

Nyumbani Village



THE NEED

## Nyumbani Village

### Kwa Vonza, Kitui District

Nyumbani Village is the realization of the vision of the late Fr. Angelo D'Agostino to create a self-sustaining community to serve orphans and elders who have been left behind by the "lost generation" of the HIV pandemic. The Village provides a family-like setting for orphaned children under the stewardship of elderly adults and seeks to ensure that the children receive love, sustenance, health-care, holistic education and culture transfer, aiming at their physical, psychosocial and spiritual development, and, at the same time, providing holistic care and support for the grandparents in their later years. Through group homes and community services, the Village seeks to harness the energy of youth and the maturity of elders to create new blended families that foster healing, hope and opportunity. The village also seeks to ensure that the residents in the surrounding communities reach a certain level of self-reliance through the Village sustainability program.

Nyumbani Village stands on one thousand acres of land donated by the Kitui District County Council. The Village is located 3 hours East of Nairobi. The site is within the poorest division in the Kitui District and has a high incidence of HIV and a high number of HIV orphans. When complete, the Village will accommodate approximately 1000 orphans and 100 grandparents living in 100 dwelling units each with a grandparent and 8 - 10 children.

THE CONCEPT

## Achievements to date:

### 1. Building the Village

Built or in process are:

- \* A Community Center used for functions and Sunday Mass.
- \* A Health Centre containing all the necessary facilities to deal with medical emergencies.
- \* A two-stream Nursery and Primary School: Hotcourses Primary School
- \* We have just started building a Secondary School: The Lawson High School.
- \* Two Units of the Polytechnic: Tailoring and Carpentry.
- \* We are in the process of building a Mechanics Unit.
- \* An Administrative Police Post

- \* 64 family houses with 8 more under construction
- \* 4 staff houses under construction which will bring the total to 9
- \* A Guest House to accommodate visitors and volunteers.
- \* Construction of a Convent is currently underway.

It is the Village project's cardinal principal to use locally available resources. With the exception of steel sheets used for roofing and glass for windows, the materials used for construction are locally sourced and manufactured on site by local labor. This has led to creation of employment, transferring of technology, instilling a feeling of achievement and fueling the local economy. The concept of training initially unskilled local people to perform the Village construction (versus bringing skilled builders from outside) has created a sense of pride and ownership in the local community.

## 2. The Village comes alive

The first families comprising 19 orphans and 2 grandparents were welcomed to the village on 28th Nov. 2006. Within a span of two and a half years, this number has increased to almost 500 children and 50 grandparents. Nyumbani Village is successfully showcasing an innovative and replicable model of care for orphans through several achievements:

Strong family relationships has been achieved through our counseling and emotional support; Education at Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary level is in place: Hotcourses Primary School has an enrolment of almost 400 students, nearly 80 students are in boarding High School and numbers in the Polytechnic are growing.

Seminars and peer counseling groups have helped to build self-awareness and self-esteem among the teenagers. Nearly all the families now have a thriving kitchen garden providing them with vegetables and fruits.

A large drip-irrigated farm and livestock Unit supplements the families' sustenance. 50 acres of land have been planted with trees for both income generation and environmental protection. 450 more will be planted.

The local community is gradually becoming empowered with members provided with small plots, training, water, and seedlings to help them grow their own vegetables so as to enable them to fight the grinding drought experienced in the area.

Nyumbani Village welcomes volunteers and guests both local and international to share in this pioneer compassionate outreach to the two 'left behind' generations of the HIV pandemic.

Information from the Nyumbani website [www.nyumbani.org](http://www.nyumbani.org)