

Elgon Kenya breathes new life to home for the aged

Bethsaida home

From Communications Desk



Bethsaida home for the aged and disabled

Elgon Kenya Limited in its resolve to work with society by giving back to the people it works with has breathed new life to a home for the elderly and disabled by donating Sh850,000 towards the purchase of a Toyota Noah vehicle, an act that has not only saved lives but also given impetus to the home to restore human dignity to the neglected.

Bethsaida Home for the aged and disabled located in the semi arid Kitengela area is home to over 18 unwanted elderly ladies and the disabled and is run by the Nirmala Dasi Sisters (SNDS). For years, the home has been grappling with transport problems with no car or medical facility to cater to the medical needs of the frail patients. And with the rough terrain in the area access to health facilities has continued

to been a herculean task that has seen the home resign to watching patients' health deteriorate with no hope in sight.

The home had therefore resorted to hiring vehicles for both administrative work and for catering to the needs of the elderly ladies. But the huge transport bill was slowly taking its toll on the home's budget as it mainly relies on donations from well wishers. For example to access the nearest hospital it would take about 10 to 20 kilometres, and with the highly priced cars for hire, it was a near impossible task to manage hiring a car on a daily basis. "And don't forget we deal with aged patients who require constant medical attention because they are very susceptible to diseases. That would mean like everyday we are taking at least one to hospital. So the financial burden has been

unbearable. What Elgon Kenya Limited has done for us by donating the car is beyond words and has saved so many lives here while giving us the strength to keep on restoring human dignity to the neglected," said Sister Alphonsa Kallivalappil, the regional superior and the sister in charge of the Bethsaida Home.

According to the sister the money used in hiring a vehicle will now be put to better use like buying food and taking care for those who do not stay at the home, as the home operates on a shoe string budget.

And a three phase electricity line installed at the home with the help of Elgon Kenya has been the spark that has transformed the farming fortunes of the home from relying on relief food to growing its own, ensuring a healthy diet for the patients while cutting cost on buying the exorbitantly priced market commodities. For with the installation of power, the home has invested in boreholes that are now watering the horticultural produces grown at the 1.8 hectares land that is owned by the home. The produce, which are water guzzlers, haven't traditionally fared well in the area due to its harsh climatic conditions which has seen the home resort to buying them in the market. The boreholes now ensure constant and uninterrupted year round supply of among others Kales, tomatoes and onions which form the staple diet for the patients and the community. Elgon Kenya has equally donated furnitures to ease the strain on the home's spending.

Bethsaida home however is work in progress with the Nirmala Dasi Sisters now toying with the idea of building a hospital and dispensary at the home



Mr Yogi Yagnik, manager Elgon Kenya Ltd. and Sister Alphonsa Kallivalappil of the Bethsaida Home.

in order to give timely medical attention to the patients and save them the agony of travelling long distances. The sisters also hope to scale the capacity of the home from the current 30 to accommodate as many neglected and sick families as possible. "We as Elgon Kenya having worked with the people on the ground feel that by working with homes like Bethsaida we are making our contribution in making the world a better place and we will endeavour as long as we are in existence as a company to do more to ensure the dignity of human life is maintained and in our own unique way take away the pain of the suffering ones where we can," said Nelson Maina the head of Communication at Elgon Kenya Limited. ■



Bethsaida's aged and disabled visit by volunteers