



With 2.4 million orphans under the age of 18 in a country the size of California, Kenya has ample reason to observe World Orphans Day. One out of ten children in Kenya is an orphan, mainly from AIDS but also from malaria and other diseases, as well as from parental abandonment. Compassion Beyond Borders invited 100 of its orphaned scholarship girls, their brothers and sisters, and their widowed grandmothers who care for them to a celebration of the day. For the women, cooking for a celebration is a welcomed opportunity to gather together and socialize.



Fifteen women working for five hours prepared the food. The cooking was done in five large pots, of about ten gallons each, over separate wood fires. In Kenya, cooking is very much women's work, including making the fire and even collecting and hauling the firewood--an onerous task as the wood may need to be hauled for a mile or more.

The meal, traditional for this region of Kenya, consisted of two mashed potato dishes, one mixed with plantain and bits of beef and a second mixed with black beans and finely chopped kale. Additional dishes were rice pilaf, also cooked with and without meat, and a carrot-lentil stew.



A heaping plate of food, plus seconds, with enough left over for the grandmothers to take some home with them was the best of all possible gifts for the orphans. Any celebration in Kenya begins and ends with prayers, in this case by a local bishop.

The village Chief thanked CBB for educating the community's orphan girls and caring for their grandmothers. CBB's Kenyan project director urged the girls to do their best in their studies at school so they could make a useful contribution to their families and their community. The celebration concluded with the District Health Officer giving the women and children a brief instruction on caring for themselves and their families.



Compassion Beyond Borders [builds communities](#) by funding the [education of girls](#) in [Kenya](#), [India](#), and [Guatemala](#) at an average cost of [\\$70 a year](#) in partnership with [local grass roots organizations](#).