

Jitegemee

\jee-tay-gay-may\ v [Kiswahili:sustain yourself]: empowering street children through education.

December 1, 2004

Dear Friends,

Something great happened when Mike Kimeu, our Program Director in Machakos, sat down to record the stories of our new vocational trainees earlier this year. After recalling the sad details of her time on the street, Mbinya Mwanzia, a 16-year-old girl, said this, "I have an opportunity to continue with education by Jitegemee...I hope to assist my parents, community, and then have a bright future and become a responsible person...I promise to help others who were in the street to come out and to become responsible, like I was helped by Jitegemee."

Reading Mbinya's story brought home to me the progress that Mike and our part-time staff have made this year. Not only have they made strides in expanding our programs and laying the foundation for a lasting organization in Kenya, but they have helped the kids take our mission as their own.

For years, we have worked toward a model of older kids helping younger kids and families joining as a community, and this year we started to see the fruits of that work. In June, our first full class of 25 vocational trainees began studying a newly developed curriculum of literacy, business skills, and personal skills. Five months later, these students began full-time apprenticeships, sponsored by Jitegemee, with welders, carpenters, tailors, and masons throughout Machakos. Several of these trainees will return to Jitegemee after their apprenticeships as teachers for future vocational students.

The staff's great work in implementing our vocational program and continuing to support our sponsored elementary and high school students has brought other incredible rewards. In October, the Machakos County Council designated a public building for Jitegemee's use. Our new headquarters will open in 2005, with office space, classrooms, a library, and a kitchen to provide hot lunches for all of our kids. In addition, the Adult Education Office in Machakos has recognized the importance of our work with street children and destitute families by pledging to assign Alex Mutiso, an Adult Education Teacher who has worked as a part-time teacher for Jitegemee since our founding, as a full-time, government-sponsored teacher with our program.

Jitegemee is entering 2005 with a growing track record and ever-greater potential. In order to help us expand the capacity of our program, **an anonymous foundation has pledged to match donations from our year-end fundraising appeal, dollar for dollar, up to \$5,000.** So, a contribution now means twice as much. With this grant, **your donation of \$100 will more than cover the cost of school and basic expenses for two elementary students**, and a gift of \$315 will send two children to high school. Our vocational program will spend over \$3,000 to establish new apprenticeships, but you can help us cut this number in half by giving now.

Thank you for the support you've shown Jitegemee this year. Your generosity has made it possible to plan for lasting growth in the coming year and to support even more children in reaching their goals.

Sincerely,

Michelle Brooks

Board of Directors

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