



**ADVANTAGE AFRICA**  
SUPPORTING INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE

3<sup>rd</sup> November 2008

Dear reader,

In the enclosed newsletter, our tenth, we highlight how Advantage Africa is supporting inspirational people to provide education, help child-headed households and meet the challenge of HIV & AIDS.

Our project in Masese, Uganda will help children like sixteen year old Beth, who lives in a shack made out of flattened oil drums in a slum for displaced people. Made vulnerable by a speech impediment, Beth was raped at thirteen and now cares for her (resultant) son, two sisters, brother, (none of whom attend school) and her widowed and mentally ill mother.

It is a sad fact that children like Beth, with no breadwinner in her family and no land on which to grow food, are more vulnerable to the global financial crisis than anyone; food inflation in Uganda is now running at over 30%. We urgently need your support to help children like her to escape poverty and exploitation and gain their basic human rights to health, housing, education, food and a sustainable income.

Although Beth's world is distant in so many ways from ours, we have most of what we need to make a difference to so many like her: online bank transfers that reach our partner organisations directly, email and mobile telephones that enable us to communicate cheaply, skilled staff and free flights to Africa from British Airways. Most importantly we have inspirational people like project worker Rosemary Korobe to befriend children like Beth and give them reason for hope.

Your support can complete the picture. Please help children like Beth by making a monthly donation to Advantage Africa using the enclosed form and envelope. If just 20 people (that's less than 5% of those receiving this newsletter) donate £20 per month, we will raise the £5,000 we need to improve the lives of the 50 children participating in this project.

Thank you for being part of our partnership of inspirational people.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Betts  
Director

# I'd Like to Support the Work of Inspirational People in Africa

•£5: a mosquito net •£15/month: a daily meal for an orphaned child •£30/month: home-based care for a widow living with HIV •£50: a bed for a child-headed household •£60/month: a community worker's salary •£100: a house renovation

**1** I would like to make a regular gift of £ \_\_\_\_\_ to Advantage Africa every month by standing order (a regular gift is especially valuable as it helps us and our partners to plan ahead) starting on: \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Bank/building society name and address:

Account name:

Account number:

Sort code:

Signature:

Date:

Standing order instructions to your bank or building society: Please pay the amount above, starting on the date indicated and on the same day of every month thereafter to: HSBC Bank, 19 Midsummer Place, Milton Keynes, PO Box 1888, Coventry CV3 2WN; sort code 40-33-33; account name Advantage Africa; account number 81549200.

**OR:** I'd rather make a single donation of £ \_\_\_\_\_ and enclose a cheque to Advantage Africa.

**2** My name, address and postcode:

**3** If you are a UK taxpayer, please tick the box below to add 25p to every £1 you donate at no cost to you:

*giftaid it*

I'm a UK taxpayer and I would like Advantage Africa to treat this donation or standing order and any future donations as Gift Aid donations. I understand that I must pay an amount of Income or Capital Gains Tax in the relevant tax year equal to any tax reclaimed by Advantage Africa in that period.

**4** Please send this completed form to: Advantage Africa, 26a Market Place, Olney, Bucks, MK46 4BA.

**Thank you** for your generous support. It will make a real difference.



ADVANTAGE AFRICA

Registered charity 1092719

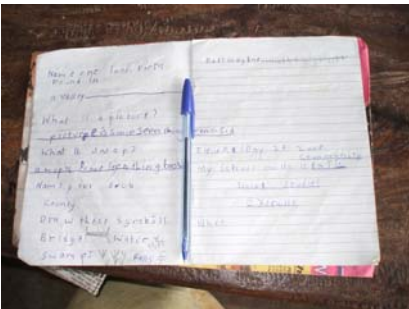


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# Advantage Africa News

Issue Ten, October 2008

This newsletter is also available on CD and by download from our website [www.advantageafrica.org](http://www.advantageafrica.org)



## Education for All

Ex-UN chief Kofi Annan once said 'Education is a human right with immense power to transform. On its foundation rest the cornerstones of freedom, democracy and sustainable human development.'

If you managed to read that, it means that you've probably had an education which enables you to read! But not everyone has the same opportunity. For example, less than 10% of disabled children in Africa attend school because of the stigma that surrounds disability and lack of facilities or trained teachers.

For all children, the early years are especially important; it's a sensitive time that should be marked by remarkable physical and mental progress. But many millions of children in Africa are deprived the foundation of health, cognitive, social and emotional development that comes from early childhood stimulation, care and education. The UN estimates that over one in ten children in Africa will not survive to age five and one in three children will start school with their brains damaged by malnutrition.

In Kenya and Uganda, Advantage Africa is helping to challenge this with an orphans' nutrition project, two nursery schools with feeding programmes attached and two units for disabled children within primary schools (and a third due to open in 2009). With our help, the inspirational people with whom we work are combining local language, care, learning, nutrition, health, life skills and plenty of interaction to life-changing effect.

Together, we can help children of all ages and abilities in our partner communities to reach their full potential.



# Supporting Child-headed Households in Uganda



Coloured crayons and lots of paper together with a sketch of a bright red sun in one corner and a cool blue moon in the other. All tools used in a day's work for our Programme Manager Jacinta Sweeney as she learnt about the lives of children living in a slum for displaced Karamajong people in Masese, Uganda.

Jacinta was working with five girls from one of the many child-headed households living in the slum, including ten year old Nancy and six year old Mary. Each household has an older teenage 'head' who takes responsibility for the younger members' care, but even Mary washes her own clothes, fetches water and cooks porridge.

As Jacinta led the task, the girls drew pictures (left) of what they do each day, from the moment they wake up to the number of hours they sleep. For them, it was a fun activity and an escape from sweeping the yard. For Jacinta and Advantage Africa's inspirational people at Masese including Rosemary Korobe (above in white), it was an opportunity to gain further insight into their lives and how to support them. The project will help 50 children like Nancy and Mary to go beyond survival; avoid street life, improve their housing, attend school, protect their health - and realise their hopes for a better life.

Advantage Africa's Director Andrew Betts says of this project: 'In twenty years of working in Africa, this is the most desperate poverty I've ever seen. We must ensure these children don't miss out on their childhood or end up abused'.

## Child-headed households...

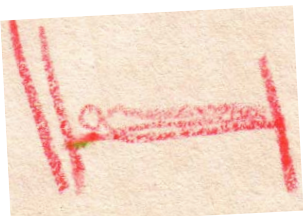
... are increasingly common in Africa, where many young parents have died of AIDS and the extended family of aunts, uncles and grandparents can simply no longer cope with looking after more children.

Children in such households usually drop out of school and are vulnerable to becoming street children at risk of sexual or economic exploitation. Most have no idea where their next meal is coming from and many are avoided by neighbours because of how their parents died.



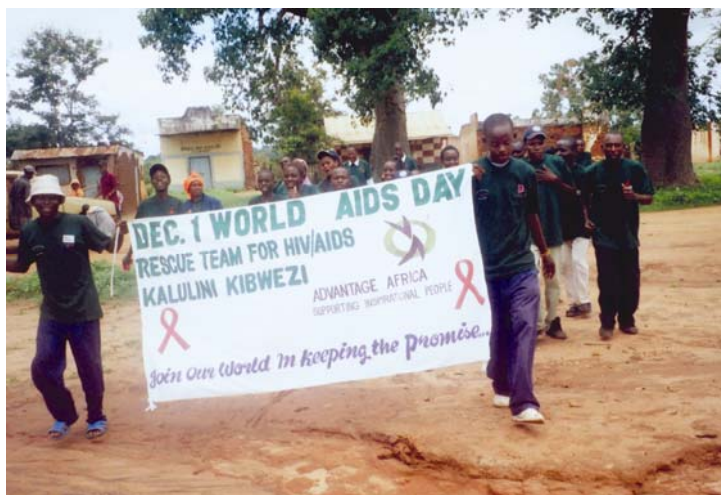
For children like Mary and Nancy  
**£5** buys a mosquito net;  
**£50** buys a bed;  
**£100** renovates a house.

**A regular monthly donation** helps Advantage Africa to sustain its work in places like the Masese slum.





# Reducing the spread and impact of HIV



National HIV prevalence in Kenya is 6%, but as high as 30% in some areas; 1.2 million adults are infected and 1.1 million children orphaned by AIDS. Against this backdrop, and that of a national average income of £330, Advantage Africa is supporting the Rescue Team for HIV/AIDS to address the sickness, death and poverty caused by HIV in the area of Kalulini, Kenya.

The Team educate children and adults about the virus in schools, churches and marketplaces using entertaining and interactive drama, poetry, music and sport. They provide voluntary counselling and testing, a weekly 'kids club', youth discussions and relationship therapy. They also support orphans and people living with AIDS, and train village midwives in how to reduce mother-to-child transmission.

In partnership with Advantage Africa, Rescue Team reach up to a thousand people each month with their life-saving services. On this page we reproduce some extracts from Rescue Team's inspirational project officer Mulwa Kamba's recent report.

With funding from Andrews Estate Agents' Project 60 and Castle Hill Baptist Church in Warwick, a new HIV/AIDS resource centre is being built. The centre will be a safe meeting place and government-approved for HIV counselling and testing.

## Campaigning

Performed skit about infidelity at public meeting attended by 500 people. It showed a poor man reliant on casual work married to a woman forced into being unfaithful with two wealthy men. The husband came back one day and found the men in his house. He was distraught and angry.

We suspended the role play and provoked the audience to contribute their views. After much discussion, the community concluded that the couple should not separate but should go for HIV testing and relationship counselling. The two men should also go for testing and counselling about the risky life they are living.

## People Living with AIDS

We met with the support group of 16 people living with AIDS who share and support each other spiritually, emotionally and practically. The members shared how to 'live positively' and we heard how a woman named Syombua was thrown out of the family home when her husband learned she was HIV positive. The husband even destroyed the house!

The group planned an income generating activity, and discussed the importance of good nutrition, anti-retrovirals (ARVs) and the high cost of getting to Makindu District Hospital to collect them. Pregnancy was also raised and the fear of being identified as 'pregnant positive'.

## Football Tournament

Held tournament on the theme of 'Every Child is Your Child'. We did the play 'Be in my shoes' about an orphaned boy who was not being loved or allowed to go to school and was being mistreated by other children. A neighbour intervened to save the situation and the orphan read a poem 'Why Me?' which helped the carer see the light.

An orphan called Mary spoke about caring for orphans, endorsed by Pastor Mutiso. Disability activist Agnes Musembi reminded people that disabled people are very vulnerable to HIV. Local radio station Musyi FM covered the event and challenged other community groups to follow Rescue Team's lead. We donated 20 mosquito nets, 5 storage boxes and 5 school uniforms to needy orphans.

## Resource Centre

We had good news that the resource centre, which will be a referral point for all our outreach activities will be funded. We need to be registered to obtain test kits and our current supply from the Kenya army will soon end.

## Kids' Club

30 children attending every weekend. The kite, radio, books, crayons and small footballs brought by Jacinta have motivated them to come. Through gospel songs, the kids are growing spiritually. They have benefited from prevention messages in poems and songs. They are looking forward to the new Resource Centre so that other children can join in!

## Orphans

We supported the 'Tei' and Avea church groups for 88 orphans. The caregivers make sure that the children get a nutritious meal each week and help them with problems including stigma and school fees. We only helped a little because of limited funds but would like to share our skills and train the caregivers and help buy beds for the orphans as we saw that most of them sleep on dusty floors which give them persistent coughs.

## Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT)

VCT, including a health talk, has been taking place every Tuesday and Thursday at Kalulini clinic with the Team's three trained counsellors Mulwa, Burgwin and Halima.



## Thank You to all our Volunteers and Supporters



A big thank you to all our volunteers and supporters who have helped us raise over **£180,000** in our **fifth anniversary year**.

You have been busy doing sponsored walks (sometimes with dogs and frying pans), runs and swims; wrapping Christmas presents; responding to our Kenya emergency appeal; volunteering at events and even forgoing presents in favour of donations. All your hard work is greatly appreciated and it has a direct impact on the communities we support. **Thank you.**



Clockwise from top right: Sally Easton swam the length of the English Channel and raised £500; Shobna Yavade was one of 100 volunteers who helped raise £8,000 by wrapping Christmas presents in Milton Keynes; Jane Betts raised £1,000 by running the famous Olney Pancake Race and Tom Bartlett is nearing £1,000 in sponsorship by running 50 miles in his 50th year.

## Some Simple Ways to Make a Difference

The global financial crisis means rising prices of food, medicines and transport for our partners in Africa. Despite these rising costs, we'd like to help them build an AIDS resource centre, begin wheelchair distribution and open a third, long-awaited unit for disabled children in Kenya. In Uganda we want to scale up our work with single parents and work with child-headed households. Here's some ideas about how you can help:

**Make a monthly donation** to our work. Just £10 a month can make a real difference!

**Write to request** our legacy leaflet.

**Give presents that will make a lasting difference this Christmas:** we don't do goats but our attractive Gift Certificates help meet real needs in Africa. Available in £5, £10 and £20 denominations.

**Organise a coffee morning,** or Christmas evening with mulled wine and mince pies, where friends and family can buy Christmas cards.

**Sign up** with us for the London 10km run in June 2009.

**Ask a friend or family member whether they would like to receive our news updates.**



**... and please don't forget to order your cards!**



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Advantage Africa supports the work of inspirational people to overcome poverty and disadvantage. In partnership with determined individuals and community groups we create opportunities for disabled people by challenging stigma and providing education and mobility aids. We reduce the spread and impact of HIV through awareness-raising and support to orphans, single parents and people living with AIDS.

**Charity Number:** 1092719 **Company Number:** 4388034

**Staff:** Andrew Betts, Teleri Jardine, Jacinta Sweeney **Trustees:** Rob Aley, Jane Betts, Alison Griffith, Chris Harvey, David Saint, Paul Winnan. **Patron:** Martyn Joseph

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