



# MJI WA NEEMA (HOUSE OF HOPE) ORPHANAGES NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 1

September 2004

## Hello and welcome!

To this, our first 'proper' newsletter. As this is our first edition it is quite difficult to know where to start. Hopefully most readers will be familiar with our website ([www.naivasha-orphans.org.uk](http://www.naivasha-orphans.org.uk)) or the information in our fundraising leaflets, so maybe I should assume you know the basics about who we are and what we are trying to achieve, and launch straight into current news. If you do need more info on the background and history of Mji wa Neema feel free to contact us.



*Stephen, aged about 4 months, abandoned at a bus stop*

## The situation in Kenya.

Things are fairly grim at the moment: the AIDS epidemic is really taking hold now. There are more than a million children in Kenya who have lost one or both parents to AIDS. Twelve percent of orphaned children are being reared by other children. In Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole there are now more than 11 million AIDS orphans and that figure is expected to grow to 20 million by 2010. By that time, 15 to 25 percent of children in these countries will be orphans.

With no Social Services or Government funded care facilities the future for these kids is bleak. The lucky few might have an Aunt or Grandmother who is in a position to support them. But for the rest, most will land up trying to survive on the street. Their only hope lies in finding refuge with organisations like ours, funded by caring individuals around the world who are willing to do their bit for humanity.

Next we come to the more immediate problem of food shortages in the region. Massive crop failures resulting from erratic rains are causing severe food shortages in many parts of Kenya. Last month President Mwai Kibaki declared the country's food crisis a "national disaster". The UN World Food Program (WFP) estimates that two million people in Kenya face starvation as a result of the drought. WFP say they want to raise \$96.5m to distribute 165m tonnes of food over six months, but at the moment aid is failing to reach the people who need it due to the usual bureaucratic bottlenecks.

## The Orphanages:

### Mji wa Neema, Naivasha

Having been established for some three years now our 'House of Hope' is now running fairly smoothly. Local support for the home has been better than expected, and in recent months our main financial input has been for repairs and improvements such as the rainwater collection system, new toilet block and security gate. The local community and church group have managed to provide for the children on a day to day basis. However, support is beginning to dwindle with the current drought - people simply have nothing spare to give - and we are standing by to provide a safety net if necessary.



*Nursery class*

## Saidia, Gilgil

Where to start? Since its inception back in April, Saidia has been a hive of activity, but there is still a long, long way to go. The building is inhabited, but barely habitable - no glass in the windows, no ceiling, no power, and lit only by tins of diesel with wicks. It might not be much, but the important thing is that the kids have a home and are being cared for.

We have kitted out a classroom with tables and chairs, and taken on a nursery teacher who will also coach some of the older children who have never been to school, to help them catch up to the point where they can go to the local primary school.



*Cooking facilities*

Probably the best way to give you some idea of the situation is for me to quote some emails from Jill Simpson on the spot:

### 27<sup>th</sup> May:

Saidia full to bursting. 15 and 4 new arrivals today. Young Turkanas, their mother died about 3 weeks ago and they have no relatives.

### 9<sup>th</sup> June:

Crisis feeding the children, very poor rains and no much food available anywhere, let alone a surplus to give away.

Little Turkana boy checked – has a shadow on his lungs and, as his mother died of AIDS and TB he is being treated and checked monthly. He has put on a little weight. Both he and his elder sister are at school. A sad little family being brought up by the sister who is very protective and only about fourteen.

### 22<sup>nd</sup> July:

Outside of building to be repainted to read Saidia children's home. Mending the ceiling and getting the other ceiling painted, a few panes of glass would be nice.

Drains sorted out.

Clothes to be washed in the kitchen so that water can go out to the veg. patch (not in bucket outside).

### 26<sup>th</sup> August:

Oh! Yes, do you remember me saying that there was a small family (4) with a very unstable Gran, the boy died under very suspicious circumstances, and the 3 girls were in need of help...we managed to have 2, both abused, and the 3rd didn't, or wasn't allowed/able to come? well, apparently we now have her. I don't know the 'ins and outs', and no photo yet, but if T and J get back from Nairobi early enough tonight I will try to go down and get all the latest habari. This might just be a suitable family for the sponsors you mentioned. Will any of the sponsors also help with my Out-Reach families? The kids will also need to go to school and it's the uniforms, books etc that are so expensive for the Grannies that are trying to keep the remnants of their family together. So much poverty, so little knowledge of how to cope, and so that gives them so little will to try.

### 6<sup>th</sup> September:

Bought small tables and chairs, plus some books, plasticine, glue, coloured paper, found some letters and numbers.

Have a nursery school teacher – young with a sweet smile – hope she will be reasonable

“When I gave her an old tennis ball to play with, tried to eat it. Hardly four years old, but in her short life everything must be eaten in case there is nothing else”

### 9<sup>th</sup> September

Ceilings not done yet, or the panes for the windows. Will try and do something this week.

Got to replace glasses for the Dietz lamps. Not ideal but better than candles or a smoky diesel wick in a tin.

*(These jobs have now been done - ed)*

The 3 Masai children came in, an elderly grandfather was totally unable to cope with them, they were all starving, the littlest has never had any attention, she was picked up and dumped outside, no food, no water, the neighbours did occasionally feed them something, but... she is unable to walk at all, too weak. When I picked her up she kicked and gave weak cries, but KICKED, so not paralysed. They were obviously fond of grandfather so he came too just to see the kids settled in, (and cut the kei apple hedge!).

## Outreach

Teresa continues to do great things with orphan families within the local community. She runs a self help group giving practical and moral support to grannies struggling to raise kids at home, and is in the process of setting up a craft group to produce shopping bags, hats and other small items which can be sold to help keep their families together. Unfortunately, whilst this might provide subsistence level income, there will never be any surplus to cover education costs. So as soon as we have Saidia on a secure footing we will be looking for sponsors for some of these children, to give them the education every child deserves and a real chance of survival once they reach adulthood.



*Teresa with two of her charges*

## UK News

The child sponsorship scheme is now up and running, and has been generating a lot of interest. A big thank you to everyone who has agreed to sponsor a child. Your generosity in securing the future for one child means that we can afford to help others.

### Recent fund raising events:

Concert at Brandon Hall, Bristol raised £560  
musicians donated their performances free

Quiz raised £250

Coffee morning £190

Medina Johnson and Faye Murphy are running the Bristol Half Marathon on our behalf today (12<sup>th</sup> September)

### Future events:

Drop in meal with authentic Kenyan cooking

Murder Mystery Dinner

(Dates to be announced, these events will take place in Portishead. If you are in the Bristol area and would like to attend, please contact Anne Mitchell for details)

### Thanks to:

Henleaze Junior School who raised money at their school play

Tyndale Baptist Church raised money with lunches  
Kibworth Inner Wheel who chose the orphanages as their charity of the year.

Jane Mellor for doing the Three Peaks challenge also for us

Maureen Harper for continuing fundraising efforts

Special thanks to Karen Ande, who visited the orphanages whilst documenting the AIDS/HIV crisis in Kenya, and has since raise a large sum of money in the States.

### Contacts:

For information and enquiries regarding the sponsorship scheme or web site contact:

**Mark Mitchell**  
**Cottage 2, Little Float**  
**Sandhead**  
**Stranraer**  
**DG9 9LD**

**Phone: 01776 830242**  
**email: [mark@naivasha-orphans.org.uk](mailto:mark@naivasha-orphans.org.uk)**

For other enquiries contact:

**Anne Mitchell**  
**4, Sage Close**  
**Portishead**  
**BS20 8ET**

**Phone: 01275 817153**  
**email: [anne.s.mitch@lineone.net](mailto:anne.s.mitch@lineone.net)**

**Website: [www.naivasha-orphans.org.uk](http://www.naivasha-orphans.org.uk)**