

## REPORT

### Lea's Visit

Wow so many experiences and impressions I get here in Kenya at Kindfund. It is the first time in Africa for me - I'm 19yrs old, my home is in Austria and I just finished school in 2019. For many years, the thought of going to Africa has stuck in my head. God put it on my heart and the Kindfund family made it easy to settle in. It is a blessing to spend time seeing what God has done. I get to know the backgrounds of the children and many can break my heart. Only God can heal these kids. Sometimes the kids bring me to exhaustion but then they bring so much joy and show you their thankfulness for spending time with them. They can sing very, very beautifully, even the little one's impress. I very much like the personalities of the children. It's amazing, even little ones are involved in a Sunday service no matter of which age or character they are. I remember little Joy just 4 years on one Sunday stepping out in front of the whole group and singing her little song. This girl just loves to sing and God can use this gift in her!

My task in Kenya was not just waiting for extraordinary/special incidents, but all in all to spend time with the children, which was a thankful job. I had a full suitcase with me with lots of gifts from people of Austria. We were doing crafts like knitting, playing games, trying to learn the recorder, climbing a tree to name a few things. Something they tirelessly love to play football. I preferred to play with the small children as football is not what I usually do. With that I felt very equal. It is not about materials but to simply spend time with the kids. They enjoy that so much. Although they do not own a lot of equipment, they are not getting bored but creative with filling their time with simple things. I had my eyes opened when a little one approached me showing a bug to which he had tied a cord and was going to take it for a walk like a dog!

My prayer was that God uses situations where I could say the right things to the children and show love to them. I was encouraged to share what was on my heart at the regular fellowships and I also had the experience to take a Sunday school class. I am thankful for that. It was not always easy for me to carry through programmes as I was on my own. Therefore, I had to work my way through how to handle the adventurous lively big groups of kids. A good way was to divide the kids. An example was when I unpacked my guitar. Everyone was curious and eager to play it. So, I lined them up (about 20 kids) and one by one they played the guitar for a few moments. When there were challenges or even conflict's I strongly remember what Pamela once said: "Do good anyway."

Something I'm not missing to mention is what cool and loving "Mum" and "Dad" Pamela and Ken are for the kids!!! Pamela once started a water battle and Ken was playing volleyball with the children! Amazing! I truly can recommend to all you guys to take the chance if you have one and step out to immerse into a project like Kindfund. I experienced it as a real blessing. It brings you to the conclusion of how unthankful we often are, taking things for granted.

Let us also pray for Kindfund family in this current situation of coronavirus. They need the Lord's comfort and help.

Thank you, Kindfund Family for having me! I would have liked to return soon which is not possible for now. God knows if there will be the next chance to visit. That will be a joy to see again all the precious faces there. It's kind of crazy how quick you dive back into your "old normal life" but all the single moments which I've collected there will not just disappear but they will have an impact on my life. It is worth it. **Lea**



Pray: for our older teenagers, the challenges they face and the challenges they bring to us: to a faithful God for the vision of children whose hearts are on fire for him: for God's wisdom for all levels of management, staff, and the children.

Give thanks to God for his faithfulness, provision and the children and staff he has given us. Thank him for the plans he has for us all

## Life under Covid



A little report on how the children and staff have been getting along under Covid lockdown.

Despite the restrictions, life has been going on and management and staff have borne up to the challenge remarkably well. The Government acted quickly in March to close the Country as soon as the first cases were identified. During that period, we equipped the homes with sanitizer and masks and issued guidance to them to reduce the risk of transmission. Schools were closed and we re-employed most of our teachers as tutors as we replaced school with Home tuition. We could not, for the sake of their health and general discipline have so many children idle.

In the homes we have organised some special activities for the children. We set aside 2 days in each home for birthday celebrations. Many children are unaware of the date of their birthday, so a general celebration was organised. It was a brilliant celebration for the children with all their favourite foods, games, and party decorations to make it a special

day for them. The photos say it all. Thank you to Shalline and all who were involved in making this a special day.

Of course, all the normal things have continued, and this has included hospital visits for those ill and two children obtained long awaited surgery. Sadly, and unexpectedly we lost Sarafina who died at the hospital.

Management has been reporting to us here formally monthly although hardly a day goes past without some contact thanks to WhatsApp and Messenger. Routine maintenance continues along with monthly shopping although we have taken steps to pay bills electronically and pay many staff to their telephones to avoid the need for visits to Isiolo the County town.

We give thanks for Raphael and Bosco two of our local Trustees who have helped management with advice and guidance on the ground. We also thank the local Government administration which after some initial confusion has rowed in behind our management with support.

## Quick turnaround for Gillian

*Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" Joshua 1 v 9*

Life for us all has changed dramatically in the last wee while. Things that we did before without thinking we now cannot do, for example, giving someone a simple hug! When I arrived in Kenya at the beginning of March, I had so many wee arms round me and smiling faces.

What a welcome, and though I miss them terribly since leaving, I'm not sure how I would have coped or if the small ones would have understood why I had stopped greeting them with a great big hug. There are many things we as adults don't understand but a child coming from a background of rejection or abuse seeing me withhold the arm around the shoulder I once gave and being too young to understand I was doing it for their own welfare, it must be very confusing. Maybe even that feeling of rejection all over again and there is nothing I could do about it. Heart breaking, and this is only one example. The verse above from Joshua 1 is a verse that is close to my heart. It was the confirmation of God's leading me to Kenya in the first place and as this story of my miracle journey back to Northern Ireland will show, it is God's confirmation that He keeps His promises and is very much still with us in all the drama this world throws at us.

It was so good to be back and see our kids again. They seemed to have missed me!! I had missed them. We laughed, played, talked, sang (well they did the singing!), visited the older children at polytechnic, the car broke down, problem with solar electricity, an unwelcome visit from an awfully long snake etc. Just the usual first week but that is where normal ended. My visit of two months ended up being just over three weeks. With the first cases of coronavirus in Nairobi confirmed the government acted quickly and closed schools. We immediately put in place measures to keep everyone safe. Isolating the homes, no visitors, restricting travel to essentials (food etc) purchasing gloves and sanitisers.



In all this preparation, hearing news of how the situation in Northern Ireland was moving fast, knowing Kenya had already stopped foreign travel into the country around the same time as they closed the schools, I never once thought I'd need to make a decision about leaving. Naïve or just busy? I do not know, but when I heard that Kenya were going to close the airport in three days I was left with a dilemma and not much time to solve it. Should I stay or go? I prayed for God's wisdom. The next three days were tough but as I look back, it was in these days that I felt the Lord renew His promise to be with me wherever I go.

I went to town in search of Wifi the next morning to see if I could change my flight. However, I could neither change my flight online, contact the airline or even book a separate new flight as there were none available in the days left before the airport closed. Next, I tried British Embassy Nairobi office. They took my details and said they would contact me the next day. This was a problem, because if they contacted me the next day and said, we have a flight going in two hours' time, it would have been no good to me because I was nearly six hours away by car. I would not make it. I had no choice but to pack and head

for the airport early the next morning in faith that I would get a flight. This had all happened so quickly the kids did not know I was leaving until that morning. It was so emotional, and just the beginning of a very emotional day. I had to go on and trust them to God as well as the decision to go to the airport.

I arrived at the airport just before 3pm. In the carpark as I was getting my bags the phone rang. The girl from the Embassy asked where I was and then told me that there were still no flights to Belfast or Dublin available. I went on into the airport to check with various airlines. Quite a few had already stopped flights. I nearly ended up in quarantine at this point before airport security realised, I had come from Northern Kenya and not just arrived on a plane! This was when I met the first person that God put in my path. I was with this lady for nearly 5 hours that afternoon. She worked with a travel agency at the airport and set about looking for any available flights before the airport closed the next day. She could find none. This was an exceedingly difficult moment, as I was now at the airport and potentially at risk of picking up coronavirus. I could not return to the children without a period of isolation if

there was no flight, then, I heard a shout from the office. I have a flight! A flight from Nairobi-Doha-London-Dublin the next day, one hour before the airport closed. A few minutes later I received a phone call from the British Embassy telling me she was sorry but there were still no flights available before the airport closed! A miracle. On one hand I was being told there are no flights and on the other, here I was with a flight. The next issue was paying for it. My bank card did not work. Long story cut short, the flight was paid for but with my bank card blocked, little cash left and being exhausted and an emotional wreck I was planning on finding a spot in the airport for the night as my flight was not until 11pm the next day.

This was when the second person that God put in my path appeared. I was curled up with my bags on a hard chair crying to myself when a commotion started at one of the check-in desks. There were people being turned away from a flight. I got chatting to this guy, airport staff I presumed. He explained to me what was going on and told me people were being sent to a hotel for the night as their flights were being rearranged for the next day. He insisted I go to the desk and check on mine. As usual, being a bit backward and at this point, wiped out, I was hanging around at the back of the group of people when he came up to me again and insisted I go forward to the desk and enquire. The result being, I got a hotel room for the night and was able to get on the flight the next day well rested and fed. A flight that I could not get checked in online and that was not even listed on the departure board right up to take off. And that was not all. As well as getting near the last flight out of Nairobi, when I got to Dublin, I got the last bus to Enniskillen. That service was being temporarily stopped the next day.

Incredible, God had made a way and given me the strength to make the journey and deal with all the obstacles that appeared. Now that I am back in Northern Ireland and struggling at times with leaving the children in such a difficult time I still need to look to Joshua 1 v 9 ".....Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" We trust and pray continually that God will be with the children and with us as we do what we can from NI to help them.

Thank you to all who support this work. We pray you have a very blessed Christmas.

## Ken & Pamela

In November 2019 Pamela travelled to Kindfund Kenya to be with the children at Christmas. She was joined at the beginning of December by Lea a teenage Austrian girl keen to share some of her year helping needy children in Africa, before going to University.

It was a remarkably busy trip for Pamela as she dealt with a few management issues and oversaw the preparations for Christmas ensuring that every one of our 125 children received an appropriate Christmas gift. In this she was supported by Esther and other staff members and some of our teenage children. All went well and the children all received a small gift and a selection of items in their 'Christmas stocking.' Pamela was keen to share with all our children so a few days before Christmas, accompanied by Lea they visited our most remote home at Ndirkir, in Marsabit County and 180kms North of Isiolo. The children were pleased to see them. They shared together and the children sang some hymns and repeated memory versus they had been learning. Lea's creativity was appreciated as the children learnt new craft skills and each one was excited to receive a gift from Lea. Returning to be at Wamba for Christmas Pamela encouraged the staff and children to prepare a drama of the nativity which they were able to perform on Christmas day. It was a high point for Pamela. It was a time for bonding with the children in the home and appreciating the several older young adults who visited her at the home to share how they were getting along outside in the wider world.

After I joined Pamela in Kenya, we had a Team Management meeting on 4th. It was a good opportunity for us to be updated on the work and issues at each home and for me to touch on key management themes in relation to our policies – child protection, education, and employment contracts etc.

Pamela tackled many issues aimed at upgrading our children's Kindfund experience. As many of you will have seen from sponsorship photos the children continue to thrive physically and we could see first-hand the benefits of a caring and loving environment for their development. Of course, like any large family we have problems with a few, and these require specific attention. The beginning of the calendar year heralded a new school year with all the



activity around children moving up a year and transferring from nursery to primary to secondary and to polytechnic. This year was no exception with two teenagers to Secondary and four to Polytechnic. Managing three fairly large children's homes, nursery and primary schools with sites running to c.30 acres in total requires a constant programme of maintenance and investment and I like to achieve as much as possible when in Kenya to reduce the risk of things going wrong. The result was we were on the road a lot between Ngaremarara, Wamba and Ndirkir not realising until we returned to Isiolo and had the clutch stripped out that the plate was in pieces and only a miracle had kept it on the road.

Pamela returned to home in early February leaving me in my last month to oversee the finish of the work started. At the same time news of the oncoming Covid 19 was beginning to occupy my mind. Despite this I managed to fit in a trip to the Samburu Safari park with our teenage boys organised by our friend John Doherty, a world expert on the reticulated giraffe.

At the beginning of March, we welcomed Gillian while wondering about the gathering cloud of the virus which had not yet hit Africa. We give thanks that she was able at short notice three and a half weeks later to return to N Ireland on 25th, the day Kenya was

closing to protect the country from Covid 19. However at this stage in early March we were still planning to bring our Primary School principal, Shalline over to Northern Ireland at the end of March, as part of an exchange with Dunclug Primary in Ballymena, and as I took my leave of the children, staff and Gillian, Shalline travelled with me to Nairobi to visit the British Council and present herself and visa application documentation. However, it was not to be as Covid 19 took over world affairs.

I flew back to Ireland on 12th March the day the first Covid 19 case was detected in Kenya and to a rapidly changing world which demanded immediate action in Kenya to protect our children.

Ethiopia – in January Pamela and I flew to Addis Abba from Nairobi for 5 days to meet Mathewos a friend we had known at Isiolo where he worked with Street Children. It was an opportunity to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary, experience a second Christmas on 7th January and to hear about the work he would like to establish with young children in his home area 300kms SW of Addis. It was a joy to experience some Ethiopian Christian tradition and meet his family at their home in rural Ethiopia. We promised him we would pray for his project.

**Ken**

# Kindfund

Be kind to one another Eph 4:32

## How to Help: Pray, Sponsor, Share...

For more information visit our website [www.kindfund.com](http://www.kindfund.com)

To arrange for a speaker or to discuss your interest please contact one of the following:

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## Baptism



We were approached by several of our older teenagers who had been participating in a Friday evening bible study group. They had been discussing baptism and requested if they could be baptised. A local pastor was pleased to meet with our children for 7 weeks after which three boys and two girls in their mid-teens were baptised

".... go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Matt 28 v19

Nzau, the manager at Wamba had the pleasure of witnessing this joyous occasion.

## New Baby

In September 2020 we were approached by Government to rescue three babies from very tragic but wholly different circumstances. After discussions, relatives will take back the care of two of them and the other, just 3 weeks old came into the care of Kindfund.

Baby Pauline is settling in very well. The older children are enjoying helping to look after her.



# Kindfund

Be kind to one another Eph 4:32

## Editorial

A short note from me as I pass the baton to Gillian to restart the Prayer Letter after a gap of 11 months.

I have enjoyed keeping you abreast of the Kindfund news for the past 16 years and thank you for your interest and support over those years. Now is the right time for me to pass this responsibility to Gillian while I am still able to assist and support her. I trust you will continue to pray for her and support her as she communicates God's working through this challenging and life-giving work.

**Ken**

2020 for us at Kindfund, as for every other person in the world, has not turned out like we had envisaged. None of us could have foreseen the pain and suffering, chaos and struggles caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. No one has been left untouched. Everything from health, finance, family, all the way to a so called "normal way of life" has been affected. The celebration of key workers and looking out for our neighbours has, however, been an encouragement during it all. In the last few months there have been lots of references on social media about showing kindness to each other; a fruit of the Spirit encouraged by Paul Eph 4:32.

Ken, Pamela and I have been unable to travel to Kenya to our children, indeed my journey back from Kenya at the end of March, as you can read later, was a miracle in itself. Since then we have had to evolve in how we coordinate the work in Kenya from Northern Ireland. Missing out on smiles, hugs and watching our children grow but fully in the knowledge that God has them under His care and keeping.

In this prayer letter we will tell you some of the things that have been happening. How the homes prepared for lockdown and how they are coping. The relief scheme we ran to help some of our pastoralist neighbours struggling with the impact of the closure of livestock markets. Birthday celebrations and welcoming little baby Pauline. We also have a report from Lea, who tells us about her visit to Kindfund, Kenya before coronavirus.

We had some sad news with the untimely death of Sarafina. A young girl in our Wamba home. This was heart breaking for us all. We continue to pray that God will comfort and strengthen all those who loved and cared for Sarafina.

I want to thank you all for your continued prayers and support as we juggle with the practicalities while still focusing on our vision of children with hearts on fire for God. In this difficult season for our world let us focus on God, the one who loves us the most as we, "be kind to one another..."

**Gillian**

## Prayer Letter December 2020

Working and Witnessing among the pastoralist Turkana, Samburu and Rendille since 2004

## Supporting our Neighbours in Northern Kenya

I received this communication from Raphael, who along with his wife Lucy manages the Kindfund Home at Ndirkir, Marsabit County in Northern Kenya:

'Hi, Ken and Pam, how are you? We are OK in the Lord. There is hunger in our neighbourhood which has affected our staff. All livestock markets are closed. (Government reaction to Covid 19 which is devastating to the local Rendille community who totally depend on their animals for survival as they live in scrubland on the edge of a desert), and every single person are crying of hunger. Members of staff besiege for food. Relief is needed for 400 households since this Covid 19 not only claim by virus it demand on famine. Tell brethren in Christ. Greet Pam and all our prayers are on you for protection. **Raphael**

Footnote: Two elders have passed on in two weeks interval not because of Covid 19 but hunger Raphael

I suggested to Raphael that we provide a relief scheme for some of the worst effected villagers. There had been heavy rain and a danger of flooding our home if it continued so I suggested he dug a barrier in the sandy soil to divert water running from a nearby hill.

In response Raphael and Lucy identified the neediest village families who could send a member to join a relief scheme and we would start pay 500 ksh per day (c.£3.30). We suggested starting with a manageable number and initially giving 5 days work and depending on how our resources are we could extend.

Thirteen men joined the relief scheme. They worked well for the 5 days and just in time made enough progress with the flood barrier to divert very heavy rain on the third day. They repaired damage caused by the torrential rain and completed phase one. Pleased to finish the job and receive their pay they posed for a team photo. Well done to the men who can now buy supplies for their families and to Raphael and Lucy who recognised the need and approached us to help.

We have since run a second scheme, cutting thorn bushes, and strengthening our outer fence and wish to thank those who donated specifically for this help. The situation will be kept under review and we will help further as we can.



Let us not become weary in doing good ... we will reap a harvest if we do not give up...

Jeremiah 9:24 I am the lord who exercises kindness  
Ephesians 4:32 Be kind to oneanother

# Kindfund

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