

# Family Sponsorship Newsletter

Welcome to the August edition of the Family Sponsorship newsletter.

## 10 Million Kenyans Face Starvation

In the past week the weather in Kenya has really been heating up. Whereas in the UK we might revel in the first signs of sunshine, here in Kenya the return of the sun is an unwelcome sight. The month of August is typically Kenya's "cold season", when the long awaited rains finally arrive, enabling crops to grow and mouths to be fed. But the sun has come and any hopes of the rains arriving have been dashed.

According to Kenya's leading newspaper, The Daily Nation, Kenya is facing a severe shortage of food and water with more than 10 million people requiring urgent assistance. Kenya's Prime Minister, Raila Odinga, recently told MPs that the severity of the food situation will be fully felt by the end of August, even though many families across the country were already starving.

Describing the food, water and energy situation in the country as "worrying" and forecasts as "grim", the PM warned that 1.2 million school-going children who depend on the school feeding programme were also in danger of starving due to the food crisis. Mr Odinga gave a gloomy forecast of the expected food harvest in the country, with virtually all the food producing regions registering a shortfall. The PM warned of a "catastrophe" if the short rains expected between October and November also failed.

## Growing Crops Despite The Drought

Thanks to Family Sponsorship, Dorin Wanjiku's family is doing well despite the droughts. Dorin is 14 years old and is one of five children to a single mother with mental health problems. Her mother has been living

on the streets for more than five years now and two of her siblings have followed this example and are also on the streets. Unfortunately one of these children has disappeared now. No one knows where he has gone.



The other three children were initially left with their Step-Grandmother, who is very old and unable to look after them. Our outreach workers, who had been working with the family since they identified the mother scavenging in rubbish dumps in Thika Town, eventually managed to trace her brother, Jackson (Dorin's Uncle) to Nairobi where he was living with his family and surviving through casual jobs. We were able to convince Jackson to return to his rural home and take-over the care of the children where they could have access to free primary education. We agreed to assist him with support for the children to attend school and also to dig a borehole to allow him to grow crops and to provide clean, safe drinking water for the family.

Jackson now takes care of Dorin and her siblings as well as his own children and we have been able to assist with the purchase of school uniforms and other vital items for the younger children and with the provision of a skills training course in barbership for the oldest nephew, Stephen. The borehole project has been a great success and the family are managing to irrigate their farm

and grow crops to both eat and sell at the market.

### **Goodbye!**

This will be the last Family Sponsorship Newsletter I personally send you as, in two weeks time, my placement with AfCiC will come to an end. I have been volunteering with AfCiC for the past year and during that time I have witnessed first hand the incredible work the charity is doing.

Working for AfCiC has been an incredibly rewarding experience, which has allowed me to develop both personally and professionally. Learning in depth the ways in which small charities work to help some of the world's most impoverished people, whilst constantly struggling to source funds and compete with other larger, international organisations, has been an eye opening experience.

I can personally testify that AfCiC is doing incredible work here in Kenya, helping to devise sustainable, poverty alleviating strategies. Over the course of twelve months, I have seen many street children taken from the depths of poverty, rehabilitated, reunited with their families and reintegrated into mainstream schools. The younger children we work with are given their childhoods back and the older children are given the opportunity to develop into respectable young adults. It is these children who shape the future of Kenya and these children who have the ability to make positive changes to the society they live in. It is all made possible by the support of people like you so, on behalf of AfCiC and the people we support, asanteni sana (thankyou very much).

Best wishes,

*Jo Bayley*

Sponsorship Co-Ordinator