

Together we are changing lives... one girl at a time.

The Maasai welcoming song greeted me as I arrived in Isinya, Kenya, last November during one of my frequent visits. Each sponsored girl lowered her head for me to touch in the traditional Maasai sign of respect. Of course, *that* brought tears to my eyes. They looked so beautiful in their beaded jewelry and red dresses. We had not spoken a word, but I could see in their eyes that the project is having a major impact on their lives. These girls **know** they will have the opportunity to finish their education and have a bright future—thanks to their sponsors.

It was a wonderful visit. We spent an entire weekend together packed with activities, workshops, girl talk and, of course, eating. There were four goats for the nyama choma (roast meat that I love), mounds of beans, corn, rice, cabbage and their favorite—cases of soda.

Fathers, mothers, siblings, friends, sponsored girls and guests from the African Conservation Center all gathered for the formal presentations. The emcee

introduced each girl and her poem or song. There were more tears when I shared a friendship song and dance with all of the mothers.

It was very exciting to get to know these girls better and to hear about their lives and problems.

“You saved me from an early marriage,” said Serah

Wamatiaiai Rei.



Leah, Chairwoman of the Dupoto Women's Group, and I enjoy the welcoming song.



Mary Memusi, Mary Shanka and Ester Kotoine shop for party supplies.

She spent a month in her house crying because her father and grandmother wanted her to marry. She knew her tuition fees would save her, and she refused to get married. Serah is only 14 years old and is in Form 2 at Ilbissil Secondary School. She is a vivacious conversationalist and the school librarian (she needs more books!).

Mercy Noonkiletti and Florence Nasoore are in Form 2 and excellent students in addition to being top runners in their region. Maybe we will see them at the Olympics.

One girl asked, "Do you circumcise your daughters? If so, do you go to the hospital or do it at home?" This girl is in Form 1 at Moi Girls

Secondary School, where they only accept the best students.

Each girl has a unique story, and the sponsors enjoy learning more about their girl through correspondence. Often the girls send a small token of appreciation to their sponsors.

We are presently sponsoring 24 girls with many more waiting for support.



Mercy, Abigail and Mary Memusi enjoy their sodas.



The fathers also joined us and enjoyed the presentations and delicious food.



To receive email updates about the project please email [BEADSoFKenya@aol.com](mailto:BEADSoFKenya@aol.com) and we will add you to our mailing list.

Thank you again,

*Deborah K Rooney*

Debby Rooney

BEADS Co-Founder

Contact us at [BEADSoFKenya@aol.com](mailto:BEADSoFKenya@aol.com) to learn more!



Our girls are friends. The party is over and they are dressed in their school uniforms. Mercy, left, Abigail, Florence, Ruth and Mary.