

From Flossie Adoyo, Director and 'Mum' of the J&D Children's Centre:

Greetings from all of us! We are all fine here at Julius and Dora Children's Centre thanks to you and your unfailing support. We sincerely appreciate the support that you give for our sustenance and development. Your support ensures that we can eat healthy food, have quality education and medical care, good clothes and a nice home to live in. Especially we are very excited about the new house for the boys. We thank God for you every day and pray that He will continually bless you and your whole family.

At the moment we have 32 children in our home, ranging in age from 8 months to 13 years old. Here are the older girls - Neema Joyce, Riziki Rael, Lulu Tamara Winifred, Matalis, Zawadi and Zubeda in their Sunday best, feeling great!



The Boys' House

We just want to give a big shout of appreciation to God and to you for our new and most beautiful Boys' House. For me it is a miracle that **the house is actually completed and the boys have moved in.**

Thank you so much for giving so generously and working so faithfully to ensure that the house is completed. May you be blessed.



I wish to express my very sincere gratitude to you, our faithful supporters, for the extra money you sent for completing the house and for the **furniture**. We managed to buy two sofa sets for the sitting room, six bunk beds, cupboards and beautiful curtains.

The place looks so stunning that the people from a round here do not believe that we actually built this beautiful house for the children. They do not understand how one can build such a house for despised abandoned babies. They believe some Wazungus (foreigners) will soon be coming to live here and that they are the ones we built the house for!

Another thing they do not believe, are the **security lights**. We have installed some sensor lights and my own workman does not believe that they were bought in Kenya. The day they were installed, he kept on going to stand near them and then walking away just to see them go on and off, and then coming to explain to me how they work. He believes our Builder/Engineer actually ordered them from America and that even I had never seen such lights. (He thinks all Wazungus and anything good comes from America!).

And then, there is the **lightening arrester**. (This area is very prone to lightning strikes yet even the Maseno University has not installed lightening arresters in their compound). That's another clear confirmation to the community that very soon Wazungus will be here to stay.

See some of the pictures below, of the inside of the house and the **opening ceremony** by Bishop Asilutwa on **18th February 2021**



Prayers were then said in every room, led by the Bishop, with everyone joining in.



Below: The Bishop signing the Visitors' Book watched by his accompanying team

Below: The corridor with tiled washrooms and toilets



Both the boys and the girls are now very comfortable in their two separate houses, and each have enough space to sleep in the beds in their bedrooms. We thank God because, this far, He has brought us.

Since the boys moved in, we have done more outside work just recently:

We bought two 10,000 Litre **water tanks** and a 3,000 litre tank and put them at the corners of the Boy's House to catch and store the rain which is usually plentiful here in the wet season.

We were having some worries with security and people walking through the garden, so we have started putting a proper security **Fence** in round the compound and will plant a hedge along it.



Most of the children (except the babies) posing on the newly-tiled steps of the Boys' House

Since time is moving on quite fast and some of our children will soon be adolescents, I decided it is important to spend even more time with them. So now I am living more-or-less permanently at the J&D Centre in Maseno. I have managed to rent out my own house in Kakamega (about an hour's drive away) to a Non-Government Organisation. This enables me to survive financially without having to go away so much to do international agricultural consultancy work. I moved here to Maseno in December.

Thank God for the new Boys' House having been completed here at Maseno, as it means I am able to sleep here in the single Carer's room and keep an eye on the older boys. I think that the children feel even more secure and are happier when I am around full-time and this is starting to have a positive impact on them.

On the next page is further testament of God's faithfulness towards our children.

I am sending you some photos and the stories of our 7 youngest children who are not yet at school and mostly have joined us fairly recently. It is wonderful to see the transformations in their lives!

“This far, the Lord has brought us....”



Naomi came to us at only two weeks old, and by the time she was 2 years old (*left*) could still only sit up but could not walk. We had to take her for physiotherapy once a week from the age of three months, and today at the age of four years (*right*) she can walk and even run.



Kinsley came to us at only three weeks old. At the age of three months, he was diagnosed with mild cerebral palsy. He could not sit up by himself or walk but loved just lying around on the floor. His spinal cord



could not support him. We have been taking him for physiotherapy since the age of three months and today, at five years old (*above, right*) we thank God that he can walk as well as run around.



We pray that one day he will be able to talk and to feed himself. We still take him to hospital for speech therapy. There is no special school around here that he can attend

and so he does not go to school. However, I am thinking of taking him to the school where all the other children go to, or providing some teaching here at home.



Rayson Otieno was four months old when he came to us and was so traumatized and scared of everything and everybody that he cried all the time (*above left*). Slowly by slowly he started to come out of his shell and today (*above right*) he is a very active, happy and lovely child at two years and two months old.

Below is **Carolyn Osita** at three months old when she came to us and then on the right at two and a half years old. A lovely and very bright little girl.

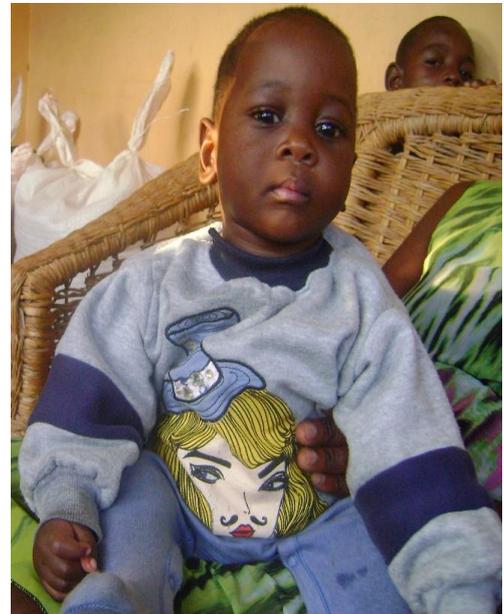




Angela at three months when she came to us (*left*). She came at the same time as **Carolyn** (*right*). They are now both two years and two months old.



Philip (Kipchoge) Etale came to us only at two days old. When I first saw him, for some reason, I thought that he was the most beautiful baby I had ever seen (apart from my own son Julius of course!), and my heart just went out to him.



The picture *above to the right* was taken when he was one year old.



Now today he is two years old (*picture left*).

A lovely and very intelligent child (though he still sucks his finger). He is loved by everybody around here and the other children fight over who is to take care of him. He knows this and is beginning to get a little bit spoiled!



In the foreground on the left is Lucky, seated together with Abigael - our youngest two babies.

Lucky is eight months old although he looks and acts older than Abigael. He is much loved by the other children.

Abigael is almost one year old but she does not look it. She is extremely scared of people and is happier in her bed than outside around other people especially if they are strangers.

In the picture to the right is one of our carers, Aunt Mercy, with Lucky who loves eating all the time and will scream loudly when he is hungry.

These are our youngest seven children. I have put their pictures in this report because they may not be very familiar to you. Sorry about that. None of the seven have started school yet.

For our next Newsletter, I will include pictures of the children who came to us when they were older (mostly transferred from 'failed' and closed orphanages), and the traumatic circumstances that led them to be brought to us here.

I thank God that He has watched over these children and protected them throughout these challenging times. I also want to sincerely thank you, friends of J&D for your support to these children. Just try and imagine, where would they be without your support. Me, I cannot even dare to imagine.



A new play group centre?

In addition to the Neema Women's Group, I have started another group of local adults, made up of both men and women. This new group is thinking of starting a local baby care/play group centre where our J&D babies and others whose mothers are too busy or are in school or University can take them to play, socialise and to be looked after for a small fee.

Our children - learning to care for each-other



Left: Fidel helping Kinsley (who has cerebral palsy) to drink his porridge. Above right: Enos, brother to Fidel, helping to feed Kinsley.

The children learn to care for each other from an early age. They all know that Kinsley is not able to feed himself so whenever they are given food, whoever is nearest to him will automatically feed him first before taking their own food.



On the left is Kipchoge with a two-day old baby who came and stayed with us for only one month and then the mother who had abandoned her was traced and persuaded to take her baby back.



On the right above is Marianna cuddling little Kipchoge.



On the left is Kipchoge sharing his piece of cake with Abigail.

On the right is Lulu playing with Kipchoge.

I sit here and watch the babies and I just get amazed at the things they do. They rarely fight with each other.





On the left is Marianna playing with Angela.



On the right is Zawadi looking after Carolyn.

And the other children doing their exercise in the evening.



Now that I am living here full time, I am able to enjoy sitting in the evening and watching the children play and carry out various activities.

School

Education has been a real challenge over the past year. Schools in Kenya remained closed through nearly all of 2020 due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Children were not really sent help or support to work at home. The schools opened on 4th January 2021, but then closed again a few weeks later because of a further spike in national Coronavirus cases.



Here's a picture taken in January of some of the younger boys feeling smart in their school uniforms.

During the pandemic last year we paid for a teacher to come into J&D regularly and teach the older children, so they have kept up well with their learning.

However, we could not afford to employ a teacher for the younger children. We tested them recently and found they had 'slipped back' and couldn't remember much of what they had been taught before the pandemic.

So I have now employed a teacher, GRACE Musumba, to teach the younger children every day in the mornings here at J&D. She has been well trained in

England. She teaches 13 of our children aged 2 – 7, plus 3 brothers who were brought to the J&D centre without having had any education aged 11, 10 and 8 sit in on the lessons.

In the afternoons Grace teaches English to the older children aged 9-13 (*see the boys on the right*) and is doing a good job of bringing them up to speed. They really need good skills in English as teaching in Kenya is done in English, so they won't learn any other subjects properly if they can't understand English well. We are paying Grace £200 a month.

In the mornings these same older children aged 9-13 are taught by a teacher called TWOMA. He teaches them Maths, Swahili, Agriculture, Social studies and Environmental Conservation. He is paid £66 a month. As part of their Environmental Conservation studies, they are landscaping the J&D compound after all the building work.



*In the photo are the older boys, from right to left:
Back row: Steven Musiamba, Baraka Obama "1", Moses Am'matsi, Tumaini Job, Imani Daniel.
Front row: Baraka Obama"2", Emmanuel Shikuku, Collins Andala, and Gabriel.*



Here are some of the girls in their school uniforms.

Left to right are Zawadi, Neema Joyce, Lulu Tamara Winfred, Riziki Rael.

All the girls are doing pretty well in school. They do their homework without supervision and they all have a desire to excel.

Riziki has done particularly well, coming 7th in her large class (the best of all the girls).

Kenyan schools are supposed to be opening again in May, so I am working hard to make sure that our children are able to go where they can learn effectively.

I am disappointed with the levels of learning of the children who had attended the local Primary school before the pandemic. Some of the classes have up to 190 children in them, and it is very difficult for the teachers to give them any individual attention.

So I am searching for other schools for our older children. Most of the reasonable schools in Kenya are boarding schools. (It is not like UK where boarding schools seem to be very expensive and only for rich people. Here in Kenya, many Primary schools and nearly all Secondary schools are boarding. I expect we will have to pay about £100 per student per term. It sounds a lot, but we were already having to pay quite a bit in 'extras' for the supposedly 'free' local primary school). Please pray that I will be able to find places for the older children at good schools in time for the start of the new term in May, and that we will be able to afford the fees.

For the younger children, we hope that Grace Musumba will be able to stay and teach them full-time at J&D, instead of them going back to the low-standard local primary school.

Eh, friends of J & D, What can I say?!!!! I do not know enough English with which I can adequately express my gratitude to you. Your support is highly appreciated and even more so at this time of the Coronavirus pandemic.

May God Bless you abundantly.

Flossie Adoyo