

## How Beautiful Together is Helping Orphans by Capturing the Struggles of Poverty

By Josie Collier

SEATTLE, Washington – In 2015 there were nearly 140 million orphans in the world. The organization Beautiful Together has attempted to dwindle that number by putting a spotlight on children in poverty. Beautiful Together is helping orphans and children in foster care systems around the world by photographing them. Through photography, they communicate their narrative that orphaned children need critical support and awareness.



The organization focuses part of its work in the United States but launches most projects in different countries in Africa. Beautiful Together has created projects and fundraisers in countries such as Ethiopia and Syria. Additionally, the organization has already completed fundraising goals for orphaned children in Rwanda. Beautiful Together purchases basic necessities for orphans with the funds.

## Why Photography?

Beautiful Together's photographs connect viewers to an orphaned child's true self. The impact that one photo has on a person can resonate with them for a long time. This is why their mission is to start small and let change follow. The founders of Beautiful Together, Tamara and Steve Lackey offer to photograph children in orphanages and send those images to different adoption agencies or other organizations that offer similar services.

## How Photography Helps

- **Donations:** Beautiful Together is also helping orphans by raising funds for orphanages. They have funded renovations in orphanages, and also different feeding initiatives. But their photography is what drives the donations. Photography has the power to influence emotion in a positive or negative light, and invoking a feeling through a photo has a higher probability of receiving a donation
- **Essence:** According to Tamara Lackey, an inspiration for her photos at Beautiful Together is that when a child is looking to be adopted she wants to "photograph them in a way that made other people better see them.". In the study of psychology, the idea of self-image and self-concept accurately presents oneself on the outside to how they internally feel. Lackey wants to capture these children for who they really are while still presenting their best selves.
- **Education:** A photo is an easier way to communicate a message rather than a written text for the simple reason that only empathy is needed to understand a photo while understanding the language is needed for reading. More than half of the human population classify themselves as visual learners. Beautiful Together photographs orphans because it is a more effective and efficient way to communicate the organization's message, and also support the orphaned children.

Beautiful Together's photographs have allowed the organization to see significant progress in their fundraising efforts. The organization was able to renovate bathrooms and kitchens at an orphanage in Ethiopia, and also donate items through their fundraising efforts. Their mission has helped numerous orphaned children find families and improve the lives of those still looking to be adopted.