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Rafiki: Children of Hope

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RAFIKI: CHILDREN OF HOPE

Tiffany M. Blount, B.A.

An Abstract Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate
School of Lindenwood University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts

2008

ABSTRACT

“Rafiki: Children of Hope” is a story of survival, loss, hope and triumph. The explanatory narrative supplements the fifteen-minute documentary, and walks you through my journey of completing the video production.

The video documentary exposes the reality the affect HIV/AIDS continues to have on Sub-Saharan Africa; more specifically, children at a small orphanage in Kikuyu, Kenya. Twenty-three children reside at Rafiki orphanage and each of those young faces all lost their parents to AIDS. Interviews with the House Mother and God Mother of Rafiki provide the organization history. Footage of the children reveals the emotional obstacles many of them were working to overcome.

Rafiki is a Swahili word meaning “friends” or “friendship” and this project was a collaborative effort between three friends. Tim Croskey, an engineer and videographer, shot all of the video footage. His wife and Kenya native, Wangari Croskey, wrote the story behind the footage and I produced and edited the final project. Together, we created a powerful story showing that not all of Africa’s children are lost.

This project proved to be challenging but extremely rewarding. I spent a great deal logging various tapes of footage spanning the years of 2002 – 2006. Lack of communication with Tim and Wangari delayed crucial elements of the project. But I eventually obtained the English translations from Wangari and was able to move forward with recording audio. My passion for music and its power in documentaries guaranteed my selections would be chosen with care. I needed the film to emit a hopeful but melancholy mood. I wanted the viewer to feel the pain buried inside the children but also see the hope most of them finally had.

The project impressed upon me that you never stop learning. After all the elements of my project finally came together, the editing process proved to be the most difficult. Piecing together the recorded voiceovers with the taped interviews, creating original titles, correcting colors of shots, and deciding the proper format for the story – all tested my assumed pre-existing knowledge.

The AIDS epidemic spreading throughout Africa seems to be a losing battle. Nevertheless, the orphans at Rafiki are fighting and succeeding. Loise, the only orphan interviewed in the documentary is currently in college and studying Mass Communications. Although she lost both of her parents, she still has her will to fight the affects of such a deadly disease. From the solemn to the happy faces, I can only hope someone is touched and moved to support the Rafiki AIDS ministries after viewing my documentary.

RAFIKI: CHILDREN OF HOPE

Tiffany M. Blount, B.A.

A Culminating Project Presented to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Lindenwood University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts

2008

COMMITTEE IN CHARGE OF CANDIDACY

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Rafiki: Children of Hope

Over green pastures and rich mountains lurks a familiar evil. An evil deadly enough to kiss you hello and stab you goodbye. An evil that erases memories before they even occur and causes a young girl to inherit motherhood before adapting to childhood. I do not know this evil's first name; I only know it by its last. HIV/AIDS.

The widespread AIDS epidemic in Sub-Saharan Africa plagues the lives of families all across the continent. The ongoing crisis yields unwelcoming outcomes. It ravages vulnerable villages and as Susan Hunter, explains, "AIDS took off in Africa before the HIV virus had been identified and linked to it, before there were any tests to detect HIV, before epidemic tracking systems existed, and before antiretroviral treatments were discovered (47)." In the blink of an eye, this evil disease ruined millions of lives. Today, it continues to affect lives, including those that haven't really had the chance to live. Children. Africa's children. More specifically, Kenyan orphans.

Rafiki AIDS ministry formed, like many organizations throughout Africa, to combat the deadly disease. Rafiki's mission began in the United States, specifically Columbus, Ohio, where native Kenyan Reverend John Nganga wanted to learn more about the HIV/AIDS epidemic. According to their brochure, the purpose of the Rafiki missionary was to provide "spiritual and personal support" to those infected by HIV (Brochure). Since their conception in 1995, they've provided orphans with financial

assistance and housing, HIV/AIDS education, and personal support to the children and family members. Rafiki may seem like just another AIDS organization, but I promise you, they are so much more. They are the hope lacking in youths in Nairobi, a Capitol once nicknamed “Nairobbery (Personal Interview).” Those lost souls needed to be rescued and this is why Rafiki: Children of Hope is extraordinary.

I. The Birth of the Story

The true beginning of this project originated in 2004, while I was a student at Saint Louis Community College – Florissant Valley. During that fall, I spent many hours working as the video production lab assistant. One day, Tim Croskey, a friend and Florissant Valley’s engineer, came to me with mini DV tapes to digitize (import into the computer). He had previously boasted about the beauty of Kenya and his trips to Africa. On that day, he had returned from a visit to his wife’s native land with a project.

Wangari Croskey, born and raised in Kikuyu, a small town in Kenya, now lives in Saint Louis. That reality doesn’t stop her and Tim from visiting her hometown as frequently as possible. In 2004, they noticed activity from a property near her mother’s home. Her family knew the property owners and when they found out it was being rented out to an HIV/AIDS organization; footage from their previous trips now had a purpose.

Tim and Wangari did not go to Kenya looking for a story about orphans whose parents died of AIDS. They were aware of the increasing death toll due to untreated illnesses. Their trips usually meant authentic Kenyan food, safaris, relaxation, and family appreciation, but deep down Tim felt their previous trips were leading up to something bigger. According to Tim, "The story, in true documentary form, was a story found (Personal Interview)."

II. Rafiki: Welcoming a Challenge

The Swahili word "Rafiki" translates as "friends" or "friendship" and this project brought together a group of friends with one goal. I must admit, my initial task was only to edit this project but as time progressed and the tapes remained unedited, my duties increased. I always wanted to document an important story untold. My first project idea was to visit Kenya for two weeks and interview Wangari Maathai about the Green Belt Movement. After discussing the idea with my friends, Tim and Wangari, reality set in. The cost of visiting Kenya was over triple the cost my culminating project tuition. Due to the distance of travel, they recommended a stay of one month; time I didn't have to leave work and money I could not garner. While the idea began to fade away, an old one reemerged.

Rafiki: Children of Hope was thus resuscitated. Now, I would not only edit but also produce a project four years in the making. The three of us: Tim, Wangari and myself met on a cold Saturday in March to watch

the footage from their three trips to Kenya during the years of 2002, 2004, and 2006. We cooked food, drank wine, viewed and logged the footage. We relived the excitement we once had, the sadness we once felt, and the passion we never lost. It was time to tell a story some say has already been told. But I say it's a story that's never been told over and over. The children of Rafiki are not an ordinary Newsweek article, Dateline piece or your average nightly news report. They are individuals with a story of hope, despair, triumph and success.

III. Creating the project

On June 10th, 2008, I met with Tim Croskey, the videographer of Rafiki, Children of Hope. After spending three weeks editing the project, it seemed necessary that I interview him as a primary source. Questions lingered about his camera techniques and Tim could provide answers a book, website or news source lacked.

Tim and I, both videographers, both editors, collaborated on a project together for the first time in both our lives. In previous works, if I edited a project, I was also the one who shot it. At times, if I shot it, I never had to see the editor work with my footage. From this experience, I learned this would not be an easy task.

And so the puzzle began.

I logged the footage into my Apple computer, utilizing Final Cut Pro editing software. I watched it, took notes and waited. During this time, my partners and I struggled to maintain communication. I could not

begin work on the project until I received a vital piece of the puzzle. Translations. The God Mother and Loise from the Kikuyu orphanage, in the town of Kikuyu, spoke the language, Kikuyu. Those two interviews halted my ability to begin editing the project. I work in an organized fashion and will rarely edit a project when missing necessary components.

Unfortunately, there was only one person who could translate them. Wangari. I left several messages with Tim and Wangari, with no response. I began to panic. I could not omit the interviews, therefore, it seemed I would have to abandon the project. I remained hopeful and realized all was not lost. When I received the tapes, Wangari provided the written narrative for the documentary, allowing me to move forward and record the audio for the narration.

The day before Mother's Day, constant rain and storms hailed on the recording of my narration voiceover. Shannon Hicks, a fellow DJ at KDHX radio, agreed to read the narration. I decided to use the radio station at Florissant Valley Community College, where my knowledge of the equipment and staff was strongest. We arrived at KCFV-FM production studio on Saturday around 6 p.m., prior to the rain reaching Ferguson-Florissant. Shannon read over the script, I assisted her with a few pronunciations (calling Tim & Wangari for confirmation on a few, with no response) and the recordings from Hell began.

Shannon's over-confidence destroyed her ability to complete a truly solid read. Yet, she had commercial radio experience and held a very composed voice. She stumbled on the word "Kikuyu" several times along with simpler words. After an hour passed, the rain began. Moments later, tiny taps of hail could be heard on the window in the studio. I didn't want to believe it could be heard on the recording, so we continued. Around 8 p.m., the rain slowed, and Shannon read the last paragraph for the fourth time successfully. I knew I could cut together a perfect read. But I still needed the translations.

The reality of possible failure and tainted teamwork worried me. I questioned my leadership skills. I questioned my passion for the project. I began to seek alternative options.

Finally, during the last week of May, Tim called. He apologized for not getting back to me, stating, everything had been crazy. He informed me Wangari had the interviews translated and would e-mail them over. At last, I could begin.

On May 30th, the general manager at my job informed me they were eliminating my position. While most would have been disgruntled, emotional or outraged, I felt relief. I knew God had a plan and He believed I was capable of success, amid my many obstacles. I spent the next couple of months collecting the final pieces of the puzzle.

Capturing the perfect voiceover for Mary Wanjiru, the Godmother, proved to be necessary. After my mother recorded the voiceover, it just

didn't fit the video. I contacted Tim to see if he knew anyone over the age of sixty, who may fit our Swahili speaking interviewee. He assured me he had the perfect person and would follow-up when or if she agreed to read the part.

Shortly after our phone conversation, I received a confirmation e-mail that Mary Hunter, a retired, part-time Librarian at Saint Louis Community College, had agreed to read the voiceover. Immediately after sitting down and going over the script with her prior to recording, I knew she was perfect. She writes short stories, so her voice has a soft, melodic tone. But after listening to Loise's interview over and over, it seemed too choppy and brief to do a voiceover. And much of her audio mixed Kikuyu and English, so I decided to use subtitles.

Footage, check. Translations, check. Voiceover's, check. Music, oh music. My love, my passion, my dear music. I sampled music for the production before I even captured the video into Final Cut. I considered the song, "Rafiki," by Zap Mama, an African-European collective. I made several trips to Vintage Vinyl's international section, seeking authentic Kenyan music with no luck. Ugandan, Nigerian, Ethiopian music, but no Kenyan Music. I searched www.Calabashmusic.com and www.Itunes, after searching Wikipedia for Kenyan Musicians. None of it felt right until one afternoon on May 18th.

I attended the BAG (Black Artist Group) event at the Scott Joplin House and there it was, my music, my inspiration. The band played

“Africa” by John Coltrane and there it was. I immediately made another trip to Vintage Vinyl, hoping, praying, they had the song. And there it was, from the “Africa/Brass” CD. The inherent mood of Jazz became the only genre of music that could capture the emotion of my documentary.

Music evokes emotion; jazz music embodies a spirit that gives moving images their power. After working with Saint Louis jazz musician Lamar Harris, I decided to use most of his music for the soundtrack. With his permission, I weaved together his beautiful brass melodies with my bare video images. Rafiki now had a sound.

The Kenyan chant heard in the beginning and end of the film is the only original soundtrack. Tim requested this song have a place in the production. Tim and Wangari visited Kenya in 2006 for purposes beyond pleasure. Her thirteen-year-old brother became a man and the chant her family sang asked the God’s to watch over him during his circumcision ceremony. While the relevance of the song lacks a direct connection to the children at the orphanage, the spirit worked much like opposites attracting.

I now cradled the pieces of the puzzle and the true challenge began. Difficulties communicating with Tim and Wangari, frustrations of recording audio, and the stress of finding the perfect music could not compare to the editing process.

IV. The Editing Videographer and Video Editor Collide

As I previously mentioned, I recorded an interview with Tim Croskey. I wanted to make certain his vision for this project was upheld. I felt this project could not fully be understood without the intentions of the videographer.

The most obvious technique Tim used caused many shots to be oversaturated with white. The shots with the children, House Mother, some scenic shots, all were white washed. Tim explained that he turned on the backlight setting on the consumer camera, Sony PCR-100, to light the foreground subject. Initially, he used the feature when necessary but when he saw the “ghostly, ethereal” effect it created on the children shots, he began to use it in untraditional settings. His lack of a video monitor affected his judgment and he admits he should have used a white card to bounce the light.

I spent the most time throughout the entire editing process attempting to correct the overexposed shots. My knowledge of Color Correction being meager caused me to seek alternative assistance. I couldn't afford a fancy tutorial on how to correct color, so I read over the Final Cut Pro manual, which introduced me to such tools as the vectorscope, histogram, and the excess luma feature. Unfortunately, while I did have the tools to show me when the video was wrong, I still lacked the knowledge on how to fix my problems. This brought me to a wonderful tutorial on Youtube by user Emeek77, who had detailed

instructional videos on how to use various elements of Final Cut Pro. I watched, learned and corrected the color I figured was doomed to remain oversaturated.

The footage was derived from three separate month-long trips to Kenya during the years of 2002, 2004 and 2006. Tim's hunger for b-roll (extra scenic footage to enhance video productions) proved valuable. Unfortunately, due to footage shot prior to the interviews, more relevant b-roll was not captured. I lacked a lot of necessary video and I needed something to fill the blanks, so my search began. I found video on Youtube and asked the user if I could use a few shots of his b-roll. He informed me that he only placed the videos online; he did not produce them. I found tons of royalty free stock footage but with a high price tag for only a couple of minutes of video.

My only successful alternative was an international HIV/AIDS charitable organization called Avert. On www.Avert.org, they have a library of free photographs that can be used, with permission, for personal or educational use. I selected a variety of photographs and contacted the necessary person to request use of the photographs. I was granted approval and that's where most of the still photography originated.

Nevertheless, I appreciated the footage captured because most Americans would not have had access like Tim and Wangari. Rafiki respected the privacy of their children and did not want them to be

exploited. I also wanted to maintain my documentarian values in respecting the art of “cinema verite” or “film truth.” I wanted the validity of the documentary to be as natural as possible.

Tim intended to purchase a monopod in Nairobi to keep the camera stabilized but realized the hassle of getting into Nairobi wasn't worth it. Instead, he used walls, chairs and other flat surfaces to stabilize the camera.

Another obstacle Tim had to overcome was equipment failure. In 2004, he brought a shotgun microphone, initially to interview Wangari's mother, only to find out it didn't work. He admits not testing the microphone was bad judgment but it's a mistake that can't be undone. I came from the school of audio and other than the oversaturated nature shots and low audio; I was pleased with his camera work. Without those issues, I never would've learned how to deal with correcting color and mixing new audio with four-year-old audio. After reviewing the rough cut of the film, I noticed slight audio crackling like vintage records. Due to the age of the tape, it seemed some wear developed. After researching audio issues online, I found that consumer cameras, like the one used to record the interviews, use a lower bit rate of 32 kHz. When mixed with higher quality (44.1 kHz and 48 kHz) from the music, a slight popping distortion is created; another issue that could not be undone. Even with every obstacle I encountered producing and editing Rafiki, the message, the story, the heart behind it, overshadowed it all.

V. The Results

“I am what I am because of who we all are.” – Ubuntu

I sincerely acknowledge mistakes were made, on all ends.

Collaborating and working with a team often results in a complete but imperfect product. I do not regret one stressful element of this project. I will undoubtedly reflect on this experience when faced with the inevitable real world challenges of video production.

VI. The Follow-up

During my interview with Tim, he revealed that when they returned to Kenya in 2006, the Rafiki orphanage no longer resided next to Wangari’s family. The owners sold the land forcing the orphanage to relocate. After looking at the faces of those children, after four years, we wondered – What happened? Did they succeed? Did the orphanage ever buy that land and open a clinic and school for the children like Mrs. Karanja hoped. Tim found the brochure he obtained during their 2006 visit, prompting us to search for any information on the Internet. While the old URL, www.RafikiAidsministry.org is no longer active, Google provide a new URL, www.marafikiglobalaidsministry.com.

According to their most recent website, (unsure of its last update), they found land to build their center on but needed \$250,000 more to complete the project. As of 2005, they’re new home in Nairobi continued to be active and successful.



Marafiki Children's Center Orphanage - 2005.

Courtesy of www.marafikiglobalaidsministry.com.

APPENDIX A

RAFIKI: NARRATIVE SCRIPT

Written By: Wangari Croskey

In sub-Saharan Africa the scourge of AIDS has decimated whole segments of its population. Kenya, situated on the Eastern coast of Africa has not escaped this epidemic. It is a country richly endowed with great beauty. From the impressive Mt. Kenya, the rich highlands, the Savannahs to the white sand beaches along the Indian Coast. The capital city of Kenya is Nairobi, a name appropriately given by the Maasai that means 'green city in the sun.'

Even as millions of people have perished there remains hope in a town called Kikuyu that lies in the fertile highlands 20 Km west of Nairobi. These highlands were for a long time envied and fought for by the English colonists for both the fertile soil that made it possible to grow almost anything and for its favourable climate. Kikuyu will now be the nurturing soil for a different group of people. This rich land will now be the home of the orphans who have lost their parents to HIV/AIDS. What had, in the past, been a fate of despair has become a life of hope for these, The Children of Hope. Their new home is called Rafiki that in Swahili means "friends" or "friendship". The orphans come from the most remote parts of the country and also the slums of the city. Some were abandoned,

others were left in the care of grandparents who are aged, poor and who are still grieving for their lost children. Most still do not comprehend the terrible disease to which their loved one's succumbed. They do not understand the magnitude of the stigma that is associated with this deadly disease.

The picture of AIDs in Africa over the past years has been one of unremitting horror. The World Health Organization describes Sub-Saharan Africa as having the highest HIV infection in the world. Although Kenya is not one of the nine countries in the continent with the highest number of HIV/AIDs cases, the disease continues to plague the country.

Rafiki is a place of hope, a place of new beginnings. The home at this point has 23 children. It houses separate quarters for the young boys and girls. The age range is from four years to sixteen. It's important to note that some of the children may not be HIV positive. Rafiki is in the process of furnishing a dispensary that will test the children and determine who are infected and who are not.

The home is run by a for non-profit organization. Some of the funding comes from companies in the country but the bulk of it is from the United

States. With a small donation, the children can be fed, clothed and sent to school. The primary goal is to provide for them until they can go to college

The children are lonely, hurt, alone, and because of this they tend to defy discipline. Some of them are too young to understand the deadly disease that took their parents from them. They do not understand why other children steer away from them, why there are muffled whispers behind their backs, why other parents tell their children not to play with them.

We spoke with Mrs. Karanja, house mother of Rafiki Orphanage, about the many challenges of her task.

(Mrs. Karanja interview)

We also spoke to Loise, a 16-year-old student from Komothai High School who resides at the orphanage.

(Loise interview)

Rafiki is a place of hope for the children. It's a tiny step towards crumbling the walls of silence and ignorance that surrounds this horrendous disease. And as Loise puts it, this is place will help her pursue her dream of being a doctor so that she too will be able to help others. After all, HIV/AIDS is a disease that can be prevented through education.

APPENDIX B

TOPIC: **RAFIKI ORPHANAGE**LOCATION: **KIKUYU, KENYA**CONTENTS: ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS FOR MARY WAWERU AND LOISE WAMBUI-- PROVIDED BY WANGARI CROSKEY, INTERVIEWER **Wangari**: Can you tell me your name?

Mary Wanjiru Waweru: My name is Mary Wanjiru Waweru**Wangari**: Where have you worked before this point?

Mary: I worked at Magutuino Primary School as a cook. I later worked with the Assumption sisters, Franciscan Missionary. The organization assists AIDS orphans too. The Assumption sisters assist the chokoras (street children) by providing meals. I did not know then but Rafiki had been following my work which as a volunteer was to locate lost children and bring them to organizations that were willing to help them either get off the street or bring them back together with remaining family members. Rafiki then approached me and offered me a job of God Mother to the children that they would house at their new location. I accepted the position in December 2002.

Wangari: How many children are in the home right now?**Mary**: We have twenty-two children.**Wangari**: How many boys and girls?**Mary**: Thirteen boys and nine girls.**Wangari**: What are their greatest needs?

Mary: The children have so many problems. Eating, sleeping problems. They come from situations where they have been mistreated by other family members who stigmatize them because their parents died of HIV/AIDS. Most of them have suffered hunger, no clothes and a lack of education. They need a comfortable and healthy environment. Lack of understanding from those around them.

Wangari: Describe a normal day?

Mary: The wake up in the morning, make their beds, clean up, and then gather together for prayer. They have to do their chores. We try to alternate their tasks. IN the beginning, they were stubborn, but slowly and surely they are becoming more cooperative. Disciplining is a huge issue. That is my hardest job.

Wangari: Are you the only God Mother?

Mary: Yes, I am. But we do have a staff five.

Wangari: Hello Loise.

Loise: Hello.

Wangari: Where do you go to school?

Loise: My name is Loise Wambui from Komothai Girls.

Wangari: Where were you living before you came to Rafiki?

Loise: I was staying with my aunt.

Wangari: Do you think you are going to like it here? Is it something positive?

Loise: It will help. When I lived with my aunt (my mom's sister), her children always came first, which is understandable. It was painful for me when they called her mom, because it reminded me of my loss. I was angry and confused.

Wangari: When did you lose your parents?

Loise: My mom died in 1982 and my dad in 1985.

Wangari: Do you have any siblings?

Loise: One sister.

Wangari: Is she here at Rafiki?

Loise: No.

Wangari: What are your plans for when you grow up?

Loise: I want to be a doctor. To give back because so much has been given to me.

APPENDIX C

Rafiki Pamphlet



Rafiki

meaning "Friend" in Swahili, is inspired and sustained by the vision of extending God's unconditional love to ease the suffering of children and families affected by HIV/AIDS worldwide.

The mission of the Project Rafiki is to lovingly serve patients and their families who are affected by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). This will be achieved by putting our faith in God into action, modeling and providing the unconditional love, acceptance and comfort of God to those we serve by our words and our deeds. Rafiki will diligently strive to eliminate fear and stigma in the church community and the community at large through educational services and comprehensive pastoral training programs that will equip all people to lovingly serve patients and families affected by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV/AIDS).

Missions

Rafiki started in Central Ohio in 1996 with a faith-based volunteer workforce trained by medical and pastoral care professionals to provide HIV+ families with spiritual support and assistance with the tasks of daily living that become unmanageable when ill.

Rafiki also offers a *confidential prenatal program* to further provide friendship and support, linking HIV/AIDS infected or affected children locally and internationally.

Rafiki desires to assist other faith and medical communities to replicate and expand upon these services wherever there is suffering due to HIV/AIDS.

In Kenya, one of the world's countries most devastated by AIDS, Rafiki has initiated a team of volunteers from the church and medical community, in Kikuyu Division, on the outskirts of Nairobi. Ohio Rafiki teams will go to

Kenya on an ongoing basis to establish community education and training of HIV/AIDS care-giver teams.

Currently, Rafiki sponsorships provide financial assistance for monthly expenses of Kenyan children who become orphans due to HIV+ status or the death of their parents due to HIV/AIDS.

In the next year or two, Rafiki has vision for adoptive placements and construction of a *Rafiki Children's Center and Clinic* where temporary housing, counseling, medical care, health education, skill training, guided recreation, education, Bible study and knowledge of the love of God will be shared.



FACTS . . .

- Statistics show that by the year 2000, 40 million people in our world will be HIV+. Despite progress made, many populations are seeing an increasing incidence due to ignorance about AIDS and increasing drug usage.
- Of a currently estimated 30 million AIDS cases worldwide, more than 2 million are found in Kenya.
- The number of people infected with HIV is estimated to be 10 times greater than the reported AIDS cases.
- Every day in Kenya's largest city, Nairobi, 1,800 children are potentially infected with HIV. A great number of these children are abandoned, not including those orphaned due to the death of their parents from AIDS, with 500 orphans dying every day from AIDS or related complications.
- Of all HIV+ infants, of which many are left to die, 3 in 4 are actually free of the virus, testing positive due only to the mother's antibodies.

BECOME A FF

Please provide me with further information

- Sponsor
- Volunteer training program for my _____
- Corporate matching program
- Donating medical supplies and/or _____
- Donating clothing and/or recreation _____
- Donating equipment for Rafiki Care _____
- Prayer partner (individual/individuals) as _____
- Participate in your cartridge request _____
- Child adoption/placement _____
- Construction of a Rafiki Children's _____
- Operations of a clinic program _____
- Sponsor a fundraising event _____
- Serving as a volunteer in Central O _____
- Cannot help at this time, please be _____

Rafiki AIDS Ministry, Inc. is a 501(c)(3)

Your Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

please add _____

Friend's Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Thank you for your _____

Mail to: Rev. John M. Ngunjiri, 14 _____

Rafiki AIDS Ministry, Inc., 17 _____





Rafiki AIDS Ministry, Inc.
P.O. Box 292069
Columbus, Ohio 43229



Rafiki Additions



Rafiki is a Gift
to the
Children of Kenya

*Greater love has no
man than he who
lays down his life
for his friends.*
John 15:13

Rafiki AIDS Ministry, Inc.
P.O. Box 292069 • Columbus, OH 43229
614-409-0794 Telephone and FAX

E-Mail: JN@ngana@aol.com
Website: Rafikaidsministry.org



APPENDIX D

House Mother Dialouge

We started Rafiki, officially, in 1998. That's the time we received ten volunteers from America with a director John Nganga, who wanted to know about HIV and AIDS in Kenya. By that time we had about 7 children who had come forward and the guardians had decided to come forward and they had accepted that their daughter had died of AIDS. And in 1999, January 15, we officially opened an office in Emmauel SEK, Kikyu, where we just had two hundred children. And from there we started doing guardian custody with the parents and the guardians. -- Then after that, we continued to do just the children and to visit them in their homes where we had been doing home-based care because we didn't have somewhere to keep the children.

And by the year 1998, we had about 300 children who are just out of this office but we had only about 75 who are sponsored. The sponsored children get 1500, which is 25 American dollars, from donors from abroad and here in Kenya.

Wangari: "Is that every month?"

That is every month per child. They come here to collect their money. We give them checks and those who are very poor, we give them cash. They come and collect their school fees, which is not even enough for school fees in Kenya. But we just give them just like a token to keep them going. And in addition to that, we used to borrow clothes from well wishers, we visit them and give them . . .

And those who are not sponsored, when we spot the very, very, desperate kids, we go there, we take food and clothes out of the few shillings we get from the donors who are willing to help us.

And by the year 2000, we shifted from SEK, Kikuyu and we rented another office near Odidus slums, we stayed there for 1 year.

And last year, in August, we moved to these offices, when we spotted some very, very desperate cases. Where you go to some children, they live with their old grandmothers and even some are great grandmothers . . .

We found some children who are sleeping in a mud house with holes. They do not even have beds. A lamp, that is history. They have never seen a lamp, they stay there, 9 of them with their uncle's children and others. Even you cannot see where they sleep. They are that poor that even to get something to eat is very difficult.

And we came out with an idea that if we get to these houses. If they rent us fairly, we are going to let them so that we can get somewhere where we can keep the very, very desperate children. They are the children you have seen in our home. Now they are staying here with us and we are glad.

And out of that, we came up with an idea of an orphanage to oversee the children. Now, this house, we are paying 30,000 shilling per month to the owner of the house. But we are still praying to God if we get somewhere. If we get money, we can buy a piece of land where we can build because right now we are having a problem of getting schools to take our children because some people in Kenya, they think if you die of AIDS, even your children are victims, they are infected.

But I'm glad that out of the five children that we have in our offices, they are all affected but not infected.

We decided to put them here. So if we get money, we buy a piece of land, we are going to build a school and at least a clinic where our children can be treated so that we can get them somewhere to live.

But I have some dear friends who have been acting as volunteers. So whenever the task is too heavy, they were coming in, they were helping. And we hold a farewell party or Christmas party every year. We get these children, they come, we share with them, we stay with them, we eat with them. Things like that, every year. And our Director comes once a year to see the children, things like that.

They help us, we work together and we are happy and hoping that God is going to see us through.

There was a time when we were so desperate but God is good. Yeah. Yeah.

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