

THE LINK Newsletter

A quarterly newsletter published
by International Needs Canada

SPRING 2023

BELLA CIAO

A safe haven for abused children

 international needs
transformed lives, changed communities

www.internationalneeds.ca



“My wish is that a time will come when no child will have to endure that unbearable pain, torture and discrimination in the name of ‘street child’”

Martha Mwende
RHYCO Director



COVER STORY

The Bella Ciao Safe House

Transforming Lives in Kawangware Slum, Kenya

In early 2021, our partner RHYCO opened the Bella Ciao Safe House and Drop-In Centre for street children in Kawangware slum. The main objective and driving force of the RHYCO team is to **improve the quality of life for young people who are born into extreme poverty.**

In just two short years, the centre has made a huge impression on the children and families they serve, as well as the surrounding community. Their approach is holistic, which means they **focus on developing the whole child** and providing ‘Real Hope’.

Here’s a snapshot of their amazing work.

Daily priorities at Bella Ciao

- Rescue children in need of protection from abuse
- Run programs for children who can’t afford school
- Operate an informal school and homework club
- Provide nutritional meals and medical support
- Reintegrate the children into their schools and homes

Long-term development activities

- Provide leadership training to expand the children’s potential
- Help parents deal with substance abuse and unemployment
- Get the community’s help to divert children from street life
- Engage in advocacy with the government
- Break the grip of poverty in Kawangware ... one life at a time

RHYCO needs financial support to pay for the many costs of helping vulnerable children who have been abused.

Will you consider making a one-time or monthly gift to make sure Bella Ciao is equipped to deliver these life-changing results?

WALK FOR WATER



Saturday, June 3rd at 12:00pm

The walk is fast approaching!

With help from Women Making a Difference, International Needs Canada is raising funds for a large water and sanitation project in the village of Kona, Burkina Faso. **The 5km “Walk for Water” is happening on June 3rd in Cottam, Ontario.**

It all started with a gospel outreach led by International Needs Burkina Faso in the rural village of Lah. After the event, the village leaders expressed how badly their people were suffering from a lack of clean water: **“You’ve brought us water for our souls; can you also bring water for our bodies?”**

With help from Women Making a Difference, International Needs Canada was pleased to raise the funds needed to drill two boreholes. A year later, clean and safe water was flowing for about 3000 people!



The second project is now being built in Kokoro, another small community that has no source of water nearby. **Women and girls travel long distances for hours a day to fetch contaminated water** that makes everyone sick. The project includes two boreholes and five badly-needed public latrines to improve sanitation.

Proceeds from the Walk for Water will be for the third project in Kona.

Make a donation or join the fun and be a walker on June 3rd Internationalneeds.ca/the-2023-walk-for-water



See it for yourself!

At International Needs, we're grateful for everything you GIVE. But have you ever been curious to GO see the programs? If so, dust off your passport and get ready for the trip of a lifetime.

You have three travel options:



Fran and Keith with sponsored child Hashi

1. Discovery Tour

The Joy of Child Sponsorship

Every year, International Needs Canada hosts Discovery Tours that give you the opportunity to travel to our partner countries and **visit the many projects and programs** that support vulnerable children and women. In February 2023, Corrie Mulder led a tour to Bangladesh with a small group of supporters.

Long-time child sponsors Fran and Keith were on the tour, and they enjoyed seeing the **great work taking place at the schools and drop-in centres**. As they travelled around the country, they heard the sad stories of children who had been abandoned and forgotten.

The highlight of the trip was meeting Hashi and Pronoy, two children they've been sponsoring for the last ten years. Many young girls Hashi's age are at risk of being sold into early marriage or child labour, common practices in Bangladesh. And they were excited to hear Pronoy talk about the future, and his plans to become a doctor.

Thanks to Fran and Keith's support, these two fine young people are **attending wonderful schools and on a path to a better life**. When their family and friends ask about the trip, they describe it as "awesome and heavy. It was a great experience, but very emotional".

Next Discovery Tour: Africa, January 2024

To reserve a seat or talk about sponsoring a child, contact Corrie Mulder at 1-888-702-9805 or info@internationalneeds.ca

2. Medical Trip

"You can't come home from a trip like this without being inspired to do something significant to help. We encourage all International Needs supporters to go on a trip and see it firsthand."

Medical trip volunteer

The Impact of Group Sponsorship

In fall 2022, two teams went on medical outreaches: one to Zambia, and one to Ghana. Over 21 days total, these volunteers visited nine International Needs schools and **served more than 5000 men, women, and children** who have no access to medical care.

The Zambia medical team discovered that food insecurity is a serious challenge at ZACTS school, where an estimated **80% of all students come to school without breakfast**. Among primary grades, the absenteeism rate due to food insecurity is 25%; the children are just too weak and unable to concentrate on their studies.

The medical team was heartbroken to see the children suffering, so they **started a group sponsorship feeding program** to make sure all students at ZACTS benefit from a healthy meal every day. 960 students, mainly those not already receiving the benefits of sponsorship, will eat well for the next five years. **Thanks to everyone on the team for their compassion and generosity!**

**Next Medical Trip:
Bangladesh, October 2023**

To reserve a seat or talk about group sponsorship, contact Festus Addei at 1-888-702-9805 or info@internationalneeds.ca

3. Umoja Journey

An adventure with purpose

Led by our Executive Director David Marshall, the Umoja Journey takes you to **beautiful and exciting locations**, while introducing you to the true nature, wildlife, and culture of Africa. But David adds: "My years leading a non-profit development organization have taught me that any adventure we seek for ourselves **must also include a look at the injustice of poverty** that grips the lives of many Africans. I design every trip so you can see the reality of life in Africa and **discover a way you can be part of making the world a better place**. We all seek a greater purpose in life."

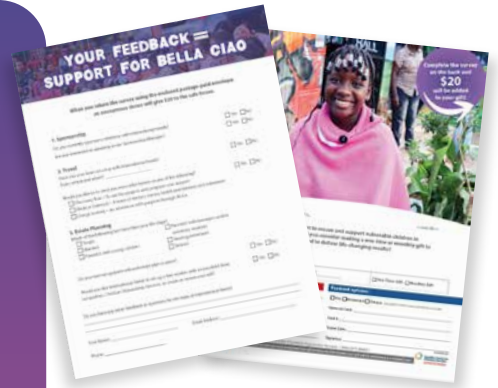


**Next Umoja Journey:
September 2023**

If you're interested in this great adventure, contact David Marshall at 1-888-702-9805 or info@internationalneeds.ca

We'd love to hear from you!

To help plan our activities, we've enclosed a short survey to get your thoughts on a few topics. This is a special survey: when you return it, **an anonymous donor will give \$20** to Bella Ciao!



Are you retired or almost retired?

Congratulations! You're entering an exciting stage of life that brings **lots of change**. After leaving the daily rhythm of work, you'll be able to pursue hobbies and spend more time with family and friends. However, retirement may also bring **financial anxiety**, and one of the most important steps you can take is to review and **update your will**. To make this process easier, we invite you to contact our charitable partner, Christian Stewardship Services (CSS), for a **free consultation**. CSS will send an unbiased Christian consultant to your house to help you build an **estate plan** that fits your wishes, while **minimizing your taxes** and legal costs.

To get started, return the enclosed survey and request an introduction to CSS.



FREE confidential service for will and estate planning.

1-800-267-8890 • www.cssservices.ca



Praise & Prayer Corner

Praise

We're thankful to God for His provision of resources that enable us, together, to support vulnerable children around the world.

Prayer

Please join us in prayer for the strength to endure through this time of global strife, natural disasters, and economic uncertainty.