

*Women For Women In Africa works with the women and children of Kibera, Africa's largest slum, by providing education and resources to enable them to live a life of dignity, happiness and hope for the future.*

Newsletter FEBRUARY 2013

## 2013 and what a year it will be for Women for Women in Africa and Wanawake kwa Wanawake

WkW has for the past two years been housed in a sub-standard building without running water (except what comes through the roof and up through the floor) and often without electricity.

Last week building commenced on the new Wanawake kwa Wanawake Family Community Centre. The land has been donated and also a substantial part of the building costs, so our challenge is now to find the remainder of the funds, about \$150,000, needed by mid year to complete the building.

It is our hope that friends of WFWIA will take some ownership of this building and contribute thus providing a safe environment for the education of women, children and also family care. Some of the costs are listed in this Newsletter.

In December 2012 the students at the Chappell Informal School graduated. The students who attend the Chappell Informal School are young people who have completed 8 years of Primary School but are unable to continue to the 4 years of Secondary School because of lack of funds and any financial support. These children will fall through the cracks and never be able to continue their education without help.



WkW does not advertise this school. It is not registered and offers no formal education but boys and girls come seeking the chance to learn and hoping for sponsorship to continue to Secondary School. They have to fulfil certain criteria before being accepted and they have to come every day if they are to be considered for sponsorship. They get no luxuries, a dark airless classroom, few books, maybe paper and pen, no meal just a health biscuit at lunch break. However they do have dedicated teachers and they enjoy singing, dancing at noon sport with their one soccer ball. 18 students is the most that can be taken at the Informal School and even then the room is crowded with just benches and a big table.

In 2012, all the students who attended the Chappell Informal School received sponsorship to enable them to return to school in 2013. This was through the generosity of Australians, many who visited WkW, and have committed to the Endowment Fund of \$1000 for 4 years.

In January 2013, Sister Leonida Kwamboka, the Director of WkW told me that dozens of boys and girls had arrived at WkW seeking entrance to the Chappell Informal School. WkW can only take a maximum of 18 so the decisions will be very difficult.

When the new Centre is built and opened in 2014 there will be room for 40 students to attend the Informal School. They will also have the facilities of a library, a health care room, and provision is being made to give them a meal of ugali or rice or beans – perhaps the only one they will have that day. They will enjoy with the Women's Group toilet facilities, water and electricity and outside is a small playground to kick that soccer ball.

This composition from Lilian Akinyi was written on her graduation from the Chappell Informal School.

Lilian is 16 years. She completed Primary School but was not able to go to Secondary School. She is the 4th born of 5 children. Her father tries to find casual work and what he earns is barely enough to feed the family and provide accommodation. Lilian's mother has been ill for 20 years and only recently, with help from an Australian visitor, has been able to have medical treatment but it is harsh and very painful.

Lilian's ambition, now that she is going to school in 2013, is to study hard to become a doctor so she can help people like her mother get well.

This is her story – please remember that this girl has only completed Primary School.



Lilian going to Secondary School.

Lilian Akinyi 08/02/2013

HOW I SPENT MY LIFE IN KIBERA

In Kibera life is so hard that without hope you can just give up. Children of Kibera are very hard working because they know that it pays but there are many challenges they face. You may find some small boys and girls engaging into various activities such as stealing from other people, drinking drugs and drop out of school due to lack of school fees.

Education is the key and the gateway to success but in Kibera people suffer very much. Some people can just tell you go and get married since you are a girl so that you can help your family. You can just regret why you had been born. Some boys are even giving up and starts involving themselves in drugs so that they can remove stress. Some of my agemate have just decided to sell themselves for money, young girls are forced to have sex in exchange of money which makes them drop out of school and become pregnant. Some even decide to do abortion which is a sin. Other young people who are orphans go to the streets and start begging for money.

Some students even decide to go and search for jobs so that they can be employed while they have not even reach eighteen years and above and this may lead to child labour. Some of the young people may give their life to do hard job which are meant for their parents.

In Kibera many people suffer because of food, shelter, clothing and education. I have heard many people saying that people of Kibera are bad people simply because they heard some people in the television fighting due to the general Elections that was held in two thousand and seven. When the general election was being held many people lost their beloved ones, properties and also their homes. Some people came from the p blues and started doing shoplifting in the shops and chased the owners of the shops away. The owners of the shops had no choice but decided to go back to their up countries where they had to struggle alot.

In Kibera we are happy even if it rains because when it rains we can get some water to wash clothes with. I like visiting my friends during my leisure and sometimes even visiting the sick in the hospital. I like the saying that goes two hands are better than one because in Kibera we like making groups eg girls group where we meet as youths and discuss things that may help us achieve our goals and also advice each other because we know that Kibera is the university of life. When you are in Kibera you will learn a lot of things.

In Kibera there are few toilets that many people use flying toilets when they feel like visiting the toilets. Don't you never hate Kibera because it has good people who have great minds which think alike. The Kibera people takes life the way it is. I have learnt that as I leave in Kibera I will keep on watching my ways to avoid getting into trouble, be a role model of good character and work hard because it pays to become a better person. Every dog has its day.

I hope that there will be peace and harmony in the next coming general election which will be held on 4th march 2013.

By: Lilian Akinyi

Magdalene Onduso is 13 years and the eldest of 5 children. She finished Primary School in 2009 but has not been able to commence Secondary School. Her mother died in 2006 and the father, a security guard on a very small wage, endeavours to provide for his children. Magdalene is now commencing Secondary School in 2013 and would like to become a doctor.



HOW I SPENT MY DAY IN KIBERA:  
 Life in Kibera is hard, until you make it easy it will be easy until the end. And there are many challenges in Kibera that people pass through and some of them engage to bad companies like stealing, Drug abuse and many others. Girls engage into school drop out, Early marriages and early pregnancies.  
 People are saying that they wanted free Education so that their children can go to school. The slums of Nairobi are screaming for civic Education ahead of General Education Elections but there are no clear plans in place to provide it. All Kibera leaders would welcome practical inputs on the constitution as well as peace Education.  
 Education is the gateway to the world of our dreams which can drive us to our destiny. It is your choice to work hard and build your foundation. Your future is determined now. The roots of Education are bitter but the fruits are more than sweet so work hard now to enjoy later in your future.  
 The general election which is coming will be bad, but I just pray to God and tell him to make Election to be peaceful and people be generous and friendly to each other. I don't want them to start killing people, closing the road for the vehicles and burning each other. Many people have died but us we are alive. It is not that we are special in God's eyes, It is because of his mercy and kindness he has provided to us.  
 Some young boys joined bad groups and started burning people's house and throwing stones. I hope we will be living a good life with our families, relatives, friends and people in our country.

For more reports from students please see the website [www.womenforwomeninAfrica.org.au](http://www.womenforwomeninAfrica.org.au)

## WkW – The place to be in January

*By Sister Leonida Kwamboka*

This is January, Kibera is abuzz with parents and children, men and women preparing their children to go to school. Money is hard to come by in Kibera and the economic pursuits of most Kibera residents is barely enough to put food on the table. Christmas celebration has just passed. Feverishly the parents and guardians scrounge and scrimp, determined to have enough to send their children to school.

Unfortunately many of their good intentions sweat and tears don't amount to much and for many the day schools open is not necessarily the day their children report to school. While primary school is supposedly free, there are all types of fees to be paid – uniform and textbooks for instance. Secondary education is not free. For many, having a child in secondary school is a dream come true. One thing is certain, like most Kenyans, the parents of Kibera dream of sending their children to school.

The lucky ones are guaranteed a place in school, courtesy of those kind and generous men and women who for the love of humanity have decided to make a positive difference in others' lives. The school opening week is a busy time at WKW. With a sponsorship of 200 children, the center is swarming with children and their parents and guardians anxious to make sure their children go to school. In a slum where the necessities of life a challenging to come by, it's a great relief for parents, guardians and their children to be going off to school, especially boarding school, where food and shelter are assured. The prospect and reality of having a whole bed to oneself.

When little Joshua got sponsorship from WKW, he was beside himself with excitement. His mother's response, at the prospect of Joshua going away to school was "at least there will be room on the seat for his sister to sleep on." When I asked her where her other 8 children sleep, her retort was that they are able to squeeze themselves along the wall of the single room that is her dwelling, while others seek accommodation in neighbors' homes.

Joshua's mother, out of desperation and the pain of watching her children suffer, decided to give away

one of her children to a local pastor to be given to another family. Painful as the decision was, it was preferable to watching her child waste away for lack of sustenance.

As luck would have it, the issue of the boy was brought to the attention of WkW where we believe strongly in the protection and advancement of children, Joshua was placed in Forest View Academy, where WkW supports 25 other children.



The beginning of a school term sees many people coming to the offices of WkW seeking help for their children. In most cases, we have to disappoint them because the organization simply doesn't have the resources to supply for the educational needs of the masses of Kibera.

Thank you for giving our families hope and our children education.



Happy children going to Forest View Academy

## The House is coming down for the Centre

*Visit website for further details*

[www.womenforwomenin africa.org.au](http://www.womenforwomenin africa.org.au)



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*Please help bring hope to Kibera*