

March 2017

Dear Special Needs Sponsor,

Some of you may have read the report of Joy's visit to Kenya on the Uzima in our Hands website, or you may have seen posts on Facebook. However, for those of you who are particularly interested in the Special Needs program or who haven't 'clocked' any of these other news sources I thought I'd send you an up-date.

Joy took an all-terrain buggy to Kenya with her (transported free by Kenya airways) which was given to Brandon (the child with hydrocephalus.) Brandon is doing really well. So far there have been no issues with the shunt and miraculously he doesn't seem to have learning difficulties.

Sandra, Mercy and Faith appear happy and are doing well at Nangina Special School. Joy discovered in passing that Mercy now runs for the Kenya Paralympics deaf team (at a local level)

A major issue which has had a big effect on Uzima has been the severe drought in Kenya and surrounding countries. The cost of food has risen dramatically. (Evans reports that the food bill for Uzima as a whole – previously 30,000 Kenya shillings is now 80,000 Kenya shillings) For families headed by frail elderly grandparents this makes things particularly difficult.

Some extra money was sent to buy food for Sandra and Mercy's family over the Christmas holidays and I thought I'd send you a quote from Evans heart-warming description of his visit to their home –

"I reached at Sandra at around 10.30am and found them all out in the morning sun outside their house, they all looked weary and tired but when Sandra saw us coming she was very excited and Marcy came running to help offload the stuff, the Grannies were all happy and wanted to know who has blessed the family they said they had in fact not had food for the last couple of days only porridge, they never knew what they had to take the next days to come, they were hungry like many families around due to prolonged drought, however, they appreciated very much and said it was xmas for the family..."

There is now a new social worker at Uzima (named Barbara) who is hoping to revive the parent support groups. Sadly these groups ran into various difficulties and Barbara will need to take them in hand, iron out issues and get them back on track if they're to continue. We will see how this goes.

The Uzima special needs class now has 18 children who are mostly 'slow learners' from the main school. I'm told their teacher, Kevin Were, is very kind and the class does seem to be meeting a need. One child who is doing well and looking much happier is Everline (the girl with epilepsy, which is now much better controlled) Everline was desperate not to go to Nangina Special School where the children generally have more severe disabilities. The special needs class at Uzima is working very well for her.

Two newcomers to the school are John and Bravel, both of whom have club foot. Bravel is in the nursery class and John is in the Special Needs Class. They both have to be carried a long way to school and we've promised to try and get the parents bikes. So far we've been unable to get any joy from Bikes for Africa as they only deliver to Mombasa. We may be able to buy bikes when enough funds are available.

Can I ask for your prayers – firstly **for rain**, and also specifically for a way forward re: **surgical treatment for John and Bravel**.

I hope this gives you a flavour of what's going on. With many thanks for your continued support.

Sue



Bradon's all-terrain buggy before it set off on its journey to Kenya.



Brandon and his Mum



These are some of the children from the Special Needs Class including John and his Dad, and Everline (in a dress given to her by Joy which she was absolutely thrilled with!)