

# Shoe grows five sizes, fits needs of children for years

April 21 2015, by Nancy Owano

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A special kind of shoe has been created; you can call it Clever Engineering. The drivers behind the shoe describe the effort as Practical Compassion. "There are over 300 million children who do not have shoes. And countless more with shoes that do not fit. Sometimes they receive donations of shoes, but these are kids. Their feet grow. And they outgrow donated shoes within a year. Right back where they started," said The Shoe That Grows.org.

The [nonprofit group](#)'s team working with children in Kenya have

provided shoes that can adjust as the foot grows. These shoes can grow five sizes and can last up to five years. There are only two sizes to work with: Small and large. With these two sizes, they said, children from kindergarten to later school-age years can have a pair of shoes that fit.

Kenton Lee, leader of The Shoe That Grows undertaking, started the project when living and working in Kenya. Because International was founded in 2009, headquartered in Nampa, Idaho. The [shoe](#) was developed in part by a company called Proof of Concept. That company is a team of footwear experts. They describe themselves as "Shoe Dogs," and they turn to digital tools such as 3D computer modeling, rapid prototyping to work out ideas.

The shoes are made of heavy-duty snaps, some buckles and a few buttons. Materials used include leather and compressed rubber for the soles. The shoe can grow in three main places. The front is an adjustable toe piece. The sides have snaps that allow the shoe to expand. The back grows, using the expandable heel strap.

Donations can enable the group to distribute the shoes in bulk. They have a goal to give as many shoes out to kids as possible. They do it by resourcing churches and other organizations. They made a video appeal for more donations because they want to get out their next order of 5000 [pairs](#), said Lee.

Footwear for poor rural populations around the world is an extremely important resource to help ward off parasitic diseases transmitted from the soil and in environments with inadequate sanitation resources. In addition to infections from the soil, mere cuts and scrapes can also make the skin vulnerable to infections. "And being sick = struggling. Kids miss school, can't help their families, suffer with pain. Many of these diseases

and parasites get into the body because people don't have [shoes](#)," said The Shoe That Grows team.

**More information:** [theshoethatgrows.org/index.html](https://theshoethatgrows.org/index.html)

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