

## OUR PROJECTS

Associazione Cuore d’Africa Onlus (Heart of Africa Association) has three long-term projects: sponsorships, building the hostel "Village of Hope - Children's Home", support for cutting and sewing school "Calosci Polytechnic".

Sponsorships are our core project: we started in 2009 with 25 children and generally we introduce 25 new ones every year.

Sponsoring a child means to give him the opportunity to study, because unfortunately education in Africa is completely private, so only a small percentage of children have the opportunity to attend courses.

The verb TO STUDY means only to go to school for all of us, but for African children this verb has many meanings, including having new clothes, learning a language in addition to their own dialect, making regular meals, helping their families to have hospital treatment.

When someone starts a sponsorship, he is immediately delivered the child’s biography and a recent photograph, information about his family and his village of origin and a letter from the Director of Community of Hope (the Kenyan Organization which has always worked with Cuore d’Africa), Father Charles Kyallo Mutua.

Of fundamental importance is to understand that child sponsorship is a long term engagement, depending on the age of the child and on the years he needs to attend all his training in primary and secondary school. The fee to sponsor a child in primary school is € 300 per year for 8 years, while for secondary school is €500 per year for 5 years. All in all this is about €1 per day.

The most important feature of our association is the real closeness to children, as there are immediate connections to the community that takes care of them. This means that, for as long as you take care of the child you sponsor, you can write him in Italian or in English and collaborators in Kenya will provide delivery and replay.

Every year our president and our secretary fly to Kenya to check the health and economic conditions of all sponsored children: they meet them and deliver letters and gifts sent from Italy. All phases of the meetings are filmed and, when back in Rome, all sponsors are given a DVD to share their abroad experience.

Hostel “Village Of Hope – Children’s Home” is our most challenging project, and it is going to involve our efforts for many years.

We are building a real village of home, as its name directly says, where 50 children are going to find a new home, because they are orphans or family abuse victims.

In 2009 Cuore d’Africa bought a small plot of land in Machakos, 60 km from Nairobi, in Kenya, on which are going to stand male and female dormitories, a small building for toilets, matron’s and guardian’s houses. An area of the land will be used for beans and corn cultures, while another one will be available for children’s open air activities.

This project helps local economy, too. In fact the construction company is Kenyan and, when the first building is ready, there will be a job for a matron and a guardian.

The cutting and sewing vocational school “Calosci Polytechnic”, named by their Italian founders, owners of a textile industry near Florence, stands in Makueni, 173 km from Nairobi.

Since 1999 "Calosci Polytechnic" offers a two-year course for 50 girls every year, ten of whom are financed by Cuore d’Africa. Since the contribution is to support school fees, this is a sponsorship for all purposes. The demands, however, is less expensive for sponsors: the course lasts only two years and the financial burden is similar to that of primary school, 340 euro.

Training comes before job activity, so Cuore d’Africa usually buys the goodwill for the girls when they have completed their studies: a sewing machine with pedal control (electricity is not

widespread in Kenya), some tissues for their tailoring, a few months of rent for the venue of their art.

The objective we are working on is the creation of a sort of micro-market between the Calosci Polytechnic and the association itself. Every year Cuore d'Africa buy new clothes for all its sponsored children: we wish we can manage to commit tailoring to a group of Calosci graduated girls, thus creating a permanent job for many women.