



Capstone Ministries

Child and Family Restoration Outreach

"The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone" Psalm 118:22

A prayer letter from Dan and Patty Schmelzer, Kisumu, Kenya

February, 2010 Volume 5 Issue 2

"It takes a village"

An apologetic for home-based care

"Children who are cared for by families within communities are more likely to thrive than those in orphanages. Children growing up in families generally receive the kind of love, attention, and care essential to their wellbeing." "From Faith to Action" p. 4 -Firelight Publication

Long before Hillary Clinton coined the phrase: "It takes a village", African communities knew and practiced home-based care. Built upon the foundation of the tribal clan, close-knit communities were really extended families who knew each other's problems and carried each other's burdens. In many communities a child was seen as a child of the community even more than a child of a specific family. As a result the surrounding community took the responsibility for rearing the child even when both parents were living. Even more so if one or both parents died, the village took in the child, decided in whose home the child would live and insured the physical, emotional and spiritual well being of the child.

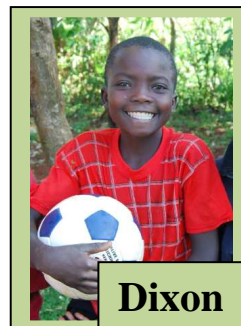
But Western culture has brought changes to Africa...and not all for the good. The Western idea of individualism is a foreign concept to many Africans and unfortunately many are learning the down side of this concept. Orphanages are a manifestation of Western individualism. Children are separated from family, clan and culture in an orphanage and that separation often robs the child of his African soul. Often an orphanage is supported by well-meaning Christians who only know that a child has lost his parents and needs care. But more and more, this approach is being questioned not only in light of culture but also in the best interest of the child.

A recent film called "Beat the Drum" highlighted the social problem of orphans and vulnerable children in South Africa. It could easily have been a film from any Sub-Saharan country. But the end of the movie portrayed a happy ending as the boy is taken from his loving grandmother and placed in an orphanage. To the Western casual observer, it

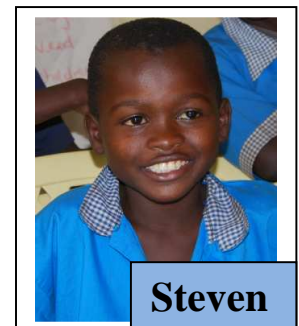
may have seemed like a problem solved and a happy ending. But it left me with questions. Why was the natural bond of the boy and his grandmother broken intentionally? The lingering message was that this institution could do more for the child than his grandmother. But is that really true?

A loving family, with all its financial challenges provides a much better opportunity for a child to thrive emotionally. As the Firelight Publication states very well in the brief entitled "From Faith to Action": *"The best way to serve vulnerable children is to strengthen the capacity of families and communities to care for them."* p. 4

Capstone Ministries was founded on the principle of home-based care for vulnerable children, specifically street children. While some may assume that street children are not able to go home because of challenges at home, Capstone has restored more than 100 children with their families and more than 50 just in 2009.



Dixon



Steven

Currently Capstone is caring for 4 boys at our Transition Center in Mbale. This small facility is designed to be a short-term care facility. Boys are taken here from the street in those situations where they cannot be immediately restored to their families. While at the CTC, the boys enroll in the local school and take responsibility with chores that they would typically do at home. Staff members counsel with family and prepare the home to receive the child. The ongoing challenge, once the child has gone home is the best way to empower and support the family without creating dependency.

Pray for Capstone Ministries. Support our work with your financial contributions. It takes a village!

Praises, Prayers and Recent News

1. **Praise God! Pray for the 4 new boys at the Transition Center: Steven, Jackton, Dixon and Jeffrey.**
2. **Pray** for God's people in Kenya who are praying for rain.
3. **Attention! You can now make your donation via Paypal.**
4. **Pray** for our two new staff members: George and Evans.
5. **Praise** God for the growth of Moringa as an income generating project for Capstone. We met our goal of receiving at least 10% of our local budget from IGA.
6. Praise God that both of our female goats are expecting twins in February
7. The Sending Place has begun training for the next team to come to Kenya for ministry with Capstone. The trip is planned for April 2010. If you would like to know more please write to us or to Jamie Eisenbiesz at jmeisz@hotmail.com You can learn more about the Sending Place at their website: www.thesendingplace.com.
8. Welcome to the pastors and teachers of S. Wisconsin District of LCMS who are now receiving this newsletter via E-newsletter.



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We will be making a few changes to the website to make it more timely and interactive. Come back every so often to check it out.

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Patty's Post It

Social networking: it's a new discovery for me, but what a blessing to keep up to date with friends and family in the U.S. Many of the latest posts have been about below freezing temperatures and shoveling snow. I really have a difficult time imagining what it must be like when a friend tells me she won't go for her daily walk because it's below 30 degrees. In Kenya we've also been in the mid 30's....Celsius that is. We are in the middle of the Kenyan (summer) dry season and it's hot, hot, hot! Our average temperatures year round are in the lower to mid 80's Fahrenheit, but the past few weeks we are maintaining mid to upper 90's. I recently was asked if we have air conditioning...the answer to that is "no" however, we are fortunate enough to have A/C in our car.

Speaking of our car, here's a short story about a common challenge in this country. Our personal vehicle is a Mitsubishi Chariot. Two years ago we took it in for an engine overhaul. When it came back from the shop it barely ran; it had no power. The mechanic took it back several times but nothing ever changed. We finally got fed-up with this guy and went to a local car dealership. The mechanics there looked at it numerous times and thought it needed to be diagnosed on the computer. We would have to wait until someone came from Nairobi with the equipment. We waited and waited, ...for two years.

Recently we heard from a trusted friend that he uses a roadside mechanic who is very good and fair in his prices. Within a few minutes the mechanic had shifted around the 4 fuel injector nozzles and discovered 2 of them were bad. Since we were heading to Nairobi within a week, we said we would pick up the parts. We were shocked to learn the fuel injector nozzles were 45,000/= Kenya shillings....EACH. That comes to about \$600.(each) Needless to say we didn't order the parts.

We were stuck; if we don't fix the car we can't even sell it. We contacted our boy Bennard who is in an auto mechanic training college in Mombasa . Bennard searched all over Mombasa and finally found someone with the same vehicle that had been wrecked. In Kenya we don't have the same organized wrecking yards like in the States. We sent the old parts to Mombasa so Bennard could be sure what he was getting was the same part. Within a few days we received the new parts at about 1/3 the cost. The mechanic came to our house, put in the new nozzles and within about 10 minutes time the car was running perfectly! The mechanic charged us 500/= Kenya shillingsabout \$7.00 U.S. dollars for his labor. We are beside ourselves with joy. Now I can say, "My chariot has arrived!"

Donations are tax deductible.

Make checks payable to: Key Ministries, Kenya Mission

As our partners we encourage you to spread the word about this ministry. Feel free to share this newsletter or write to Dan and Patty to add a friend to this mailing.