

Julius and Dora Children's Centre, in Maseno, Kenya



What do we do?

The Julius & Dora Children's Centre's mission is to provide a loving home for abandoned babies. Most of them have been the victims of attempted infanticide, having been 'thrown away' outside and left to die.

We currently have 32 children – ranging in age from 0 – 11 years (9 girls and 23 boys).

It is a stark fact that most of these children wouldn't be alive without the help of the J&D Centre. There is no other charity or government agency in this Western Province of Kenya which is willing to take on

the demanding work of caring long-term for abandoned babies.

Why are there so many abandoned babies? The main problem is that, particularly in this part of Kenya, children who are born as a result of rape or incest (sadly common in large extended families), are viewed as cursed and as bringing a curse on anyone who looks after them. So young unmarried mothers are forced by their families to abandon their new-born babies and leave them to die.

To meet this terrible need, the Julius and Dora Children's Centre (J&D) was founded in 2006 in memory of a Kenyan Christian couple who fostered many children in their lifetime. They left a bequest of land in Maseno, in North-Western Kenya, where we have now built the Children's Centre.

Kenyan Social Services has assessed J&D as "Excellent", and frequently asks us to take in more children. Abandoned babies cannot be placed with adoptive or foster families, because they are viewed as cursed and would almost certainly be killed. Until 2017 we limited our numbers to 14 children, but recently the government closed many inadequate orphanages and without consultation has so far 'dumped' over 18 extra babies and children on us. This is a huge challenge!!

Who cares for the children?

Flossie Adoyo is the overseer and manager of the Centre. It is named after her late parents. Flossie gives her time voluntarily, so is sometimes away as she supports herself by doing international development consultancy work. The day-to-day running is done by five very committed paid staff – four full-time women who live with the children, and one gardener/handy-man. They do all the practical housework, cooking and caring etc. and are very good at playing and singing with the children, and teaching them basic skills.

Many volunteers and members of the local church (e.g. the Mother's Union) are very supportive, visiting, spending time with the children and sometimes bringing extra food. Students from the nearby college Christian Union come to play games with the children and tell them Bible Stories.

Our main challenges in looking after the children:

- a) **Food:** The children eat simple and nutritious local food, much of it home grown in our garden. We have our own chickens and hope to buy a cow for milk. Flossie is a professional agriculture consultant, and we teach the children good farming techniques. Rapid inflation and problems in Kenya mean that food prices are becoming very high.
- b) **Medical and care:** Health-care is expensive in Kenya – there is no National Health Service! When the children were abandoned, mostly at birth, they were exposed and left to die, without milk or shelter for many hours or even days. Considering this, it is amazing how healthy most of our older children now are, though several needed hospital treatment when they were first found and rescued. Two needed extensive physiotherapy to enable them to learn to walk, one child has cerebral palsy, and one is HIV positive. Sadly some of the other children who have been 'dumped' on us recently, had clearly

been beaten and abused. It is wonderful to see the transformation as they have now begun to receive love and care.

c) **Education:** All the older children currently attend the local Primary School. This is supposedly free, but one has to pay for desks, books, pens, uniform etc, so it costs about £200 annually per child. Next year when the eldest children start Secondary school, we will have to pay full school fees for them. We also have to prepare them for life and work after the age of 18. We hope to provide some computers so the children can learn IT skills.

With the recent influx of 18 extra children, making a total of 32, we urgently need:

1. To find and employ some new **care-staff**, and a social worker to search for relatives of the recently-arrived older children from other orphanages.
2. To **build another house** on our site, with extra bedrooms and space for a carer. Our existing home was designed for 14 children, so with 32 children now it is desperately overcrowded. With generous donations we've made good progress – the foundations, walls and roof are complete, but now we need to **raise £20,000** to pay for the remaining work to complete the new building.

How do we make the most of donations?

A little goes a long way to save and transform the life of a child.

Now with 32 children, our basic regular running costs are about £34,700 per year.

The trustees are actively involved and all give their time freely. As the UK staff are all volunteers, the only administration cost is the bank transfer. Donations can be gift-aided.

Regular giving helps us to secure our children's future. Please consider:

- Sponsoring a child (Minimum of £25 per month. £60 would cover a child's monthly food, education & health costs)
- Supporting ongoing costs by giving whatever you can per month.

One-off donations will help us achieve special projects (such as building extra accommodation) and improve the children's home and lives at Maseno.

"Friends of Julius and Dora Children's Centre" is a registered UK charity based in England, which raises money for the J&D Children's Centre in Kenya. Charity no. 1122222.

If you would like to donate to support the work of the J&D Children's Centre:

To set up a regular payment or to send a cheque, please contact our Treasurer: Mr Jim Dobson, Thwaite Moss House, Rusland, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 8JZ. Email: jimfdobson@gmail.com (Make cheques payable to: 'Friends of Julius and Dora Children's Centre, Maseno').

or... online donations can be made by visiting our website www.janddchildrenscentre.org The process is done through 'Give as you Live' – a well-known agency which provides support for small charities by processing their donations and claiming Gift Aid on their behalf.

If you do any shopping online, do support J&D's work without any cost to yourself by signing up with 'Give as you Live', and registering "Friends of Julius and Dora Children's Centre, Maseno" as your preferred charity. Then every time you buy anything online from the thousands of participating retailers (e.g. Amazon, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Boots, Ryman, Bodyshop, John Lewis, etc) the company will give a percentage to J&D.

For further information:

To contact our Chair of Trustees, Revd Eugenia Adoyo, email: ndiingo@hotmail.com

To receive a free quarterly emailed newsletter, contact Revd. Amiel Osmaston. Tel: 015395 35476 or 0739 2969 182 Email: amiel.osmaston4215@outlook.com

Please look at our website: www.janddchildrenscentre.org

Updated April 2020