



Classroom at 'Revealed Orphanage Educational Centre'



Smiles of excitement at receiving their presents



Lining up for lunch of kidney beans

'We can be the difference'

written by Dave & Alex Thomas

Dave and Alex Thomas are hoping to raise £1000 to make a difference in the lives of over 90 children living in Nairobi's slums. The couple will embark on a 24-hour sponsored fast to raise money for the 'Revealed Orphanage and Education Centre', which provides a home and education to some of Nairobi's most vulnerable children. Here is Dave's story...

As the car bumps along the dusty Nairobi road to the orphanage and school we're visiting, I think of our little girl's bedroom back in the UK.

Pastel pink, butterfly bedding, matching curtains and handmade paper butterflies that flutter across the wall. A pretty pink rug and butterflies stencilled by Mummy onto her wardrobe. A beautiful room; a space that she loves where she can play and sleep and enjoy just being...

The car pulls up. The smell of the nearby landfill dump fills my nose. Or maybe it's the rubbish-infested river that slugs its way through the slum we are in. Corrugated metal sheets form the walls of the small, timber-framed, shabby buildings that are the 'Revealed Orphanage Educational Centre'. Moses, the man who set up the work, leads us inside.

The floor is dust and dirt; rough wooden desks are the only furniture. This is the room where the children have their school lessons. Sweet, little faces beam at us from the few rows of desks as the children enthusiastically launch into their greeting song. It is soon lunchtime and the children stand patiently in line to receive their kidney beans in water.

In another similar building elsewhere, there are mattresses and blankets on the floor, plus a few beds where some of these little ones sleep. This is all they have to call home. I think of our little girl Lucy's beautiful room again. My heart breaks. Yet without these lowly provisions, these vulnerable children would have *nowhere* to go, *nothing* to eat and no schooling at all. Moses tells us, "You walk along the streets and meet children with tears in their eyes because they did not eat anything last night and they don't know where to find something to eat the following day. We have to take some to our day care centre where we can only manage to give them one meal a day."

As meagre and poor as these surroundings are, Moses and the volunteers that look after the children give all that they have out of their own poverty. They care for the children, nourish them, keep them safe and give them an education that will help them have a better future.

Later that day, we visit the three other orphanages / schools that Moses runs, all equally poor and basic. Here, other children are looked after and taught.

The small gifts we brought with us - pencils, notepads and lollipops - are met with huge smiles of gratitude and cries of excitement. I look at their faces and wish we could give them the world... They line up and, one by one, come forward to receive their gift from me. Some I hug, but many seem understandably nervous of close physical contact with a stranger. There is one little boy, however, that I can tell is waiting for a hug. When it is his turn, he wraps his arms around my neck. He hangs on like he will never let go... I hug his small body. He is two years old. In that moment, I hold back the tears that I would later shed for all those 'Daddy hugs' this boy doesn't have.

I think of my own little girls: Our sweet, baby Heidi and our lively, lovely 3-year old Lucy. I think of holding Heidi and hearing her laugh. I think of the way Lucy squeals "Daddy!!" when I come in from work, launching herself onto me for a huge cuddle. In those moments, my girls know they are wanted, they are precious, they are loved. I want to tell that dear little boy how very precious he is...

The wonderful men and women that voluntarily look after the children, do their uttermost to love them and care for their needs. But with so many children, so little resource and themselves spread so thinly, there is only so much they can do. "We have been trying to do this on our own with the little resources we get from the local church," explains Moses. All basic provisions – food, clothes, bedding, education – are funded by the kindness of the local church. Despite their own poverty, they do their best to 'remember the poor' as they believe is right.

I am amazed by Moses' tireless efforts to provide for the children that come into his care. His ambition and hope is to improve provisions for the children by making the work more and more self-sustainable. "We believe that one day," says Moses, "we will then be able to find our own land and build a better home with more rooms to help more children from the slums in Kenya, find a place to call home." His plan is to eventually invest into ovens so that some of the volunteers can bake bread to then sell; and to buy land and seed to then be able to sell the produce. The money made can then be put back into caring for the children. "We hope in the future to expand this work to support more children find access to their basic human rights," he says.

I am back home in the UK now and I don't want to forget those children. I don't want to forget their needs. I don't want to forget Moses. My family and I want to help. We want to give what we can. We are going without food for 24 hours to raise money to help fund the provisions. If you'd like to help, simply skipping a cup of coffee at Costa means we can feed 3 children that day... Every penny given will be used wisely by Moses, whether to respond to the immediate needs of the children or to invest as he sees fit. Every bit of help makes a huge difference in the lives of these children... No amount is too small!

How to help...

Together we can be the difference.

To donate VISIT:

<https://crowdfunding.justgiving.com/revealed>

Or TEXT ALEX on 07861 657 909 with your name & how much you want to give.
Our Justgiving page closes 10/12/15

What our money can do...

- £1 to feed a child for the day
- £5 to give a child new shoes
- £10 to fully clothe a child
- £18 to buy a child a mattress



facebook.com/revealedorphanage

Meet Moses



This is Moses Otunga, a man with a smile as warm and as kind as his heart. Moses looks after the orphanages / schools that we visited in Nairobi.

When he was a young child, his parents divorced and he remained with his father. His father remarried and the new wife did not want Moses. Unimaginable as it is, his father put Moses out on the street to fend for himself. He was six years old. Moses lived in the local market place with other orphaned children for two years.

When he was 8, an English doctor noticed that the feet of the children living in the market place were covered in sores. The man provided treatment for Moses and the others, and found a room for them to stay in. That was the start of the small orphanage that Moses grew up in.

Now fifty years later, Moses pours his heart and experience into caring for unwanted and needy children, offering what shelter and provision he can to over 90 children. Many of the children are orphans; others are so poor they cannot afford to be part of the state education system and so are sent to Moses. He and the 10 volunteers he works with, provide a home, a parent-figure and an education to those vulnerable children.