

Garden of Hope Children's Home

Kenya



IMPROVEMENT ROADMAP

January | 2024



Overview of this Children's Home

Background & Mission

Garden of Hope Home is situated in Ngong Sub-County within the county of Kajiado, Kenya. It started in 2004 as a feeding program for children in the nearby slums of Gichagi and later transitioned into a children's home, owing to the need. The home cares for orphaned, destitute and abandoned children who come from various counties in Kenya, with most of them from Kajiado County (Maasai Community). Children are referred to the home through the Ngong Sub-County Children's Office. Some of the children have been rescued from early marriage and other forms of abuse. As time went on, Director Pauline realized there were many children who were not going to school, so she started a school for them in a rented premises. Later, with the help of donors, she was able to purchase land to move the school and start a home to help the neediest of the children, most of which had been orphaned. Initially, they had donors from Ireland who assisted in raising funds to build the classrooms and dormitories for the children. However, at some point in 2018, the donors stopped their support, leaving the management to source for funds locally. Currently, the home is serving 20 boys and 29 girls for a total of 49 children. Their mission is to care for orphaned and vulnerable children, alleviate their suffering, and ensure they are uncorrupted by the world.

Recent Accomplishments

- E-Learning was made available for the children, courtesy of Thika Alumni Trust.
- Acquired new mattresses and beddings for all children, courtesy of a volunteer.
- 4-year high school scholarships for five children were provided, courtesy of Kenya Scholarships Fund.
- Transitioned two young adults to independent living.
- Acquired birth certificates for all the children.
- Enhanced security by engaging the services of Securicor Company

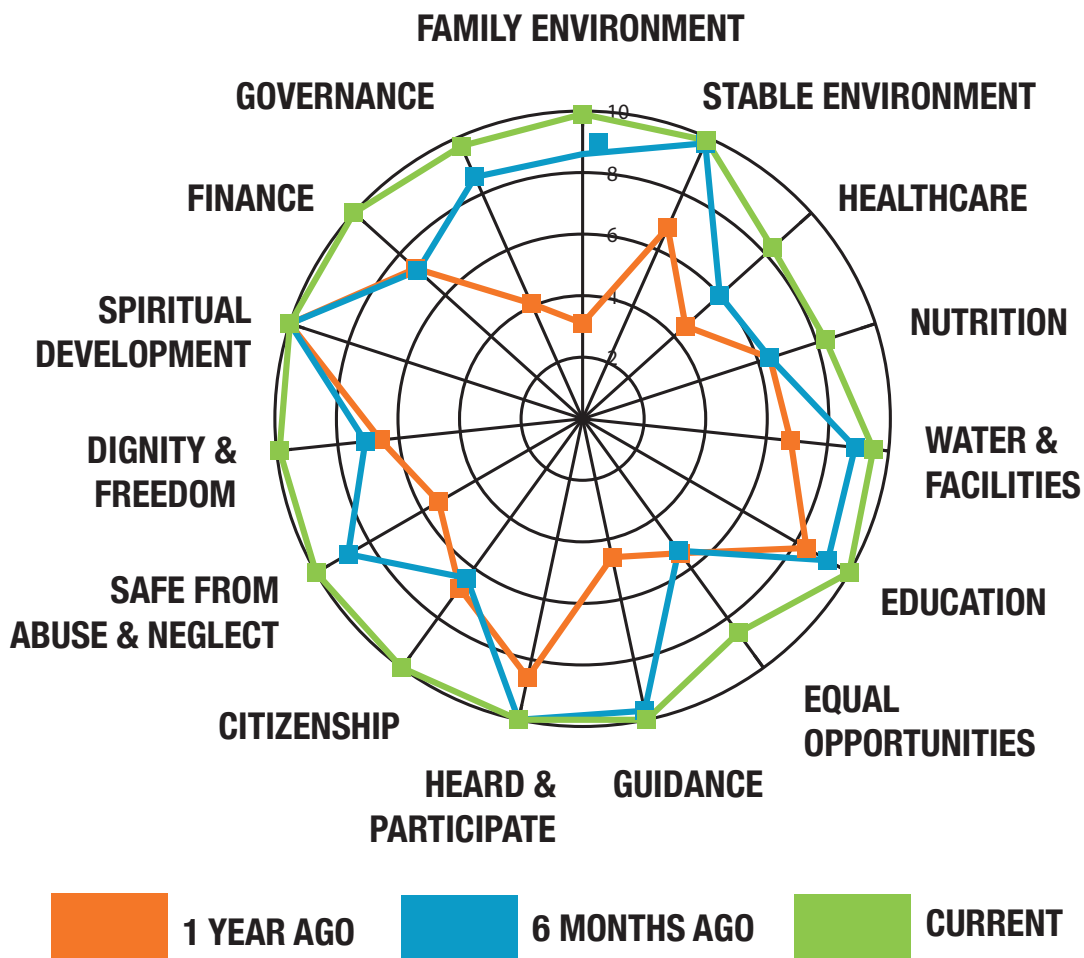


The Thrive Assessment

What is the Thrive Assessment?

In 1959, the United Nations (UN) adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which defines children's rights to protection, education, healthcare, shelter, nutrition and more. We have codified all 13 Rights, as well as a Finance Standard and a Governance and Human Resource Standard, resulting in a total of 15 standards. These standards ensure that children receive care that truly helps them to thrive, now and in the future. The Thrive Assessment will be administered every 6 months with each partner home to chart the progress of each standard. Our team works with caregivers to outline next steps which and compiled into an Improvement Roadmap.

Current Thrive Scale



Strategic Initiatives

MEDICAL FUNDS

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| PROJECT SUMMARY | It has been a challenge for the home to raise medical funds for the children due to lack of income flow. They rely on the nearby government facility, which only mostly provides prescriptions since they have no medicines in stock. Sometimes, the staff will contribute towards that. In case of emergencies warranting additional services, the director will at times borrow from online banking platforms. The children would benefit from medical insurance cover under the National Insurance fund. 3 children are grouped as one family to pay 500 shillings per month. The current 49 children would require ksh. 8000 per month. |
| INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST | KES 96,000 / year \$ 655 USD / year |

INSTALLATION OF WARDROBES

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|---------------------------------|--|
| PROJECT SUMMARY | A donation that was promised over six months ago has not come forth yet, so the home has come up with a budget to implement the project of installing wardrobes so children have their own space for belongings. |
| INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST | KES 266,000 \$ 1814 USD |

TRANSITION AND FAMILY REUNIFICATION

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|---------------------------------|--|
| PROJECT SUMMARY | Due to the proximity of the home being close to the government offices, the home is continually receiving children who have been rescued from abuse and neglect. The home is then required to do family tracing and reintegration of the children, as well as support transition to supported or independent living for those who complete school. They are seeking funds to enable a smooth process. (10,000 per month) |
| INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST | KES 120,000 / year \$ 818 USD / year |



Right to Live with Family

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home has a total number of 49 children with 4 caregivers, a matron and a cook who stay in the center and help care for the children. The home is in compliance with the government stipulated ratio of caregiver to children. Currently the ratio is 1 caregiver to 10 children. Since caregivers alternate their off days, they have maintained consistent care for the children. The social worker has collected all the background information of the children and filed it. Most of the meetings and training are in-house and held by the home counselor. When a new caregiver joins the home, there is an orientation that they are taken through with on-the-job training to help familiarize them with the activities, requirements and expectations. New staff are also taken through the child protection policy where they consent to it. The home has time where siblings come together, especially during weekends. They have a social worker who helps with home tracing, paperwork and documentation of children's background information. Education and training of the caregivers are organized and carried out by the counselor. Family visits are allowed and done at the families' convenience.

- Provide continuous training for the caregivers.



Right to a Stable Environment

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Rules are clearly explained to the children and they each sign an agreement to follow them, which are kept in their personal files. The home has age- appropriate consequences for breaking the rules. For the younger children, time out is given, while the older children are given extra manual work such as cleaning of dormitories, weeding in the garden, cleaning the dining hall, or they are occasionally restricted from watching television. The home does not allow the use of nicknames. Children are called by their name and are allowed to do what they want, especially on weekends and during holidays, though with supervision. Since the home has a dining hall, children eat together as a big family. The caregivers meet with the home counselor and the social worker to discuss behavioral ideas to help effectively teach and discipline the children, though it is not structured. Caregivers have weekly time off, where they alternate leaving on Saturday in the afternoon and reporting on Monday in the morning. There is no commitment to a 2-year contract, but the turn-over rate has been below 20% in the last one year. Staff meetings happen frequently, sometimes twice or even thrice a month. The caregivers play with the children on a daily basis, especially the young ones. With the older children, it happens on weekends and holidays where they play football, go hiking and participate in other activities. One major tradition the home has is birthday celebration. Since the home does not know the exact birthday for the children, the government allows them to pick either the 15th or 16th of June as their birthday. The home has taken advantage of this where they organize a grand birthday party for all the children in June.

- Establish the signing of at least a 2-year contract for the caregivers.



Right to Healthcare

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Every year the children receive a health check-up from volunteer institutions. Not all the children have their vaccination card, other than one child that was born in the home and those under 10 years who were vaccinated and given a PHV card. Soap and water are available in all hand washing areas where children are encouraged to wash their hands frequently. The home has an identified government hospital where all children are taken for treatment. The girls are provided with enough sanitary supplies and there is proper disposal, which is in the home's pit latrine. They are trained by the social worker and the caregivers on the use and disposal of sanitary towels. The toddlers are cleaned immediately after soiling themselves. The home does not have a plan for annual visual and dental checks, but those in need are taken to the identified hospital for medical attention. The home has never experienced lice, but children are checked for ringworm and dewormed when necessary. In each child's file there is a section for health information where medical reports are filed. The home has a fully equipped first aid cabinet and a first aid box. They don't have a medical fund for the children and they are still seeking a donor who could support that. For children with special needs, the home has proper measures and treatment plans in place. There have never been orthodontic needs, but those could be addressed if necessary. Caregivers encourage children to brush their teeth twice a day, though not all of them do it. Menstrual education is done both in school and by the caregivers.

- Outsource for medical funds.
- Encourage all children to brush their teeth at least twice a day.
- Try obtaining vaccination details where possible, especially during home tracing.



Right to Nutrition

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home provides three meals every day and children are well fed. The food is prepared and served in a clean environment and dishes cleaned immediately after eating. In case pests are spotted, the home ensures that the area is fumigated. There is a need to repair the chimney for ventilation purposes, to reduce and control the flow of the smoke in the kitchen and its surrounding area. Children receive appetizing and tasty food every day. They receive different proteins each day, which are alternated between beans, meat, green grams, and eggs. They also receive vegetables daily and fruits once or twice a week. Through in-house management, the home ensures that children receive nutritious food. though they don't have an identified nutritionist to guide them. For those who need special attention, guidance on their nutrition is given during their medical checkups. The cook is aware of food safety requirements and always submits a food handlers certificate from the ministry of health after every six months.

- Improve ventilation in the kitchen and dining area.



Right to Safe & Adequate Water & Facilities

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

An inspection from the relevant government authority has taken place and approved the water safe for domestic use. The home has consistent and reliable water for drinking since they installed a water purifying system. There is a community flood light which lights the entire home during the night. The septic tank and the water tanks are installed in different directions to avoid water contamination. The home has a fire assembly point, a borehole, the community flood light that uses solar, and solar lamps as their emergency plan. Due to their land topography, they have never experienced floods. There is someone on the grounds who addresses and carries out property maintenance. Safety concerns have been addressed and facilities have been deemed safe and capable of withstanding the elements. The home has installed a tank in the dining area for drinking water, and it is cleaned and filled every morning. Sink faucets and showerheads do not apply in the home as they use buckets and basins for bathing, as well as pit latrines. The home also has 2 security guards on standby at any given time. The home has no smoke alarms, no emergency plan and never participated in fire drills. Property maintenance happens regularly, though there is no written plan. The home is licensed by the government and renewal of license takes place every three years. They have ensured that electrical installation is done by a qualified electrician hence no exposed wires are hanging around. All the staff are aware of the importance of drinking water and always encourage the children to drink water frequently.

- Work on acquiring a smoke alarm.
- Plan to conduct fire drills.



Right to Quality Education

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

All children are enrolled and attend school 100% of the time. Those age 7 and over have been assessed and are able to identify each letter of the alphabet and articulate their sounds. For those who cannot, the school teachers have a plan in place to improve their literacy. One example is a boy who was admitted to the Centre and had never been in school. The teachers assessed him and are helping him to catch up. All the children who are 11 and over have been assessed and are able to read and write at a 3rd grade elementary level. Every child 9 and over have been assessed and are able to do basic addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Those who cannot are being helped by the teachers through one on one tutoring. Caregivers conduct regular activities with children below school age to help them reach developmental milestones and prepare them for school. Some of them attend the school play group classes. The home, through the teachers, does an evaluation of children to identify those with learning disabilities and referrals are made where necessary. The school library has age appropriate books written in a language that can be understood and accessible to children on a daily basis. e.g charts for the younger ones. The Internet and computers are available. The home has upgraded their computer lab and the children are now engaging in e-learning. One on one and group tutoring is done by teachers from the school in the evenings and on Saturdays. All the children of school age have been assessed and can read. Those who cannot are being helped by the teachers to be up to standard. Transition housing is currently not applicable, but the home has supported two of their children into independent living. One who is in college lives in the home, while the other one lives with their guardian. The rest of the children are in primary and high school. The home has a fully equipped crèche (playground) that is accessible every day. The children have computer classes with a qualified teacher and during holidays a caregiver with computer skills steps in to supervise and help them. They have coloring books, water paints and crayons for the younger children. Every child has access to one on one dedicated and undistracted tutoring every day, since they have a school.

Continue with current practices.

Right to Equal Opportunities

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home has not yet installed a dedicated space for every child, but each has a carton where they keep their items and clothing as they wait for the installation of wardrobes. The home has a transition plan where they have supported 2 beneficiaries to independence. All the staff are role models for the children. The home does not have a severe case of disability but has plans in place in case of any. There is one child who had his toes burned in his early age and he uses orthopedic boots and he can access all the areas in the center.

- Continue the plan in place for installation of wardrobes in the dormitories.



Right to Guidance

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home has a job description and agreement, which is signed by each employee upon employment and filed. All caregivers model positive behavior. Education on self-awareness is taught in school and in the Centre by the caregivers. The child behavior management policy is being used by the home to explain the expectations to the children. With the counselor, children are provided psychological healing and therapeutic resources in group or individual settings on a daily basis. The home director and counselor evaluate the caregivers to determine if they are fit to be mentors. Continuous discussion on changes associated with puberty with adolescents is done by the social worker, the counselor and the teachers in school. Caregivers have an in house and external training on how to model, teach, and reinforce basic life skills and behaviors with children, which happen monthly and once every year respectively. The home has a mentorship program which is conducted every Thursday by a group called ADEO who offer sex education to children above 11 years. The home is currently using a child to child protection policy that was drafted by the social worker, which she has submitted to the government and hopes that it will be adopted by all the CCIs to protect against child abuse. Children above 15 years have career fairs in school, which exposes them to different opportunities and skills. They help with manual work at home, like the tiling project of the kitchen garden, the boys participate and are given a token of appreciation. Children also help in cooking as well as cleaning their sleeping areas and the dining hall. The home has a care plan that is documented. There is communication with post high school and vocational students who have been reintegrated to their homes. These students are also required to report back to the home every term and submit their performance reports.

- Continue with current practices.



Right to Be Heard and Participate in Decisions

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Children are at liberty to do what they want with their free time, under supervision. When needs are verbalized, they are heard, acknowledged and addressed. The home also allows the children to decide what they wish to eat, most especially during special occasions like birthday celebrations, Christmas and Easter holidays. However, they are limited by what is available. Children, especially the older ones, choose what they want to wear, except in the case of wearing their school uniform. Before administering any medication or injection, children are given an opportunity to express themselves and treatment is explained. The home allows the children to opt out of non-essential activities if they are not willing to participate. Individual development plans have been implemented for each child and are updated on a monthly basis. Children have leadership roles such as dormitory mentors, environmental prefects and the planning of activities they wish to do during holidays,

Continue with current practices.



Right to Be Prepared for Citizenship

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

All the children in the home have birth certificates. With the help of the counselor and director, the social worker holds monthly training with caregivers to educate them on ways to help children learn and practice responsibility. Children have age-appropriate personal responsibilities such as cleaning the compound, helping cook, washing dishes and gardening. The home always observes national and local holidays like national tree planting day and others. The compound is cleaned daily, litters disposed appropriately and broken items kept safely in the store. The children participate in community cleaning where they are taken to Ngong hills, which is a tourism place, to collect litter and plastic bottles that are disposed of by tourists. They are taught leadership, ethics and governance in school. The social worker guides the children on saving and budgeting. Major current events are taught in schools and watched on television.

Continue with current practices.



Right to Safe from Abuse & Neglect

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home has employed security guards to ensure the security of children during daytime and at night. They also have a community security light that enables them to see all corners of the facility at night. In the dormitories there are separate dressing areas and the toilets are separated for boys and girls. They also have separate sleeping areas with the youngest children being housed separately. The home has ongoing in-house training, which is guided by the child protection policy to equip caregivers and ancillaries with knowledge on alternative ways of enforcing discipline. On matters concerning one on one time between individuals, the child protection policy has addressed it. They always have in-house training on care and prevention of child abuse and the training happens frequently. They also do an evaluation of children regularly and report the findings to the social worker and relevant authorities. Children are accompanied by adults during any outdoor activity. They have a policy that guides visitation where visitors have to sign in and out during child visitation. New employees submit a copy of their identification and police clearance letter. Additionally, a background check is done before they join the rest of the staff. The toddlers are always out of their cribs, unless they are taking a nap. New children are assessed and taken through the healing process by the counselor.

Continue with current practices.



Right to Dignity and Freedom

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Children are washed on a daily basis with proper care of infants observed. Kindness is a virtue that is emphasized and addressed by the management policy. Children are not allowed under any circumstances to share beds or bedding. The home has enough supply of clothing and under garments. Self-care is taught by the caregivers and the social worker where children are encouraged to do as much for themselves as possible. Consequences for the infraction of rules are discussed with children ahead of time and communicated in a way the child understands. They have enough beddings, which are washed on a weekly basis as well as when soiled. Children are not allowed to share toothbrushes. Not all the children have towels of their own, apart from some of the older ones who have maintained their own. They have adequate play areas for all ages with enough age appropriate playing materials. Children who know their native languages are allowed to speak them. The home doesn't really encourage children working outside its environs so as to earn.

Fundraise for purchase of towels for the children.



Right to Spiritual Development

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The children are allowed to be part of a spiritual community where they are allowed to attend mass and church services. They have communal prayers, devotion and fellowship every evening with the guidance of the home director, who is also the counselor and an evangelist pastor. They take part in religious celebrations such as Christmas and Easter. There are adequate bibles, hymn books and christian story books used by the children. Fellowship and devotion are always led by the children. The home has a chapel that is used for prayer and meditation as well.

Continue with current practices.



Financial Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home works with bank statements to track its income, with well-maintained records which are available for review by donors and auditors. The home does its tax return filling every year in accordance with the law that governs non profit making institutions. Although funds are not sufficient, controls are in place to avoid misuse of finances. The home does not make a profit and therefore does not keep a profit and loss statement, but they keep financial receipts. The home operates on an annual budget. Reconciliation of bank accounts is done on a monthly basis. There is no segregation of funds owing to financial constraints, to the extent that the director and the management often donate out of their own pockets to cater for emergencies. The home has an external auditor. For major expenses such as building, a donor comes in and does it for them, such as the water purification machine project, without handing any cash to the management. They have a qualified accountant who does the validation of finances annually.

Continue with current practices.



Governance and Human Resource Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The land is secured under Garden of Hope Home as the owner. New caregivers are taken through an orientation process before they start working. The home has an organizational chart that outlines supervision and delegation of duties and responsibilities. Both formal and informal meetings are held regularly to address issues and improve processes. All the staff sign a contract with which a job description is attached. The home has an operational license that is usually renewed per government requirement. The director holds weekly staff meetings to provide opportunities for staff to receive support and guidance pertaining to their positions, but it could be more consistent. They have in-house training and once in a while external training on child development and attachment. The home has an active board of directors who meet twice every year. They receive in house training on how to care for sick children. The home abides by a vacation and leave policy, which is stated in the employment contract. Employee files are kept safely, with their achievements and acquired skills updated regularly.

- Provide training on caring for sick children, especially in first aid.



Current Improvement Partners



Child in Family Focus

Child in Family Focus is driven by the need to bridge the advocacy and awareness gaps evident in the alternative care arena in Kenya. The organization is committed to raising awareness about disadvantaged children in need of permanent, safe and loving homes and eliminating the barriers that hinder them from realizing their basic need of a family. The organization engages, enlightens, and empowers children's institutions and families for life changing outcomes. Learn more at www.childinfamilyfocus.or.ke.



ADEO

The African Development and Emergency Organization (ADEO) is registered in Kenya and its headquarters Nairobi. Their mission is to improve the quality of life of the vulnerable and disadvantaged in the society through community empowerment and equity in Africa.



The Thika Alumni Trust

The main objective of the Thika Alumni Trust is the advancement of education of students attending primary and secondary schools in Kenya by the provision of equipment, materials and support. The trust recently donated laptops to the home for the children's access to E-Learning. The partnership will continue as they offer training and more to the home. Learn more at thethikaalumnitrust.org.



Kenya Education Fund

Kenya Education Fund has a mission to provide economically disadvantaged students in Kenya with scholarships, support and educational resources for them to improve their lives and communities. The organization took up education sponsorship for five children from the home who joined high school this year, and the sponsorship will run through the next four years..

