



makindu

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

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NEWS FROM MAKINDU CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

SPRING 2010

A shared vision across the globe. When people truly share a vision, they are connected — bound together by a common aspiration.

MCP Launches Sponsorship Program

After a year of study and development, Makindu Children's Program announced its sponsorship program at a luncheon in October. For \$35-\$50 a month, a donor becomes a sponsor. This money provides health care, payment of school fees and other costs, nutrition, social services, HIV education, medical treatment and medication. Sponsors choose the age and gender of their sponsored child/children. Through sponsorship, donors receive the precious gift of relationship — first, in the form of a recent photo and description of the child/children selected, then through updates on the child's/children's status sent to sponsors three times a year. Within this program, donors are allowed to write to sponsored children. Because these orphaned children are placed with guardian families in their community, they will not be adopted. A sponsor may continue with a child (but is not required to) until the child becomes an adult.

Since October, we have 20 sponsorships pledged. Our goal for this year is to increase this number as much as possible. If you, or someone you know, feel you can spare \$35 a month, we know you won't regret it from the moment you see the face of your sponsored child and for as long as you continue with the program. These children will never know the protection and love of a mother and father. We hope you will join our family from afar to provide them with basic necessities, courage and hope for the future.

Most donors choose to set up an automatic monthly transfer from a bank account or credit/debit card. But, if preferred, donors can mail in checks on a schedule. Monthly support continues until the donor notifies the program manager to discontinue payments. Annual, semi-annual or quarterly payments can be arranged. Whichever you choose, the results will be tremendous!



Asante sana kwa wema ulionitendea.
Thank you for your good deeds to me.

News from Babu

My name is Babu Juma, a graduate of MCC. I have been a part of the Centre since 1998 when it started.

Before the coming of MCC, my life was a misery and I had lost hope. I had dropped out of school due to lack of school fees. My grandmother, who was our only guardian, was unable to pay for all five orphans left in her care.



Madonna [another orphaned boy and Babu's cousin] and I used to go around the streets collecting metal scraps to at least supplement our aging grandma. We would even go to the market and plead with the sellers to allow us to shout [hawk] their products in exchange for, at most, 20 shillings [about 25 cents US]. I would even carry babies on my back to at least earn supper or lunch at a neighbour's. I cried a lot when I saw my friends going to school and I think God heard my prayers and sent MCC right on time to save a capsizing boat. It was hope sent from heaven. Since then, life has never been the same again.

Many of us who had dropped out of school got a second chance. The sight of new school uniform and the assurance of

school fees revived my hopes. We were all smiles when lunch was introduced [at the Centre]. Again, there was no greater joy than to learn that we would have the chance to attend secondary school. It always had been an unattainable dream for all of us until the coming of "Tumaini" [tumaini means hope in Kiswahili; tumaini is the motto of MCC]. [The MCC kids and caregivers became] one big family full of joy and laughter. We told stories, played soccer, went on trips, held slumbernights. All this I now realize was meant to motivate us and elevate us to the level of normal kids. Most of us were traumatized by the deaths of our parents, and no one understood us better than MCC. It was indeed sweet home.

Today I am amongst the most humbled by the activities of Tumaini. I am and will forever be indebted to MCC, the donors for their continued support, the volunteers who made us feel loved and important, friends who offered advice, guardians for their continued defense and support. I can't mention you all for the immense support. Please help Makindu Children Centre in giving chances and hopes to orphans and vulnerable children.

Asante sana, Babu

Ngwenze and Mutua Mbindyo

Ngwenze and Mutua Mbindyo are twins whose mother died in childbirth. Upon entering into the program in 1998, they both were severely malnourished, anemic and very weak. In addition, Ngwenze was born with a congenital heart abnormality known as a "VSD" (a hole between the upper and lower chambers of the heart) and was suffering from severe congestive heart failure. This was further aggravated by her advanced malnutrition and anemia. And because of the reduced cardiac output of her heart, she also had a small stroke when she was 1½ years old. Her survival was questionable as no advanced medical intervention was available.



Their elderly grandmother would carry them both on her back to the Centre each day for food — and a bit of hope. **This is where some magic and mystery comes in:** Against all predictions, and with no specialized medical care and only the initiation of food and love, both children began to dramatically improve. Within six months, Ngwenze's heart defect began to spontaneously close and now all signs of her heart failure are gone.

Ngwenze is currently a very happy, vibrant and energetic child, running about the Centre and keeping in step with her twin, Mutua. Both kids are reliably the first to come and the last to leave the Centre, and constantly entertain us with their antics. Things have come full circle now, as their granny has become blind and is becoming weaker each day. The children are now the ones to gather firewood, fetch water and help her get to the market and medical clinic.

Years ago, Ngwenze was given a nickname by the guardians which translates as "flower of the dust" — the child who somehow flourished from the dusty and drought-stricken Makindu soil, and survived despite all odds.

Winnie Barron, February 2010

NOTE: Both children can be sponsored in MCP's new child sponsorship program.



BEFORE & AFTER

Beautiful new mural at the Makindu Children's Center created by MCP volunteer, Pat Walker of Lebanon, OR



Proper Walk 2010 to Benefit the Makindu Children's Program

The 5th Proper Walk is now scheduled for August 2010! Michael Farley (MCP Board co-chair and Walk organizer) along with seven other Americans will be walking 180 miles in ten days down the Kerio River Valley in the far northwest of Kenya. All walkers have committed to raising \$10,000 for the Makindu Children's Program. The walkers also cover the costs for the adventure out of their own pockets. Farley calls the Proper Walks: **Adventures for a Cause!**

Michael Farley arrived in Makindu in 1977 for a two-year stint as a Peace Corps Volunteer, assisting the subsistence farmers of the area. He went to help — and he did. But in giving that help, he got much more than he gave. He taught them about selling their produce, forming a co-op to get better prices, rotating crops — mundane, practical things. They taught him by example: by being kind, caring, tolerant, happy to share what little they had. He grew to love the people and their fascinating country, and dreamed of someday walking the entire Rift Valley, from Egypt to South Africa.

His experience while serving with the Peace Corps had an incredible impact on his life. Vowing to return, he has made the trip back 23 times in the past 27 years.

Visiting Makindu, he was devastated to find each time there were more homeless, hungry children, most of them orphaned by the AIDS pandemic, roaming its dusty roads and the nearby bush. On one visit Michael met Winnie Barron, the MCC co-founder, and was very impressed by the Centre's work with orphans. He asked Winnie what they needed most. Her answer was simple: "Money."

Michael's acquaintance with Jasper Evans, a renowned camel expert and north Kenyan rancher, led to his first Proper Walk — a trek that involves walking many kilometers in a day, many days in a row. Remembering both his dream of walking the Rift Valley and the plight of the orphans in Makindu, Farley came up with a plan to do a Proper Walk in the Rift Valley to benefit the children.

This first Proper Walk was up the Suguta Valley (the Valley of the Black Death) in Northern Kenya, traveling 140 miles in 10 days in August, 2002, and raising \$43,000.

Since then, Michael has organized and led **three additional Proper Walks**. In 2004, the hikers covered 160 miles traveling down the Milgis River from Haut to Ol Maisor. 2006 found them following the Ewaso Nyirio River Valley for 171 miles. The 2008 Walk traversed the Great Rift Valley to Lake Bogaoria and Lake Baringo, 151 miles. All four were completed in a time period of ten days. **Altogether, the four Proper Walks have raised \$320,000 for the Makindu Children's Program.**

Off-Season "Improper Walks"

Alaska. In November 2009, a small group of family and friends went for an "Improper Walk" in Anchorage, Alaska, to raise money for MCP — six adults, one child and two hardy infants. With no snow on the ground, the temperature was only 20 degrees. In "puffy" coats, hats, gloves and smiles to keep us warm, we headed out on our version of the Africa Proper Walks along a bike trail into the woods. The danger element of the Walk was the possibility of crossing paths with moose, bear or coyote, but we saw none and were not disappointed by that! The Walk was fun. A few invitees were unable to come with us but made donations just the same. We raised \$285! And we plan on doing another Walk next summer (warmer). There may be another in Yakutat, Alaska, too.



Portland. Board member Steve Randolph and friend Anita Ambrosini walked the Portland Marathon in October generating over \$3,500 in donations for MCP. Unlike the Greek soldier Pheidippides, they didn't run to declare a military victory over the Persians but to celebrate the accomplishments of the Makindu Children's Centre and the many children served these past ten years. The 26 miles flew by, and the gummy bears at the end were great!

Your Home Town? You might consider organizing an Improper Walk in your area, solo or with friends. Or using a locally organized run or walk as the venue to challenge yourself and raise funds for Makindu Children's Program. Let us know if we can help with brochures or other information.

Bora maisha; mengine ni majaliwa.

Life is the best gift; the rest is extra.



MCP Welcomes New Board Members

After serving for a year on the committee to develop the sponsorship program, Ellie Smith joined the Board of Directors in October. In 1972, Ellie, along with her husband and two-year-old son, moved to Eugene, Oregon, from central New York to attend the University of Oregon. She had been an elementary school teacher in New York. After earning her master's degree, she worked as a counselor in the Springfield School District at the elementary, middle and high school levels. She is now retired. In 2005, Ellie and her husband traveled to Africa. She was profoundly touched by the children, no different from her own grandchildren but for abject poverty, loss and fear. She saw children sleeping on city streets and begging. Older siblings, who in our country would be in school, were working just so younger ones could survive. Back at home, she learned of the Makindu Children's Program and knew she had found the way to make a difference.

Barbara Gleasman and her husband moved to Eugene in 1990 from the Chicago suburbs. A nurse by profession, since arriving in Eugene she has continued in nursing management and chronic disease program development. She is now in the final stage of the professional part of her life and has begun to focus on what she would like to do next that will bring value. Currently, she volunteers at a free clinic and has become interested in the way the Makindu Children's Centre approaches the health and growth of its children. She's looking forward to contributing to the success of MCP and its mission of hope for those children.

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We need your help to keep the Makindu Children's Centre in operation. MCC provides food, education, medical care and a place in the community for the Makindu orphans and their guardian families. Your donations help sustain a grassroots organization that is making a positive impact every day. Here are some ways your donations help:

\$35 provides food, elementary schooling and medical care for one child for one month.

\$50 provides school uniforms and shoes for 10 children.

\$100 provides milk for 100 children for one month.

\$200 provides bulk food (maize, beans, oil, etc.) for 59 families for four months.

\$350 provides a high school education (tuition, boarding, books and supplies) for one student for one year.

Remember, all donations to the Makindu Children's Program are tax deductible. Please consider becoming a sustaining donor or child sponsor.

I care and I want to share!

I am making a one-time donation of: \$ _____

I am making a monthly pledge of:

\$ _____ for _____ months.

Please send additional information about sponsorship.

FOR DONATION BY CREDIT CARD:

Name on Card _____

Billing Address _____

City & State _____

Zip _____ Phone _____

Visa MasterCard Exp. Date _____

Card # _____

Signature _____

FOR DONATION BY CHECK:

Please make checks payable to the order of:

MAKINDU CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Mail to:

MAKINDU CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

P. O. BOX 51556, EUGENE, OR 97405

Makindu Children's Program is a 501 (c)(3) organization tax ID#93-1153131 and your contribution is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.