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# young nation



## Rescued children lead in conservation efforts

**They want Chyulu Hills protected.**

By JACOB NG'ETICH

**M**ost African sayings reprimand children for abusing the environment. But children of a rescue centre in the dry Kibwezi area are the lead conservationists.

The costs of environmental abuse are huge and highly disastrous for an area that rarely receives rainfall like Kibwezi. And the little ones at Sikizana Trust Rescue Centre understand this very well. To them, conserving the environment is a matter very close to their hearts.

"We are just doing what is good for the environment," 11-year-old William Mutinda says.

He is in Class 7.

Any visitor to their Centre is wowed by their conservation efforts. When a group of journalists from Nairobi and Kenya Wildlife Service officials visited the Centre recently, the children did not dwell so much on the challenges they experience every day but they were eager to convey the message how they wished to see the environment around them taken care of as a matter of priority.

Teresa Mumbi, 13, a Standard Eight pupil of Mwitasyano Primary School read a two-

page letter to the guests which explained the dangers of degrading the Chyulu Hills around Chyulu National park.

She termed deforestation of the hills as being done at "an alarming rate" sounding an alarm that very soon the beauty of the hills will be no more. "When we came to Chyulu Hills a few years ago the place was bushy but changes have occurred, deforestation is taking place, the forest is fast-disappearing," she said.

She blames the numerous charcoal dealers in the area who disguise themselves as artists

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Comas Nzilili and Rachel Mutinda respectively, this has reduced by a big percentage the poaching of animals for meat.

“For a very long time people were killing animals and selling their meat and we have taken time when we meet them to tell them that it is not good for the environment,” said Mutinda. And even Wambua Mutua, 10, who joined the home a month ago, was glad to be part of the group of the children at the Centre that are championing the environmental conservation cause.

Mumbi says that for them at Sikizana Trust Rescue Centre, they will not relent on championing for a stop to deforestation and killing of wild animals in Chyulu.

The Centre’s director Cosmas Nzilili said they have always taught the children to value the environment they live in.

Mr Nzilili said the message by the children to the people around Mwitasyano village has made them change a lot.

“When the children meet those villagers in Mwitasyano and tell them the need to preserve our environment, including the forest and the wild animals, they take it seriously when they get the message from the children,” said Mr Nzilili.

Mumbi and the rest of the 17 children in Centre are optimistic that by changing the situation in their vicinity, they are making a world better for themselves and others that come after them.

**All thddid** carrying their wood carvings to the market for the hill’s woes.

In her letter which she read to the guests she said: “We want the Chyulu forest fenced with electric wire to lock out poachers and wood merchants in order to get re-

liable rainfall and a good climate.”

William Mutinda, 11, and in Class 7, says that poaching of animals to sell meat from the National Park was also taking place but due to their efforts and that of the director and co-director of the Centre

## Poem

**Rudyard Kipling** (Born 1865 Died 1936)

If you can keep your head when all about you,  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too,  
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
Or being lied about, don’t deal in lies,  
Or being hated, don’t give way to hating,  
And yet don’t look too good, nor talk too wise:  
If you can dream—and not make dreams your master,  
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;  
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster,  
And treat those two impostors just the same;  
If you can bear to hear the truth you’ve spoken,  
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,  
And stoop and build ‘em up with worn-out tools:  
If you can make one heap of all your winnings,  
And risk it all on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings,  
And never breathe a word about your loss;  
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew,  
To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you,  
Except the Will which says to them:

“Hold on!”

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch,  
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;  
If all men count with you, but none too much,  
If you can fill the unforgiving minute,  
With sixty seconds’ worth of distance run,  
Yours is the Earth and everything that’s in it,  
And—which is more—you’ll be a Man, my son!



## happy birthday wishes



**DWIGHT GITONGA**

Dwight, you are now three! You bring so much joy to us especially with your smiles, and your smattering English keeps us entertained. We pray that you will grow up as an obedient, intelligent and a God-fearing boy.

you remain an ever jolly boy, and live to celebrate countless birthdays. Wishes from dad Wanjohi, mum Liz and brother Davis.

**AGNES SHIKO SAMMY**

Happy birthday Shiko. As you celebrate your birthday we want to wish you God’s grace. May you grow to be a God-fearing young lady and may all your heart desires be fulfilled. Best wishes from mum Regina, dad Sammy, sisters Lucy and Wambui, bro Maina, grandma Waregina, aunt Mary and all your cousins.

**MEYER ZAWADI ARNOLD**

Happy birthday as you turn three. You are a special gift from God and we give Him glory. May your dream to be called Dr Meyer come true. Best wishes from dad Arnold, mum Priscillah, aunt Phylis, Lilian and your best friend Lovely



**TIFFANY MUTHONI**

Happy birthday Tiff, as you turn one. May you live to be a God-fearing girl. We love you so much, our angel. Best wishes from dad Mureithi, mum Monicah Wanderwa, sister Ashlene Muthoni, uncles Simon Ndwiga and Kamau Kanini

(Becks), aunties Mildred Karimi and Diana Njoki, grandmothers Emma Muthoni and Celina Muthoni.

**LEONEL MWANIKI**

Happy ninth birthday Leonel. May the Almighty be with you always and bless you abundantly. Best wishes from grandpas, parents Mureithi and Purity, brother Liam, aunties, uncles, cousins and Standard 3 North classmates at Bethlehem Academy, Ruiru.



**CYNTHIA NTHENYA MULWA**

Happy birthday Cynthia. As you turn two, we thank God for you. May you grow up full of wisdom, good virtues and be a God-loving girl. Best

wishes from your mom Beatrice Wanjiru, dad Godfrey Mulwa, grannies, aunts, uncles, cousins and all your relatives.



**IAN NDEI WAITHAKA**

You are now two years old. You are a blessing to us and may the Almighty God shower you with blessings always. Best wishes from dad Erick, mum Mary and your cucus, guka, aunties and uncles.



**BARAKA EMANUEL WANZALA**

Happy first birthday Baraka. May the Almighty God shower His blessing upon you as you grow up to be a loving and caring son. Lots of love and birthday wishes from daddy Isaac

and mum Valentine, grandparents and all your friends.