

There are 1.2 million children in Kenya who have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS, and hundreds of thousands who are infected with HIV themselves. Yet too many of these children lack access to the treatment and support they need because of high levels of poverty, changing social and economic conditions, and lack of access to basic services such as healthcare.

Christian Aid is working with expert, local partners to reach over 170,000 orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) affected by HIV/AIDS across 18 counties in Kenya with urgently needed treatment and support. The comprehensive programme will improve the health and treatment of OVC, help households supporting these children to become economically resilient, and improve the systems that protect OVC.

Through a partnership with USAID, every £1 given results in £20 for this vital work. Your support would be a sustainable investment in these children and their communities.

Background: Why this project is needed

While Kenya's economy is the biggest in eastern Africa, the country still has millions of people struggling to survive, their lives blighted by poverty. Despite the Kenyan economy growing in recent years, poverty reduction has been far from significant. Most people live in rural areas or urban "slums", with poor access to basic services like water and sanitation, schools and healthcare.

Good health is essential for development, but rates of many preventable communicable diseases are prevalent, and high rates of malnutrition and diseases caused by poor sanitation and hygiene practices make the situation worse. In this context, the thousands of children who have been orphaned or affected by HIV/AIDS are even more vulnerable.



Orphans and children affected by HIV/AIDS are missing out on quality health, education and social services.

There are 1.2 million children in Kenya who have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS. Of the estimated 160,000 under 15-year-olds who are infected with HIV, only 78,000 (49%) have access to Antiretroviral therapy.

Kenya has achieved progress in scaling up HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, and in addressing the complex impacts of the disease, but the epidemic's influence on children remains a challenge due to several factors:

- **Lack of access to quality health, education and social services** means that children often miss vital immunisation, may suffer from malnutrition and curable diseases, and may be out of education
- **Systemic structural and capacity gaps in government, community organisations and other institutions** have resulted in difficulties in birth registration and identity card acquisition for OVC and led to barriers to claiming their rights to healthcare, citizenship, and land and other inheritances
- **Rapidly changing social and economic conditions** mean that traditional extended family systems and networks which OVC have relied upon for care and support are overstretched and rendered ineffective

To most families, HIV presents an extra burden that exacerbates the challenges they are already facing with incredibly stretched resources. In this context, children's care and treatment often falls by the wayside.

Our response

Working with strategically selected, expert partners with local presence and networks across Kenya, Christian Aid is implementing a comprehensive programme which aims to ensure that children affected by HIV are provided with the support and care they need to thrive. To do this, we work towards three objectives:

- **Improved health** and social status of OVC and their families affected by HIV/AIDS
- **Enhanced economic resilience**, caregiving and protection capacity of households and caregivers
- **Strengthened protection systems** that are responsive, inclusive and accountable to the needs of OVC

Project Details:

Project partner:	We deliver this project with Pathfinder International, as well as various local partners with presence and networks in the 18 target counties
Project location:	18 counties across Kenya: Nakuru, Kiambu, Turkana, Muranga, Machakos, Narok, Makueni, Meru, Kajiado, Nyeri, Kitui, Nyandarua, Kirinyaga, Embu, Baringo, Laikipia, Tharaka Nithi and Samburu
Timeframe:	Five years, 2017-2022
Target audience:	Children and young people who have been affected by HIV, orphaned by HIV or who are HIV+ themselves; their carers and family members in their households
Beneficiary numbers:	170,000 orphans and vulnerable children in 52,000 households
Cost per beneficiary:	£175 per child (\$224)

Activities:

The key activities that the project undertakes include the following:

Improving the health and treatment of children affected by HIV and AIDS, through:

- **HIV support:** Children are provided with medical support including, where appropriate, testing and counselling support on HIV. For those who test positive, anti-retroviral treatment and necessary support will be provided
- **Nutrition:** Age appropriate nutrition is provided by working with schools and health services to ensure children do not suffer from malnutrition or associated consequences of insufficient food intake
- **Child Protection:** Local safety net and support systems are extended to families with orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). These services will also work with older children to ensure they have birth certificates and similar vital documentation to support their access to services available to them.
- **Education:** Education materials and in some instances, support on paying school fees, are provided. Vocational training will also be provided to older children where appropriate

Helping households to earn more money to be able to care most effectively for these children. This involves:

- Undertaking **analysis** to understand the market opportunities for income generating activities
- Based on this analysis, **training** will be provided to households in the jobs that have been identified (examples might be in elements such as horticulture or bee-keeping)
- Support in **accessing the market** so that those producing goods get the best process for their work
- **Savings and loans models** are generated in communities to help members generate additional income

Improving the systems that protect children and young adults to ensure they are looked after. This involves:

- Improving the county-level **standards of care** for vulnerable children in the targeted 18 counties
- Enhancing **monitoring mechanisms** to ensure that gaps in policy and practice are identified and closed

Ruth Munini Mutungi and her four grandchildren are beneficiaries of the programme. At age 60, Ruth is the sole provider for her household, after she lost her daughter to HIV six years ago. Grandparents and the elderly are increasingly caring for orphaned children and the physical and financial strain is considerable. Through the programme, Ruth's grandchildren's school fees are taken care of. Phylis Kanini, Ruth's granddaughter, dreams of pursuing a degree in journalism. With the help of the programme, Phylis and her siblings stand a better chance of achieving their career ambitions.



Ruth Munini looks after her grandchildren Dennis Musembi, Michael Ndungu, Phillip Kioko and Phylis Kanini

The comprehensive project ensures that the health and wellbeing of orphans and vulnerable children is supported, giving them a better chance of fulfilling their life potential.

Should you decide to support the project, your gift would unlock 20-times the amount, making your donation a truly sustainable investment in the communities in Kenya.



For any further information, please contact:

Hanna Salminen | Philanthropy & Partnerships | 020 7523 2201 | hsalminen@christian-aid.org