

Victor by name, victor by nature



Former street boy Victor Ochieng has just joined university, triumphing over the disadvantages of being a street boy.

When he was orphaned Victor and his sister went to live with their grandmother. She tried to care for them, but she was already looking

after four other grandchildren and couldn't earn enough to feed them.

Victor said, "I was always hungry so I went to live on the streets. I lived there for a year until Mama Chege found me and said I could have a place at the Sunshine Centre. I was very happy and able to go back to school."

Victor excelled at school, and in September started a BSc degree in Science and IT at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University.

We support 138 former street boys at our Sunshine Centre; 25 are at college, 52 are in primary and 58 in secondary school. All of them aspire to be victors, too.



Footsteps trustee Wendy McMahon and Sunshine Centre's Mama Chege visit Mike Muraya and Brian Macharia at Nyondia Primary School.



Sunshine Centre social worker Simon Kuria checks how our former street boys are progressing at Milimani High School.

Street boys: this is my story...

Evans Thiongo (age 15)

I am the youngest of 10 children and I used to steal food from my brothers and sisters because I was so hungry.

My mother is only paid 250 shillings (£1.50) a day to work on farms, but she often only gets work on two days a week. Because of the challenges at home, I went to the streets when I was 12 years old. I collected charcoal and scrap metal to earn a few shillings to buy

food. At night I slept anywhere - under market stalls or in doorways.

One day, Mama Chege found me on the street and gave me something to eat. She then asked me if I would like to come to Sunshine and I said "yes."

I am very happy be at Sunshine and I love being in school. I like maths best and would like to be an engineer when I am older. I enjoy the food at Sunshine and having a bed to sleep in at night. Mum is very happy I am at Sunshine.



John Kimani (age 13)

I went on to the streets when I was 10 years old.

My mother had a stroke and couldn't walk. She got better but her right arm is still paralysed so it is very hard for her to get work. And when she does find work, they don't pay her as much as the other workers.

I went to the streets because there wasn't enough food to eat at home and

not enough money to pay my school fees.

On the streets I could make 100 shillings (£0.60p) a day which I gave to my mother to buy food, but it often wasn't enough. I wasn't bullied or afraid, but life was very difficult. I only ever had one set of clothes and one pair of shoes.

Mum and I are both very happy that I am at Sunshine. I feel safe, I have food and I have soap to wash my clothes.

Samuel Ngugi (age 13)

When I was on the streets, bigger boys would often come and beat me and take whatever I had managed to get, so I was always fearful and hungry.

I would sometimes go home to sleep, but very often I stayed on the streets sleeping in doorways and under the stalls in the market. I had been on the streets for 7 years when Mama Chege found me. I met

Mama Chege in the market when she was giving out food to street boys - I was really glad to have some. She said I could have a safe place at Sunshine, and I was very happy to come because I knew some of the other boys who had already gone there.

I went to the streets because my single-mum couldn't earn enough money working in the quarry to feed me and my brothers.



At the Sunshine Centre in Naivasha, Kenya, former street boys find love, education, good food and the opportunity to develop new skills.

During her recent visit, Footsteps International trustee Wendy McMahon taught some of the boys to knit.

"During my visit last year, one of the boys had been trying to knit on two felt pens so I took knitting needles and wool, cast on the first stitches and off they went...!"



Why I love Sunshine...

While each street boy's story is unique, they follow a pattern which involves leaving home, dropping out of school, desperately scrounging for food and ways to earn money on the streets, and risking being beaten and abused.

We ask each boy what they like about the Sunshine Centre - the photos illustrate some of their answers. Having fun with other boys ranks highly (Wendy McMahon brought the balloons when she visited), but enjoying mountains of good food is their top priority.



If you have lived on the streets, having a set of smart clothes is a luxury (even if you have to wash them yourself!).

The boys love going back to school, and enjoy extra tuition on the Centre's computers in the evenings and weekends.

Social worker Simon Kuria reported, "The schools are very impressed with our boys' ability and awareness of use of computers, and often ask them to help others in their class."



Each evening, the boys gather in the Sunshine Centre classroom to sing their favourite church songs before heading for their comfortable beds.

A highlight of a trustees' visit is a walk to the hotel where the manager allows the boys to swim in the pool. After an hour of excited splashing, the boys enjoy a special lunch sitting in the shade of the acacia trees.

That's why the boys love Sunshine!.

Children need care and kindness...



Steven Ochieng shares a joke with his grandma. As he is an orphan, she cares for him, but she only earns a small amount selling sesame and dried fish, so we help her with a small monthly donation to make ends meet.

Steven is in his final year at high school. He hopes he will get the grades he needs to take a computer science course at college which would enable him to fulfil his ambition of having a cyber-café of his own. When not studying, he likes to relax by dancing and listening to high-tempo Kenyan music.

Ali Hamisi Tsteste (known by his nickname Johnnton) was in a bad way. His mother's drug addiction affected her own and Johnnton's health, and when his mother was admitted to a drug rehabilitation centre, he joined our Tumaini Children's Home in 2012.

Now in his first year at Tumaini Timbwani High School, he tells us, "I like playing basketball after school. And when I join university I would like to study architecture."



Three children with big dreams.

Currently in her 3rd year at high school, Elnora hopes to become an air hostess.

As Joram's favourite subject is Health Education, he aspires to study medicine, while Amigo's favourite school subject is science and he aims to become a great engineer.

All three children have experienced great difficulties and, with our help, are now cared for by village elder Njagi and his wife Constance.

Grown up and left home, but where are they now?



With the help of our outstanding house parents Charles and Mary Osaleh we have been caring for orphaned children at the Tumaini Children's home for 20 years.

Vivian Amwayi was one of the original 12 children we rescued. She left the Home many years ago but stays in touch and recently sent the photo (left) of her at work at the Living Waters Medical Clinic in Makwang'ani.

Doreen Kagendo (right, white sweater) joined the Home in 2011, and having completed a university degree, now works in Nairobi. Recently she visited the Shammah Children's Home to give gifts to the 30 children they care for. "I understand how important it is to give, and what it means to the lives of the needy," she told us.



Caring for the ultra-vulnerable...

...in Naivasha

Our Sunshine Ultra-Vulnerable (UV) programme supports families in the Naivasha area who suffer multiple difficulties such as disability, mental health issues and extreme poverty.

Hannah Wanjiru is very poor and her daughter Jane is severely disabled, so we have been providing the family with a food package each month to enhance the nutrition and improve the health of the children. Included in the pack are special dietary supplements for Jane.

When Wendy McMahon visited the family she saw that the children were benefitting from the extra nutritional supplements. The disabled girl Jane was much more settled, even excited, rather than distressed, and was moving herself more across the ground outside the house.

We tried including nappies for Jane in the monthly aid pack, but she found them uncomfortable and had been tearing them and trying to eat them, so they have been discontinued!



Mary Wangeshi is severely disabled and cared for by her sister Joyce (who also has disabilities).

We are helping the family by providing a monthly food pack, paying school fees for her children, and have funded a vocational training course for her eldest daughter Lydia.

Mary struggles to speak, but every time she receives a food parcel she smiles broadly and mumbles 'Ngai amurathime' ('God bless you' in the Kikuyu language) and does the sign of cross which the team interpret as meaning that she prays for them, too.

When Wendy visited she gave Mary two chickens - a gift from a donor in UK - which she clasped on her lap with a big smile on her face.

The local church has rallied round to help the family too, cleaning the house throughout and coming each Sunday to take both of the ladies to church, which they enjoy.

We are looking at how we can help make the family more self-sufficient by providing grow-bags to cultivate vegetables outside their house, and maybe some more chickens, too?

...and in Mombasa

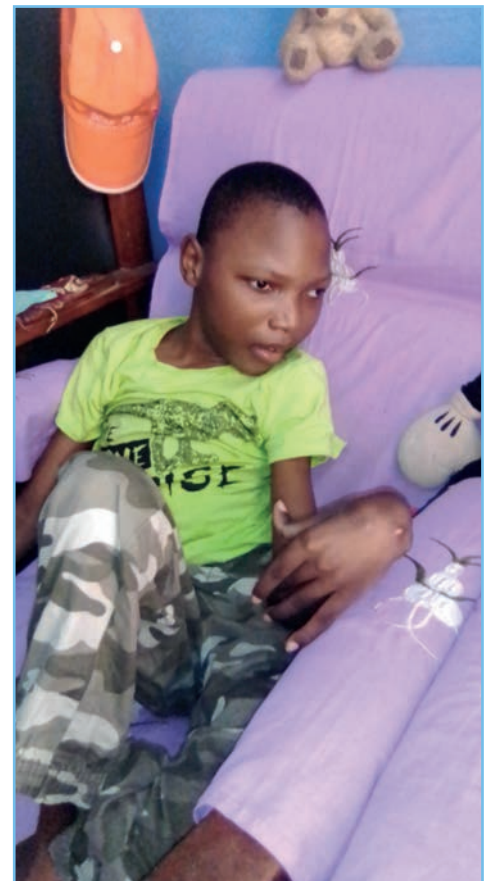
Jane Fridah heads up the Special Needs Education Programme at Tumaini School in Mombasa which supports 11 children with varying disabilities.

She was delighted with the new iPad we donated which allows the children

to use special software to develop their skills (photos below).

Livingston Mburu (right), has severe cerebral palsy, but his condition has greatly improved since we started funding regular physiotherapy for him.

His mother says that he can now move his legs and hands by himself and he is much more relaxed and happy.



Free meals for slum schools...



Footsteps trustee Wendy McMahon visited Church on the Rock School in Nairobi's Kibera slum to check how the school meals we fund are helping the children.

Do the free school meals make a difference? Michael Mutinda (right) thinks they do.

He was a student at the school until 2015 and recently completed a Bachelor degree in History and Archaeology with IT at Maseno University.



...make 48 children happy!

A delivery of bags of beans, maize and rice is always an exciting event for the 48 children at the Imani pre-school in Nairobi's Kibera slum. As they gather round the bags, they let the grains run through their hands, knowing that this means that there will be plenty to eat at lunch time.

"We are very grateful for the continued love and support that you give us," said school founder Lucy Munyao. "The new kitchen you funded last year is working very well. It is well-ventilated and so isn't smoky, which has made a great difference. Next time you visit, please come when we are taking the children for a day out so that you can come too!"



Have skills, can earn...



The smart modern Food and Beverage workshop at the Naivasha Technical Training Institute (NTTI) has attracted 23 students keen to learn how to make a living in Kenya's hospitality and tourism industry.

Once a week the tables and chairs are reorganised to make a restaurant where staff and members of the public can enjoy a 3 course lunch at a very reasonable price.

A qualified chef watches over the trainees as they prepare the food, ensuring the lunches are of the highest quality, and that the students learn how to give their customers top-class service.



We supported **Patrick Nguie** at the Sunshine Centre and at NTTI. Now a qualified mason he earns enough to support his disabled parents and pay his two younger siblings' school fees.



David Ndungu comes from a very poor family, so we are funding his plumbing course at NTTI. As he learns, he is growing in confidence and hopes to get a good job when he qualifies.



Dancun Mwangi, a former street boy we supported at NTTI, is now earning his living as a plumber with the Naivasha Water and Sanitation Company.

Would you believe they were once street boys?



Former street boy Julius Mwangi is top of his class at school and expected to score over 400 out of 500 marks in his exams.

He uses his IT skills to teach other boys at the Sunshine Centre and has also been appointed Secretary General of Nakuru County Children's Assembly to represent the rights of children, including those who are on the streets.



It is difficult to believe that this young man in a smart suit used to be a street boy.

Having completed a year at Pwani Bible College, Kelvin Kiplangat has started a work attachment with Nakuru View Church.

"Thank you so much for your support. May the Lord bless all partners who have given help to me and the Sunshine Centre."



Samuel Kamau saved up money from a temporary job to set up a barber's shop.

One of his first customers was another former street boy, Benson Thotho.

"Benson came to say hi," Samuel told us, "so I had to make him smart. He paid with big smile because of the work I did on his head!"

Hopefully other customers will pay in cash!

Footsteps International in Kenya



Transforms the lives of 138 former street boys at the Sunshine Centre, Naivasha



Cares for 28 orphaned and abandoned children at the Tumaini Centre, Mombasa



Strengthens education of 260 children in Nairobi's slums



Helps train 500 young people in life-skills

We are delighted to receive single and regular donations in support of our work.

We work with trusted partners to ensure that donations actually get where they are needed.

We do not discriminate against any needy person on the grounds of their religion, tribe or nationality.

Footsteps is managed by trustees who are all unpaid volunteers, committed to putting their Christian faith into action.

This newsletter was compiled following the visit to our projects by trustee Wendy McMahon in September 2023.

Give a MAD gift at Christmas



Send a Christmas gift that **Makes A Difference!**

You choose a gift and we send you a card representing your gift.

- You give the card to make someone happy.
- We use your donation to **Make A Difference** to someone in need

www.footstepsinternational.org/giftcards

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