



Changes to MRT as a result of COVID-19

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Jedidah and the staff were given a dilemma when lock down happened globally – it was impossible for staff to stay distanced at work and also look after their own children when schools closed. They luckily had just the right number of staff for each one to look after a baby with a few in reserve.

Jedidah went to each home ensuring they had facilities to sterilise bottles and a safe mosquito-free environment where babies could sleep. Everyone has formula milk, water filters, and gas to boil water. The staff were thrilled since they continued to earn a wage (there is no safety net for income in Kenya) and they were able to look after their own children. We also gave staff, and some of the home-based families, extra provisions to help feed extra mouths home from school.

What we hadn’t bargained on was how well the babies would do in home environments. With a single mother to focus their attentions on and with all the stimulation from siblings, the babies were hitting their milestones earlier than at the baby rescue centre. They were really thriving. Research shows that the ability to form bonds at a very young age (even if it gets broken and a new one made with a forever-Mum) is much better than to never learn to bond at all.

The challenge now is to have enough staff to manage one baby each when we have a surge in abandoned babies.

We plan to use the centre to train ‘flexi-staff’ and look after the newly admitted babies until they are medically well enough to leave. We will also need to make sure that home conditions with our staff are optimum which may mean helping them with small changes to their homes. The staff will meet twice a month at the centre with the babies for training, assessment of the babies and of course socialising with all the other foster staff. Jedidah keeps in touch weekly with all of them both by mobile and visiting now that Covid restrictions are lifting a little more.

There is a feeling that within the next year there may be a surge again in abandoned babies given economics and no schooling. We would like to have extra staff trained - and optimal conditions at home for them - as this new way forward seems definitely to benefit both babies and staff.



Staff with babies in lock down



Baby fostered as lock down eased



This lovely boy came as a toddler now doing well