

Drops of Hope

A Newsletter for LittleDrops Orphanage Fund

Welcome to the first issue of Drops of Hope. We are very excited to bring you this publication.

The year started off beautifully with our very successful first ever Dinner/Fundraiser.

We sincerely want to thank all our benefactors and supporters. Without you we would not have been able to achieve the success and impact we have today.

With continued support, we look forward to making a bigger impact in the lives of the children who otherwise may have been abandoned.

A Night of Hope

A Night of Hope was the LittleDrops Orphanage Fund's first event but you wouldn't have known it. Everything was dazzling; from the simple, yet gorgeous décor to the powerful and moving presentation. You could see the fruits of all the planning and hard work that went into it. The guests were welcomed by a LittleDrops member and shown to their seats. A little mingling was done to kick off the night and then the event started.

The guests were entertained and educated by beautiful kids who volunteered their time to dramatize the life of an orphan. They were accompanied by a narrator, Fola Akinsanmi whose soft yet poignant words cut through every heart in the room. The "Rainmaker" presentation was very moving and educational.

Then came the breaks when the "Wonders of Africa" dancers, regaled in their attire, entertained us swinging their hips to the beat of a far away drum. I would be amiss if I fail to mention the excellent and bountiful African cuisine that was enjoyed on the night.

There was also the silent auction that proved successful. Pictures, dinners and the like were auctioned out; raising about \$1000 on the night. Adding the auction, donations, pledges and company gift-matching; LittleDrops raised about \$12,000.

On the whole, the night was indeed a night of hope. It made me realize that in the midst of the hopelessness that exists in our world, it is still beautiful to get together and share the hope we all have, and that I too can make a difference no matter how small.



by Amara Osisioma

"We enjoyed our evening, especially knowing that in some small way, we as a community are coming together to help make at least one life easier. We had an opportunity to meet some very nice people at the event. Congrats to the team for putting this together."

~ Ken, Seattle WA

What's a Dollar?

"Here, have a dollar, in fact naw brotherman here, have two. Two dollars means a snack for me, but it means a big deal to you"

~ From the song "Mr. Wendal", by Arrested Development

In so short a quote, the songwriter captures a different but essential angle of how else a little drop can make a big difference. We often think of one little drop becoming useful only when it comes together with other drops to form a large ocean, but miss the ability of that little drop all on its own to become a mighty ocean to Mr. Wendal.

Still, what is a dollar? What can it really do? Well, a dollar can make a trip to the vending machine in exchange for pretzels or

soda; or perhaps invoke a wash cycle at the Laundromat. A dollar can mean one more ride at the fair or a cone of ice cream on a hot summer day. Indeed, one dollar can mean a little necessity or a little indulgence.

Far across the ocean however, a dollar can also mean a hundred and forty five Naira. It can mean 3 square meals for one hapless Nigerian child or a "new" used shirt to replace the one little Mr. Wendal picked up last year. A dollar can pay for the day's shelter for a bunch of street kids or it could

unlock the local pharmacy for treatment and a bandage for big wounds on tiny legs. Yes, many miles across the ocean, one dollar can mean life and death.

by Wale Martins



Streets of Lagos, Nigeria

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Your Donations at Work

Accounting for every dollar you donate is one of our most important and serious responsibilities. We want you to be aware of how your donations are helping make a difference. After the year ends, we will send out a detailed financial statement. We, however, did not want to wait till then to let you know how your donations are being used. Here is an overview of our finances so far.

Through "A Night of Hope", we raised over \$12,000.00 (includes pledges). For this year, we plan to distribute \$10,800 to 7 homes in 2 installments (June and December). We initially thought we'll only be able to support 6, but thanks to your generosity we are able to add one more home. The breakdown as well as the basics of the homes is below.

The amounts do not represent the unmet need of the homes, however we wanted to start with a small, yet very important, step. As we develop our relationship with the homes, children and benefactors; and get more financial support we hope to provide more financial assistance.

Fortunately, LittleDrops is run on the goodwill, elbow grease and contributions of volunteers. Our administrative expenses (like wire transfer fees, filing fees, etc) are really low. We want to keep these unavoidable expenses as little as possible and definitely no more than 10%. Our goal is to have as much of your donations as possible go directly to the homes and children.

All outstanding amounts will be carried over to 2007. We expect the support amount for 2007 to be much higher than 2006.

If you have any questions or would like more information please email us at finance@LittleDropsOrphanageFund.org.

Thank you so much for your continued support and kindness.



St. Anne's Orphanage Home

In 1984 the Rotary club founded St Anne's Orphanage to cater for the many orphans and abandoned babies around the Warri area in Delta State. Later in 1995 they asked the catholic diocese take over operation of the home. Since it's founding St Anne's has opened its doors to babies brought in from several unfortunate situations. Some babies are found in the bushes or trash and are brought in by the police or good Samaritans.

In 2004, they decided to start the motherless babies option since there were too many women dying during or soon after child birth and fathers needing help to care for the children at the early stages.

After nursing and caring for the orphans for about 3 to 4 months, they put them up for adoption. If they are not adopted they can stay until they are eventually adopted or indefinitely if they are never adopted. The children are educated and trained until they are settled, married or decide to leave on their own.

Some of the children are either physically or mentally challenged. These children are not put up for adoption and are allowed to stay indefinitely. In the words of Sr. Cordelia, "They become our own".

Motherless babies are allowed to stay at the home for a maximum of a year and a half. At the end of this time, the father takes the child home and continues the care. During their stay their father has to visit the child at least once every 2 weeks or once every month. This allows them to build a relationship with their father.

St Anne's organizes special activities for the children including birthday celebrations, museum and zoo excursions, and a variety of indoor and outdoor games. They also take the children for check ups at the hospital where the homes gets a discount.

Unfortunately since their van broke down a little over a year ago they have not been able to take the children on outings. The van is beyond repair and they are looking for help to get an 18 seater van. They currently have to charter a van to take the kids for their check up.

Thanks to past donations they have received they were able to purchase a car. On a child's birthday they use the car to take him/her out but not the whole group since the car is too small to take them all.

Still from the donations, they were able to purchase a power generator to assist with the unreliable power supply. About a year and half ago, they were able to paint and renovate the home. Another major use of the donations they get is the children's education. They currently have a child who just finished secondary school and is looking for funds to go to the university.



Our Lady of Apostles Orphanage Home

Our Lady of Apostles Orphanage Home was founded in 1956 by the Missionary sisters of Our Lady of Apostles. The home, today, has about 27 children under its care ranging from 3 months to 36 years old.

Like St Anne's Orphanage Home, abandoned babies are brought in by the police or individuals. In some cases the mothers actually bring their children saying "I had this baby and I don't want it, if you don't take it I will kill it."

In 2005, O.L.A. home received about \$12,000 in donations. About \$10,000 of that was spent on items like food, clothing, school fees, medical expenses and salaries. Their estimated need was about \$15,000.

There is no school in the village where the home is located. They have to commute the children to and from school every school day. Another long commute is taking the children for their medical check ups every 3 months in the nearest town, Jos. Of course if the children are sick, they'll have to make the commute as needed. The home sometimes struggles with paying for gas, medication and clothes.



2006 Grant Distribution

Aisha Mana Orphanage Home

2006 Grant: \$1,200

Location: Jos, Plateau State

Number of children: 15

Year founded: 1995

St Anne's Orphanage Home

2006 Grant: \$1,600

Location: Effurun, Delta State

Number of children: 23

Year founded: 1982

Edo Orphanage Home

2006 Grant: \$1,200

Location: Benin City, Edo State

Number of children: 19

Year founded: 1978

St Mary's Home

2006 Grant: \$2,400

Location: Gwagwalada, Abuja FCT

Number of children: 49

Year founded: 1995



Kogi Orphanage Home

2006 Grant: \$800

Location: Lokoja, Kogi State

Number of children: 8

Year founded: 1995

Zuma Memorial Hospital

2006 Grant: \$2,000

Location: Irrua, Edo State

Number of children: 35

Year founded: 1952

O.L.A. Orphanage Home

2006 Grant: \$1,600

Location: Jos, Plateau State

Number of children: 27

Year founded: 1995

More information about the homes, how they are selected, etc. can be found on our website.

www.LittleDropsOrphanageFund.org



The Orphan Problem

Millions of children of all ages around the world have nowhere to call home but the very streets that you and I walk through as we go home. And nowhere is this truer than in many developing countries where many of these children contend daily on dangerous streets for life's basic necessities. For these ones, a roof, a meal, clothing and safety are luxuries that they must purchase with the only thing of value that they have – childhood.

Were this the only obstacle life threw at these young ones, many of them would actually survive, for great is their resilience and determination to triumph against odds they never chose. Alas, it is not!

- Excerpt from "A Night of Hope" Rainmaker Presentation

“It's impossible to get used to seeing this kind of thing, this poverty, this malnutrition. I've seen it up close, but the truth is, I still can't imagine what it's like. Laying on a plastic mat, no sheets, no privacy, medicine only for the lucky. What can you do watching your child die in your arms?”

“When you've reported a lot of stories like this, there's a tendency to compare. Somalia was worse, they say. So is the Sudan. But there shouldn't be a sliding scale of sorrow. Children are dying. How many little lives lost is an acceptable toll?”

~ Anderson Cooper, CNN

How to get involved

Spread the Word Help us get our message out. Share this newsletter or our website link. You can also contact us for brochures.

Make a Donation It's very easy to underestimate the difference your contributions can make. We need a lot of financial assistance to continue supporting the homes and maybe even add new homes.

Volunteer Volunteers are the foundation of LittleDrops. We need all the help we can get. Please contact us if you'll like to share your talents and time.

To make a Donation...

Online, please visit
<http://www.LittleDropsOrphanageFund.org/MakeADonation.asp>

By Mail, please send check(s) to
LittleDrops Orphanage Fund
14609 NE 45th Street Suite E5,
Bellevue, WA 98007 United States

Donations are tax deductible.

What's Next?

Over the next months, we'll continue to communicate with and distribute funds in installments to the homes we have listed.

One of the goals of these communications will be to develop a better understanding of their situation and how your donations are helping improve their condition.

We will, a little later, begin to explore expanding into other developing countries so we can spread the hope you helped create.

Towards the end of the year, we'll begin planning the next "A Night of Hope" which will be in early 2007.

"I hope that my achievements in life shall be these - that I will have fought for what was right and fair, that I will have risked for that which mattered, and that I will have given help to those who were in need, that I will have left the earth a better place for what I've done and who I've been."

~ C. Hoppe

Tell us what you want ...

We want to make sure that we convey information that you find interesting, informative and/or educational. Please let us know how well you think we have done in this issue and let us know what you'll like to see in upcoming issues. Your feedback is important to us. You can email us at newsletter@LittleDropsOrphanageFund.org.

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide orphans and vulnerable children a complete and healthy wellness of being now, and a good chance at a successful future through financial, intellectual and other necessary contributions

Get more information, Contact Us:

Website: <http://www.LittleDropsOrphanageFund.org>

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