure to Sudan as the Human Resource Coordinator for the International Rescue Committee. Anne played a pivotal role in developing excellent processes and procedures for all AFCIC operations, introducing staff training and development, making the organisation wholly compliant with all Kenyan Government Regulations (no easy task!) and putting AFCIC-Kenya in a generally strong position with an excellent reputation in assisting and rehabilitating street children. She will be missed greatly. We wish her the best in her new role.

2007 therefore also saw the arrival of new Country Director, Eleanor Harrison, bringing a new wealth of experience, ideas and energy to AFCIC-Kenya. We welcomed her in July and she has made significant progress for the charity in a short time.

Fundraising

AFCIC-Kenya's fundraising potential has not been fully exploited at present and this has put the organisation in a position of vulnerability in terms of its programmes – wholly dependant on the success of the UK Office to fundraise for our activities. It is essential that AFCIC-Kenya moves towards a more secure funding model with its own direct income, income generating activities and more long term grants. We must also focus on developing relationships with local businesses to help finance our activities. The Trustees have a key role to play in this.

A key aim for 2008 must be the hiring of a local fundraiser to support the Director and Trustees in galvanising the local business community in supporting AFCIC-Kenya.

That said, AFCIC-Kenya successfully raised over Ksh 1.2 million in restricted funds in 2007 for child sponsorship, family sponsorship, skills training, for the school feeding programmes and the AFCIC-Kenya Land Fund. Links were made with churches in the UK and Kenya, schools and small trusts and individuals and we must build on this momentum in 2008.

Monitoring & Evaluation

An in-depth evaluation of AFCIC-Kenya's programmes was launched in September 2007 with the full participation of the staff, volunteers and the children themselves. The purpose of this process was to collect informed and accurate data on our programmes and services, identify our current strengths and weaknesses, identify new area of work and need and build a coherent strategy for 2008. The following activities took place:

- A street census was coordinated by Action for Children in Conflict in partnership with other agencies on 15th September 2007 with 326 vulnerable children interviewed across three locations, collecting information on the scale and nature of the street children population in Thika area.

- Children’s evaluations were conducted at the DCC & ICC. The children were involved in designing the questionnaires and local volunteers were brought in to assist with the evaluation to enable a confidential environment (staff were absent). These interactive surveys highlighted substantial strengths – children were overall extremely satisfied with our services – and areas for improvement – such as more animals at the ICC and more family work at the DCC.
- An interactive, participatory Staff & Volunteer Evaluation Day was held in October to look at individual, team and organisational strengths and weaknesses, to analyse our current programmes and plan our strategy for 2008. This was extremely successful in helping to identify new areas of work such as on-site skills training at the Day Care Centre, the shared commitment to buying our own land and the need for increased advocacy in KCLAW amongst other things.
- We also conducted an evaluation with the parents of the children we assist to look at how we could further support them to become economically self sufficient; and we plan to have a stake holder’s review and trustee’s review of our work this coming month.

Training & Development – staff & volunteers

Staff training and development grants were given to all staff, leading to new skills in Human Resources, Community Development, Information Technology, Social Work and Driving.

Staff Supervision was introduced later in the year, building on the appraisal system established in early 2007, improving communication and enabling further training and development.

A training and development needs assessment for the organisation was conducted in the latter part of the year and the following needs have been identified:

- Monitoring & Evaluation Skills
- Writing Funding Proposals
- Information Technology
- Business Management & Micro Finance
- Presentation Skills
- Introduction to Management
- Financial Management & Accounting Skills
- Drug Awareness
- Special needs

The Training and Development Fund will focus on meeting these needs in 2008 to the benefit of the organisation and the children we serve, ensuring that we are the most effective local children’s organisation in Thika District able to take on new challenges and opportunities.

School Feeding Programmes



Action for Children in Conflict
Lunchtime at Garissa Road Primary School

We continued to play a crucial role in preventing children from going to the streets in search of food through our successful school feeding programmes.

- 25200 school meals were prepared and eaten at Garissa Road Primary School since February, with an average of 140 receiving a free meal daily. Those provided with a meal were the most needy and vulnerable as identified by the teachers.
- 30010 school meals were prepared and eaten at St Patrick's Primary School in 2007, with over 24000 being provided free of charge and the others at a subsidised rate.

These programmes play an incredibly important role in keeping the most vulnerable children in Thika in school and off the streets. The programmes also help to improve school performance and retention. Their flaw is that we are still not feeding as many children as we should.

The Director and former Head Master at Garissa Road Primary School also conducted a feasibility study into setting up feeding programmes at other poor public primary schools in the Thika Area in October/November 2007. 5 schools were visited and recommendations made. If resources are secured we plan to expand our feeding programmes to new schools in 2008, focusing on children in special units and those in standard 4 or below as a first step – identified as areas in significant need from the census.

School Holiday Clubs 2007

280 pupils from St Patrick's and Garissa Road Primary School attended our holiday clubs this year. It was the third year for St Patrick's and the first for Garissa. The Clubs are incredibly successful at ensuring that extremely vulnerable children have access to a safe environment and are educationally stimulated, fed and

cared for during the long school summer holidays. This year we had 5 international volunteers and 12 local volunteers, alongside the teachers at both schools, coordinated by International Volunteer Nathan Waller. A particular treat this year was a live performance by Juacali, Genge Star in Kenya! The closing ceremony was broadcast on Citizen Television on the lunchtime news.

In 2008 we plan to recruit 8 international volunteers to participate in the clubs. This should lead to a more diverse skill and talent pool and more funding (the clubs are wholly funded by contributions from overseas project volunteers) so that we can engage more children at both schools in the Holiday Clubs. We also plan to extend the time required by all volunteers to one month so that we can have adequate preparation and team building time before the active work with the children begins.

Financial Management

Significant improvements were made to AFCIC-Kenya's accounting systems, ensuring that we continue to be a transparent, cost effective and efficient small NGO. These included:

- Official Payment & Receipt voucher books were introduced
- New filing systems were introduced
- Delegated budgeting was introduced
- New finance forms were introduced

We continued to experience problems in relation to budgeting with an overly optimistic view of the exchange rate, high bank charges and lack of accounting software. We also have the ongoing challenge of currently receiving our monthly budget from the UK at the end of the month after expenditure has been made. These problems will be minimised in 08/09 by:

- Using a realistic exchange rate in the new budget
- Opening an Uwezo account at Barclays Bank. This will minimise Bank Charges and enable us to gain some interest.
- Improving our financial stability through more active fundraising

Networking & Advocacy

AFCIC-Kenya made significant progress in raising its profile locally, nationally and internationally in 2007. This is extremely important as unless we promote ourselves and tell people what good work we are doing we will be unable to find new donors.

- GASPA – Garissa and St Patrick's Association (made up of staff, teachers and parents of pupils at both schools) – set up with support of Action for Children in Conflict in January 2007. They are tasked with developing resources for the Feeding Programme.
- Thika Network of NGOs set-up and facilitated by Action for Children in Conflict in April 2007.
- Positive press articles and interviews with KCLAW throughout year.

- Al-Jazeera Television Interview with Director, July 2007 on the causes of street children in Kenya.
- Visit by the Mayor of Thika to our programmes in July and positive articles on this visit on the radio and in Thika Times Newspaper
- Citizen Television lunchtime news feature on Director and Holiday Club Coordinator, Nathan Waller, August 2007
- Photography Exhibition: Street Children of Thika, 26th October, Christina Gardens, Thika
- Human Rights Committee Forum at Thika Town Hall, November 2007. Speeches by the Director and KCLAW Manager.
- Visits to Kiangombe Slum and Thika District Hospital in December 2007, coordinated by the ICC and reported on local radio.
- Street Children's Steering Committee set up in August 2007 and coordinated by Action for Children in Conflict.
- Christmas Dinner with local supporters.
- BBC Swindon Interview with the Director on violent conflict in Kenya and impact on our work, January 2008.
- Welsh Magazine article with Director on violent conflict in Kenya, January 2008.

International Volunteers Programme

- We had 9 international volunteers join us in 2007, providing their skills, knowledge, enthusiasm and financial resources to improve our programmes and enable us to expand in new areas.
- Seba volunteered in the early part of 2007 and played a key role in training our children in acting. This led to the production of an excellent play that was performed for the students of St Patrick's Primary School by the children at our Day Care Centre. A film was also made of the process.
- Freest also volunteered in the early part of 2007, providing invaluable expertise in proposal writing and building our knowledge and understanding of other organisations. Freest also played a pivotal role in the success of our Child Sexual Abuse Workshop held in April.
- Terry Nicholls joined us in July 2007 to run an excellent debating project at both St Patrick's and Garissa Road Primary Schools. Standard 8 pupils were trained in different debating procedures and skills, given different topics to debate and understand. The project culminated in a fascinating competition between the two schools with Garissa Road being declared the winners. Terry will be returning to Thika this July and we look forward to a re-run and perhaps St Patrick's claiming the trophy for the first time!
- 5 international volunteers joined us for the Holiday Club Programme, 3 of whom stayed for an extended period and assisted with our work.
- Mike Fallon, Chartered Surveyor, played a key role in the analysis of data from our Street Census and the production of the final report. He also played a key role in drafting new plans for our proposed Kitchen at Garissa Road Primary, in the establishment of two web-based groups to promote Action for Children in Conflict. He is also continuing to help AFCIC-Kenya in the UK with technical plans for the ICC on our proposed piece of land.
- Charlie Hughes, UK Home Office, organised and implemented a Photography Exhibition on the Street Children of Thika with the Director. Following the Holiday Club Charlie spent 6 weeks teaching the children at our centres how to handle a camera, how to take good photographs, how to take photographs of their experiences on the streets of Thika and also taking some excellent photographs himself. These were displayed in Christina Gardens. Over 60 people attended the exhibition. We now plan to use these photographs to hold a successful exhibition in the UK to raise the profile of our work.
- Nathan Waller, Teacher, Coordinated our School Holiday Club Programme this year and also played an extremely useful role assisting St Patrick's Early Childhood Development Unit. He worked extremely hard and managed to draw some famous stars to our Club and generate considerable media interest.
- Kelly Fitzgerald, Teacher, played a key role in the School Holiday Clubs at St Patrick's and Garissa Road. Since returning to the USA Kelly has also played a fantastic fundraising role for AFCIC-Kenya encouraging her friends to donate to our work. She has played a significant role in generating funds for

child sponsorship, family sponsorship, skills training and school expenses. We hope that she will keep up the excellent work!

- Kerensa Roberts, played a key role in the School Holiday Clubs at St Patrick's and Garissa Road. She was the lead organiser in the play showcased by the children at the closing ceremony "The Giant Pineapple."
- Ruth Groebner, Lawyer, played an essential role in the KCLAW team for 5 months, taking on her own cases, supporting children with special needs, facilitating a children's rights education programme at Garissa Road, the Kids and Cops Dialogue, designing and implementing an effective and much needed impact assessment of KCLAW's work and designing and publishing some excellent leaflets of the Kenyan Children's Act and Parental Responsibility. She is very much missed.
- Dave Rooney, Website Developer, volunteered with AFCIC-Kenya for over one year before becoming the Programme Manager of Michezo Youth Initiative, an initiative of AFCIC-Kenya and Thika United. Dave overhauled the AFCIC website and substantially improved our brand as an organisation before focusing on supporting and developing Michezo. He has returned to Australia to generate some hard income and we wish him well in all his future work.

We have 3 volunteers joining us in late March 2008. These are:

- Chris Howarth, UK Playwright
- Helena Kaliniecka, Social Worker
- Megan Burley, Family Sponsorship Coordinator

Programme Development & Expansion 2008

AFCIC-Kenya finally moved into its own offices this year which was a great relief to all, enabling a separation of work and residence for the Director and international volunteers. The move also enabled KCLAW to get its own private space for handling sensitive client issues.

Some programmes continue to fall under the direct supervision of the Director, alongside management of all other programmes. This section will only focus on these areas as proposed areas of expansion and development of DCC, ICC and KCLAW have been mentioned elsewhere.

- School Feeding Programmes – we plan to increase the number of children having access to a free school meal from 280 to 500 in 2008
- We will be building a Kitchen at Garissa Road Primary School to improve the efficiency (cost and environmental), hygiene and accessibility.
- We will be launching an innovative performing arts project, *Hear Our Voice*, which will be led by the Director and a UK playwright.
- We will be inviting two film companies from the UK to AFCIC-Kenya to film our projects and promote our work.

- We will launch Adult Literacy Classes in Kiandutu for the parents of the children we assist.
- We will research and submit a funding application for a Peace & Conflict Centre in Nakuru following the recent post election violence, building on our expertise in child trauma work and building on the experience of the Country Director in this area.
- We will conduct a feasibility study into operating a Day Care Centre in Meru.
- We will actively fundraise for our Land Fund with the aim of owning a piece of land by the end of 2008.

AFCIC-Kenya Donors

AFCIC-Kenya is very grateful to those who have donated to our programmes in 2007. We can not operate without you and would not be as successful as we are in reducing the prevalence of street children in Thika without your assistance. In particular we would like to thank:

- **Action for Street Kids** for their significant and ongoing support of the Day Care Centre. We would not have been able to support so many vulnerable street children into positive futures without you. Thank you.
- **Anne McClure & friends** for their ongoing commitment and dedication to all things AFCIC-Kenya. Your support provides us with vital encouragement to continue our good work. Thank you.
- **A J Burton Trust** - for their donation and support for the Day Care Centre. You are helping us to support older street youth in skills training – an essential activity without which they will become the street adults of tomorrow preying on vulnerable children. Thank you.
- **ArcAid** for their generous support of our school feeding programme at St Patrick's Primary School. Without your support many vulnerable children may have dropped out of school in search of food. You have given them the chance at a much brighter future. Thank you.
- **Better Way Foundation** for their generous support of the Interim Care Centre – we successfully assisted many new street children and their families in 2007 because of your assistance. It would not have been possible without you. Thank you.
- **Brookside Dairies Ltd, Thika** for their ongoing support of our work through kind donations towards the physical well-being of our children. This support is essential and having local partners inspires us to do more. We look forward to an ongoing positive partnership to help the Thika community. Thank you.
- **Bruce Gow** for his invaluable expertise in all things financial and his substantial financial contributions to the AFCIC-Kenya Christmas Tour to Naivasha. The children will never forget it! We are also grateful for his ongoing support in improving the efficiency and self-sustainability of AFCIC-Kenya. Thank you.
- **Cat Gow** for her ongoing sponsorship of John Chege, without which he would not be able to attend a special school for the deaf and mute. He is full of joy and hope because of this. Thank you.
- **Charlie Hughes** for his excellent photographic skills and enthusiasm and willingness to put together a great exhibition for AFCIC-Kenya celebrating the children that we aim to serve. We look forward to an exhibition in the UK as a next step! Thank you.
- **Chris Le Fevre** for his contribution to our Christmas Tour to Naivasha for the staff and children. It was a truly once in a lifetime experience for many of the children. We also thank Chris for his ongoing support and commitment to AFCIC-Kenya's programmes. It is very much appreciated and encourages us all. Thank you.
- **Elio Lolli** for his continued invaluable assistance in making links with the local business community in Thika and elsewhere. It is a great partnership and we look forward to working together in 2008. You have helped us so much. Thank you.
- **Family Sponsorship Supporters: Samantha Whittaker, Holly Davis, David Whittaker, Peter and Sue Davis, Karen Potton, Mike Fallon, Melinda Stone.** Thank you for being innovative and willing to test new ways to help vulnerable families. This programme is unique; we are just at the beginning, but we are already seeing poor families slowly being able to improve their economic situation and therefore

being more able to support their children. We have much to learn and many more families to support. Thank you for being the leaders and starting this programme with us.

- **Francesca Camporeale and Lady Margaret School London** for their active support and fundraising for the street children of Thika through AFCIC-Kenya. Please keep doing the great work you are doing!
- **G plus Europe** for their extremely generous and much needed support to AFCIC's work. Without your support we would not be the success that we are and many vulnerable children would not now be succeeding in school, in skills training and in work. Thank you. The difference you have made is great.
- **The Harries Family** for their continued support of AFCIC-Kenya. For their in-kind donations of essential firewood for our school feeding programmes and for their generous promise of donated land. We hope to be able to secure the necessary paperwork this year and starting building through the resources in our AFCIC-Kenya Land Fund. This assistance is absolutely crucial in the development and expansion of AFCIC-Kenya and we are truly grateful. We look forward to helping so many more vulnerable children through this. Thank you.
- **Jitain Shah** for his support of our work in the community and at the Interim Care Centre. Knowing we have such good local friends makes our work easier and our days brighter. We hope that we can continue to build on this friendship in 2008. Thank you.
- **Kelly Fitzgerald & friends** for their fantastic support of AFCIC-Kenya and Kelly's dedication, enthusiasm and commitment to the School Holiday Clubs. The support you have provided since has been invaluable in ensuring that some of our children have returned to school and accessed skills training. Thank you all!
- **Kenya Clay Products Ltd** for their contributions to our Christmas activities in support of the grandmothers in Kiangombe Slum and the Children at Thika District Hospital. These activities were an incredible success and your contribution helped to make this possible. Thank you.
- **Kerensa Roberts** for her time, dedication and financial commitment to the School Holiday Clubs in 2007, helping to make them the success they were. Thank you.
- **Leens Supermarket** for their ongoing support of our community work in Kiangombe, Thika District Hospital and for our Street Census. We could not achieve so much without you. Thank you.
- **Maeve McPhillips** for her commitment and understanding of AFCIC-Kenya's commitment, her ongoing support for Loise to ensure that she can complete here secondary education, and for her support of our other programmes. Many, many thanks.
- **Martin Hodgkinson** for his generous support to AFCIC-Kenya's programmes. It would not be possible to continue to perform at such a high level and help so many in critical need without this support. You have given us encouragement and hope and we are so grateful. Thank you.
- **Mike Fallon** for his technical and financial assistance to AFCIC-Kenya. Our excellent Street Census Report is primarily the result of your hard work and we also look forward to an innovative and exciting new Interim Care Centre on our own land in future with your designs! Thank you.
- **Mike Weimar** of Happy Moments Africa for mattresses and chickens for our Interim Care Centre and for supporting one our older street youth, Joshua, in farming and a new life in Nanyuki. You ensured that our children slept well and were able to return home to their families with belongings. This is so essential in our work and the children were very happy! Thank you.
- **Mills & Reeve Charitable Trust** (operated by Mills and Reeve LLP) for their contribution to our legal work and therefore understanding of the importance of this service in helping impoverished families in accessing justice and legal redress when victimized. Please do not forget us! Thank you so much.

- **Nathan Waller** for his coordination, dedication and financial commitment to the School Holiday Programme in 2007 and his support of the Early Childhood Development Unit at St Patrick's Primary School. The School Holiday Clubs would not have been possible without you and would not have been such a success. Thank you.
- **P & G Bird Charitable Trust** for their kind donation towards the Day Care Centre, helping to ensure that vulnerable street children have a safe, supportive environment in which to look towards the future. Thank you.
- **Revd Mike & Roz Harrison** for their generous support towards the AFCIC-Kenya Land Fund. You have made our dream of owning our own land in 2008 a true possibility. Land is crucial in providing stability, security and self-sufficiency to AFCIC-Kenya, reducing our reliance on donor assistance in the long term. Thank you so much!
- **Ruabon & Penylan Churches**, North Wales for their generous support towards the AFCIC-Kenya Land Fund. The future looks bright because of your assistance and we feel that we will be able to achieve so much more through this land, helping more vulnerable children than ever before. Thank you.
- **Ruth Groebner** for her legal skills, time and financial assistance to KCLAW. Our brochures on the Children's Act and Parental Responsibility would not have been made without you. The Kids and Cops Dialogue programme was also only possible through your generous support. Thank you.
- **Samantha Whittaker (and her cousin Andrea)** for her tireless commitment to the children at Garissa Road Primary – ensuring that the most vulnerable have access to at least one meal a day and can therefore stay in school. Thank you.
- **Stuart Armitage** for his ongoing commitment to our school feeding programme at St Patrick's Primary School – without you many children would not be fed and therefore would not be in school. Your support ensures that the most vulnerable are able to access education and therefore have a brighter future in Kenya. Thank you.
- **Sandy Oliver & friends** for their support for former street children to go to good primary and secondary schools, allowing them to live their newly fostered dreams and have bright futures with hope. Thank you.
- **Stanley Smith Charitable Memorial Fund** (operated by Wragge & Co) for their contribution to our legal work and therefore understanding of the importance of this service in helping impoverished families in accessing justice and legal redress when victimized. Please do not forget us! You are helping to reduce child abuse in Thika through your support. Thank you.
- **Terry Nicholls** for his commitment to education for the poorest – supporting 3 children from our partner primary schools to go onto secondary education; an impossible dream without your help. Thank you.
- **Thika Memorial Church (ACK)** for their donation towards our work with street children in Thika. You have helped to make a positive difference to the lives of many. We look forward to a continued partnership to transform the lives of vulnerable children in Thika. Thank you.
- **United Reformed Church, Highworth** for their donation towards our Day Care Centre. We would not have been able to support so many vulnerable street children into positive futures without you. Thank you.

Conclusion

In summary 2007 was a fantastic year in terms of programme development and success. We continue to be one of the most successful organisations working with street children, providing a holistic service that focuses on both the child and their family.

Our community approach is challenging, with parents too willing to give up on and give away their children but it is the correct path. Overall, the approach of NGO's in Kenya is still an institutional one in relation to vulnerable children, with permanent children's homes seemingly built on an almost monthly basis. We fervently believe that whilst there will always be a role for institutional care, it should be the option of last resort rather than first resort. Where possible, a child's place should be with the family.

The benefit of this family based approach is also that we are able to help the whole family rather than a single child. We aim to support the family emotionally and economically with parental training, empowerment, counselling, child rehabilitation and small business loans so that they can become self-sufficient. We believe that providing a hand up rather than a hand out is the only way forward in genuinely supporting impoverished families and communities.

We have built up a highly dedicated, professional, staff in AFCIC-Kenya who work tirelessly to provide the best possible assistance to the vulnerable children we aim to serve. The staff, local and international volunteers and trustees play an integral role in our success and we should also take the time to praise their contributions. I am fully confident that our knowledgeable, skilled and committed staff and volunteer team are the key reason behind our success. I am truly grateful for all their endeavours.

We look forward to 2008, dedicated to improving our income so that our programmes can continue to go from strength to strength. We will work to serve all members of the community, focusing on street children, other vulnerable children and the displaced. Our purpose is to develop the potential in every child and parent that we work with, to empower and enable them so that the family and community are strengthened. We are a partner, not the parent; we are the enabler, not the giver. We are committed friends who do not give up easily and have high expectations in the children and families we work with. We never label and we know that we make the future, it does not make us.

Finally, we look forward to working with you in 2008. Our doors are always open. You are most welcome. Karibu Sana.

Eleanor Harrison
Director

Action for Children in Conflict in Kenya
PO Box 130
Thika, Kenya
+254728774970
Kenya@actionchildren.org