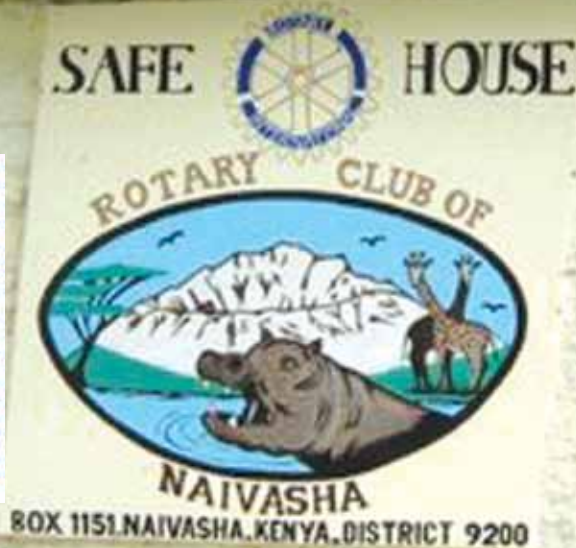


Safe House History



CENTENNIAL PROJECT
CELEBRATING 100 YEARS
OF ROTARY

From Jail House to Safe House – that’s what we call the Centennial Project of the Rotary Club of Naivasha centre for abused and defiled children.

The “Safe House” is an old jail located within the premises of the District administration offices (i.e. Law courts, D.O. office, etc) in Naivasha town. The original

jail was built by the Colonial government between 1939 and 1942 and was used to intern Mau Mau rebels. Post independence however, the Jail House was only used till 1967, when all inmates were transferred to the Naivasha Maximum security prison.

Since the establishment of the Rotary Club of Naivasha in Sept 2002, there has been a demand to address needs of children abused and defiled by their care-givers. Due to the ever increasing number of reported cases, a joint meeting with the Naivasha District Hospital, the D.O.’s office, the Police, and the Naivasha Council was held to forge a way forward.

In July 2004, the Commissioner of Rift Valley province, through the Naivasha District Officer, and the Rotary

Club of Naivasha (R.C. Naivasha), signed an M.O.U. to allow the creation of a “Safe House.” This would ensure that children who are mistreated would receive counseling and treatment in a child friendly environment. The M.O.U. also ensured co-operation between the various arms of Government to prosecute the offenders, and in some cases, relocate the child to a better environment. The M.O.U. also makes Naivasha District a test case, for the implementation and enforcement of the Children’s Act of 2001.

The RC Naivasha was given 2 dilapidated houses on the Administration premises to renovate and convert into a "Safe House." During renovations, it was realized that the old Jail, then occupied by Administration Police (A.P.) and their families, would make a better, more secure venue. It became a challenge; convert the old Jail House into a Safe House. The condition precedent was that RC Naivasha would have to finish renovations on the old houses to allow the A.P. to move before work could start on the old Jail.

Initial seed money (Ksh 900,000/=) to finance the project came from the Naivasha Horticultural Fair. The

balance of money and goods came from well-wishers, friends, and the pockets of the Rotarians themselves.

The first phase took 4 months to complete and by November 2004, the A.P. and their families moved from the old Jail House to their newly renovated homes. The A.P. were happy as they now had better plumbing and sanitation facilities including water tanks, upgraded electrics, a new roof, new windows and doors, and concrete floors.

The second phase was more complicated and arduous. The old Colonial Jail House had no windows, no lighting, poor ventilation, clogged septic tanks, no water

tanks, no kitchen, leaking roofs and worse, black walls from years of neglect and cooking on charcoal stoves. Most of this work was completed by March 2005 in celebration of 100 years of Rotary!

We also had to furnish the Safe House. Beds and linens, mattresses, mosquito nets, cooking appliances, kitchen utensils, office furniture and equipment were all needed before we could open the Safe House to children.

However, there was one burning issue. Did we have the capacity to undertake and implement this project alone? The answer was a resounding NO!

Understanding our limitations, we approached GOAL Ireland to assist us in capacity building and project management. They gave us guidelines as how to most successfully implement our ideas.

Today, the Naivasha Safe House provides shelter for girls and boys (ages 2 months to 15 years) who are the victims of defilement, rape, abuse, neglect, etc. The Safe House is not a permanent home.

Children are given a SAFE, child-friendly place to stay whilst under-going counseling, and medical treatment. The Naivasha Safe House works closely

with the MOH, Police, D.C.'s & D.O.'s Office, Children's Officer, and various counselors, and psychologists, to treat the affected children. We also seek legal redress through the court system.

The children are closely monitored by a social worker, and a matron. Every effort is made to rehabilitate and re-integrate the children into their extended families once both child and family members are counseled as to the needs of the child.

It costs over Ksh Two Million per year to run the Safe House. Our current funding comes exclusively from the generosity of the Naivasha Horticultural Fair, and Maridadi Flowers. We are seeking ways to have more permanent funding in place, including appointing non-Rotarian Board of Trustees, and Management team.

Better funding would allow us to build a playground for the children, provide 2 teachers (one elementary level, one higher level), establish an infirmary within the Safe House, and ensure we can continue to employ qualified persons to manage and operate the Safe House.

To date over 400 children have benefited through the "Safe House"

Richard McGonnell



One of Naivasha Hortfair sponsors dancing at the official opening of Safe House

Dorcas Tusubira

Re: Safe house

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Dear Friend,

Please see below an extract from our past District Governor's wife Dorcas Tusubira on the Rotary Club of Naivasha "Safe House" after finishing her year travelling around East Africa with her husband, D G Tusu.

" I must confess that my heart goes out to the children, and if I had to pick just one project that made the greatest impact on me, it would have to be the Naivasha Rotary Safe House ; a home for abused children. One could not imagine why such beautiful children ranging from just a few months to about 18 years of age could be abused by anybody and especially their own family members. When they sang a song welcoming us and praising Rotary, there were very few dry eyes around. It was a mixture of emotions and totally overwhelming. The Rotarians dressed in their t-shirts, caps, badges and the Rotary Wheel were the only assurance in which the Children had found a safe haven."

www.rotarysafehouse.org



Njoki Ndungu officially opening the Safe house