

Kwetu Girls' Home

In Dar es Salaam, the busy capital of Tanzania, 10 girls ages 13 to 19 live and learn together at the Salvation Army's Kwetu Centre. Their smiles and laughter hide some of their lost childhood, as all of these girls were rescued from trafficking and exploitation.



Each of the girls were identified by Salvation Army volunteers and brought to the centre. They will spend six months at Kwetu where they receive life skills training, spiritual counselling, and psycho-social counselling. After graduating from the programme, the girls will receive practical vocational experience and be reunited with their families and communities.

Many of the girls who come to Kwetu have lost one or both of their parents making them easy prey for traffickers who convince them to travel to the city with a promise of work or schooling. When the girls arrive in the city they are often used by their 'owners' to beg or sell fruit, alcohol, or cigarettes on the streets. These girls walk the streets all day without any food for themselves. Other girls are taken to brothels and used as commercial sex workers. Many of them show signs of trauma when they arrive at Kwetu.

Meet Gladness, an 18 year old girl who shared with us about her journey to Kwetu.



I never knew my father, but lived with my mother and grandmother deep in the rural area. Life was very difficult because my mother cannot even manage her own life. It was not simple in the village, it was difficult.

When I found out that I failed my primary school national exams, I didn't know what to do. Then my sister told me, 'Let's go to Dar es Salaam to make some money.' I wanted to make money, so I went with her. When I came to Dar es Salaam, I worked selling alcohol in a bar. Life was hard, this was not what I was expecting. Also, my sister wanted me to prostitute myself, but I told my sister that I can't do that and that I was not comfortable selling beer. I was not prepared for this type of job when I decided to leave my home. Therefore when I was wondering what to do, I met a woman, who was a Salvation Army volunteer, and she told me to come to this centre.

Life is quite good here at Kwetu Centre because they have sent me to school to study hotel management. I expect something good because I am preparing for my future. In my course I am learning how to cook, how to serve food, housekeeping, and front office work. After class, we study, clean, or cook. We also learn life skills such as how to keep our bodies clean, health, hygiene, and cooperation with others. When I leave here I want to work in hotel management.

The Salvation Army faces an overwhelming need. Kwetu's graduating class of May 2013 shared these words with us, pleading for the others still out on the street,

Now it has reached the time that we go home and provide a room for our fellow girls to come and get the support... We are very many in the streets, and no one has appeared to help us except you. Our fellows are still waiting for your rescue. May the Lord God lead you on this matter.

Join us in rescuing trafficked girls in Tanzania through our JUST Gifts Catalogue? A gift of £5 will pay for a month's worth of medical care for a girl at Kwetu, and £30 will help to cover her vocational school fees.

