



SEEDS IN HIS GARDEN
children's home

Meet Michelle Awuor

Where it all started

I came to the home in 2005, at the age of nine months. I clearly remember being a little girl surrounded by a family that finally chose me. Having lost my biological mother, I had survived on a diet of water and stolen fruit. I am fortunate to have found the only Mother I have ever known. No one compares to her. She has helped me piece together my past. With them, I have an emotional support system that defies the typical orphan archetype. I have come to appreciate the richness of large family life; it has, in fact, led me to embrace the African philosophy of *ubuntu* – “I am because we are.” Perhaps the love created and shared at SIHG should be studied. It could take a lifetime to realize that the only ones who truly have your back are those who dropped their own lives to build yours. Mama Becky did that. She taught us from an early age to give back to the community – through drives for clothing and food donations – and instilled in us the importance of gratitude. I have been given firsthand insight into degrees of poverty and misfortune. With equal exposure to legal systems and the unjust treatment of those who cannot vocalize their needs, I developed the desire to become an advocate.

The Internal Fight

With a sense of purpose restored, a passion grew. At the age of twelve, I was exposed to the custom of some African cultures that practice Female Genital Mutilation. It lodged itself inside me – something I came to blame on ignorance, and on the voices that stay hidden. I drew my strength from role models like Amina Chawahir Mohamed – a trailblazing Kenyan lawyer, diplomat, and public servant – and found in them the courage to become that voice for others. She and many others gave me permission to dream beyond what I thought I could become. It is worth mentioning that this journey of self-discovery was shaped by the nurture I received from Seeds in His Garden – a home that embraced my every need. After serving as Vice President of our pioneering Rotary Club at Lukenya, I came to believe that participation has never been more essential for this generation. Taking a gap year to continue doing just that brought me to Jifunze International, an Australian-based NGO dedicated to supporting another set of vulnerable people. My direct contact with Jifunze beneficiaries reignited in me the profound importance of



Infant Michelle, above; and toddler Michelle, below.



Graduation Day Michelle!

being a strong legal voice. Through that experience, I found myself in full agreement with my twelve-year-old self – and with the moral principles that govern Seeds: beneficence and gratitude.

Behind the scenes

When you are younger, it is easy – almost second nature – to compare family dynamics as you are exposed to different versions of love. But if anything, I have learned: your story is what you make it. Our family has always had a way of leading people to the best version of themselves. I loved how our family-centered mealtimes allowed me to deeply connect with others who carried their own pain. In a sense, trauma bonding. All family traditions were

crafted to build the comfort of familiarity – from Santa hats to talent shows. Charades never quite stuck – I like to blame the vast variety of perspectives. But it offered laughs, letting us become fully emotive beings. There was a period where my biological father pretentiously wanted to reunite with his daughters. As the youngest of three – and still so young when I entered the dynamic, I now revel in – the sense of abandonment hit harder the second time. I had to overcome a demeanor shaped by imposter syndrome. Often struggling to know my own worth and potential. Even asking myself: Why me? Have I not been through enough? But within the environment of love – built by newfound siblings and supportive adults – the sense of belonging became the most powerful form of restoration.

The Becoming

I recently graduated from my A-Levels, unexpectedly taking a much-needed gap year. These were a scary few months. It has allowed me to view the world from beyond the comforts of home – the best form of exposure therapy. It is all about having a life well lived. I have used this gap year with graceful patience to deliberate on my goals and the pathways toward becoming an advocate for others. Achieving a higher level of education is a blessing most could only dream of. Obtaining a bachelor's degree in International Relations with a minor in Criminal Justice Studies would provide me with the qualifications to join a task force focused on improving policies and laws related to FGM. Maybe not yet representing anyone in court as I had hoped, but it is a great start. Representing the vulnerable in a court of law could begin from a different avenue entirely. It would be the start of building a foundation before leading people toward the right cause. So far, my view of this is simple: participate in change. More than that – recommitting myself to being that change. It never has to be grand. But it can be real.

– by Michelle Awuor

A glimpse into a chapter from a book I am writing...

...But here is what I know now, looking back. What I couldn't have understood that night – what I only understood years later, sitting in Kenya with a child who wouldn't speak, or one who raged at nothing, or one who flinched when you reached for them – was that God had been teaching me something through my own story that I would desperately need for theirs. Because those children knew this feeling. Every single one of them. The confusion of loving someone and still needing to know where you came from. The anger that has no clean target. The grief of a door that may never open – or

one that finally does and leaves you more questions than answers. I had felt the shape of it. And when a child sat across from me, too shut down or broken to name what was living inside them – I didn't have to imagine it. I had my own orange scarf burned into memory. You cannot give a child that kind of understanding from a textbook. You can only give it if you've lived somewhere near it yourself. I think that was the point all along.

*There is more to this story – much more.
The book is coming.*

– With love, Rebecca



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Our mission is to provide care for abused, neglected, needy, abandoned and orphaned children in Kenya and prepare them to be Africa's future leaders. We seek to provide the children with physical, emotional, academic and spiritual tools needed to develop their full potential.

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A Child Is Waiting

Seeds in His Garden Children's Home – Nairobi, Kenya

Somewhere outside Nairobi tonight, a child is going to sleep knowing they are safe. Knowing they are fed. Knowing someone is there.

That didn't happen by accident.

It happened because someone – maybe someone very much like you – decided that a child they would never meet was worth something. Worth a meal. Worth a school uniform. Worth a future.

Seeds in His Garden has been that place of safety since 1998. We take children from infancy through college – children who arrived with nothing, some with special needs, all with a story that deserved a different ending.

We have watched them grow, graduate, and go out into the world carrying something they were almost never given.

Dignity. Belonging. Love without conditions.

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Whatever you can give – \$20, \$50, \$200 – it lands somewhere specific. It pays for a meal, a schoolbook, a doctor's visit, a moment of stability in a life that hasn't had many.

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[Give today at www.seedsinhisgarden.org]

***Every child deserves a safe place to belong.
Help us be that place.***



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Thank You!