



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



For over 20 years, Mama Dolfine has ensured Korando provides a safe and loving space for some of the poorest children in Kisumu, Kenya. Even when resources are tight, Dolfine has done everything in her power to offer vulnerable children security - often at the expense of her own needs; eating less food or giving up what little space she has for the chance to take in one more child. The situations that bring these children to her attention can be understood with broad brushstrokes: AIDS, poverty, hunger, abuse, or neglect. But rarely do we as donors get the opportunity to learn the scope of their struggles.

Recently, a member of the local Kisumu community reached out to Dolfine about a family in need. This time, it was the children living at the Center that raised their voices, determined to pay it forward. The work of the Center is not just what Dolfine and the teachers do, it extends into the next generation being shaped by their work. What follows is a beautiful and heart wrenching story, told by Dolfine herself, about how the children at KEC show their love and support to others. It is a reminder to everyone that ripples can indeed create enough waves to change a community forever.

Responding To Those in Need - by Mama Dolfine

It all began with a heartbreaking story that reached our ears, four innocent children left utterly alone after the cruel hand of fate took away both their parents. The children are Hassan Elley, a bright PP1 pupil aged 3 years; Ravel Aron, a cheerful Grade Two learner aged 5; Sheril Awuor, a determined Grade Eight candidate aged 15; and Shila Awino, a quiet and mature Form Three student aged 17.

Their father passed away in April of this year, leaving them under the care of their mother. Sadly, tragedy struck again when their mother also died and was laid to rest on Saturday, 13th September this year.

After the burial, the children were left to fend for themselves. Days turned into nights of hunger and despair. They went to school on empty stomachs and returned home to nothing, no food, no comfort, no parental care. The neighbors, though aware of their situation, were themselves struggling and could offer no meaningful help. They were slowly starving, both physically and emotionally.

One day, a concerned neighbor came to us and explained the full situation. She made us aware of how the four children were living alone, without support or basic needs. Her detailed account moved us deeply and it is the reason we decided to go and assess the situation ourselves.

When I told our children about the situation, they immediately insisted, “Mama, let us go and see them. We can share what we have, even if it means sharing our beds, our food, our clothes, even our plates. Mama, we were once in that horrible situation, we know what it feels like to sleep hungry, to have nothing to wear, and to feel forgotten. Please, let us go and see them. We can share what we have.” Their words pierced my heart. In that moment, I saw a reflection of pure empathy; children who had once been in pain, now ready to heal the pain of others.

On Saturday, 20th September, I set out with three teachers and nineteen of our children to visit the children. We walked several miles under the hot sun. As we walked, I silently reflected on how this journey was bringing to life the very lessons I always teach, that true compassion begins when we respond to the pain of others. When we finally reached the home, what we saw broke our hearts. The children were weak, frightened, and hopeless. Their home was nearly empty: no food, no bedding, and no comfort of any kind. Their environment was unsafe, especially for the two girls, who were at great risk of abuse or exploitation.

Tears rolled down the faces of our children. Some held the little ones in their arms, others quietly prayed. In that moment, I saw true compassion come alive. All the children turned to me and said, “Mama, we cannot leave them here. Let’s take them with us. They can stay with us, even if we have to share everything.” They all agreed with tears in their eyes, a decision so selfless that it broke my heart. Even in their own hardship, they were ready to give everything to comfort those who had lost it all. I couldn’t refuse. That same day, we brought Hassan, Ravel, Sheril, and Shila to the Centre.

They are now safe with us, sharing meals, bedding and laughter with their new brothers and sisters. Since then, they have been sharing what little we have with the rest, food, bedding, soap, and other basic needs. A donor has reached out and through his generosity, the children received new clothes, school books, pens, and every basic necessity they needed. He even covered the school fees for the Form Three girl, ensuring that her education would continue without interruption.

Their presence constantly reminds us how compassion can breathe life into despair. Watching them smile, learn and play again is a daily reminder that, love when shared, truly heals. In their smiles and courage, we are reminded that even in hardship, love and care can rebuild what was once lost, one child, one story, one new beginning at a time. Each day, as they laugh, study, and dream again, we see the quiet miracle of compassion unfolding before our eyes. **It is in such moments that we remember, it does not take much to change a life, only a willing heart and the courage to care.**



Shila Awino (Form 3, 17 years)

"There was a time I truly believed my life had ended. Losing both our parents so close together left an emptiness I cannot even describe. Each day felt darker than the last and I wondered if we would ever smile again. But then Mama Dolfine, the teachers, and the children came, and for the first time, I felt that we were not forgotten. When [the donor] reached out with such kindness, it was as if light had found its way back into our lives. [The donor] made it possible for us to get clothes, bedding, books, pens, and other basic necessities was very important to us, it made us feel cared for and valued. Today, I can go to school with peace in my heart. I can laugh, dream and believe again. The love they showed us has given me strength and reminded me that even after great pain, hope can still be born."

Sheril Awuor (Grade 8, 15 years)

"When I saw the other children coming to our home that day, I could hardly believe it. For so long, it had felt as though the world had forgotten us. Watching them walk towards us, my heart filled with hope I had almost lost. When I saw them cry because of our suffering, I realized how much pain we had been carrying alone. That moment changed everything. Today, I smile again, I learn without fear, and I sleep knowing I am safe, all because of the love that found us through Mama Dolfine, the teachers, and the kindness of children. My life has truly been touched and renewed."



Ravel Aron (Grade 2, 5 years)

" I feel like I have a family again."

Hassan Elley (Grade PP1, 3 years)

Though he is still too young to express himself fully in words, his cheerful spirit speaks volumes. Hassan is lively, joyful, and has adapted remarkably well despite his tender age. He enjoys drawing and colouring figures, a sign of his growing creativity and bright imagination.



Mama Dolfine

"When I first heard about the four children, my heart broke. I could not imagine young souls facing such pain and loneliness. Visiting their home and seeing their condition reminded me why this foundation exists, to be a refuge for the forgotten and a voice for the vulnerable and orphans."

Mr. Evans

"It was impossible not to cry when we saw the condition they were in. But seeing them laugh and play now, seeing them cared for and happy, is a reward beyond words. This is what teaching and compassion truly mean."

Mr. Protus

"The courage and empathy of our children that day inspired me. To see young hearts ready to give from their little, and to witness the transformation of these four children, is a reminder that love is powerful and healing."

Mr. Stephen

"When we arrived at their home, my heart broke. Seeing the fear and hunger in their eyes reminded me why we teach compassion and kindness. Watching our children reach out to share everything they had, filled me with hope, hope that humanity and love can change lives. "

Three More Ways to Give!

1. Give by Check

Make your tax-deductible gift today by sending a check to the address below! Every dollar counts and helps support the students of the Korando Education Center in critical ways.

Ripple Effect Project
PO Box 1956
Waterville, ME 04903-1956

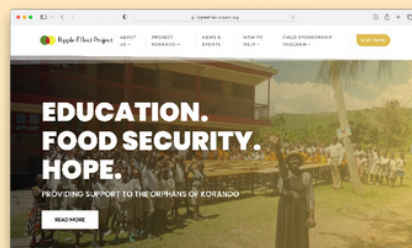


2. Sponsor a Child

Connect with a student and help provide a safe environment to live and learn. Visit our website and click **Sponsor a Child** to support a student through a monthly giving plan.

3. Give Online!

Simply visit www.rippleeffectproject.org and click **Give Now** to make a secure donation through PayPal. You can even set up monthly sustaining donations!



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