

THE AIC KAJIADO CHILD CARE CENTRE

The AIC Kajiado Child Care Centre runs its own integrated nursery school with 3 teachers and occasional local and international volunteers. As at January 2011, they have 90 pupils, 12 of whom are physically challenged and reside at the Centre for treatment, rehabilitation and schooling. Able children from the local community join the school to enable them to integrate with the physically challenged children at an early age. After nursery school, the girls go to the A.I.C. Girls Primary School and the boys to the Primary Boys Boarding School, both of which are within about an 800m walk which enables even the weakest disabled child in a wheel chair or on crutches to walk to and fro our Child Care Centre every day before and after school. Those who successfully pass primary school go on to join normal government secondary schools, often outside the immediate district.



The AIC Kajiado Child Care Centre begins much of its work out in the Maasai villages where staff visit monthly to locate disabled children, promote awareness of their rights and increase awareness of the Centre and its ability to improve the child's self-reliance. Poverty within the Maasi tribes means that many children never attend school. Girls are married at an early age and boys take care of their livestock. Children with disabilities face the problem that they cannot cope with the day to day duties of their communities and are therefore not seen as valuable. In addition, having a physically challenged child is a great cause for shame in rural villages, where they are regarded as a curse. This results in them being hidden from view and often neglected.

The photographs below show children from the Ilpartimaro area, a very remote part of Maasailand, where the Centre runs a home care programme for groups of parents. The tribes in this region move frequently in search of water and pasture for their livestock. Disabled children are often neglected and left alone due to their inability to cope with the hardships involved. The physiotherapist visits in order to try and teach parents about the basic care of their disabled child and even the necessity to show love to these children. The Centre hopes that these children will be allowed to attend their Nursery school to receive the treatment, rehabilitation and education that they can offer. They are entirely reliant upon charitable donations to facilitate this. The two photographs below are of disabled children from the Ilpartimaro area with their mothers.



PROFILE OF SOME OF THE CHILDREN RESIDENT AT THE AIC KAJIADO CHILD CARE CENTRE

Gedion Kiranto Museregu. Gedion was born on 28th December 2004 with bilateral clubfoot which was noticed immediately after birth, but never seen by a doctor. He grew up in the remote and nomadic Ilpartimaro region of Kenya (mentioned above). Both of his parents are young, illiterate and very poor - having been affected by the frequent and prolonged droughts. His mother brought him to the Child Care Centre for treatment on 6th April. It was planned that he should undergo an operation to improve his feet but his parents failed to bring him in for treatment and Gedion disappeared completely from the programme. His father is extremely ignorant and didn't want his son to be seen as 'disabled' because he believed it to be a curse and therefore preferred to hide him thus worsening his situation. Gedion therefore, never had the opportunity to mix with other children in his early years.

On 2nd march 2009, he was rescued by the physiotherapist who was carrying out his home care programme, visiting clients at their villages. Gedion was brought to the Centre against his father's will for treatment. He was taken to the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (P.C.E.A.) Kikuyu Orthopaedic Rehabilitation Hospital for corrective surgeries. Since then, he has been living at the AIC Kajiado Child Care Centre for rehabilitation and treatment and he attends the Nursery school. He is in the youngest class and is an average pupil. Gedion requires long-term follow-ups and assistance as he outgrows his walking frame. He needs support to enable him to continue with education. His mother collects him to take him home during school vacations but his father refuses to show any interest in his rehabilitation programme.



Lepilal Lekoche. Lepilal was born on 20th March 2004 in the village of Merrueshi in the remote Loitoktok district. He was born with a condition known as Anthrogyphosis, a rare congenital disorder that is characterized by multiple joint contractures and muscle weakness. It almost ruined his young life as he had spent most of his life crawling and he could not socialize and play with his peers due to his disability. His family is extremely poor and has no livestock; his parents held little hope for him.

He was brought to the Centre in 2007 by a Samaritan neighbour who heard about the Centre and decided to come and inquire about whether Lepilal could be helped. He went home and shared the news with Lepilal's parents who brought him in for medication immediately. He was taken to P.C.E.A. Kikuyu Orthopaedic Rehabilitation Hospital and after several treatments he can now walk using a walking frame.



Lepilal is very jovial and shows great interest in learning. He is happy that he can now walk on his own and no longer has to crawl in the dust. The photograph below shows Lepilal with his Grandmother who has been staying with him and the District Education Officer; he did very well in his classwork and was awarded a gift last year.

The Centre is extremely happy with Lepilal's progress - he is making a good recovery and is able to walk to and from school independently. His grandmother has returned home and has happily left him in our hands. She has great hopes that her grandson will one day become a bright star in his entire family.



Mariam Sanare. Mariamu was born in 2000 in the remote Ilpartimaro village and was brought to us by her nomadic Maasai parents. They claim that when Mariamu was 5 months old, she was left alone in the house, whereupon she rolled into a fire. Mariamu also has cerebral palsy. Due to her disability, Mariamu was often left alone in the house as the rest of the family needed to be on the land. She comes from a very needy background; her mother was married at an early age to a very old man and has a large family of 8 children to support. This poverty and the nature of her environment has left Mariamu in a state of stigmatization. She is learning in the AIC Nursery school but she is unable to talk. However, she is able to follow the instruction of the teachers and socializes with her friends.





Message from Daniel Sapayia – Centre Director

We praise God that he has blessed this community with the Child Care Centre and that he has blessed each one of us with the opportunity to meet, help and serve these children. We know that he brought each and everyone of them here for a very specific reason. Although the world often ostracizes, turns its back on and ridicules an imperfect body or mind, we know that each one of us is perfectly, wonderfully and fearfully made by our father in heaven. Though the world looks at the things the child **CAN'T** do as a result of the disability, we look for the things the child **CAN** do or was able to do as a result of the disability! Gedion, Lepilal, and Mariamu would most likely have never received an education had they not been disabled. Many of the Maasai people do not value education. Their livelihood is livestock. Thus, a child is of more help tending to the cows than going off to sit in a classroom. However, because these children were not able to help with such duties, they were seen as a burden and the parents did not then hesitate to send them away to school. Now these educated children offer a glimmer of hope to their parents for a better future, and in a few more years to come, these once “cast away” children will most likely be relied upon by their parents and siblings. Gedion, Lepilal, and Mariamu **CAN** go to school because of their disability and today all three aspire to become great people in life.

The parents of the younger children are beginning to change their attitudes and views about education and the children may have gone to school regardless of their disability. But, most have grown up in non-Christian households and may have never come to know Christ Jesus had they not been sent to this Centre. Our goal here is to not only treat them physically but most importantly spiritually. The Lord has set before us the task of laying the foundation of faith,

honoring Jesus, nurturing and guiding the children with prayer and polishing them by teaching them God's word. This is not an easy task nor one we take lightly for we know that these children are the future of this community, country, continent and world and we know that if they are well "built" in the Lord they will then be prepared to spread Christ's message of hope, truth, love and life.