

THE NASIO STORY

In 2001, just outside Mumias, a village in rural western Kenya, Irene Mudenyio found an abandoned baby in a sugarcane plantation on her farm. The baby, apparently aged 4-6 months, had been left lying in a blanket and must have been there for at least two days.

{slide=Hospital attention}

He needed immediate hospital attention, as he was in a bad way, severely dehydrated and under-nourished. African Safari ants had eaten the skin on his back, and he had suffered from exposure to the weather.

Irene tried to find the baby's mother, and when that did not work out, she went to the police to see what could be done about getting him adopted - but they could not help. Irene had 12 children of her own, and felt that she was too old to adopt him herself, so the little boy, now named Moses for obvious reasons, went into a missionary orphanage, paid for by Irene's daughters.

As the months went by, Irene and her family decided that Moses would be better off in a family environment, and one of her daughters paid for a carer to help Irene bring up Moses. And that is where the whole idea of a day care centre came from.

{/slide} {slide=The search for an orphanage}

Their search for an orphanage for Moses had opened their eyes to the scale of the HIV orphan problem in western Kenya. The only question for Irene and her family was how best to provide care and education for more than just Moses. The idea of setting up an orphanage was soon rejected as being impractical and too expensive to fund, but a day care centre seemed to be a possibility.

One of Irene's daughters, Lorna Makokha, owned a road-side kiosk which was not being used. Local fund-raising produced seed capital of £300, enough to start up, and, with Irene, Lorna and some of Lorna's sisters funding running costs since then, the Noah's Ark Day Care Centre came into being.

Started in 2001 and located at Mumias in Western Kenya, it provided food, clothing, medical care and welfare for the children in its care.

Lorna has passed away and funding and management of the existing centre become too great a burden for the family, who do not live locally.

{/slide} {slide=On the first day...}

The NASIO Trust was then set up to enable this work to continue, to expand and to be done better. (NASIO is a Kenyan name, used in honour of Irene's mother.) On the first day more than 60 children turned up for the fifteen places

then available.

After extensive fund-raising, a new enlarged centre was built at a cost of £30,000+ for the care of the children. This was officially opened in November 2005.

{/slide}