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“Congratulations! Today is your day. You’re off to Great Places! You’re off and away!”

Dr. Seuss

1 Editorial

Dear friends

Volunteers are a vital resource at Kids of Africa. I am especially grateful to our longest-serving volunteer Christian Morley, who has written this newsletter. Christian joined Kids of Africa almost two years ago and originally planned to volunteer as a teacher for six months. Thanks to her open personality, background in education and strong commitment, she immediately settled in well and, six months later, decided to extend her stay at Kids of Africa by a further two years. This is just one of the remarkable examples set by people from very diverse walks of life who dedicate their time and/or resources to the children at Kids of Africa. While our

organization is small, it means the world to the children it has helped. That's why every penny invested in this project has a huge value in terms of the human rewards it brings.

Thank you for your continued support for the children at Kids of Africa.

Best regards



Burkhard





“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You’re on your own. And you know what you know. And You are the guy who’ll decide where to go.”

Dr. Seuss

2 A Bright Future

On the first day I arrived at Kids of Africa as a volunteer in November 2009, I already felt as if I had been part of the Kids of Africa family for years. I was welcomed with open arms, hearts, smiles and, of course, laughter into this big family, which then numbered 84 children and about 75 permanent and casual staff. Over the course of two years, our family has grown to 92 children and still has about 75 staff members, each with their own distinct personality that helps to make Kids of Africa what it is today. I am amazed at how this family has grown and, in particular, at how the children have developed. They have become more responsible, more energetic and outgoing and, most importantly, more confident.

When I first arrived, for example, Henrietta Precious (then aged just 3) was very wary of any person other than the mother and other children in her house. There were many occasions when Henrietta would start to cry just because I waved at her or went to talk to Mummy Justine. Since then, she has grown more accustomed to other people and now plays happily in the compound together with the other children from her house – even coming up to the others or the staff and trying to tickle them! She is interacting with the kids in the village and is taking an active role in looking after the younger ones.





I was talking with some of the children the other day and Brenda (aged 11) told me that she likes Kids of Africa because it will give her the chance to have a bright future. Another example is Sheila (aged 7), who has discovered what she wants to do in life: she wants to be a chef. Sheila told me that her favourite thing at Kids of Africa is helping in the kitchen: "I like cutting up food and making lunch for everyone." Every day, Sheila can be found in the kitchen, helping the staff prepare meals. She is learning at a young age a skill that will assist her in the future. Ronald (aged 9) is another child who has changed since I first came to Kids of Africa. Ronald is a funny guy, always joking and laughing and not taking life too seriously. Over the past year, he has matured greatly. Before, Ronald was one of the children who would not settle at school and not keep his things neat and tidy but he is now one of the top students in his class!

These are only a few examples of how the children are growing and developing. Every single child has thrived here, from the youngest ones – Destiny and Jacob, who are learning to walk – to the older children who are going to school. It is no easy feat to grow, but with the support of the mothers and other staff, they are making real progress. It is incredible to see.





3 Nose Stuck in a Book

Over the past year, the Education Department, led by Dorte Budolfson, has pushed reading as the number one priority among the children and the teachers. On any given afternoon or weekend, the older children ask to use the library and sit and read the different books that have been donated to Kids of Africa. From a teacher's standpoint, this is what one would hope to see from their students.

Benjamin (aged 9) loves the library: he is an avid reader and acts as one of our librarians, looking after the books. His second favourite thing about Kids of Africa are the teachers – particularly the activities they do with the kids during the school holidays. “I like the way teachers at Kids of Africa work. They teach us well. During holidays, they teach us new things and teach us differently than at school.” And he is not the only child who has caught the reading bug. Abas (aged 12) told me that in the evening before bed, he and his younger brother Ronald take out their storybooks and read quietly. If they get any ideas from the books they have read, they then continue to write their own stories. This reading craze is not limited to the older

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”

Dr. Seuss



children: Hope (aged 8) told me he loves the library because it teaches him to read so he can then read in front of the class. It does not end there: the younger children such as Steven, Michael, Elijah and Betty can often be found asking the volunteers or teachers to read stories to them over and over again. The focus on reading has boosted the children's self-esteem. For example, Annet and Rachel (both aged 6) came running home to Mummy Jocelyn to tell her how

they had learned to read. The girls proudly came in to announce what their teacher Milly had taught them, and the reception they received from Mummy Jocelyn was priceless! The girls were grinning from ear to ear. This is the confidence we want our children to have when they are at school. Kalungi (aged 10) said that he likes books because “you learn new things when reading books” and they give the children a chance to discover new worlds on their own.



“Oh, the places you’ll go! There is fun to be done! There are points to be scored. There are games to be won. And the magical things you can do with that ball will make you the winning-est winner of all.”

Dr. Seuss

4 Sports

In January 2010, I started running with a few of the older children to stay in shape. I would not have imagined then that we would end up having close to 40 children and 10 to 15 staff running in the mornings during the school holidays as we do now. With the assistance of the security guards and the guidance of the Director Tage Budolfson and his wife Dorte, the runners are timed and try to improve continuously. It does not matter how old you are, your goal is to run as fast as you can for at least 3 km. The children are learning how to set personal goals and to push themselves. They are also gaining pride and self-assurance from challenging themselves. A few of them have even realized that if they

work hard at running or any other sport, there may be other things to gain. Abas told me that his favourite thing at Kids of Africa is participating in different sporting events like running, football and basketball. He enjoys it because he learns more about the different sports and hopes that maybe one day he could compete internationally. It seems only fitting that on 23 October, we will be hosting our first Kids of Africa 5 km and 10 km fun runs here at the village and throughout the local community. Our goal is to show the importance of exercise and of working hard to achieve a goal. We hope that the children will see the benefits and take part in an event to show their talent and effort.





Running is not the only sport the children participate in: they have been doing football training with three volunteers during the school holidays and the staff are now also training in the afternoons. And we are all now eagerly waiting for our new multi-purpose sports court to be built so we can start practicing basketball, tennis and volleyball. As the Director says, we hope that Kids of Africa will become a “sports village” in the future to build up the children’s confidence, strength and ambition!



**“And will you succeed?
Yes! You will, indeed!
(98 and $\frac{3}{4}$ percent
guaranteed.)”**

Dr. Seuss