

The Lost Sheep of Nairobi

By Karobia Njogu

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To the children at Sheepcare Community Centre in Nairobi, nothing is impossible.

Bright-eyed and innocent, they recite their motto by heart, gesturing energetically to emphasise the words. They are sure they can “make a positive change in Nairobi, in Kenya, Africa and the world in Jesus’ name”.

It is hard to believe that some of them were picked off the streets or orphaned by AIDS, and had no hope for an education before they joined Sheepcare Community Centre.

They live in cramped conditions, and are surrounded by depressing scenes of rubbish and sewage, and an atmosphere of crime, drunkenness and prostitution.

But they have found hope through the ministry of Pastor Luke Oywa who set up Sheepcare Community Centre in 2002.

Every morning they come from different parts of the village to attend school at the centre. When possible, the centre provides a meal of beans and ugali (the stodgy corn-based equivalent of mash), or a helping of maize porridge.

But according to Luke, what really draws the children is the love, security and nurturing they receive at the centre.

“I realised that the children need love and understanding, not just schooling – they had been exposed to a lot of suffering,” Luke says.

While serving as a church pastor, Luke got the challenge to pay attention to the social needs that were glaring in his face whenever he walked through the community. Many children roamed idly on the streets, men spent their time drinking, and women eked a livelihood out of making local brew.

Luke decided he would do something to help the community.

Shortly after that he attended Vision Conference 2002, organised by Samaritan Strategy and CMS. Luke was excited to discover that many other people shared his vision for holistic ministry.

He realised that with the little he had, he could make a difference. He loves and values these children, and is training them to become the good leaders that Africa needs.

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