

FRIENDS OF THE KAREN STREET CHILDREN

JULY 2008



Secondary school leavers are happy with their results

We have now been working for 13 years with some of the most underprivileged children in the communities surrounding Karen, a leafy suburb of Nairobi, sponsoring some of the brightest and most needy children through their secondary education. We are delighted that our older students celebrated success in their final school exams at the end of 2007. **Joseph Muchina** (left above) scored an “A-“ in his KCSE exams, and has applied to **Moi University** to study Computer Engineering. **Jackson Kiarie** (third from the left) has started a **degree in Community Development at Daystar University**, and **Simon Ngige** (right) has started a **Diploma in Electrical and Electronic Engineering**. Joseph and Simon are lucky enough to have sponsors, and we are hoping to find help for Jackson also. All of them have dreams of achieving skills which will enable them to build a secure future for themselves and for their families.

All of these boys have spent time doing **Community Service** at the **Lenana Slum Orphan Project** in various capacities. This has proved to be an important exercise, both in terms of “giving back” to the less fortunate in the community, and in discovering hidden talents in our students. They have all been given high praise for their leadership skills and sense of responsibility, and have been held up as role models for the younger slum children. We will be widening this programme for our school-leavers next year.

In January this year we were flooded with applications from high-achieving, desperately needy children, some of them displaced from their homes in the internal strife which followed the Kenyan elections, and all in dire need. Without outside assistance, none of these children would have a hope of education beyond Primary schooling, which in Kenya ends at the age of 14 years. All the applicants were interviewed, the best were shortlisted, and homes visited to assess need. After agonies of decision-making, we took on **eleven** bright, ambitious, underprivileged students including three girls, mostly

orphans. We now have **42 students who are currently sponsored by the Friends of the Karen Street Children**, all of whom need not only funding but also pastoral care and support. All of these students have come with report forms showing very high marks in the first term, including five who have come top of their class.

Eight of our older students are now in tertiary courses, **Judy in Clinical Medicine, Mary in Banking, Joseph, Motor Vehicle Mechanics, Sarah in Catering, Joseph in Electrical Installation and Joyce in Tailoring, and now, Jackson studying Community Development and Simon, Electrical and Electronic Engineering**. All are building a secure future. **Kennedy** has successfully completed his education and training in Motor Vehicle Mechanics and employment has been found for him.

At the end of 2008 two girls and eight boys will finish their schooling, and at least four are expected to achieve marks which will qualify them to apply for University courses. We are working hard to raise funds to make their dreams a reality. It is our aim that every student should be given an opportunity to gain a marketable skill, at whatever level.

In addition to our ambitious high-achieving students, we also take on a small number of students, mostly girls, who have suffered unsupportable hardships at home, and who need to be able to grow up in safety in the security of a boarding school environment. It is very rewarding to watch these students establish self-esteem and become confident young people, acquiring practical skills which will carry them into an independent future.

All our students are in boarding schools across the country, where they are getting an education in a safe environment, with food provided and a bed to sleep in at night. Many of our students are not assured of even these basics at home. We are proud to be able to provide for a small group of bright children what so many elsewhere take for granted.

The costs of educating a child for a year are as follows:

Boarding Primary School:	Kshs 60,000.-	GBP 510
Boarding Secondary School	Kshs 75,000.-	GBP 640

This is based on actual costs for the year 2008, and includes school fees, food and accommodation for boarding pupils, textbooks and stationery, all uniform, shoes, transport, tuck, pocket money and holiday activities, and a cover for medical emergencies.

We are very grateful to all our sponsors who have made this work possible over the past year, and would like to thank especially:

The Robin Hood Institute for the funding of seven sponsored children, especially Mary and Judy in tertiary education.

The Dulverton Trust for their generous donation.

The Christmas Craft Fair Trust for their continued generous support of our children.

The Karen Country Club for continued support through their annual golf competition.

An Anonymous Trust for their support in funding four children through vocational training, and providing the children with donated computer equipment and internet access.

Ian Cameron and the Talisman Restaurant for generous support through their raffle.

And so many other individual donors.

Also:

Rodney Sutton for his help with the Newsletter

And last but by no means least:

Nicholas Couldrey for his generous donations and for all his help with the Trust in the UK.

Tini and Jonathan Kenworthy for their support of Joseph Kuria and for all their help and support with the Trust in the UK.

We receive many heartfelt letters from our students, and would like to quote from Judy's recent communication:

"I just don't know how to thank you when I am saying this, how much I would like to tell you and every other KSC sponsor how much you have done for me. I feel so much in debt and don't know how I can pay. I was remembering the other day that only four years ago we were living with my two cousins, one is two years older than me and the other one a year younger than me, but today they are all married with children. If it were not for your intervention I would be sailing in the same boat as I had despaired and never thought I would ever be in school, but today my hopes of being a surgeon are higher than ever and I won't let anything stop it until I get it".

Judy is now completing a very successful first year of Clinical Medicine at Meru Methodist University, and is well on the way to achieving her ambition.

KSC has made a dramatic difference to the lives of many children. Poverty, strife and illness are taking a terrible toll in Africa, and many children suffer. We are able to give a future of hope to just a few of these children, thanks to the generosity of our donors and friends. We are always grateful for any donation, however small. "A little goes a long way".

Thank you.

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Trustees of Friends of the Karen Street Children Trust
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