

UPENDO ORPHANS SUPPORT PROJECT

NEWSLETTER FOR THE YEAR 2015

OUR VISION: TO CARE FOR KILIFI'S ORPHANS IN THEIR COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT THEM TO BECOME INDEPENDENT AND RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

PREAMBLE:



Figure 1: Some members of the Women's Group

On behalf of the Upendo family, I wish to take this opportunity to invite you to our 2015 newsletter which gives highlights of our activities this year. The project had 56 beneficiaries who benefited through the Education, Feeding, Healthcare, Psychosocial Support, Shelter Improvement, Skills Empowerment and Outreach Programs.

Welcome!

EDUCATION PROGRAM:



Testimony One:

My name is Saida Salim, an orphan under the Upendo Orphans Support Project. I am in Primary School Class 2. During the end term examination for third term 2015 (September to November), I scored 670 marks out of 700 marks. My dream is to become a teacher.



Testimony Two:

My name is Kitsao Karisa, an orphan under the Upendo Orphans Support Project. I am in Primary School Class 3. During the end term examination for third term 2015, I scored 488 marks out of 500 marks. I am aspiring to be a captain.

Despite the poor and hostile upbringing, the two children are among the children in our project who are excelling academically. Their future is promising.



Nelly Mwariga receives a gift from the School Manager (left) and Project Secretary (right) for being the most disciplined girl during the school prize giving day in 2015. Nelly is of average academic performance but her character has seen her excel in other areas of life. Congratulations Nelly!

FEEDING PROGRAM:



Figure 2: Local youth donating food to Upendo Orphans

SKILLS EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM:

A program giving the Upendo Orphans vocational skills. It is amazing how quickly some of them have learned the tailoring skills.



Above: some of the items made by orphans under Skills Empowerment Program. So far so good!

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT PROGRAM:

Group counselling and guidance is done once a week between 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. This is helping the children cope with adolescence and the social issues they encounter at home. In 2015, the psychosocial support program covered the following topics: rape, peer pressure, adolescence, HIV prevention, HIV testing and stigma, HIV infection, drug abuse, school dropout, and unplanned pregnancy. These are explored using quizzes and debates. The children are always eagerly waiting for the psychosocial class on Saturdays. They are very free with the counsellor and willingly share their home experiences with her.



HEALTHCARE PROGRAM:



The children are given deworming tablets and health talks regularly. Left: a nurse in the Women's Group is explaining how to use toothpaste for effective care of teeth. Right: the toothpastes donated to the project are being distributed to the children.

SHELTER IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

In 2015, the program managed to construct a new house for three children in the project. The children were always at the mercy of neighbours to accommodate them during the rainy season. The new house (below right) has made a big difference in their lives. Below left is where they were living before.



Figure 3: Old house



Figure 4: New house

OUTREACH PROGRAM



The family above was visited during one of our outreach activities. They are living under total poverty. The father passed away in 2014 and all these children dropped out of school in 2015. The mother is heavily depressed and has not been able to find any work to help her meet the basic needs of her children. The eldest is 13 years old and is virtually a street boy more often found on dumping sites. Upendo can consider some of them for sponsorship when sponsors are available.

Grants and Donations:



Above: Orphans and guardians receiving gifts from TIME UQ

An organization in Australia called TIME UQ (<http://www.timeuq.org/>) donated money for each orphan to get a solar lamp, mattress, mosquito net, 2 bed sheets, a mat, bathing soap and toothpaste. The funds were also used to facilitate a Sexual Reproductive Health seminar.

SPEK

The above organization (<https://sites.google.com/site/kenyaspek>) based in Switzerland funded the Reproductive Health Education in 2015 for 52 orphans.

UPENDO LOVE DAY

This is a day in the Upendo Orphans Support Project calendar of events. This year it was celebrated on 3rd October, 2015. The day brings together Upendo Women's Group members, Orphans, Guardians, Volunteers and invited guests. Each of the Upendo orphans is attached to a member of the Women's Group named "Group Guardian". During the love day, there is a session where each orphan sits with the group and family guardian to share about his/her life in school, Upendo, home and the community. Other activities include singing, dancing, poems, speeches, sharing a 'love breakfast' and lunch. Most of these children either lost one or both parents. In the community they are discriminated due to the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS orphans. The aim of this day is to give the orphans a new lease of life as they socialize, mingle and share with the guardians and guests. It lifts their self-esteem and helps them view their future with hope. For the Women's Group, it is one activity to make them achieve the

objectives for the Upendo Orphans Support Project: “Assisting orphans to become independent and responsible citizens of their society”.



Figure 5: Upendo children dancing



Figure 6: Upendo ladies dancing



Figure 7: Sarah Atkinson, a sponsor, cutting a cake for the Love Day



Figure 8: Guardians

Visitors and Gifts

A local bible study group visited Upendo Orphans to socialize with them last year. They brought a special gift for the children. The faces of the orphans tell it all.



Figure 9: Special gift to Upendo Orphans



Figure 10: Bible study members & staff working to make orphans happy



Figure 11: Cakes donated by a local bible study group



Figure 12: Bible group members playing with children



Figure 13: Visiting Youth giving a listening ear to Upendo Orphans

I feel humbled to take this opportunity to recognize all those who supported Upendo Orphans Support Project in the year 2015. We continue to cherish your involvement with our project which has seen us this far.

Grace Mzungu

Project Administrator