

Spur Afrika

An occupational therapist from The Victorian Rehabilitation Centre is working to change the fate of children from Kenya's Kibera slums



Sponsored children from Kibera in Kenya

Rosalie Lui, an occupational therapist at The Victorian Rehabilitation Centre, had to do something after seeing firsthand the horrendous conditions of the Kibera slums in Kenya. So she started Spur Afrika, a locally-run Kenyan charity that aims to equip children and young adults in the Kibera slums through school sponsorships, careers, training and mentorship.

"After a trip to Kenya in 2011, my heart was moved to do something to change the fate of those who lived there. So when I returned to Melbourne, I started raising funds to establish Spur Afrika. Spur Afrika is a community development organisation that aims to alleviate poverty, disease and crime through quality education, authentic mentorship and providing health care access," she said.

The charity runs a child sponsorship program which allows the neediest children in Kibera to attend school with essential books and a uniform, have access to medical care, receive mentoring from the Spur Afrika team and to attend Spur Afrika clubs and activities that supplement their education.

"We aim to do much more than just pay children's school fees; we also spend time teaching them about life outside of school. We teach them to be street smart," she said.

Another program run by the charity is Msingi, which means 'foundation' in Swahili. Msingi is a 12-week training course designed for youth to find their career



path in life. Topics include: discovering your purpose, personality and career types, interviewing skills, goal setting, choosing a business plan, managing an income, budgeting, negotiation skills and lots more. Graduates of Msingi exhibit a sense of social, spiritual and economic independence. The organisation hopes the program will grow, as unemployment and idleness are major problems for youth.

In Melbourne, Ms Lui runs various events such as trivia nights, raffles, fun runs and futsal tournaments to fundraise for Spur Afrika.

"We also hope to hold medical clinics with Melbourne and Kenyan doctors in

January 2014. These clinics will be held at Spur Afrika partnered schools, in which we hope to administer basic health care and provide vaccinations," she said.

Spur Afrika is a project of African Inland Mission (AIM), which provides financial, legal and administration support.

"As we are a very small organization and with only volunteers to run the Melbourne office, we rely fully on the generous support of the community," Ms Lui said. [PH](#)

For more information visit www.spurafrika.wordpress.com, spurafrika.melbourne@gmail.com.