

THE LINK Newsletter

SPRING 2018

MAKING EVERY DAY COUNT | NEW SCHOOL BLOCK



Kenya's RHYCO Program is Giving Hope to the most vulnerable in society

Kawangware is a slum settlement west of Nairobi with more than 600,000 inhabitants. Most live on less than a dollar a day and struggle to survive and feed their families. Layers of garbage, dirt, and human waste line the pathways between rows of dirt-floored homes made of tin and mud. The people who live in Kawangware face incredible challenges, from widespread unemployment and low wages, to rampant disease. Water supplied by the city is not available every day. Safe drinking water is scarce and expensive. Water born diseases, pneumonia, and malaria are prevalent as well as many airborne diseases due to the poor drainage system. As a result, many children and youth live on the streets, scavenging for food and are at risk of exploitation and abuse.

International Needs' Real Hope Youth Community Organisation (RHYCO) Drop-in Centre was established in Kawangware slum in 2014 to bring hope and protection to street children and youth. In conjunction with local agencies, **RHYCO's team** of volunteer social workers is working hard to help reintegrate these children into their families and communities.

"It's important that every child knows that their life is worth living and they have great potential." • **Martha Mwende, Program Manager**



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RHYCO TEAM

The RHYCO Drop-in Centre is a safe place where the basic needs of street children are met.

THE RHYCO DROP-IN CENTRE OFFERS SERVICES INCLUDING:

- Home visits to facilitate sponsorship and reintegration.
- Play therapy, a library and informal schooling.
- Counselling services and social support.
- Linking children with rehabilitation and detox agencies.
- Street work to locate children including a community awareness program using puppetry.
- A feeding program and provision of clothing and showering facilities.

"It is our hope that with counselling, skills teaching, and mentorship, street youth will be able to find or create work for themselves and lead more fulfilling lives. We want to see younger street children reintegrated into families, going to school, and leading meaningful lives. The Drop-In Centre will help us immensely to reach these goals."

• **Jocelyn Muraya, Director of International Needs Kenya**

The RHYCO Drop-in Centre involves the entire community in promoting the welfare of children. The team works directly with the parents and relatives of youth, teaching them the knowledge and skills they need to help prevent their children from going to the streets. The team also engages in advocacy at a government level.

Support through child sponsorship and scholarship programs are offered to those who wish to return to school.

The RHYCO Drop-in Centre requires ongoing support to sustain its services to vulnerable children and youth.

**A New Vision
The Story of
John Kiarie**

John Kiarie is 28 years old. He lives in Kawangware with his wife and 2 children, and manages the **Wasafi Car Wash** - a project designated to create employment opportunities for rehabilitated street youths and young adults. John knows from

experience the dangers of street life. He was 8 years old when he began living on the streets.

John shares, *"I dropped out of school in grade 2 and went to live on the streets, not realizing that this was a highway to hell. I was introduced to cigarettes and glue sniffing. Later, I moved on to marijuana, then graduated to hard drugs."*



John married while he was living on the streets and his wife had 2 children. Being homeless with his family brought a lot of challenges. Cold nights and poorly cooked foods, hard sleeping conditions, and a lack of proper clothes made their lives miserable.



The children developed a lot of infections due to their exposure to the streets. The continual scorn and discrimination the family faced from people was disheartening.

"People called my wife all sorts of names because she loved a street boy. We had no hope. We were a gang of over 50 people and 14 of us decided to come out and get help through the RHYCO program. Because I really wanted to get my life back, I listened to the doctors and counsellors and did what they asked. The program worked really well for me and I am happy to say that my life has changed for the better. I feel like I am living a normal life like any other man and that feels really good." • John

John's employment at the **Wasafi Car Wash** has enabled him to support his family and provide for their basic needs. He is able to pay their house rent and buy food, and continues to work hard to improve his family's life. John is a good mentor to his peers.



The **Car Wash Project** is funded by International Needs. Rehabilitated youths and young adults receive basic training on behavioral change, career guidance, and business management. Since the project began, a local Church leader has been following the participants' progress and encouraging them in their new lives.

PRAYER CORNER

ITEMS FOR PRAYER

"Prayer does not fit us for greater work; prayer is the greater work." • Oswald Chambers

Please pray for the work at the RHYCO Drop-in Centre in Kawangware, Kenya. So many street children and youth are in desperate need of help and intervention. Pray that God will lead the staff in every way, and bring hope and healing to the children and youth in their care.

ITEMS FOR PRAISE

"For what You have done I will praise You." • Psalm 52:9

We praise God for His love to the people of Limuru whose lives have become much simpler in many ways. Because of the new borehole in their community, waterborne diseases will trouble them no more, and the hours formerly spent fetching water will now be used in more productive ways. **Thank you!**



Three Cheers for the New School Block at Doblogonno, Ghana

Students and teachers at **Doblogonno Junior High School** could not hold back their

joy and excitement as they moved into their newly dedicated school block. The new structure was built with the support of Canadian donors and comes as a great relief to students and teachers who were learning and teaching in overcrowded classrooms. The new facility includes a library, a computer room, an office, and a staff common room. Teachers will no longer have their offices under a tree.

Delivering an address at the ceremony to dedicate the new JHS block, the Public Relations Officer of the Ga West Municipal Education Directorate, Rev. Michael Narh, was hopeful that the new facility will have a positive impact on all aspects of learning and teaching at Doblogonno Junior High School.

"I would like to encourage the students to make good use of this new facility by working hard to excel in their studies. May you all, staff and students, cultivate a good maintenance culture to prolong the life of this facility." • Rev. Michael Narh

Many thanks for your generous support of this project.





Making every day count!



On May 13th this year, Aggie Stretch turned 65. This new milestone has had her thinking, "What now?" Looking into her granddaughter's tiny eyes, Aggie decided that she would raise support for a cause impacting women and children. Talk of maternal health issues had been drifting in and out of her home since before Christmas as her husband, Dr.

Neal Stretch, prepared to fly to Guatemala on a medical mission with International Needs Canada.

"I have always held women and children close to my heart. I come from a family of six children and my parents were good role models regarding love and generosity, despite the hardships they themselves faced as immigrants." • Aggie

During her 65th year, Aggie will raise \$65,000 for maternal health in Guatemala where the maternal mortality rate is shocking. Out of 1000 mothers giving birth, 140 will die from preventable causes. To give you a comparison, the average maternal death in Canada is 7 to every 100,000 live births. Guatemala is among the worst in the global south for maternal and child mortality.

Aggie is partnering with International Needs Canada to fund their three-year program to permanently reduce preventable maternal and newborn deaths in the rural Western Highlands of Guatemala.

For more information please visit www.65bysixtyfive.com

INTERNATIONAL NEEDS CANADA

DISCOVERY

TOUR

Upcoming Discovery Tours

Ghana Medical Tour	November 11-23, 2018
Guatemala Discovery Tour	January 14-24, 2019
Bangladesh Discovery Tour	February 2019

For more information please contact Corrie Mulder at
905.637.9411 or corrie@internationalneeds.ca

Discovery Tours offer a unique opportunity to witness first-hand the difference your contribution is making in the lives of the people you support. It also allows you to connect with other people serving on the ground. Your support is the fuel that drives their service.

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