

Building Houses, Building Hope

HFHK Statistics:

Families served: 4580
Ave. monthly payment: \$15
Ave. house size: 34 sq. m
No. of employees: 25
No. of communities: over 100

Message from the National Director

Thank you for Helping Us Settle 167 Internally Displaced Families. 168 to go!

Dear Friends of Habitat for Humanity Kenya,

Through your kind and sacrificial giving, I am happy to report that we have almost reached the half way mark in our IDP housing project in Maai Mahiu. We have completed construction of 146 houses and moved 146 families from deplorable living conditions in tents that were no longer habitable to new three roomed houses of permanent construction. Another 21 houses are under construction and we are confident that the families will occupy these houses by the end of April. For these 167 families, their lives have been totally transformed as you will read in the story of Florence Njuguna in this issue.

We remain acutely aware of the urgent housing needs of another 168 families that are still living in tattered tents but are confident that with your continued giving, we will be able to house these families within the next six months. We have asked Agnes Wangui to tell, in her own words, how it is like living in a tent whose use by date has long passed.

As resources permit, kindly do donate to enable us construct a house for Agnes and 167 other families. For those out of Kenya, donations can be made through the Habitat for Humanity International website www.habitat.org. Kindly designate the donation to Kenya and send us an e-mail at hfhkenya@hfhkenya.or.ke to let us know that you have made the donation and that you would want to designate it specifically to our IDP project in Maai Mahiu.

For those in Kenya, you can donate through M-PESA Business Number 506600 or ZAP Business Number 0731107717. You can also ZAP with HFHK as a 'nickname' instead of the account number or you can make out a cheque and drop it at our offices or call us to collect it.

The internally displaced families in Maai Mahiu have shown determination and resilience in the face of adversity and we at HFH



Habitat for Humanity Kenya completed IDP houses in Maai Mahiu

Kenya have learned a lot from them on how to face adversity and come out of it stronger. In this newsletter edition, I will let the two ladies mentioned above speak directly to you- one joyous and grateful for your kind donations that have enabled her to own a new house and one hopeful that she will also get an opportunity to own a decent, durable house like her neighbours.

I also wish to thank and welcome aboard our newest corporate partner- Eagle Africa Insurance Brokers Limited- and to thank them most sincerely for their kind donation that has enabled two internally displaced families to move into their new homes. Eagle Africa Insurance Brokers Limited provides a wide range of insurance solutions to the Kenyan and regional market and we provide a link to their website www.eagleafrica.co.ke for further information on how they are transforming the lives of Kenyans through innovative insurance products.

I wish to leave you with the two touching stories of Florence Njuguna and Agnes Wangui. I am hopeful, through your generous giving, that I will be able to report back to you in the next issue that we have finally constructed houses for Agnes and the other 167 families who are in very urgent need of decent housing.

Asanteni sana (Thank you very much)!

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Home at Last! The Story of Florence Njuguna

When we visited Florence Njuguna, a mother of two children in her newly built house in Maai Mahiu IDP camp, we found her busy doing her normal household activities. Her well furnished house and well maintained garden full of maize crops and vegetables took us by surprise. For Florence, life had indeed gone a notch higher. She was not the same Florence when she first came and settled in Maai Mahiu IDP camp two years ago.

Without employment within the camp and little opportunities to access daily income, Florence describes her initial times in Narok transitional IDP camp and subsequently in Maai Mahiu IDP camp as full of problems; a life she was not used to for the three years she had lived and worked in Narok town.

Florence tells her story...

Florence serves tea to her guests inside her new house



“It is painful to know that we lost everything that we had earned from the charcoal business in Narok town,” she narrates. There was no time to pack our belongings. We had to run for our dear lives to the nearby police station as groups of young men torched our houses and killed anyone whom they suspected did not come from their ethnic community. We were later to be hosted at the District Commissioner’s grounds in Narok

town for one year. Life there was not that better either for many of us. We had to continuously depend on handouts from well wishers and many are the times we could go hungry if none did not come our way”, she explains.

“My children are now happy that they can do their homework and sleep well unlike in the past when we were living in the tent.”

However, through the government resettlement package of Kshs. 35,000 (About US \$ 467) per family, we were able to pool our resources together and purchased a piece of land in Maai Mahiu where we pitched our tents. This was the only solution for us at that time, as we had no more resources to put up permanent structures that could shield us from the adverse windy and rainy conditions in Maai Mahiu area. “As you can see there are no trees in this field to shield us from the strong winds especially at night when it gets extremely cold”, she adds.

It was not until Habitat for Humanity Kenya approached us and promised to build for us these 3 roomed permanent stone houses as you can see. At first we did not believe that the houses would be built and completed as they had indicated and promised.

For now we can only thank God for this gift and continue to pray that well wishers from all corners of the world will continue supporting HFHK meet the shelter needs of our brothers and sisters who are still living in the tents now tattered and subject to regular repairs.



Florence in her small garden next to her house

With my small shamba (Kiswahili word for garden), I am now able to grow food crops enough to feed my family. My children are now happy that they can do their homework and sleep well unlike in the past when we were living in the tent. As for my husband Njuguna, he now has time to look for casual jobs from the nearby farms to supplement our daily income from the sale of vegetables.

She continues to say that, I can now see the bright future ahead of my family and still believe that more positive changes will come my way soon. I plan to continue farming in my small plot and continue saving the proceeds I get from the sale of food crops for the future of my family.

Florence is very grateful for the support she has received from HFHK and all well wishers who came to their rescue. She says that the HFHK initiative of building them houses has helped her and her neighbours in so many ways.

For her, memories of what transpired on that fateful day is something she would wish not to be pushed into. Her only wish for now is that, never again should Kenyans turn against each other and that the dark cloud of violence, killings and destruction will not hover again in times to come in this country.

Despairing But Still Hopeful:

Agnes Wangui aged 50 years, was displaced from her home in Eldoret during the post-election violence that rocked the country in 2007/2008. Her husband Paul Mwangi fled to Uganda while she and her nine children sought refuge at the Eldoret showground camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs). She has since lost contact with Paul, her husband, and does not know of his whereabouts. Tears flow easily when Agnes recalls the skirmishes and the merciless killings of innocent people at the hands of rioting gangs.

Agnes tells her story...

“When the violence broke out, I fled with my children to the showground where other people had also run to safety. We camped there for over a year during which we received KShs. 35,000 (about US\$ 467) from the government as a resettlement package. In 2009, we pooled our finances together with several other IDP families, and bought a piece of land in Maai Mahiu area within the Rift

Valley province, and subdivided it into smaller plots. We then camped on our new land and had to continue living in our cramped tents as we had no more resources left to use in rebuilding our lives.

Agnes continues: “I live with two of my children who attend a nearby day secondary school, as well as my five grandchildren. My older seven children are grown up and have left to fend for themselves and live on their own. Life has been very difficult for us all since we were uprooted from our home; our tent is now worn out and leaks heavily when it rains. The children fall sick regularly and often go hungry; they are also unable to focus on their studies. When I sit back and reflect on the problems that we are facing, I only wish that God will see us through and come to our rescue” she says sobbing.

Agnes was previously a businesswoman, successfully running a small restaurant and providing for her family’s needs; sadly all was lost during the chaos and she has since been reliant on well wishers

UAE Global Village: A Touching Experience



The Sharjah Higher College of Technology pose for a group photo in preparation for a build

It's a scorching Monday afternoon in Mubukoro, a small village in Chuka, Meru South District, in the Eastern part of the country. Joseph, a young father of two, his wife Frida and the host community at large are anxious to meet their long awaited visitors; the Global volunteer (GV) team from the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Besides them, stands a one roomed timber walled house and a semi permanent kitchen. In partnership with Habitat for Humanity Kenya and the friends from the UAE, the family is assured of moving to a decent, affordable house within a short period of about three weeks.

The eagerly awaited moment comes and both the hosts and the visiting team break into songs and dance, each in their indigenous languages; and although they do not really understand each other, their happy faces are a sign of good things to come. However, the task at hand is urgent and everyone rolls up their sleeves, pick

up tools and begin breaking the barren ground and working on the foundation for Joseph's family new house.

The five days that the GV team spent with the community were filled with curious and amusing moments as all interacted, experienced and appreciated their different cultural backgrounds. They shared and learnt from each other, and created awareness within the neighbouring communities on the need for decent shelter. What seemed to be a distant dream for Joseph and his family of owning a simple decent home, became a reality through the pulling together of resources by HFH Kenya, the Sharjah College team from the UAE, and the members of the host community.

Within a span of five days, the three roomed house was almost complete all because of joining hands together with a common mission: "a world where everyone has a decent place to live". In a span of few weeks, Joseph's family will move out of their one roomed, timber walled temporary house into their new spacious, decent and permanent house.

A special thank you (*Asante Sana*) to the Sharjah College team (UAE) for changing the lives of a family in need of decent housing.

Our regards also go to Matt Rivard, Canada open team and The American School of Abu Dhabi for joining hands with HFHK in assisting build houses for needy families in Machakos and Bomet regions respectively.

"Within a span of five days, the three roomed house was almost complete..."

The Story of Agnes Wangui

for survival. She hopes that she will soon get a decent, permanent house with the help of Habitat for Humanity Kenya. Her story reflects that of the 168 IDP families still living in similar, deplorable conditions in Maai Mahiu IDP camp.

I feel hopeful and I pray that well wishers will continue supporting and giving towards the noble work being carried out by Habitat so that my family and I can soon move out of our tattered tent and settle down into a decent, permanent house that we can call home. God bless Habitat for Humanity Kenya abundantly and may He touch the hearts of more people to help me achieve this dream"

Agnes, with some of her grandchildren outside her tent



HFH Kenya clinches 2nd position at the National Urban Forum (NUF4) exhibition!



Anne Njuguna (Left) and Pauline Ngenga (Right) with participants at HFHK stand during (NUF4) exhibition, Nairobi

Habitat for Humanity Kenya (HFHK), participated in the Fourth National Urban Forum (NUF4) held on the 27th – 28th January, 2010. The Forum, with the theme “**Right to the City – Bridging the urban divide**”, was hosted by the Ministry of Housing and held at the Kenya School of Monetary Studies in Nairobi. Key players within the housing development sector were invited to participate in the NUF4 and use it as a platform to deliberate issues, exhibit and profile their activities and innovations in line with the Forum’s theme.

Hon. Soita Shitanda, the minister for housing, led other dignitaries from United Nations in opening the forum. HFHK got the rare opportunity of briefing the honourable guests on its activities when they made a stopover at our stand.

The NUF4 was organised in preparation for the 5th World Urban Forum (WUF5) scheduled for March, 2010 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The WUF is a biennial event designated by the UN – General Assembly as an informal advisory body on all urban issues. HFH Kenya was awarded the second position overall as an exhibitor!

Thank You for Helping Us Resettle 167 IDP Families!

We wish to express our deepest gratitude to all our partners, friends and well wishers both local and international for their generous support towards the resettlement of internally displaced families in Maai Mahiu area.

Through your faithful and selfless giving, we have so far reached the half way mark of building decent and durable houses for the affected families in Maai Mahiu IDP camp. There is no other way to fully express our appreciation for your loyalty and commitment towards meeting the shelter needs of this group of people.

We at Habitat for Humanity Kenya can only say **THANK YOU VERY MUCH** and May God Bless You All.

Special Thanks go to:

Individuals

- Abigail K
- Aggrey A
- Albert M
- Alice S
- Alton C
- Barbara
- Bernard K
- Betty M
- Bob M
- Bridget T
- Carol M
- Carol N
- Caroline M
- Charity M
- Charles N
- Christine T
- Christopher M
- Dennis S
- Dorothy K
- Elizabeth T
- John K
- John N
- John C
- Joseph M
- Julius I
- Kelvin M
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- Lorna K
- Mathew M
- Mathews N
- Michael R
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- Peter K
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- Sarah M
- Sarah W
- Seraphia K
- Stella G
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- Virginia K
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Local Corporates

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- Housing Finance Corporation of Kenya
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