



MJI WA NEEMA (HOUSE OF HOPE) ORPHANAGES NEWSLETTER

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A letter from Jill Simpson to all sponsors and supporters:

SAIDIA CHILDRENS HOME.
October '05

Dear All,

I have to start with an apology. I have been very remiss in sending out a report on how Saidia and all the children are. We had a busy season with several safaris and then both Angus and I went down with a hefty go of 'flu. Since then I have been involved in a dog-fight and managed to get severely bitten. It is healing now, but I have not been busy with all the usual activities.

Saidia: we have had wonderful rain in Gilgil and so every thing has been growing well. We have had maize off the front bit, a nice treat for the kids, grass is growing on the area that is for the children's play-ground. We have now got a chicken-wire fence all round the whole area and, so we now we hope, NO GOATS!! (The first planting in the new area of hedge, vegetables and trees was just growing beautifully when goats got in and ate everything.)

Karen and Jeff Ande from the USA have been here photographing the children to take back and help them to raise more support for us all. When we met them in Nairobi, we could hardly believe our eyes with the amount of luggage they had.....a HUGE amount of clothes, shoes, balls and bits and pieces for the children! What an excitement as the children got assorted new clothes, shoes and socks, we are almost fashionable now. Thank you both Karen and Jeff.

Amelia, the super Australian girl who is helping, no, she is doing it all, run the Granny Club, has been up with two volunteers from Ireland who have spent a few days with us at Saidia and done a multitude of wonderful jobs around for us. They have been helped by a few ex-street boys. These are lads who have been helped by Simon Harris, a friend and ex-teacher who lives round Gilgil, to leave the streets and a life of petty crime, in order to learn a trade - possibly mending bicycles, mending shoes, woodworking etc. and be useful citizens. Simon put it to them that perhaps they could help round the Saidia kids and they have!! Wonderful.

Today, when I went down, there were a whole gang of young girls (women) helping wash the clothes, talk and playing with the kids. These were from the neighbouring secondary school. It is a great help to us and does so much to give our kids a feeling of being part of the big wide world out there. A big 'Thank-you' to them.

Two Irish lads have been helping with the building. They have got the guttering set at the right angle, waste water set out properly, rubbish pit dug, windows replaced at a small cost and so on. They also found a new carpenter to make the playground furniture - the first one came up with some awful designs. We now have a whole lot of lovely brightly coloured swings, seesaw and slide, also a painted goal on the wall and a hoop for throwing in the basket/netball. Many thanks to the person who contributed the money for this equipment. I will be writing soon and will send some photos.

Our Anne (Mrs Mitchell, in UK), who does so much for us and she is the person who helped the whole project get started, has been, and is very ill in hospital. We all send her our love and best wishes for a speedy recovery. Her son, Mark, has very gallantly said he'll hold the fort until she is better. Mark does all our computer work for us. Thank you, Mark. (*Anne is now out of hospital and back at the reins - ed.*)

Prof and Mrs Vareschi, from Germany, have been supporters too, have both been killed in a freak accident while studying flamingos in Tanzania. Our sympathy to their families.

Rabbits and more books to be got, another gift from a person in UK, thank you. We have some rabbits ready and a hutch but until we can be assured they can be feed and don't get stolen, we have them up here at our house. Kanari, a child who loves animals, comes up and stays and helps look after them. Books: we are working on that one. We have some story books already but we do need to get more and also ones that are educational without being text-books! Thank you also, and we will be working on that.

A Kenya Company has donated a solar panel and batteries for us to put in electric light. A great gift and we are working on getting the wiring done so the children will have light at the end of a switch instead of paraffin lamps. This will enable us help the children to do their home work in the evenings, a great improvement. Our very nice Nursery School teacher who already stays on late to help with helping the children catch up, is very pleased. I wonder how many other children in Gilgil will have electric light to do their home-work. Very, very few, I bet.

We have had a good long holiday and all the kids are back at school. Our year ends in December and I hope to be able to get a school report for each child to send to you. My apologies for not getting one out in July.

Health-wise the children are fit, several have had the 'flu but we take them to the local clinic for treatment....paid for by us. BUT, we are hoping that a local Doctor who is a member of the 'Lions Club', will be able to visit us once a month and check all is well, and possibly help with any minor problems. Given the very varied and poor background of these children we are conscious of health problems and we are giving them all Counselling, but I am delighted to report that we don't seem to have any problems in that direction. I wish you all could see the smiling faces and shouts of pleasure as footballs are kicked about, even our little ones run round...and cause some confusion!

I think that is all, except to thank each of you for your generous help in supporting us with these very under-privileged kids. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Jill



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