



OUR FIRST PRIMARY GRADUATES!

We now provide free primary education, welfare, food, clothing and healthcare for nearly 500 of the poorest and most vulnerable slum children in Uganda. And now 2016 sees a big step as the first kids move up to secondary school!

2015 was an exciting year for Child of Hope. It was the year that saw the school building completed and our grand opening celebration party.

It was also the year that our very first children (registered back in 2008) completed their primary education and underwent the trauma of taking their Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE)! It was a very tense time with lots of nervous faces anxiously staring into text books — and that was just the teachers! Lots of time was given to revision and practising exam technique with past papers. Although Child of Hope is a licensed primary school, it's not yet registered to take examinations. So our children sat their exams at another local school.

There are 4 subjects the children have to take: English, Mathematics, Social Studies (a mixture of Geography, History, RE, etc) and Science (a mixture of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, etc). Each paper is marked out of 9 (with 1 being a distinction and 9 being a fail). Marks for the 4 papers are added together and then the children are put into one of four divisions depending on their score. Lots of prayers were prayed and lots of encouragement given... and then lots of nail-biting waiting for the results to come out!

We are pleased to say that every single one of our pupils passed really well. Out of 18 candidates we had 2 in Division 1, 14 in Division 2; and 2 in Division 3. As our first year of undertaking PLE, we are over the moon

with the children's achievements. We had considered that perhaps some children would struggle and therefore we'd have to look for other kinds of training rather than secondary school. However, with these results, every child is now supported in secondary school by Child of Hope.

There are a couple of reasonable secondary schools in the locality... the 2 best children who want to concentrate on science have gone to the slightly better school (Mbale Secondary School) and the rest have been registered at Wanale (pronounced Wan-arl-ee) Secondary School. They were all very proud to put on their new uniforms, but still very happy to come back to Child of Hope every day for their lunch and some reassurance! A huge thank you to all our sponsors for their support and prayers for these children... they really are a success story and we hope that you are proud of them too.



IF I HAD A HAMMER...

Every teacher knows that in each class there are going to be one or two children who just aren't going to keep up and who have significant learning difficulties. These kids really struggle to understand the basics and see their classmates shooting ahead while they find themselves left behind, feeling confused, isolated and losing hope for their future.

It becomes difficult for the teacher too, seeing a kid getting demoralised and then watching that turn to boredom, distraction and then trouble-making.

In the UK these children would probably be given specialised help, but here in Uganda that doesn't normally happen. However, always willing to try something new, at the beginning of this year a vocational/life skills group was formed within Child of Hope school. Alongside our staff, Emma Stewart (UK volunteer teaching advisor) formed a new style of syllabus for these children which focuses on the simple basics of reading, writing and maths. During the morning hours, the 12 children work on these subjects around a big table with teacher Juliet, who does her best to make it fun and interesting whilst taking it at a very slow pace. During the afternoons, lessons get really interesting! We've employed

community members who come in and teach vocational skills; Mr Mayeku works with some of the children on carpentry and thus far they've made simple money boxes, stools, folding chairs and at the moment they're working on new free-standing shelves for the library.

Aunty Sarah comes in and spends time with the children showing them textiles skills. They all have a go and have been making simple cushions and bags together. Aunty Julia also comes in and works with the children on jewellery-making. The kids have had great fun thinking up new designs and carefully, painstakingly thread beads to make colourful necklaces, bracelets and earrings. Their first batch were swiftly snapped up by our female staff members who were happy to pay for their new accessories – the profits from which go towards more materials for the vocational programme.

The change in the children is starting to show - they have greater enthusiasm for coming to school, they're proud to be a part of a new pioneering group and

they are seeing that they can be good at something. In fact, it's so popular that some of the more 'academic' children have been asking to join the group!



The programme is still in its early stages and we are keeping a careful eye on its progress, but we're pleased the initial analysis shows that the children are doing well. We have plans to bring in other vocational skills later in the year and we are excited to see what the future holds for these children.

If you'd like to support this new programme, you can sponsor a share of the costs at just £10 per month.

Conservation: GREEN FINGERED FRIENDS

Last year a wonderful supporter of Child of Hope donated considerable funds with the idea that the money could be put towards something to do with 'conservation', although she was happy for us to decide.

Well, we must admit that the money sat there for a while as we scratched our heads and tried to think what we could do! Finally, the managers of all our departments sat down together and came up with some ideas. The foundation to this is that we want our children to understand their important role in looking after God's creation. We want them to grow up knowing that their environment must be cared for and to give them the skills to do so. In addition Uganda has a long tradition in agriculture/farming and many people in Uganda have a small plot 'back in their village home' where they grow crops to make money in addition to their 'normal' employment. We realised that this was something our 'slum-dwelling' children were missing out on.

For some time Bex and Moses have owned a piece of land at the back of the school and previously they had allowed a neighbour to use it for planting her crops etc. After protracted negotiations (sometimes the wheels move slowly!) she completed her harvest and the land was handed back for use by Child of Hope. The plan is that each class has a plot to demonstrate how to grow certain plants/vegetables (potatoes, peas, beans, cabbage, egg plants and tomatoes, etc).

The children will try various techniques to see which produces the best harvest and every child will have a chance to roll up their sleeves and get muddy! They'll learn topics such as what plants help the land and give nutrition back to the



soil, how to prevent free-roaming animals spoiling the crops and the problems of waste management (plastics, etc). As an added bonus, hopefully the children will be able to eat the end product! In addition the children are helping us with our 'plant a tree' project and our aim is to plant at least 300 trees around the school site. We are determined that our children will grow up as responsible green-fingered friends!



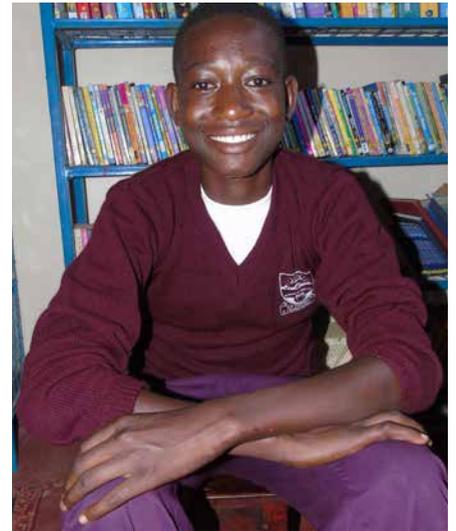
We want to tell you about two of our children: Peter and Alice. Both of them started with us way back in 2008 when we first had the idea of having a nursery in Namatala slum. They have now completed their nursery and primary education and are feeling pretty chuffed with themselves for reaching secondary school!

Peter is now 15 years old. He was 8 when we first met his mother who begged and pleaded with us to help her son. He had run away from home and was living on the streets. He had grown tired of the constant gnawing hunger of poverty and had been seduced by the seemingly free lifestyle of the street kids.

Back then (before we had home assessment forms and age limits for new registrations) we thought he seemed like a good candidate for our help and so brought him into our nursery. But it was tough going for the first year or two. A life on the streets changes a child and he was constantly fighting with other children and generally getting into all kinds of trouble. After a lot of love, attention

and strict boundaries, Peter's life started to turn around and we realised that he was actually pretty bright! His mother died a couple of years ago and Peter now stays in our Children's Home. His life since coming to Child of Hope hasn't always been rainbows and bright fluffy clouds though.

A couple of years ago 'the street' called to him again and we had a tough job getting him away from bad influences. But he turned things around again and worked really hard for his PLE. He managed to achieve Division 2 (narrowly missing Division 1 by just 1 mark) and is happy to be in secondary school ... a huge change from the certain life of crime (and possible early death) that was his future on the streets back in 2008.



"Thank you to Child of Hope for sponsoring us. I am now living a good life and in the future I'd love to be an astronaut (!) but if that doesn't work out I'm hoping to study to become a doctor. Please continue helping us."

Peter

SPONSORSHIP WORKS!



Alice is now 14 years old and is the first person in her family to go to secondary school ... ever! Her father died when she was little and her mum was struggling to bring up 4 children by herself (Alice was the youngest). She joined us in 2008 as a 7 year old

but 2 years later she was fighting for her life after an horrific accident with a paraffin lamp that gave her 3rd degree burns over her abdomen, chest, upper arms and neck. She was admitted to JOY Hospice for several weeks and spent a further couple of months living with Bex and Moses whilst she healed from the scars and her mind healed from the trauma.

Not long after, her mother abandoned Alice in Namatala and went back to her village home, taking 2 of Alice's siblings with her. The 3rd sibling was married off in her teen years leaving Alice on her own. Of course, she was very happy to come to our Children's Home where she has lived ever since. Alice is a quiet girl with a ready smile who can't quite believe she's

made it to secondary school! She's not the brightest girl in the class but she's worked very hard indeed and managed to get Division 2 comfortably.

"My life is transformed from the ordinary life to a new life. I have loved studies so much. I will trust God to help me finish my studies. In future I want to become a doctor or a nurse so I can help the needy ones in the hospitals. I like singing and dancing to gospel music because if it wasn't for having God by my side, I wouldn't be what I am today."

Alice

Please consider sponsoring a child for ONLY £15 per month. We want to help more children like Peter & Alice to have a future!



Registration: HOW DO WE CHOOSE?

When Bex is visiting donors and sponsors she is often asked "How do you choose which children to take into Child of Hope?" and her reply is usually "I don't!"

It's a serious question and the answer is actually always evolving and improving year on year. Bex quite rightly doesn't 'choose'. It would be impossible and wrong for one person to unilaterally decide who deserves to get a free place at the nursery school, thereby accessing all the other Child of Hope programmes (healthcare, feeding, primary education, income generating opportunities for families, etc). Obviously we don't want to provide a free place to a child where her family

could actually afford to send her to school themselves. So, over the years, we have developed a process of assessing the homes and families that the children come from.

This year we have tweaked the form again, asking very few but very objective (rather than subjective) questions which give a clear indication of how poor a family actually is. For example: How many members in the household? Can the (oldest) female head/spouse read and write with understanding in any language? Does every member of the household have at least one pair of shoes? The welfare team visit the homes in pairs and simply write down the answers which are then scored and compared against other families' answers back at the

office. Local officials and pastors can recommend families for a placement, but they still have to undergo the same assessment. Spot checks are carried out on some of the answers by a staff member outside the welfare department, as an anti-corruption method.

Many families have attempted to bribe our officers in the past in order to achieve a placement for their child! After the analysis and comparison of 'scores' for the families, it becomes easy to see who is most in need of being given a place. No-one has to use their 'judgement' and no-one is biased by a 'cute-looking kid' or a manipulative parent. It is simply a matter of looking at the scores!

YES, I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A DONATION: (PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE UK ADDRESS BELOW)

My Details:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Title: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A ONE OFF GIFT

and I enclose a cheque made payable to Child of Hope for £ _____ or make a card payment on the childofhopeuganda.org website, or by online banking (see below).

or

I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE MONTHLY PAYMENTS TO CHILD OF HOPE BY STANDING ORDER:

Please ensure you complete your address details above and bank details below.

£ _____ per month for (please circle): Child sponsorship (£15)/ Teacher's salary (£60)/ Welfare worker's salary (£25 full sponsorship, £10 part sponsorship)/ Food (£5)/ Healthcare (£7)/ and most urgent need.

Starting on ____/____/____ until further notice from me in writing.

Bank name: _____ Sort code: _____

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_____ Postcode: _____

Account name: _____ Account no: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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GIFT AID DECLARATION Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

I want to Gift Aid my donation and any donations I make in the future, or have made in the past 4 years to Child of Hope.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Please notify Child of Hope if you:

- Want to cancel this declaration
- Change your name or home address
- No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

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UK Office contact details:

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Child of Hope is run in Uganda by husband and wife team Moses & Bex Okotel (pictured) and a staff of over 50. In the UK and Ireland it is headed by a team of trustees and volunteers, who make possible the life-changing social impact we provide for the children of the Namatala slum. If you would like to join the team, please see the UK Volunteers page on our website.



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