Each year, Makindu Children’s Program helps Makindu Children’s Centre positively impact the lives of hundreds of orphaned and vulnerable children and their families in the Makindu area of Kenya. In the culmination of 2016, it is great to hear the many success stories by beneficiaries and how grateful they are for the support, from a child appreciating a new school uniform, to a caregiver grateful for a home visit and word of hope provided by staff. 2016 was no different.

Meeting the children in person often results in dear connections. In 2016 two groups of lucky fundraisers traveled to Kenya not only to enjoy the incredible Kenyan landscape and nature parks, but also to visit the Makindu Children’s Centre and meet the children. The Proper Safari and the Proper Walk participants thoroughly enjoyed festive welcome ceremonies with the kids, guardians and staff, sharing a meal, music, poetry and hope. The folks on the Proper Safari spent a project day at the Centre painting the walls, building school desks and planting vegetables. During both these events, strong connections were made all around. For example, Cheri Villa met Daniella on the Proper Safari, see their story on page three. Another Proper Safari will take place this summer, August 24 – September 4. Consider joining the Safari and making your own endearing connection to a Makindu child!

Donations in support of this year’s Proper Walk and Safari totaled $161,387, ensuring basic needs continue to be met for the kids for many many months to come. The basic needs accessed at the Children’s Centre include education, nutrition, health care, legal support, advocacy, and psycho-social support.

EDUCATION MCC provided school fees, uniforms and learning materials to the children enrolled in the program. The provision of the education materials helps keep the children in school. The 26 children in high school and 14 children in vocational school successfully completed the year’s class work. Hundreds more in pre-primary and primary school also did well, successfully completing the school term.
Thankfully, her perpetrator is in police custody and the case continues. MCC will provide advocacy and care throughout her court case.

**PSYCHO SOCIAL EVENTS** PSS events have played a key role throughout the year in equipping the children with life skills. The events have been held quarterly in all outreach sites. On a typical PSS day, 900+ children come for the day to listen to facilitators cover a specific topic. The topics of Careers, Goal Setting and Relationships were covered last year. Children also receive guidance on life issues during the PSS days, and a huge midday meal is served to all who attend. The Community Health Volunteers and MCC staff also offer psycho social support to the children through home visits and, when necessary, one on one counseling is available. Caregivers and guardians visit the office often for guidance by the staff.

**HEALTH CARE** For any sick person, the need for adept medical care is paramount. Due to the biting drought in the region, most families would trade health care for food. For MCC beneficiaries though, whenever the guardians or children are sick, their medical bills are covered. In 2016, a total of 74 guardians and 103 children were treated at the district hospital for illness or minor injury. 412 girls received sanitary napkins throughout the year and 89 HIV+ children received regular checkups, medications and monthly multivitamin supplements.

**LEGAL SUPPORT and ADVOCACY**

Child advocacy and victims rights are gaining ground in Kenya, though defilement cases remain quite high within the program area. One of the girls was defiled, allegedly by the Makindu Area Chief, who has since been interdicted. When MCC found out she had not reported to school and seemed traumatized, MCC staff intervened and connected her with a psychiatrist. While she has since resumed school, she still has not picked up well in her academics. She will continue to receive legal advocacy and protection throughout the court case and will maintain her access to mental health care and counseling. Another Makindu girl was also defiled last fall, and has an ongoing child abuse case at the Makindu Law Courts.

**FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS** While MCC is always striving to meet the basic needs of the kids, the facility also has basic needs arise occasionally needing precious dollars to repair or address a maintenance issue. In 2016, two projects at the Centre required immediate attention — and extra dollars. Early in the year it became apparent the latrine pit was full and posing a health and sanitation risk. An MCP donor stepped in and covered the $600 cost to pump the latrine pit clean. Thank you, Deb! In the fall, a health inspector pointed out drainage flow issues from under the Centre’s kitchen floor, which also posed a health and sanitation risk. Makindu Children’s Program covered the $1,850 to dig a new trench and pit, eliminate the leak and replace the pipes.
Imagine a small child growing up in a culture where walking daily for miles and miles is the norm, and often the necessity. Collecting and hauling firewood for the cooking fire, portaging heavy jerry cans of water for the home, goods from the local shops, carrying younger siblings on their backs, helping with farming and household chores and tasks... kids in Kenya are hard workers!

Now imagine young Daniella born with a severe clubfoot deformity, for whom these tasks were more than the usual challenge. She learned to walk with one foot rotated internally at the ankle and flipped over onto its top.

She and her family accepted that this would be her fate. As they say there, she simply learned to “push on”. There was no alternative but to live her life without options or aids, and she did so with both grace and acceptance, in classic Kenyan tradition. This kiddo is sweetness personified, and exudes pure happiness; she remains ever joyous!

However, at 9 years of age it was becoming increasingly difficult for her to walk without a great deal of pain and swelling in her weakened foot and leg, as the muscles had become quite stiff and atrophied.

Then fate intervened, and Daniella met Cheri Villa, one of the participants on our first “Proper Safari” fundraiser held last year. Cheri was touched by this child and her predicament, and committed to help her.

In November Daniella had an operation that appears to have been successful. She is walking pain free now, still supported by a brace and using one crutch, but her leg is becoming stronger each week. The everlasting smile on Daniella’s face has become even more euphoric. She is excelling in school, scoring 495 out of 500 on recent testing, and happily playing and keeping up with her friends. Now the current challenge is trying to restrain her from running!

...Imagine!!

Thank you to Cheri, for her precious gift of transformation to Daniella!

We invite all of you to have the opportunity to meet the MCC children, by joining us on the next Proper Safari this August, or becoming a sponsor through our sponsorship program to get to know a child more personally. I can promise you that they will touch your heart.

-Winnie Barron

THESE CHILDREN ARE LOOKING FOR SPONSORS!

Sponsors receive regular updates on the children they sponsor.
The updates include photos, drawings and letters.

DAVID is an 11 year-old, very smart and joyful boy who is 2nd academically out of 46 in his class! He hopes to become a scientist when he grows up. David’s guardian is his grandmother. She takes extra care for him since he is HIV+. David likes going to psycho-social events at the Children’s Centre, and enjoys playing football. $50 a month will cover David’s basic needs, HIV care and medications, and check-ups as needed.

MUTETE is 15 years old & lives with her mother. She is a kind and shy girl. Mutete just completed her Kenya Certificate of Primary Education and will be supported by MCC to go to High School. Reciting poems is one of her hobbies. Her mother is HIV+ and has heart issues so Mutete takes care of her a lot. She appreciates what MCC provides for her. $35 a month will cover Mutete’s education, food and healthcare.
THANK YOU TO OUR 2016 DONORS!

We want to make sure we get it right. If we have inadvertently omitted your name or have an incorrect detail please contact us at HelpTheKids@makindu.org

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Continued on Page 7
We are saddened at the loss of these children and beloved guardian at MCC:

Mutinda was born in 2004 and passed away in September 2016. He was on care and had been admitted to Makindu Hospital for an HIV related illness. He was from Kamboo site.

Isaac was born in 2009. His mother brought him to MCC in February but he was far too sick with HIV and malnutrition to survive. He died at the hospital.

Ndinda was from Kamboo also and was born in 1999. She passed on in October 2016 at the age of 17 years from HIV complications. She passed away while in the hospital.

Katalembu was a mentor to many children and families in the community for years. She used to walk for miles carrying loads of firewood to MCC for our cooking fire as a way of thanking MCC for helping to feed the children. She was most beloved and revered by many in Makindu. She sadly passed away last month.

JOIN US AT THESE UPCOMING EVENTS TO SUPPORT THE MAKINDU KIDS:

**Grati-Tuesday!**

and **ReJEWEL**

May 2, 12—8 pm
Oregon Wine Lab
488 Lincoln Street
Eugene, Oregon.

Enjoy wine, jewelry, scarves and camaraderie with the friends of Makindu.

**Date Night!**

at Sam Bond’s Brewing
June 10, 6—10 pm
540 E. 8th Avenue
Eugene, Oregon

Music by the Foggy Ruins!
Enjoy a dance, beer and raffle.
$1 of every pint goes to Makindu Children’s Program!

**Reggae Party!**

Mighty Joshua is at it again.
Look for upcoming shows at the Top of the Hof.

Hofheimer Rooftop
2818 West Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia

Music by Mighty Joshua!
All proceeds benefit Makindu Children’s Program!
JOIN US IN EUGENE for the

PROPER SAFARI 2017
August 24—September 4
Apply now at HelpTheKids@Makindu.org

The journey begins on August 24th with a flight into Nairobi. After a night’s rest, the group will travel south to Hunter’s Lodge, set on 25 acres of lush gardens in Kiboko Springs. The next day the group will walk up Mt. Mielu for a view of Mt. Kilimanjaro and then on to Makindu for an incredible welcoming ceremony at the Children’s Centre. The next day you will participate in a group service project at the Centre and be rewarded with a game drive by private bus at nearby Tsavo West Game Park. The group will then travel north to the Laikipia Highlands and embark on a three day camel safari. Camping will be in canvas tents with cots and linens provided. Travel on to Nakuru, the fourth largest city in Kenya and enjoy lodging and amenities at Hotel Cathay. Wake early for another game drive through nearby Nakuru National Park known for its rhinos, buffalos and flamingos. That afternoon, September 3rd, end the Proper Safari back in Nairobi with lodging again at the Boulevard Hotel. Safari spots limited. Apply now!

The cost for the Proper Safari is $2,500 + airfare. Each participant also commits to raising $2,500 for Makindu Children’s Program.

JOIN US IN KENYA: Six spots remaining

Register at Makindu.org
2 player teams with a $200 registration fee at RE/MAX integrity in Village Plaza Loop
LUNCH PROVIDED
Deadline to register is April 30, 2017

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Help give these kids HOPE!

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Thank you D. Pennell Brooks for many of these great photos.