

Update from an email sent to Cate Dewey from the school's principal - Nichodemus Obiero, on March 28 2008.

The project continues to be successful

1. We are supporting 485 children – all of the AIDS orphans in the community are now attending elementary school..
2. The livestock projects are flourishing. There continue to be eggs, chickens and piglets to sell. The stall is built for the dairy cow and there will soon be sufficient napier grass to support a cow. She will be purchased soon.
3. The tree nursery project continues and members of the community are buying saplings to grow by their homes. The trees are being sold at a low price and will provide a future source of income for these people.
4. Maize, kale and tomatoes are being grown in school gardens and will be used to supplement the lunch program when the crops can be harvested.
5. Cate continues to be invited to speak to community groups and churches. The financial support for the project is continuing.
6. A short video clip of a presentation was produced by John Dowsett of Adrenaline Communications and put on youtube in April 2008.
7. We continue to feed the kindergarten children 5 days a week. The lunch program was increased from 2 to 3 days a week in January 2008.

However, the post-election conflict in Kenya has adversely affected our project

1. We have 116 new children in our program, all of whom needed uniforms. The parents of some of these children were killed in the violence in the Rift Valley and Nairobi. Other children were AIDS orphans who were forced to move back to their ancestral homeland to avoid violence. This has put additional pressure on the adults in the community who have had to take in more children. For us, this means that we need to raise more money to feed more children.
2. Food prices have risen dramatically, even as much as 400%. Beans, maize and cooking fat are now very expensive. Luckily, the school had purchased enough food to feed the children 3 days a week until mid April. However, it will now cost more money to maintain the current lunch program.
3. The profit from the corn grist mill is low because of high fuel prices and the famine in the area means that less people can afford to have grains ground.
4. Travel is dangerous and expensive. School officials need to travel to Busia to do the banking. Limited vehicles on the road and high fuel prices have increased the cost of this trip.

Just like fixing the school's well last July, these set backs are just that – challenges that we will meet and overcome. Thank you for your on-going support of these children and this community.