



Happy Home News

Picture of This Month

Alfred Mdeizi, Board Member and father of Happy Home, playing with his children



Happy Home Orphanage is a non-profit organization created in June 2006. Its founders include citizens of Kenyan, Canada and Belgium. It's mission is to help orphans and vulnerable children by providing a nurturing family atmosphere in which to grow. Each child receives access to safe shelter, good nutrition, basic health services and education. Happy Home is located in Western Kenya about 400 kilometers from Nairobi. The first group of children – 12 in all – arrived on November 2, 2006. Since then, Happy Home has grown to accommodate 25 children with room for more.

Our vision is to help the children to grow up in their own culture within their own community and to keep contact with their extended families. To that end, we recruit staff from the area, send the children to a local school and encourage them to go on family visits for 1-2 weeks twice yearly during school holidays.

CONTENTS

Problems in Kenya... How is Happy Home doing?	2
News from the children: Education and school	3
Learning Home Sciences	4
Children's Play and Activities	5
Staff and Board News	6
Happy Home Certificates.	7
News From Kenya	8
News From Belgium	9
News From USA	10-11
News From Canada	12
Happy 2008	13



PROBLEMS IN KENYA

How is Happy Home doing?

All of you probably heard about the current instability in Kenya. Several of our donors and friends already questioned us about what is happening on the ground and how the children are doing. We don't want to go into the political background, this information is available on all newspapers online (see news.google.com). Here is some news from the village and the children.

Despite the current turmoil in Kenya, Happy Home continues to operate more or less normally. Although the area around the facility remains insecure, the children are safe and are receiving basic services. Friends in the village report that things were calmer this past week (the week of January 7) and that it has been somewhat easier to operate than when the violence first broke out. This is not to say that the situation is not serious. Many people from Stella had to flee, there was much looting and, regrettably there were a number of deaths reported. Happily, none of the children or staff were hurt. As it were, most of the children returned safely to Happy Home from their holiday visits to their home villages just prior to the outbreak of the "troubles."

Our local partners on the ground are working on the children's security. Indeed, the future is still insecure as the political demonstrations still lead to recurrent violence.

Our principal problem at the moment is a dramatic rise in the cost of operations. Food prices have basically tripled and public transportation is extremely expensive because of the shortage of fuel. Accordingly, we are developing procedures to make sure that staff will have the resources to purchase food and medical services during the coming weeks.

In addition, we will continue monitoring the situation and provide periodic feedback to our many supporters.

The next pages of this newsletter report about the pre-election period.



EDUCATION AND SCHOOL

Exams

The school year has ended in Kenya and the children completed their exams. Although the results have yet to be posted, the teachers reported that most of them will pass with good marks, especially the younger children.

The pictures show the evolution of school results from the 1st to the 2nd term. Results of the 3rd term are not yet available.

**HAPPY HOME ORPHANAGE
SCHOOL - PERFORMANCE
SECOND - TERM - 2007**

2007 - CLASS - 1 - SECOND TERM		MARKS		POSITION		FIRST-TERM	
Rank	Name	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
1	Night Mwangi	430	500	6	54	17	510
2	Elmer Mwach	450	500	7	54	19	470
3	Monica Awari	410	500	10	54	16	490
4	Asca Pili	325	500	38	84	-	-
5	David Zimwani	115	500	81	84	85	101

CLASS - 2		MARKS		POSITION		FIRST-TERM	
Rank	Name	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
1	Bender Awino	385	600	15	75	37	244
2	Ronald Ombayo	369	500	21	75	2	431
3	George Kihungu	316	600	37	75	66	218
4	Jonathan Amoiro	512	600	12	75	25	331
5	Collins Ochieng	288	600	48	75	41	278
6	Faith Akinyi	250	600	57	75	77	177

CLASS - 3		MARKS		POSITION		FIRST-TERM	
Rank	Name	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
1	Stanley Oduku	453	600	5	74	15	374
2	Simon Lukal	287	600	42	74	46	214
3	Louis Mwanja	220	600	65	74	69	278

CLASS - 4		MARKS		POSITION		FIRST-TERM	
Rank	Name	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
1	Edwin Vee	264	500	3	67	13	196
2	Elyabun Awip	171	500	25	67	29	161

CLASS - 5		MARKS		POSITION		FIRST-TERM	
Rank	Name	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
1	Francis Anaya	170	500	30	64	37	170

PRE-SCHOOL - SECTION/NURSER		MARKS		POSITION		FIRST-TERM	
Rank	Name	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
1	Blessing Anyango	445	500	1	27	-	-
2	David Ombwango	425	500	2	27	5	25
3	Itena Kavere	443	500	3	31	11	28
4	Jacqueline Ajandi	408	500	6	31	19	28
5	Babu Ochieng	330	500	6	27	4	25
6	Stephen Oungo	270	500	11	27	22	28
7	Ezekiel Rugutse	341	500	17	31	21	28
8	Dady Ochieng	142	500	20	27	22	25

NB: There is very good and encouraging performance. It's almost 100% improvement.
By M.A.C. Oj...

Tutoring

Many of the children are receiving extra tutoring from our local nursery teacher. Tutoring takes place at Happy Home for two hours each evening.



LEARNING HOME SCIENCES

Knitting

Rose, called « mama » by the children, started teaching them home science. For example, on a recent Saturday, the children enjoyed a knitting class. Such classes teach basic life skill that the children need to become independent.



Rose, Melissa en Raechel knit the most difficult repairs

Rose shows the children how to knit



Susan repairs her skirt



Boys enjoy sewing as well

Folding Clothes

Each child at Happy Home has a small cupboard to store clothes and personal items. Like children everywhere, however, many items go un-folded. Rose is teaching them not only to fold their belongings but also to care for them.

Faith and Kavere fold their clothes



Making order

- And like children everywhere, things can get messy. Shown here,
- Melissa helps the children
- organize their toys,
- books, schoolbooks etc.

Asca, Babu and Night with Melissa



CHILDREN'S PLAY AND ACTIVITIES

Grateful for the Toys received

The children are very happy with the toys and teddies they received recently. They play with them in the afternoons and evenings and then store them in a toy box for safekeeping.



Osango playing



Jumping rope



All proud to show what they have

Making their own toys

Who can be more creative than a child? Boys build houses, make clay and metal cars, and use plastic and thread to manufacture their footballs.



Girls make little dolls in clay or cloth and knit clothes for their own dolls.



Ronald and Kihungu made a nice iron car



The boys' house



Monica and Elisabeth



Stanley Ondiek with his ball



Ombwayo with clay cars



Playing with a ring and rope

STAFF AND BOARD NEWS

Hassan joined us in November

We have a new manager, Hassan, a young university graduate, joined us after successful job-interview with the board of trustees in November 2007.

He will soon complete a three-month trial period.

Office work



Hassan, with Kavere, Babu, Osango, Ombwayo and Abibo



The Board in Happy Home

The Board of Trustees is currently composed of Alfred and Bernard (local party) and Isabelle and Edouard (international party). Isabelle and Edouard visit the home frequently and enjoy playing with the children.

Not pictured here is Bernard.

Uncle Alfred and the girls



Uncle Edouard welcomed by the kids



Aunty Isabelle and Bless



Melissa, our Volunteer—Nov. 07 to Jan. 08

Melissa is our third Belgian volunteer and has become a real mother to the children. As a professional psychologist she tries to understand the behaviour of the difficult children and reports to the manager and social worker.

Tupac, her boyfriend joined her in December to help in the renovations of the home.



Aunty Melissa and Aunty Agnes (staff) with the children



HAPPY HOME CERTIFICATES. THE EXPLANATION

“Self Help Group”—Department of Social Services



In June 2006, Happy Home Orphanage was registered as a « Self Help Group » in Kenya.

This is a « group of individuals who perform activities to help themselves or to help their communities ». It is comparable to the Belgian « association de faits ». It has no legal status as an institution, and cannot own assets. All responsibilities lay with the members of the group. That has now changed ...

“Charitable Children's Institution”—Ministry Home Affairs



In May 2007, Happy Home Orphanage was registered as a « Charitable Children’s Home».

This means that we are now officially recognized as an institution: an orphanage. Organizationally we fall under the Ministry of Home Affairs and report to them about management and the children’s well-being. This new status is good for three years at which time it can be renewed.

We are now a legally recognized Orphanage in Kenya !!!



NEWS FROM KENYA

Gifts to Happy Home

Our donors in Kenya are increasing. We have some permanent sponsors, but most donations are casual or in kind.

For example, we recently received large amounts of children clothing and books. They were very welcomed as the children are learning to read and story books are the excellent motivators to do so. We especially appreciate books that fit in the local rural context as they are the most accessible to the children. Thanks a lot !!!

Alfred takes care of the volunteer's security

Two Belgian volunteers, Melissa and Tupac, were residing in Happy Home when the problems started in Kenya.

We would like to reassure you that they have been safely escorted to Tanzania. We would like to thank our local partners for organising this. We can really count on them to ensure the health, safety and security of our volunteers.

Edouard and Isabelle are still in Belgium

Edouard and Isabelle are presently in Belgium, waiting for the situation in Kenya to improve before "going home". We are in regular contact with the people on the ground and have good information about the security and transport possibilities.



NEWS FROM BELGIUM

2 September—Happy Home Happening

On 2nd of September, donors, volunteers, sponsors and friends of Happy Home gathered in the park of Arenberg in Leuven for the Happy Home Happening. It was a perfect opportunity to get to know each other and to thank the people present for their support. Everyone brought home made cakes and drinks. A presentation about the children and the history of Happy Home was screened in one of the neighbouring rooms. The organising team was very happy with the presence of 60-70 people and the nice and warm atmosphere and enthusiasm of the participants.. The event will certainly be repeated !

Fundraising successful

Fundraising in Belgium has been very successful. Most of our permanent sponsors are based in Belgium. Besides this, a large number of activities were organised for fundraising, several babies choose Happy Home as a birth wishlist, and a number of charity groups sponsored Happy Home projects, including part of the renovations.

Visitors in Happy Home

Belgian visitors to Happy Home have been numerous since the summer. The children were overwhelmed and every time a visitor was ready to leave they said « eyawa» (« it's unfair » in Luo).



NEWS FROM USA

Successful Fundraising

The end of December 2007 will mark Happy Home’s first year of fund raising in the United States. To date, our U.S. representatives, Ed Sulzberger and Linda Ercole-Musso, have raised \$25,000, mainly in the form of small casual donations.

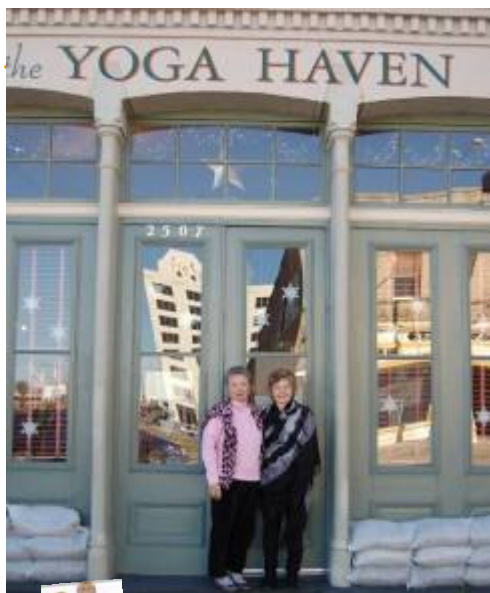
The bulk of the fund raising has taken place on an island in Southeast Texas, an area known as Galveston County. An important part of our efforts, Sulzberger explains, is that we conduct it under the auspices of an organization known as the Agroforestry Council International, which allows US tax payers to receive a tax deduction.

Nevertheless, he says, the biggest motivator for US donors is the idea of helping the Happy Home children. The US fund raising program has also identified a number of larger donors, he says, but the bulk of the funds come from ordinary people who give anywhere from \$10-100.

US Fund raising efforts also received a big boost from the publication in September of a major story about Happy Home by reporter Harvey Rice in the Houston Chronicle. The [article](#) helped raise more than \$5000 and identified many new donors.



Ed Sulzberger playing with the children in Happy Home



Yoga Heaven

Sulzberger notes that the business community play an important role in the success of the program. One of the biggest commercial efforts is a highly successful monthly fund raiser conducted by the [Yoga Haven](#) studio in Galveston, Texas. One Friday evening of every month, Yoga Haven owner Kathleen DiNatale conducts a special yoga session just for Happy Home. Thus far, she has raised \$2,500 making Yoga Haven and its patrons the largest group of Happy Home donors in the United States.

Yoga Haven owner Kathleen DiNatale and Happy Home US representative Linda Ercole



NEWS FROM USA

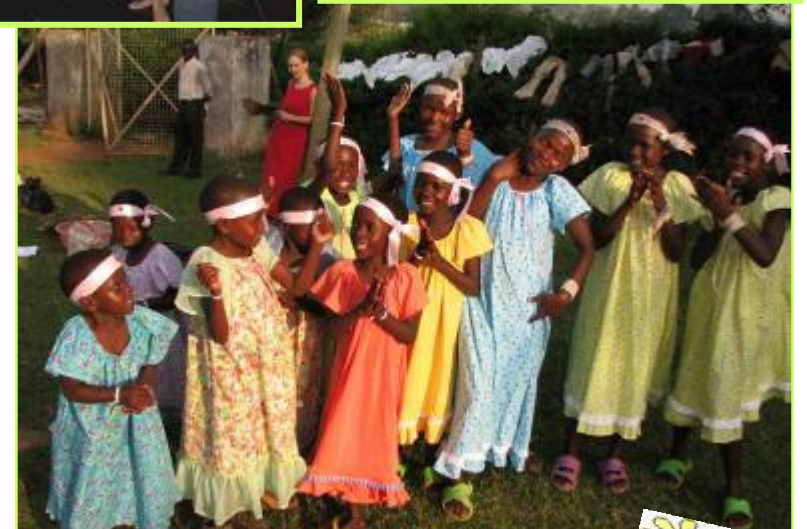
Artists Support Happy Home

Other businesses that support Happy Home include Galveston Designer [Cathy Stovall](#) who has sewn highly colorful “Twirligirl” play gowns” for each girl at Happy Home; book publishers Ester Nelson and Davida Hirsch of [Granny Press](#) – a New York publisher specializing in children’s books; Cheryl Jenkins of Galveston’s [Hendley Market](#), a specialty gift retailer; and artists Cheri Ray and Kay Kemp of Houston’s [Wild Heart Art](#).



Happy Home kids and Granny Press publishers Ester Nelson and Davida Hirsch of New York.

Happy Home girls and designer Cathy Stovall and her “Twirligirl” play gowns.”



NEWS FROM CANADA

Visitors to Happy Home

In August, our first visitors from Canada, Simon and Catherine, visited Happy Home. And in November 2007 Edouard's brother, Franz Jr. and Stephanie came and played and danced with the children.

The children are always happy to meet visitors.



Franz, Edouard's brother, and Stephanie



Simon and Catherine



Happy Home Bank account in process...

We are now at the stage of opening a bank account in Canada to receive donations. The non-profit organization "ESEE-Monde" was approached and is now hosting our action for Happy Home. A dedicated bank account number will be available soon.

Information Session

Info-session. In August 2007, an information session for Happy Home was organised by Edouard and François.



Happy Home children, staff, Board of Trustees, and our volunteer teams in all four countries wish you all the best for 2008. We thank you for your contributions last year, without which this project would never have been possible.

We hope that the Happy Home projects will grow further in 2008, and will assist more orphans and vulnerable children. Our aim is to make children happy and to give them opportunities for education and to achieve their dreams for the future.



Happy Home

MORE INFO

Site: www.HappyHomeKenya.org

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How To Help?

Names:

Email:

Contact address:

◇ I register as a **godfather/mother** of Happy Home and agree to give* *monthly/quarterly/yearly/.....* donations of* *KSh / € / US\$ / Ca\$* to Happy Home Orphanage bank account (please tick below) starting from the date of/...../ 200..... In case of termination of my sponsoring, I will contact Happy Home by email or post at least two months in advance.

◇ I give a **casual donations** of* *KSh / € / US\$ / Ca\$* to Happy Home Orphanage bank account (please tick below)

◇ I would like to **help in the country office** with (specify) or organise a Fund-raising happening..... (specify) in (town).

◇ I would like to **Volunteer in Happy Home**, can help with and am available round the following period to

The money will integrally be used to provide a safe and comfortable home to total orphans registered in the orphanage and to maintain their home. The contact email will only be used to inform me about the children and send me financial reports. It will in no case be transferred to anyone.

Done in on Signature,

Please tick the country office you wish to relate with:

Kenya: Happy Home Orphanage 012 464 552 5400, NBK, Awendo Branch (swift: NBKEKENXXXX)

Belgium: 979-326 10 73-35 (IBAN: BE57 9793 26 10 7335 - BIC: ARSPBE22). Please mention your contact details (email). Tax certificate from 30-EUR/year.

USA: Checks payable to the "Agroforestry Council International" and mark the memo line as "Happy Home Kenya". (US income tax deductible)

Canada: bank account registration in process, contact François Dubé

PLEASE POST OR EMAIL TO THE CONTACTS LEFT