

Seed of Hope Centres Update

It has been an exciting few months for us at Seed of Hope. Here's the latest on what's been happening.

- Monday 24th November was the first graduation ceremony at Seed of Hope Kitui. It was an excellent day with a good turnout of parents and others from the community. The students were encouraged by their teachers, Vision Africa staff and the school committee members. As is the norm with all Seed of Hope graduations, each girl was presented with four certificates and a small gift. It was a great celebration. 28 girls graduated.
- Wednesday 26th November was the second graduation ceremony at Seed of Hope Kariti. 24 girls graduated and it was an excellent ceremony. There was a lovely atmosphere with shining performances from the girls. The attendance of parents had really improved since last year - with more than double the number in attendance this year. This shows that we have been able to encourage the parents to be more involved and take more responsibility for their daughters. The guest of honour was the area MP's wife and she did a fantastic job of advising the girls. She would like to come back and spend more time with the girls during term time which we are really looking forward to.
- Friday 28th November was the fifth graduation ceremony at Seed of Hope Nairobi. 10 girls graduated. The highlight of the day was their fashion show in which the girls proved that they really do have a lot of potential. It was well attended and a fantastic day for all.
- All Seed of Hope students (first and second years) sat their Trade exams under the Ministry of Labour (Department of Industrial Training) in December. This is an expensive, but extremely worthwhile activity. This ensures that they leave Seed of Hope with a high quality and very recognisable qualification. We recently received the results and almost all girls passed the exams!
- Roots businesses continue to prove to be a successful means of launching our graduates into the world of small business. This year we opened four new businesses around Seed of Hope Kariti and three at Seed of Hope Kitui. The girls are performing very well and the businesses are already proving to be sustainable, although it is not an easy task. Continued monitoring of these businesses is key to their success. We are in the process of launching 3 further Roots businesses around Seed of Hope Nairobi right now.
- Seed of Hope Nairobi students fulfilled their work placements December-January. Our usual calendar dictates that they start in October. However, due to the post election violence which disturbed

operations at Seed of Hope Nairobi for about two months, it was necessary to extend their training period and postpone their work placement.

- Seed of Hope Nyamache have really turned themselves around in the last 12-24 months. The students are now shining examples to everyone else in the Seed of Hope program. The centres look excellent, they have a very productive shamba (vegetable patch), and the staff have an excellent spirit. The leadership of their new head teacher Edna Tureti has really been beneficial. The ongoing involvement of Gitau as a senior management representative has also proved very successful. The centre now experiences some of the best attendance rates, highest academic performance from students, and the lowest student drop out rate!
- Over the last couple of years, drop out of students has been a very big challenge for Seed of Hope. Drop out occurs for several reasons - pregnancy, negative influences including those of family, discouragement in their studies, and especially this year (particularly in Nairobi during the post election violence) students were relocated due to strife/tragedy within the family or community. We have tried to conquer this challenge and one effort has been through extra curricular activities. Whether it be football or community outreach projects or jewellery making sessions we have seen that such activities have helped to build the girls and has contributed to their staying in school.
- Throughout January and February we have been enrolling new students - approximately 175 between the four centres. These are 175 more girls who need support and training to give them dignity, opportunity and hope for the future.
- We have exciting new opportunities for sponsorship with two packages available. Feel free to spread the word!

£10 - Education sponsorship (This covers the costs of learning such as teachers salaries, classroom resources, exercise books etc, and includes the cost of the annual government exam, the cost of graduation and something towards their post-graduate business plans.) This works out as just 50p per day to equip a disadvantaged girl with Life skills, Business Skills and Vocational Skills!

£7 - Welfare sponsorship (This covers our feeding program - lunch and breakfast for every girl) and very basic healthcare.) This works out at just 40p a day to provide essential nutrition!

- All of our Seed of Hope Centres are currently building up income generating activities to try to make the centres more self-sustaining. Watch this space for more information on our new chickens, cows and

pigs! We are also experimenting with bee-keeping (honey production) and bread baking!

Thank You for your continued support! Please visit www.vision-africa.org for photos and more! We greatly appreciate your kindness and generosity!

THANK YOU!!