



Fall 2016 Newsletter

www.jitegemee.org

411 Highland Ave #171,
Somerville MA 02144



107

Primary, Secondary, and
College tuition fees
supported

120

Former street children
participating in the Vocational
Program

400

Children and caregivers
receiving health education
and screening



A Note from our new Executive Director

Dear Friends,

It is such a delight to join Jitegemee and, as I've transitioned into this new role, to work with the teachers, staff, students, board members, volunteers, and of course, founder Farah Stockman - all of whom make Jitegemee the strong, impactful program it is today.

My family and I moved to Machakos, Kenya in August, and the students welcomed us to Jitegemee with song, dance and a poetry recital even more heart-warming than the Kenyan sunshine!

Jitegemee hands-on

As I started to get some hands-on knowledge about this wonderful program, I watched as the teachers worked with the 40 students enrolled in this year's Vocational Program to finish their rehabilitation and basic literacy and lifeskills training. These young people are the most vulnerable of the vulnerable in Machakos. Most of them have been living and working on the streets, and until Jitegemee teachers found and recruited them to our program, their lives looked like they would continue and end on the streets.

After the six-month rehabilitation course, the students select a trade and are paired with a tradesperson in Machakos for a 1-year internship. We were fortunate to be there when the students selected their trades - ranging from catering or hairdressing to plumbing or welding. By the end of the selection process, some students were in tears, telling me they were so grateful to have this new opportunity for a meaningful, healthy and sustainable life.

Trip of a lifetime

Also in August, I joined the staff and students on the annual field trip. We took more than 120 students to the Animal Orphanage in Nairobi. Although Nairobi is a mere 35 miles from Machakos, many of our students have never visited their capital city. Here's a note from one student, describing her anticipation for the field trip:

"I woke up at 2am. My mother asked me what kind of trip it was, because I did not sleep the night before. That was my first day to go to Nairobi. On that day I did not eat my breakfast. It was on Thursday. I was afraid that the buses would leave without me. I arrived at the bus-stop at 4am. I was wearing my Sunday best on that day." - Eunice Maanai

It is rare to be able to see, on a daily basis, the impact your work has on someone else's life, and I count myself extremely fortunate to be able to see these children every day and watch them transform their lives. I am grateful for the support of so many people around the world who make this possible.

Looking ahead

Your support for Jitegemee makes this work and transformation possible. We've already raised \$170,000 in 2016, and we need to raise another \$35,000 to close out the year. We hope you will help us reach this goal, and continue changing Kenyan children's lives for the better.

Thank you, thank you for your generous support.

Warm regards,

Verity Norman-Tichawangana

Harrison's Story

Kangundo Secondary School
Form 4



I was selected to join Jitegemee when I was living on the streets in Machakos. Before I even started school my parents divorced, my mum went back to her mother's house, and I found myself living with my grandmother. Finding food was so hard and I did not get any education.

At the age of 11, I ran away from home and went to the streets. I joined a group of other street children and every day we would spend our hours scratching through the trash pits and gather food thrown away by rich kids. We used to use drugs on the streets, mostly sniffing glue. When you're under the influence of drugs you can do anything - rob others to get money for your own survival. It made it possible to cope with life on the streets. I was on the streets for more than two years.

Then I met teacher Alex on the streets of Machakos, and he told me about Jitegemee. He asked me some questions: Would you like to get reformed? Would you like to get an education? He told me all the things that would change in my life. That it could be better if I got an education. After a few weeks I agreed to visit Jitegemee and I joined the program.

When I joined Jitegemee things changed quickly. I got food - a meal every day. I got temporary shelter. They helped me reunite with my family and I went back to my grandmother.

Before Jitegemee, I didn't know any other place aside from Machakos. Now I've been to Masaai Mara, Mombasa, Nairobi, to the national parks. I've been to so many places since I joined Jitegemee.

Then there's my education. When I started primary education, I struggled - my mind was not yet settled. But slowly, things started changing. I started learning, and sometimes I would stay at school

until 7pm at night. Jitegemee would pay for my tuition, I would get textbooks, uniform, everything I needed for school. I would also come to Jitegemee for lunch during the day.

I made it up to the end of primary school, and I got good grades in our final exams. I was so happy! I never imagined I would do so well. I am now in Form 4 at Kangundo Secondary School, and this year I am writing examinations for seven subjects - English, Mathematics, Swahili, Business, Chemistry, Biology

and History. My favorite subject is Biology. I love Biology!

I have dreams of becoming a doctor, and specifically a neurosurgeon. My mother encourages me to do the best I can. Personally, I love to serve. Being a doctor will allow me to make my wish come true - to serve other people.

"Jitegemee is everything to me. It made my life become fully formed and fully reformed. Jitegemee is a shelter for me. It is a home for me. It is a life for me. I have no words to explain what Jitegemee has done for me. If it were not for Jitegemee, I would still be perishing on the streets."

A special thanks to our volunteer board members and strategic advisors: Farah Stockman, Allyson Black-Foley, Catherine Mosca, Shulamit Kahn, Clarence Wardell III, Abby Kral, Abdul-Rahman Lediju, Mark Palmer, Regina Schwartz, Devin Powell, Jessamyn Berniker, Michelle Brooks, Kyalo Musua, Tulaine Montgomery, Terry Mutuku, Peter Nduulu, Benedictor Musau, Munene MOUTHIA. Rasto Omolo. and John Mutwaia Itumo.