Emmanuel Home Newsletter
July 2020

(formerly ***Kanyawegi Children's Home****)*

Latest News from Kenya

Usually there is a huge contrast between what folk face in Kenya compared to those of us in the UK. At the time of our last newsletter in January we couldn't have imagined just how our two countries were to be united in facing the same monstrous threat from a microscopic virus! Our experiences of Covid 19 have been vastly different, though. At the time of writing the UK is approaching 45000 deaths, despite an absolutely amazing and resilient NHS. In Kenya they are approaching just 9000 confirmed cases and less than 175 deaths (although we can't be sure in either country the reported figures are totally accurate). Let's hope and pray the pandemic doesn't get out of control over there, as Kenyan health and other services wouldn't be in a strong position to cope.

Nairobi was put into lockdown quite early on as it was one of the main centres of infection. For quite a while our manager Linda reported that there were no cases in Kisumu and only a handful in one county outside of Kisumu. Then things changed in her area back in May.

Linda reported: *"I had to buy masks for the kids around this area because it is being said that there is a woman who escaped from Nairobi and she is hiding at our local market. She is said to have left Nairobi because she thinks she is infected and she doesn't want to be taken for quarantine. So the police are looking for her and anyone found without a mask is caught and pays a fine of 10000 Kenyan Shillings* [about £75]. *I don't want us to be victims to this."*



Now lockdown restrictions have been eased, the country joins many others in trying to get back to some degree of normality, but clearly there will have been a big impact upon the country. The education system has been particularly hard hit. Although universities and colleges may be able to begin some work again in September (but in new ways) the Education Minister has just announced that primary and secondary schools will not reopen in the autumn, and the children will re-start their 2020 academic year in January 2021 (the Kenyan academic year begins in January each year). Sadly this means the whole of 2020 has largely been 'lost' to the children. However, we as a charity have been doing what we can to supply the children with the resources they need for work at home, and additional study packs too.

The change in educational cycles in Kenya will effectively add an extra year into the time we will be supporting the remaining children and young people. We will trust God to provide what is required to ensure the children continue to make the most of their education.



Making a difference: Just prior to lockdown we were able to provide Kevin with a laptop for his studies on a Medical Laboratory Technician course he is undertaking. The laptop enabled him to do his own research for assignments (rather than relying on cribbing from others!) and has, of course, been of help to him during lockdown when higher education institutions have been closed.

This year we have also invested heavily in school text books for the children – to give them the reference materials they Require. Some examples:



Mercy, shown below, stays with her grandmother. As mentioned in January, she suffers from anaemia and has had a chequered schooling history due to absences caused by illness.



However, in May last year we were able to arrange specialist assessment and treatment for her. New medication with a better diet resulted in a significant improvement. She was determined to catch up with her peers this academic year, and is shown here with some of the school resources provided for her.

Although Mercy will have to re-start her final primary education year in January 2021 she still wants to do well, and is now much healthier than she was a year ago.

Another girl, Millicent, who was funded by her uncle to re-take her final secondary school year achieved good results second time round and has gained a place at the Multimedia University of Kenya – to study a Bachelor of Procurement and Logistics Management degree. We will not be paying her fees (these will be covered by government grants and by family), but will provide her with a substantial 'one-off' gift to cover some of her initial costs for books and materials etc. so that she can make a really good start.

Family Support: We usually provide provisions to families when the children are home from school for the holidays. However, we have extended this into June and July as the children have been stuck at home for this extended period. It helps the families out when there are extra mouths to feed!

Sometimes in the past it has been possible to deliver food and household essentials to the family homes, but in recent months that hasn't been so easy. Where possible the young people themselves help collect the shopping or it is picked up from Linda's base – to be carried away possibly on foot or using bicycles or motorbikes (see below). The families are always grateful for this extra support. Savings made on school fees (not needed for the summer term) have enabled us to fund this service.







Finally – a great achievement!

In February one of our boys, Ian Alex did so well in the under-14's section of the National Youth Chess Championships in the Kisumu region that he was offered a place on the team for the all-Kenyan finals in Mombasa.





Ian Alex all set for his next chess game!



Unfortunately that stage of the championship has been postponed, but along with Ian Alex's family provisions we made sure he had a chess set of his own so that he could practice a bit! We don't actually know who is around that is willing and able to take him on, but we wish him all the best when the championship is re-launched.

Prayer Pointers

Please pray...

- For our Manager Linda who recently lost an uncle in Nairobi to covid. Give thanks for her faithful work for the charity.
- Giving thanks for how God has provided us with the funds from individuals and churches to sustain this work.
- For the children and young people who have to cope without returning to school until Jan 2020.
- That despite the current difficulties our children, young people and adults will still have a real experience of God's love for them.

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