

Sponsorship Newsletter

Welcome to the latest edition of the sponsorship newsletter. I hope that it finds you well. Here in Thika the rains have arrived and the temperature is rising. Below I have included some highlights of what we have been up to over the past few months. Enjoy!

All the boys are back to school...

January and February were incredibly busy as Daina, our education empowerment officer was challenged with the task of trying to ensure that each and every one of the children we work with was able to return to school. All the staff rallied together to help complete numerous school visits and attend the nerve wracking entrance interviews with the new entrants. In addition, countless shopping trips meant that the office was often bursting with school trunks, mattresses, school books and all of the other items demanded.



'Edwin Wanyioke with Daina our Education Empowerment officer as they leave for school'

Edwin (pictured) waited patiently whilst the right school for him was found. He was incredibly nervous before his interview and was practicing hard for the days leading up to it. He looked incredibly smart on his interview day, and successfully got a place in Standard 5 at St. John's Kigoro Academy. Food is very important to Edwin because of his past and one of his main concerns was the size of food portions at school. It would seem that he was satisfied by what St John's Kigoro had to offer, and like all of the boys from our Interim Care Centre, Edwin was really excited to be returning to school.

St. John's Kigoro Academy is in a beautiful area surrounded by tea plantations with a cool climate. Edwin has just finished school for the Easter break and came to the office to let us know how he is getting on. Edwin says "St. John's is a great school because it has a good compound with a great ripe mango tree. The people are good to me and the teachers too. I have made many friends. I enjoy English, Maths, and Social Studies. Next term I want to score above 400 marks. I will never give up at school."

What it means to be sponsored...

At the beginning of March the children who attend Secondary school were on their midterm break. Many came to the offices and some were able to write personal letters to their sponsors. The personal relationship that a child develops with his/her sponsor can mean so much to them and they are often asking questions about how their sponsor is doing.

George Gathogo is in Form 1 at Giachuki Secondary School and is an active member of our performing arts project Hear Our Voice!. He is a top performer and an incredibly polite and kind boy. We asked George to write briefly about what it means to him to have a sponsor and why he believes it really helps him and boys like him.



George (left) with his schoolmate at midterm.

George wrote the following:

"I would like to take this golden opportunity to inform you about why is it important for me to have sponsors. I think it will help me to study without much stress and it can enable parents to do much without having panic about their

children's school fees and they can do something else to support his/her family. It will enable one to study seriously for not wanting his/her sponsors money to be of no benefit to him/her. I think it can also be of benefit to a student to avoid school drop-out to avoid losing the sponsors chance and help parents to have limited funds. It can also improve the student's seriousness to work hard and children to feel protected from child labour and mistreatment. It can also help a student to maintain and have hope that he will become what his profession will be, like me I have been inspired to become a meteorologist in the future. It will also be of great challenge for a learned person not to help as he was helped. I think it will be of great help if all of us wishes to be a sponsor."

Back to basics with our families



On March 18th we held a business training day for all of our families on our family sponsorship programme. Throughout the day we had facilitators speaking about basic business management skills, financial planning / budgeting as well as family planning. We also had a lengthy group discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of the businesses that they were currently operating and exchanged ideas on how they could improve. We invited three of our most successful

families, Mary Gikonyo, Evans Otieno, and Uncle Harrison, to talk to the others about their successes. This proved to be a hugely inspiring moment and we hope that it will give hope to everyone and allow them to see what they are able to achieve.

We are now asking all of our families to attend a monthly meeting in Thika where we will monitor and discuss the businesses both individually and as a group. We hope that this will allow them to be far more honest and open with us about the problems that they face, and also allow us to spot any potential problems early on. Sharing their own experiences can help inspire ideas boost confidence as they realise they are not alone.

New home for Margaret and family

AfCiC has been supporting Margaret for over a year now. She has 4 children but previously was unable to provide for them and turned to alcohol to help her through. We decided that the best option for Margaret was to send her to a rehabilitation centre where she could overcome her problems whilst receiving the care and attention that she needed.



Margaret with her son in their new home

Margaret did incredibly well and the progress that she has made in the past year is fantastic. She has recently been able to move out of the rehabilitation centre and into her own home. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Graham and Joy Hardy and family, who have been absolutely crucial in supporting Margaret and have recently facilitated her move into her own house.

Margaret already has big plans for the future of her and her family, and is already planning to open a roadside kiosk very close to her home from which she can sell vegetables, sugar cane, and hopefully githeri at some stage in the near future. I visited Margaret last week to deliver some of the items for her new home and she was the happiest I have seen her. She is now full of positive thoughts and really believes that she can change her life from this point forward.

WELCOME AND THANK YOU TO OUR NEW SPONSORS!

Finally I would like to thank all of our new sponsors who have joined us over the past few months. You are all incredibly welcome and your support is hugely appreciated. Please tell your friends about us!

Thank you to:

Olivia Humphreys, Christine MacClean, Sue Cooke, Samantha Smyth, Su Corcoran, Duncan MacClean, Jenny Benton, Janet Gow, Hazel Tiffany, Rod & Denise Thomas, Jessica-Adeline Summersby, Chris Kolenburg, Meela Shah, Mikki Corcoran, Maria Giacobazzi, Amanda Stephens and Kerwyn Foo, Maira Bholla, Chris Becher and Dorota Lyszkowska