



Project Kenya 2010

Helping African women & children impacted by HIV/AIDS

August 2010

Project Kenya 2010 Rochelle Boodie, Peggy Edwards, Floreen Forde and Lynette McKenzie from Toronto along Allison Moorman and Nicole Rolston from New Jersey journeyed to Kenya this August.

Thank you to our families, friends, neighbors, parishioners, co-workers and complete strangers. We raised enough donations to buy 22 dairy goats, 46 water tanks and 180 blankets for The Ecumenical Centre. We then visited and made donations to 3 orphanages and the children's orthopedic ward at Kenyatta National. Dr Victor Kireti also arranged for us to be a part of the free medical camp in Taita.

Thanks to all who accompanied me to Kenya.

Ecumenical Centre

Plot 10 A few weeks before we arrived in Kenya, the families of Plot 10 were displaced from their homes. The owner of Plot 10 had decided to renovate the building. The families still live close to the Centre.

By the time we arrived,



Children of Plot 10 modeling their uniforms

Esther and the ladies had already sewn the school uniforms, knitted the sweaters and made the shoes. We brought green backpacks with school supplies, toiletries and snacks for all 20 children.

When we arrived at the centre on Wednesday August 25th, some of the children had already arrived. Everyone went upstairs and the children found



their names on their uniforms laid out neatly on chairs. We gave them the backpacks, then we had lunch together.

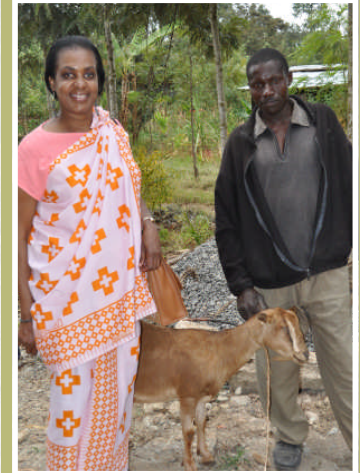
We also paid for the uniforms for two other children who were present that day, so in total 22 children were outfitted for school. A big thank you to

everyone at Parkwoods United Church Sunday school and Amberlea Presbyterian Church Sunday School Kid Zone and Vacation Bible School.

As a result your generosity, the children of Plot 10 will be attending school this September.

Way to go kids!

Dairy Goats

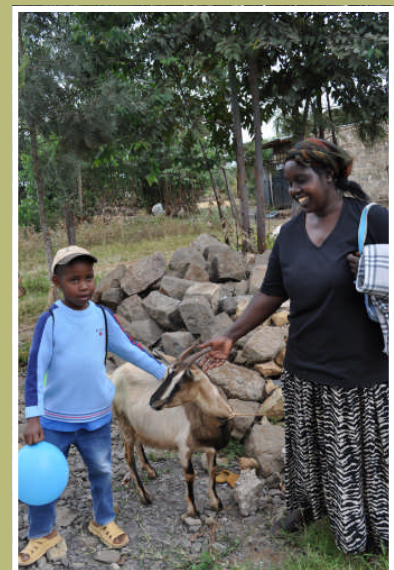


Daniel, Esther's husband, made the 5 hour trip to his hometown to negotiate with some of the dairy farmers of Kenya. It took him several days before he finally convinced them to sell him the 22 goats.

Several families now have fresh milk to drink.

There was much jubilation when the goats arrived on Wednesday August 25th.

Thank You so much to all donors.



Water tanks: Forty six (46) women had registered to participate in the water tank project. With the help of new friend Kamal from Karen Huduma Ltd, we bought the water tanks directly from the manufacturer. As a result, all 46 women who had registered received a water tank.

Some of these 46 women have not yet started to contribute towards the fund. It is hoped that each recipient will start /continue to contribute to the fund so the remaining members can benefit in Phase 2 of the project.

Each water tank will hold 1,000 litres of water. The women and

girls no longer have to walk miles to carry water from the wells.

The “Happy Group” provided the best entertainment when the water tanks were delivered.



Blankets: Esther told us that last winter was extremely cold and several families were affected. The homes in Kenya are not built to withstand the cold temperatures.

When Esther and her 7 year old daughter Debra visited some of the affected families,

Debra noticed that some homes did not have any blankets to keep the children warm.

With our remaining donations, we bought 180 blankets for distribution to those families in need. We requested that each family from Plot 10 received 2 blankets.



The Revolving Fund - your donations at work

So far 40 members have borrowed money from The Revolving Fund to start their own businesses.

Members borrow from 1,000 shillings (\$12.00) up to 10,000 shillings (\$125.00).

Some of the members have stalls or kiosks in the market or on the street in front of their homes. Others have set up canteens to sell meals in front of schools or job sites. A few are selling merchandise door to door.

The Revolving Fund has become so popular that members are now lining up to borrow money. The waiting list is very long.

We met some of the new business women and heard their stories. Everyone recounted how their life has changed since starting out. The best part is they can now provide the necessities for their families.

These members have expressed their gratitude to the many donors of The Ecumenical Centre Revolving Fund.



Visit to The Taita Community

Villa 16 Star of Hope was the first orphanage we visited on Monday August 23rd. Mrs. Albina Mshila runs the home for 12 children living with HIV / AIDS.

Aldina is a very special lady; she retired in 2006 and returned home to live on her 8,000 shilling (\$100.00) a month pension in her modest 3 bedroom home.

Aldina had worked as a mother with SOS for 25 years and cared for 21 children.

When she returned home, she found two of her siblings infected with HIV/AIDS. Her sister subsequently passed away but she enrolled her brother into the AIDS program. Today, her brother looks absolutely amazing.

Aldina heard that some of the children in her community who were infected by HIV / AIDS were being neglected and left to die. She began taking these children into her home and today there are 12 healthy looking children living with her. The children range in age from 3 years to 16 years. Aldina also helps care for a few other infected children living in the community.

Aldina's biggest challenge is providing food for herself and these children. Another challenge is getting enough water for domestic use and for growing vegetables. The home has a bore hole but its solar pump is broken. The cost to repair the solar pump is approximately 400,000 shillings (\$5,000.00 USD). We also heard how some days everyone survives on porridge for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Our group donated some foodstuff, clothing, books, school supplies, blankets and linens to Villa 16.



We also bought snacks for the children, so we threw them a party; every child loves a party. It was a pleasure meeting these wonderful folks and spending time with them.

With the help of her family, the community and visitors like us, Aldina will continue to care for those vulnerable children who need her love and support.



Visit to Mwatate Children's Home and Rescue Centre

When we stepped out of the vehicle, some of the children living at the centre rushed over to greet me; I was pleasantly surprised. Then I realized I had met several of the children at the free medical camp; a few of them still had their stickers.

This centre is run by members of the community and is home to 30 children aged 3 years to 15 years. These children come from different backgrounds and have different challenges/problems. There is a high malaria level in this community. The Mwatate Centre rescues children whose parents have died and children who are living with grandparents who can no longer take care of them. Some children were also rescued from child traffickers.

There are 2 "mothers" living at the centre to provide the special care these children need. Their only teacher does

her tutoring for free. This year, the top student in the community is a resident of the Mwatate Centre.

This centre has lots of challenges facing them. The building is a rental and there is no electricity. The owner of the building is offering to sell it for 1,600,000 shillings (\$28,000 US).

Our group brought foodstuff, bags of goodies for the children, school supplies, books, toys and a soccer ball.

For a brief moment, we were able to put a smile on the faces of these wonderful children.



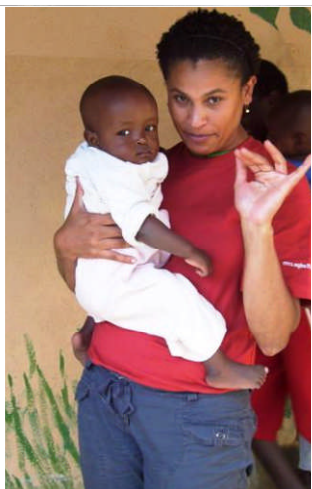
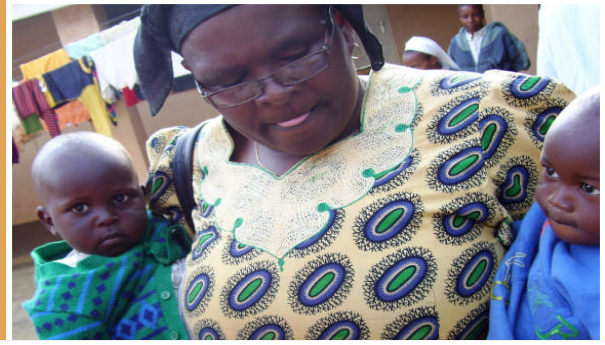
Visit to St. Joseph's Orphanage, Taita Community

St. Joseph's Orphanage greeted us with handshakes and lots of smiles. This home is run by the Catholic Society and funded in part by the Society and visitors. We were ushered into the compound and were welcomed with song and dance. Michael, the leader of the group, was outstanding. He is a natural, a very talented singer and dancer. When you look at him performing with the group, one would never know this young man did not even speak the same language when he arrived a few years ago.

There are 46 children living at St Josephs; 20 are under 5 years, 12 are under 10 years, 13 are under 20 and 4 young men are over 20 years. The youngest child is 2 months old. She was found abandoned on the road-side when she was only 2 days old.

After the singing and dancing ended, we went into the dining room and held a party for these children. We left donations of food, diapers, books and school supplies. St Joseph's greatest needs are donations to

buy food, disposable diapers and volunteers. These loving children needs lots of help.



Free Medical Camp in the Taita Community

We met up with Dr. Victor Kireti then drove several hours to the Lumo Community in Taita Hills, arriving at Lions Bluff Lodge very late on Friday night.

On Saturday Aug 21st when we arrived at the Kenyatta High School in Taita, the many volunteers had set things up and were registering the patients.

There was a large crowd in the school yard listening to guest speakers on the PA system. We later learned that these speakers were Health Educators and were providing valuable health information to the patients while they waited to see the doctors.



Dr. Kireti with one of the patients

Some of the patients had travelled very long distances to come to the clinic.

The doctors present at the camp were cardiologists, pediatricians, surgeons, ophthalmologists, dentists and dermatologists. There were also health educators, nurses and pharmacists.

Most of the drugs prescribed by the doctors were available for pickup at the pharmacy window. The drug companies had donate the medications.

When a patient needed an ultrasound or EKG, the technicians sprang into action. One of the longest lineups was for the ophthalmologists. There was a large donation of eyeglasses from the Netherlands. Patients had their eyes checked and then got fitted with a brand new pair of eyeglasses.

If anyone had a serious illnesses/disease they were given a referral to the local .

By the end of the day, the clinic had seen approx 1,600 patients.

Thanks to the area MP Hon. Andrew Mwatela, and the many volunteers, the clinic is held twice a year.



Visit to Ward 6B, Kenyatta National Hospital



Victor got us permission to visit the Children's Orthopedic Ward at Kenyatta National Hospital. The day we arrived the elevators were broken so we had to climb up the stairs to the sixth floor while dodging throngs of visitors coming in the opposite direction.

We met the nurse in charge of the floor. We visited the children in the ward; some of them were still asleep while others were in recovery after surgery.



A few of the mothers were staying with the children.

The other children had walked or were wheeled into the day room. We looked around the room; there were no activities for the children. Unfortunately some of these children stay for months in the hospital because their parents cannot afford to pay for their surgery.

We chatted with the children, gave them some snacks and presented the ward with books, games, movies and a DVD player. Then we found out that their TV was broken. We stopped at the store on the way home. The next day we returned with a new TV.

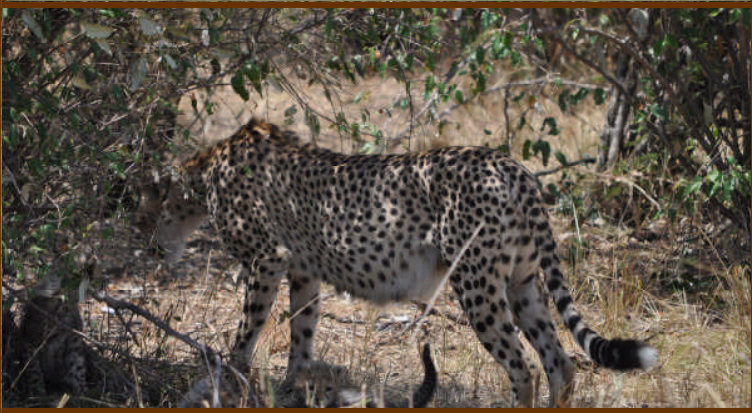
The children now have activities to keep them busy.



Time to have fun and see the animals too



L-R ...Allison, Rochelle, Lynette, Floreen, Nicole and Peggy



Asante Sana, Thank you to...

- Rochelle Boodie, Peggy Edwards and Lynette McKenzie from Toronto; Allison Moorman and Nicole Rolston from New Jersey, for making the journey to Kenya
- Esther Wanjohi and The Ecumenical Centre for their hospitality
- Dr. Victor Kireti for his guidance and for allowing us to be a part of the Medical Camp.
- Hon. Andrew Mwatela for arranging our accommodations at Lions Bluff Lodge, our visits to the orphanages and our farewell dinner.

- Mrs. Jacinta Mwatela for helping us negotiate the purchase of the food for the orphanages
- Lions Bluff for their top notch service
- Everyone who made our trip successful

Thank you all for helping a few of the needy families in Kenya!

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