

## Message from the National Director

# Momentous Times of Great Promise

Dear Partners and Friends,

**W**e in Kenya are going through interesting times, which we hope will make us a better country and a better people in the years to come. Let me explain.

In late 2007 and early 2008, the country underwent an orgy of violence, blamed on the disputed presidential election of the year 2007. Regretfully, by the time we came to our collective senses, with some prodding from the international community, 1300 of our fellow countrymen and women were dead and 630,000 displaced and living in tents in the internally displaced persons camps that sprung up on all over the Kenyan landscape.

Since then, a concerted effort has been made to bring justice to those who were displaced and died. Currently, six Kenyans have been summoned to the International Criminal Court of Justice at the Hague on suspicion of having funded or organized the violence that was visited on Kenyans.

Unfortunately, this judicial process has generated fear and anxiety and our

prayer is that this does not lead to ethnic tensions again, because, unfortunately, our ethnic diversity, has been more of a curse than a blessing.

I am happy to report that things are beginning to look up for the Kenyan economy. The country registered a 5% economic growth with projections of up to 6% and the Kenyan landscape is full of major infrastructural development projects that will make it easier for Kenyans to trade and move goods to and from markets more efficiently and effectively, which we are confident will translate into greater economic growth and prosperity and people being able to invest in better housing.



HFHK National Director Mr. Simon Nyabwengi (left), Mr. Koome Kiragu HFHK Chairman, Board of Directors and Nairobi Bottlers Limited Managing Director Mr. Segun Ogunsanya ( Right) during a cheque presentation ceremony at the company's offices in Nairobi.

We have continued to tap into this growing economy by providing housing solutions to families in rural areas through our housing microfinance projects, flower farms workers through our partnerships with Mt. Elgon Orchards and the Panda Flowers and to the internally displaced families through your generous giving and support.

Talking of internally displaced families, I am happy to introduce our newest partner, Family Media, a Christian TV and Radio Station that has partnered with us to create awareness of the plight of internally displaced persons. Using their media platform, they have been communicating to their audiences on the urgent housing needs for internally displaced persons and are targeting to raise enough

funds to enable us construct houses for the remaining 135 families within the next three months.

I do wish to thank Family Media most sincerely for their very generous donation of their facilities for this very noble venture and for the passion and commitment to see the families still in tents move to permanent homes that will accord them dignity and give them hope for a better future. My special thanks to Leo Slingerland, the Chief Executive Officer, who called me up and told me ' Simon, this is something that we want to do!' Do join us in donating and volunteering to work on the project site to enable us realize the objective of giving homes and hope to victims of the post-election violence in Kenya.

I also had the privilege of attending the National Affiliates Conference in Atlanta from the 21st to the 25th of March and I had the privilege of hearing and seeing first hand the great work that Habitat for Humanity Affiliates are doing in the United States of America!

What really made the trip worthwhile, apart from the sights and

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We do believe, however, that we are turning a corner and that Kenya can only become better and we do look to a future where Kenyans of all backgrounds have equal opportunities for advancement and can contribute to the betterment of the Kenyan nation.



The joy of owning a house

sounds of beautiful Atlanta, was the opportunity to meet with some of you and the conversations that we had, comparing the building programs in the US with our own building programs in Kenya. And for those of you who tithe to Kenya, thank you very much for your support that has enabled us house 5000 families in houses that they are proud of and which give them hope and dignity.

It was great to have a face to face conversation with the folks from Macon County HFH, Salt Lake Valley HFH, Upper Yadkin Valley HFH, Cincinnati HFH and Paterson HFH.

I do plan to keep you regularly updated on what HFH Kenya is doing to alleviate housing poverty and hope to continue learning from you the great work that you are all doing.

I do wish to thank you all for your continued support. We are seeing increasing contributions coming in from our sister affiliates and an increasing number of global village teams coming into the country. It is your support that keeps us going and we are very grateful for your commitment.

For those of you who have been scratching their heads for a holiday destination, do allow me to suggest Kenya to you. You can come in on a GV build, spend a week with a family building a home and then, as your schedule allows, take time to visit our world famous game resorts and beaches and even climb the whole of the 5,500 metres Mt. Kenya!

On behalf of the families that we serve and the HFHK family, I wish you all the best of Easter Holidays!

Asanteni Sana.

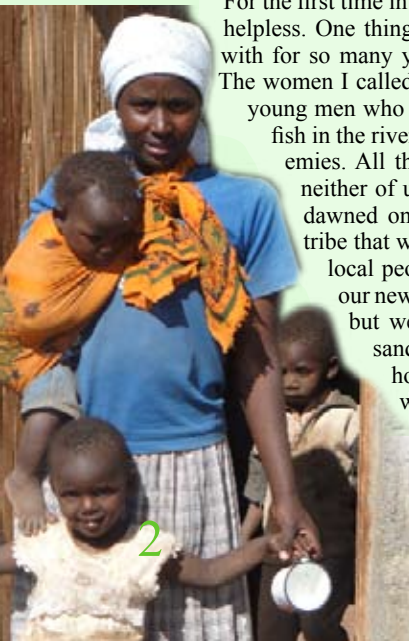
## HOME SWEET HOME

As told by Mary Wambui, a house beneficiary

For many years, I lived with my parents in a small decent house next to a river. I loved swimming with my friends and playing with the water as it flowed down stream. My mother owned a shop and my father was a business man. We lived a simple life but one full of joy. Most of our neighbours were from different ethnic communities but I hardly noticed the differences between us. We went to the same school, held cultural activities together, spoke the same language, and shared our joys and sorrows. People in the community loved me, my family loved me and they all called me “mrembo” meaning the beautiful one.

Life can surely change very suddenly. Just when everything seemed to be going well, tragedy struck. In 2008, after the announcement of the presidential elections, violence broke out. People were wailing and cries of desperation could be heard from the village shopping centre. Soon the air turned black from burning houses and within minutes the violence spread to the villages. Before we knew it, we were the targets being sought. Property worth thousands of shillings was burned to ashes, vehicles stoned as we all scamped for safety to the Eldoret show-ground where there was some security and protection from the police.

I was terrified, confused and felt extremely vulnerable. For the first time in my life, I saw my father confused and helpless. One thing was clear. The people we had lived with for so many years had suddenly turned against us. The women I called mother, the girls I grew up with, the young men who told me stories and taught me how to fish in the river were no longer friends but sworn enemies. All this was caused by circumstances that neither of us had control over. That was when it dawned on me; I was from a different tribe. A tribe that was now perceived as the enemy of the local people. With much pain, I had to accept our new reality. No longer did we have a home but were now huddled together with thousands of other families that had fled their homes and congregated in the stadiums, where tents became our new homes.



A jovial house beneficiary at HFHK's Internally Displaced Housing Project in Maai Mahiu

Life in the tented camp was not easy. We cooked in recycled tins as we had lost all our household goods, slept huddled together in the tent and depended on well-wishers for food supplies. With fate bringing us together, we had no choice but to unite. Unite and find a lasting solution. And so we did. We pooled the resettlement money given to us by the government and bought a piece of land in Maai Mahiu area along Maai Mahiu-Naivasha road. I lived in a tent for two years with the hope that God will respond to our plight.

It is now three years since I moved to Maai Mahiu IDP camp. Looking back, I find it hard to believe that I have come this far. I must confess it has not been easy. There are times when living in the tent was unbearable. Times when I wanted to get back to those who caused me so much pain but we had vowed to put that behind us. I cannot forget the dark cloud that hovered in our country, but time is a healer as I have been able to forgive and move on.

I have chosen to pick up the positive things I learnt from this experience. Experiences that have made me a better person. I will never take anything for granted. I am grateful for each new day. Many people have been generous to me, many of them do not know me yet they empathized with my situation. I will forever be grateful to all of you who have supported us through this journey and those that donated to Habitat for Humanity Kenya and enabled me to move from the tent that I had called home for three years to a permanent, three roomed house. I feel extremely indebted to all of you. I have found a new home. From a tent to a sweet home.



# Mt. Elgon Housing Project

In May 2010, Habitat for Humanity Kenya entered into a partnership with Mt. Elgon Trust, the arm of Mt. Elgon Orchards that is engaged in the development of projects and activities that contribute to the welfare of both the staff of the Flower Farm and the local community of Chepchoina area.

The Mt. Elgon Trust runs a primary and a secondary school, a dispensary and an orphanage, providing much needed assistance and hope to the local community.

The housing project is a brainchild of Dr. Bea Anderson. The project will provide 120 workers of the farm and other interested persons in the neighbourhood with decent two bed roomed houses. HFH Kenya is constructing the houses and providing loan product and management expertise to the firm.

The houses are being constructed using hydraform blocks. These are blocks that are machine pressed and are a mixture of soil, sand and cement. The houses constructed using this technology are attractive and durable.

The project will run until 2012. At the end of the project, 120



Workers try their hand on the state of the art hydraform machine.

families will have homes they can call their own. The families will be expected to repay back the loan for both the house and the land.

Many thanks to Mt. Elgon Trust for this partnership that has enabled HFH Kenya to provide much needed housing to families that are in urgent need of decent, durable housing.

## Global Volunteers Transforming Kenyan Communities



It is all smiles for students of Dhahran High School during their Global Build visit in Eldama Ravine.

The first three months of this year have been quite eventful for Habitat for Humanity Kenya. A record 10 global village teams joined Kenya's rural low income families with one mission in mind-to help them build decent and durable homes.

During their visit to the country, the group of volunteers got the opportunity to witness the deplorable housing conditions that majority of Kenyans rural families have had to contend with and also the positive transformation in the lives of families that are recipients of HFH Kenya's housing solutions.

The Global Village Program has kept its promise of providing an opportunity for volunteers from all walks of life to build or renovate houses whilst interacting with the local host communities. Other

than building houses, strong relationships and bonds across cultures have been created and experiences exchanged.

"I am excited to be in Kenya today. It has always been my dream to participate in Habitat Global Village Trip. This dream has been fulfilled today, as I am here in Eldama Ravine building with this lovely family", said Sarah, a student at Dhahran School led by Alichia Gerber. With increasing numbers of global village teams visiting the country, HFH Kenya hopes that there will be increased awareness on the urgent need for decent housing and the role of everyone- volunteers, communities and homeowners- in making poverty housing and homelessness socially, politically and religiously unacceptable in Kenya and globally.

On behalf of the families we serve, we extend our gratitude to all Global Volunteers who have visited and supported our programs. As they say, "*when the world comes together, hope is restored*".



# Barclays Help Build Houses for Internally Displaced Families!



Barclays Bank of Kenya staff put up a wall for a house beneficiary at Maai Mahiu Internally Displaced Housing Project

Among the beneficiaries of the Bank's kind donation was Mary Wanjiru, a mother of two-Gloria Njoki aged 2 and Esther Wairimu aged 4. For her, it was a new dawn in her life having lived in a tent for the last three years. During the build, the families thanked the bank and HFHK for the noble act, saying it would go a long way in changing their lives. To date, Habitat for Humanity Kenya has spent approximately Ksh 40 Million in putting up 200 houses for families displaced from Narok and Eldoret.

Habitat for Humanity Kenya National Director, Mr. Simon Nyabwengi thanked Barclays Bank of Kenya and the Management of Galana Oil Company for their timely intervention and donation. He urged Kenyans and other well wishers to join Habitat for Humanity Kenya Local Volunteer Program to help raise the extra Ksh.29 Million needed to house the remaining 135 families. For more information about the Local Volunteer Program; kindly contact Anne or Festus on [rdc@hfhkenya.or.ke](mailto:rdc@hfhkenya.or.ke)

Early this year, the Management and staff of Barclays Bank of Kenya joined hands with Habitat for Humanity Kenya to help resettle the internally displaced families in Maai Mahiu.

Led by the bank's Director of Corporate Banking, Mr. Nick Mbuvi, the group of over 60 staff braved the hot sun and dust to construct eleven three roomed decent houses for families that were displaced by the post election violence of 2007/2008.

The build came after a very passionate and aggressive fundraising drive by Barclays' staff that raised 1,777,000 Kenya shillings, with the bank matching the staff contribution shilling to shilling. Many thanks to Barclays clients who not only gave but also came to build with the Internally Displaced Families.

Speaking at the IDP camp, Mr. Mbuvi said that the bank will endeavor to adopt the housing project as part of its long term project of giving back to the community. "Barclays Bank is not just about banking. We strive to uplift the lives of needy communities and today we have responded to Habitat for Humanity Kenya call in addressing the plight of these families," added Mr. Mbuvi.

## Thank you for Supporting us

### HFHK Partners with Family Media

HFHK recently partnered with Family Media to raise funds for IDP families in Maai Mahiu.

The new partnership will see Family Media run a three months campaign dubbed "Building Hope" through production of documentaries, promos for both television and radio, weekly mentions on the station E-newsletter, follow-up specials, short stories, interviews, website and a series of publicity in churches on the progress of the housing project.

Family media is a dynamic Multi-Media Christian Broadcasting Organization that Broadcasts via Terrestrial Free to Air Television and Radio, Satellite and the World Wide Web reaching millions of peoples across the globe.

During the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding, HFHK Chairman, Board of Directors Mr. Koome Kiragu thanked the management and staff of the station for coming on board to help these families have access to decent shelter, saying that three years has been a long time for them to live in tents.

The station's team led by the CEO – Leo Slingerland expressed great optimism that enough funds will be raised towards housing the 135 internally displaced families living in tents within the same camp. To support this initiative, kindly visit the following link: <http://www.familymedia.tv/buildinghope>

#### LOCAL PARTNERS

Action not Reaction Team  
Barclays Bank of Kenya  
Family Media Limited  
Galana Oil Company  
Hope FM Radio  
Housing Finance Company  
Imperial Bank Limited  
International School of Kenya  
Middle East Bank Kenya Limited  
Mission Tours and Travel  
Nairobi Bottlers Limited  
Rotaract Clubs, Nairobi

#### INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

All the Global Village Teams to Kenya  
Anthony and Vivian Scibilia  
Barry Segal Foundation  
Canada HFH  
Cincinnati HFH  
Courtney Hofmann  
Griffin Area HFH  
Haley Hoskinson  
Harford HFH  
Keith A. Levi  
Knox County HFH  
Macon Area HFH  
Marion County, HFH  
Melanie Mixon  
Northern Berkshire HFH  
Paterson HFH  
Salt Lake Valley HFH  
Seattle/South King County, HFH  
South Eastern Steuben County HFH, Inc.  
South Sarasota County Inc, HFH  
The Village Church, USA  
Truman State University HFH CC  
Upper Yadkin Valley HFH



Your contribution has made it possible for us to resettle over 200 IDP families.

**Habitat for Humanity®Kenya**  
P.O. Box 38948 - 00623, St. Michael's Road  
Off Rhapta Road, Westlands, Nairobi-Kenya  
Tel: (+254 20)445 4380 / 445 4381  
Fax: (+254 20)445 4382  
Email: [hfhkenya@hfhkenya.or.ke](mailto:hfhkenya@hfhkenya.or.ke),  
[www.hfhkenya.or.ke](http://www.hfhkenya.or.ke)