**Portfolio**

Totocare started as loosely-knit group of Nanyuki Preparatory School parents and teachers association. These groups offered moral and material support to a number of their members who were terminally ill. They banded together after two couples died and the resultant orphans were faced with destitution.

Before a lasting solution could be found to this threatening situation, the school management in conjunction with the PTA took full charge of the orphans; the institution cared for the children during school semesters and the parent community subsidized this effort with both material and financial support. As the number of orphans increased, the parents offered holiday homes to some of the children and monitored the progress of the ones staying with guardians - most of who were HIV+ mates of the dead spouses.

Bearing in mind the magnitude of the pandemic, over the years the number of orphans in Nanyuki increased alarmingly; thus the focus of the group shifted from primarily taking care of their own, to looking after the less fortunate in the society. As the activities of the group became more and more known in the community, we were inundated with needy cases. By 2003 we were supporting 60 children and had identified many others in dire need of assistance.

Prior to this, as a part of community obligation, the school had been sponsoring a number of vulnerable children drawn from various rescue centers and support groups - Nanyuki children's home, Laikipia street children rehab center, Mfariji etc.

With the two programs running concurrently, the financial burden became enormous on both the school and the parents. The PTA was finding it increasingly hard to cope as the main source of funds was from members. As most of them had young families to take care of, donor fatigue was beginning to tell and it became obvious that it would be a matter of time before the project collapsed.

To forestall this, an urgent PTA meeting was convened at the beginning of 2003 and a 5 member proactive committee was elected to study the problem. They resolved to de-link the activities of the group from those of the school and registered as a Community Based Organization (CBO) to facilitate resource mobilization activities. This was the birth of Totocare Support Group.

This Australian based charity has come about after 4 of us volunteered at the schools and orphanages in Kenya in 2011. We are working with school administrator and host mom Rose to provide school sponsorships for the children mentioned above from within our Australian community.

**Are donations tax deductible?** No!!

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