A DONOR AND PARTNERSHIP APPEAL

DREAM CHILDREN'S HOME

Clarion Call to Donors

From One Woman's Dream to a Home of Hope — and a Future Rooted in Families and Communities

180+	2004	Ngong–Matasia
CHILDREN IN CARE	ESTABLISHED	KENYA

> *"Every child deserves a place to call home, a family to love them, and an opportunity to dream of a brighter tomorrow."*

Founded December 2004 | Ngong–Matasia, Kenya

A Dream Born Out of Compassion

Dream Children's Home is more than an institution; it is the fulfilment of a lifelong dream rooted in compassion, love and an unwavering belief that no child should have to face life's challenges alone.

The story began with a young girl, Mrs. Rachel Gichia, who grew up in a slum under the care of a single parent. From an early age, she witnessed the painful realities of vulnerable children: those abandoned because of poverty, those neglected due to parental alcoholism, and those left destitute following the death of their parents.

As she watched these children struggle without the protection, care and affection every child deserves, something stirred deeply within her heart. She questioned why so many children had to suffer when society had a responsibility to protect them. She made a personal promise that one day, if she had a job and a home of her own, she would open her doors to children who had nowhere else to turn.

> *That childhood conviction became a lifelong calling.*

From a Personal Promise to a Life-Changing Mission

After getting married in 1988, Rachel continued to nurture her desire to provide a safe haven for vulnerable children. During the devastating HIV/AIDS pandemic, countless children were left orphaned, abandoned and without anyone to care for them. Their suffering strengthened her resolve to turn her dream into reality.

With the support and encouragement of her husband, she made a bold decision: to open their family home and share what they had with children in need. In December 2004, the dream became a reality when Rachel welcomed a four-year-old girl from their church whose parents had both passed away within a short period. With no relatives willing to take responsibility for her care, the little girl found a new home in Rachel's family. She was welcomed, loved and embraced as one of their own.

> *This single act of love marked the beginning of Dream Children's Home.*

A Small Beginning That Became a Lifeline for Many

In January 2005, while watching television, Rachel came across a heartbreaking news report about four children who had been abandoned by their grandmother following the death of their parents. The children, aged between four and ten years, had been left without anyone to provide for or protect them.

Unable to ignore their plight, Rachel travelled to Mwiki to find them. She located the children, met their grandmother and, after receiving her consent, brought them into the care of Dream Children's

Home. What had begun with one child was now growing into a mission to rescue and transform more vulnerable lives.

In February 2005, Rachel approached the Ministry of Social Services to formally express her desire to care for orphaned and vulnerable children. Having established that children were already living in her home, the relevant authorities agreed to register the institution as a charitable children's home. Dream Children's Home subsequently became a registered charitable institution under the relevant government authorities.

A simple sign erected outside the home announced its presence to the surrounding community. Soon, children's officers, community members and concerned individuals began referring orphaned, abandoned and vulnerable children who had nowhere else to turn.

Growing Together: A Family Beyond Boundaries

Today, Dream Children's Home has grown to accommodate over 180 children. What began as an extension of one family's love has developed into a larger community built around care, protection, dignity and the promise of a better future.

Located between Ngong and Matasia, the home has provided a place of refuge for children who have experienced abandonment, loss, neglect and other difficult circumstances. Our commitment has never been simply to provide a roof over a child's head. We aspire to ensure that every child experiences care and protection, accesses education, receives appropriate support and develops the confidence and skills needed to become a responsible and independent member of society.

> *We believe that a child's circumstances should never determine the limits of their future.*

Our Next Chapter: Family Reintegration and Community-Based Care

Dream Children's Home recognises and embraces the Government of Kenya's direction under the National Care Reform Strategy for Children in Kenya 2022–2032 and the Children Act, 2022. These reforms place the child's right to family care and protection at the centre of the national child-care system and seek to strengthen families, prevent unnecessary separation, and support safe transitions from institutional care to family- and community-based care.

We understand that compliance with the law and the national care reform agenda is a responsibility we must take seriously. Accordingly, the next chapter of Dream Children's Home will focus on supporting family tracing, assessment, preparation and reintegration, in collaboration with the relevant Children's Services officers and other authorised professionals. Each child's circumstances must be considered individually, and any reintegration or alternative care arrangement must be safe, properly assessed, guided by the child's best interests and followed up through the appropriate channels.

We do not view this transition as an end to our responsibility. Rather, it is a shift in how we serve children: from providing care within the home to strengthening families and communities so that children can grow up in safe, nurturing and supportive environments.

Reimagining Our Facilities: A Continuing Resource for Children and Families

As children transition to family- and community-based care in accordance with approved plans, Dream Children's Home intends to make constructive use of its existing dormitories and other erected structures. During long school holidays, and subject to the required approvals, safeguarding measures and guidance from the relevant authorities, these facilities will be used as a convergence and programme space where children and their parents or guardians can participate in structured activities.

Planned Holiday Programmes

- **Mentorship programmes:** guided sessions that help children build confidence, set goals, develop life skills and identify positive pathways for their future.
- **Psychosocial support:** age-appropriate group support, counselling and referrals where needed, helping children and caregivers address emotional and social challenges.
- **Parent and guardian engagement:** sessions that strengthen communication, caregiving skills, family relationships and shared responsibility for children's wellbeing.
- **Economic empowerment:** practical opportunities for parents and guardians to learn about table banking, savings, income-generating activities (IGAs), and other locally available livelihood opportunities.
- **Family unity and confidence-building:** activities that encourage trust, belonging, mutual support and stronger relationships between children and their caregivers.

These gatherings will also provide a structured opportunity to identify challenges experienced by children and guardians during the reintegration journey. Concerns will be listened to and, where necessary, addressed through appropriate case-management, child-protection, counselling, referral and follow-up channels in coordination with the relevant authorities.

> *Our intention is to ensure that reintegration is not merely a change of residence, but a supported process that strengthens families, promotes children's wellbeing and helps prevent renewed vulnerability or separation.*

Our Clarion Call: Stand With Us Through the Transition

The transition to family- and community-based care requires careful planning, family assessments, preparation, follow-up and sustained support. These processes take time and resources. For a home

that has grown to serve more than 180 children, the transition also requires a responsible reorientation of programmes, facilities, staffing and partnerships.

We therefore respectfully beseech our sponsors, donors, friends and partners to bear with us as Dream Children's Home aligns its operations with the Government's care reform direction and the applicable legal and regulatory requirements. We cannot disregard or continue practices that are inconsistent with the law. Non-compliance with lawful child-care requirements is not an option. Our duty is to act responsibly, protect the children and work with the relevant authorities to ensure that every step is lawful, safe and in each child's best interests.

Your continued support during this period is especially important. It will help us protect continuity in children's education and wellbeing while strengthening the families and communities that will increasingly become central to their care. We invite you to remain part of this journey—not simply as supporters of a children's home, but as partners in building safer, stronger families and brighter futures.

Priority Areas for Donor and Partner Support

Funds and other forms of support will be directed towards the following key areas:

1	**Family Reintegration**	Family tracing, assessments, preparation of children and caregivers, reunification support, follow-up visits, case management and referrals, in coordination with the relevant authorities.
2	**Education**	School fees and related learning costs, uniforms, books, stationery, school supplies, educational support and continuity of learning for children in transition.
3	**Economic Empowerment**	Parent and guardian capacity-building, table banking, savings initiatives, skills development, enterprise support and income-generating activities that strengthen household resilience.
4	**Psychosocial Support and Empowerment**	Mentorship, counselling and referral services, life-skills development, confidence-building, child participation, family-strengthening sessions and structured holiday programmes.
5	**Logistical Implementation Costs**	Essential transport, communication, coordination, programme materials, monitoring and follow-up, safe use and maintenance of facilities, and other reasonable costs directly required to implement the transition and support activities.

Education and Economic Empowerment: Investing in Lasting Change

Education remains one of the strongest pathways through which children can overcome disadvantage and build independent futures. We will continue to prioritise access to learning and support children to remain engaged in education as their care arrangements change.

At the same time, empowering parents and guardians economically is essential to sustainable family care. Through table banking, savings groups, skills development and viable income-generating activities, we seek to help caregivers strengthen household income and meet children's needs with greater confidence and stability.

By investing in both education and household economic resilience, donors and partners can help address not only the immediate needs of children, but also some of the underlying pressures that place families at risk.

A Message from the Founder

> *"When I look back to where we started, I am humbled by how far we have come. What began as a small dream in my heart and a willingness to share our home has grown into a family of over 180 children.*
>
> *I have always believed that no child should be denied love, care and an opportunity in life simply because they lost their parents or were born into difficult circumstances. My dream has always been to give these children a place where they feel loved, accepted, protected and valued.*
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> *As we embrace the country's care reforms, our commitment to children remains unchanged. We now seek to extend that commitment by strengthening families, empowering guardians and supporting children as they move towards safe and nurturing family and community environments.*
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> *I appeal to our sponsors and partners to walk with us through this important transition. Your patience, understanding and continued support will help us honour our responsibility to every child."*

Mrs. Rachel Gichia
Founder, Dream Children's Home

One Dream. Over 180 Lives.

A Future Strengthened by Families and Communities.

Established December 2004 | Ngong–Matasia, Kenya

Policy alignment note: *This appeal reflects the direction of the Children Act, 2022 and the National Care Reform Strategy for Children in Kenya 2022–2032. Individual reintegration and alternative-care decisions remain subject to the child's best interests, assessment, authorisation and follow-up by the competent authorities.*