



ADVANTAGE AFRICA
SUPPORTING INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE

16th October 2012 (World Food Day)

Dear Advantage Africa supporter,

Welcome to our autumn newsletter in which we highlight an important new initiative to help the orphaned and vulnerable children in our projects to receive a nutritious daily meal. It's called The Plate Project. Please find out more and get involved!

The newsletter also highlights how Advantage Africa is enabling people in East Africa to overcome poverty, gain confidence and grow in independence. Helping people to help themselves is at the heart of what Advantage Africa does, and we hope you'll be encouraged by the stories of how Joyce, Josephine and Muinde have started on that journey.

Thank you for your part in making this life-changing work possible, and our best wishes,

Andrew Betts, Director

P.S. Our Christmas cards and donation gift vouchers are now available for order online at www.shopadvantageafrica.org

I'd like to help people living in poverty to become more independent

•£10: hoe & seeds •£30: wax for candle-making •£50: poultry project •£160: robust wheelchair • £20/month: physio home visits

1 Here is my donation of £ _____ to Advantage Africa (cheques payable to 'Advantage Africa' please).

OR: a regular gift of £ _____ each month by standing order starting on _____ (date)

Bank 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: Advantage Africa, HSBC Bank, PO Box 1888 Coventry, CV3 2WN; sort code 40-33-33; account number 81549200.

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:

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax don't qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give (28p on every £1 that I gave up to 5 April 2008).

4 Please send this completed form to us at: Advantage Africa, 26A Market Place, Olney, Bucks, MK46 4BA.
Thank you.

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Food, Glorious Food

We all like a good meal. Food sustains us and entertains us. It helps us be creative and sociable. Cookery programmes are among the most popular on TV and no less than 5 million of us tune in to drool over soufflés and meringues in 'The Great British Bake Off.'

There was no mention of such treats during this year's World Food Day on 16th October. Instead, the UN highlighted countries without enough food, and called for better production and distribution in a world with more than enough for everyone. Despite the global food surplus, it's estimated that almost a third of children in Africa start school with their brains damaged by malnutrition. Thousands of orphaned and vulnerable children living in Advantage Africa's project areas still struggle to eat even one meal a day. This stunts their mental and physical development, makes them more prone to disease and means they can't concentrate in school.



For boys and girls in Kenya and Uganda, good nutrition is the foundation of a healthy and positive future. That's why Advantage Africa is working to improve the nutrition of children living in poverty and helping their communities produce nourishing food. Our projects help the most marginalised people, such as those who are disabled or living with HIV, to grow crops and rear livestock and ensure orphaned and vulnerable children don't go hungry. For example, in Obambo, Kenya, we're helping over 100 children to receive a meal such as rice and beans, every school day (pictured above). Further east in Kibwezi, we're supporting 80 youngsters to eat nutritious food together. In Bajjo, Uganda, we're planning to build and equip a kitchen so that 150 boys and girls in a nursery and primary school can have a good lunch. These nutrition projects ensure children are more resilient, can fight off infections and take part in their lessons without fainting from hunger.



Make a plate - feed a child

<https://apps.facebook.com/theplateproject/>

(You don't need to be a Facebook user for this link to work)

Advantage Africa's new fundraising venture, The Plate Project, aims to support this work by using internet technology, a world away from the numbing reality of empty stomachs, to 'make a plate and feed a child'. Please visit The Plate Project website via the link below or through our Facebook page to design a plate, send a message in Swahili and donate to provide nourishing food today.

A Maasai proverb says, 'Happiness is as good as food.' Please support The Plate Project to help children in Kenya and Uganda share in that happiness. Thank you.

Programme Manager

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ADVANTAGE AFRICA: PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE THROUGH...



...Poultry-keeping

Joyce (pictured outside her home) lives in the arid Kibwezi District of eastern Kenya and is HIV positive. Discovered in deteriorating health, she's been helped by Advantage Africa to access her antiretrovirals, the vital medicines that keep her alive and enable her to 'live positively'. Advantage Africa and its partner organisation, Rescue Team for HIV & AIDS, are now helping Joyce to take the next step in her journey towards self-reliance. She's one of 20 women and men living with HIV who've been trained in keeping poultry. They've learned how to build simple chicken houses and vaccinate their stock against diseases.

Each group member was provided with chickens and basic equipment and they're now generating income to pay for their medical costs and more. Joyce says *'I started with six chickens and they've now multiplied to eleven and I expect more chicks soon. I collect eggs every day to eat and to sell for 15 shillings each (about 12p). The good market for eggs here means I can now buy my own medicine'*. Rescue Team's Mary Syokau says 19 out of the 20 households have increased their independence as a result of the project and *'It's a real success'*.

Advantage Africa has been promoting poultry-keeping for more than five years as a sustainable enterprise with benefits to the nutrition, income and independence of families affected by HIV. We've now supported more than 500 families to rear poultry. Annet, a 55-year old widow in Uganda looking after six grandchildren and adopted orphans is an enthusiastic beneficiary. She says: *'Before this project, I wasn't convinced we could make money but now I can see for myself poultry is gold.'*



...Candle-making

Advantage Africa recently supported 50 single parent families in Bulange, Uganda to be trained and equipped to make candles to sell in their local markets. The candles provide an essential source of light for local people and are also mosquito repellent to reduce life-threatening malaria. They're long-lasting and don't drip like others sold in Bulange. Packed in boxes of eight, they are gaining a good reputation and selling well enough to give these families an income to meet their basic needs.

Josephine (left), is a 43 year-old single mother with five children. Our partner, the Single Parents Association of Uganda found her *'desperate, when everything seemed to be ending'*. After her husband left her, she had limited means to earn an income to care for her children and they became severely malnourished and ill. Since joining the candle-making project, she earns a steady income to pay for their food and schooling. Beaming, and with restored confidence, Josephine says she has *'never attained anything good like the candle-making project'* in her life before.

...Farming the land

Advantage Africa's focus on helping people to help themselves means that many of our projects have a food and farming focus. We recently assisted the community of Obambo, Kenya to buy land to grow food for their orphan feeding programme featured on page one. Advantage Africa's Director Andrew Betts says: *'It's a step towards sustainability. Local harvests reduce reliance on external aid and help ensure that orphaned children in this area receive at least one good meal a day.'*

- £10 provides a hoe and seeds to farm the land
- £30 buys a big sack of candle wax
- £50 helps a family to start keeping poultry



...Improving mobility, overcoming stigma

Disabled people in Africa face many barriers to becoming self-reliant including neglect, discrimination, and lack of practical mobility aids suitable for the local terrain. Advantage Africa's work with the Kibwezi Disabled Persons' Organisation (KDPO) helps disabled children, women and men in one of Kenya's poorest areas to overcome these barriers and become independent.

Six-year-old Joseph and his four-year old brother Mutinda (pictured) were both born with an inward rotation of the ankle called club foot which makes walking difficult. In the UK, this would routinely be treated shortly after birth. However in Kenya the procedure is unfamiliar and unaffordable for families living in poverty.

Three days every week, KDPO's staff visit disabled people like Joseph and Mutinda to provide emotional and practical support. They assist them with counselling, wheelchairs, crutches, boots and physiotherapy to ensure they can grow in confidence, attend school or go to work and be part of their communities.

In discussion with disabled people and their families, Advantage Africa has arranged for 17 children and adults, including Joseph and Mutinda, to have surgery to improve their mobility and independence. On return to their rural homes they will receive appliances made in the KDPO workshop and ongoing physiotherapy. KDPO's coordinator Agnes Musembi says 'These boys will one day be running. When people see them, their attitudes to disability will change.' Inspired by the Paralympics, Agnes is planning a sports day for disabled children to have fun and demonstrate that 'disability is not inability'.



Joseph and Mutinda have faced mobility problems and stigma all their lives, but are now looking forward to a new start.

Some names have been changed to protect privacy

...Appropriate appliances



All Advantage Africa's projects begin with rigorous planning with our partners and beneficiaries. Our Kenya Programme Manger Rob Aley is here helping KDPO staff, most of them also disabled, to plan their work for disabled people's improved welfare, rights and independence.



After weeks of assessments in the field, the robust appliances are collected from a special workshop in Nairobi and hauled on to the roof of a *matatu* (local public bus).



A five-hour journey on the notorious Mombasa road follows. The matatu finally reaches Kibwezi with its precious cargo.



Next morning, the wheelchairs and tricycles are brought to KDPO's office ready for distribution to disabled people living in remote areas.



A call is made, a key found and the appliances brought into a well-wisher's shop for safe storage overnight.



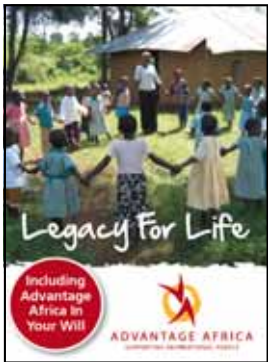
The wheelchairs are given out alongside training in their use and maintenance. Muinde is overjoyed with his new tricycle and his new-found mobility and independence!

- £160 provides a disabled person with a robust wheelchair like Muinde's
- 80 people are on our waiting list for appliances like these pictured



Celebrating our 10th Anniversary

Advantage Africa marked its 10th anniversary in July with 50 friends in Milton Keynes enjoying dinner and music. We reflected on our work overcoming barriers of poverty, vulnerability, isolation and discrimination. We heard of the charity's achievements in numbers including the building of 6 schools, 500 chicken houses and 15 water tanks. Some of the 'change stories' at the heart of Advantage Africa were told: Makau who learned to walk; Teddy who cheated death and 'lives positively' with HIV, Peter who went to school for the first time and Pauline who found 'hope for a colourful future'. The evening concluded with a sincere thank you to all our supporters and volunteers, in the UK and beyond, for their part in helping to improve the lives of thousands of people.



Legacy for Life

Our leaflet 'Legacy for Life' provides some basic advice on leaving a gift to Advantage Africa in your will. Topics covered include how to leave a legacy, making a will and different kinds of bequests. Please contact us if you'd like to receive a copy.

You Save Money - We Raise Money!

We've joined a great scheme which can help save you money on your household bills - and raise funds for Advantage Africa at the same time. The Utility Warehouse guarantees savings on your current suppliers when you switch services and donates up to 5% of your bill to Advantage Africa at no cost to you. To join, please call 0800 1313000 and quote our appeal number G40182 or visit www.utilitywarehouse.org.uk/G40182



In the Spirit of the Olympics



Sixteen-year olds Conor and Tom on their way to completing the gruelling Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race. They raised over £600 in sponsorship for Advantage Africa.

Jane, Steve, Sian, Tony and Andy have raised over £7,000 with their marathons in 2012. Others have done a half marathon, 10k, triathlon or canoed the Thames. If you'd like to discover your inner Olympian and do a sponsored event for Advantage Africa, please contact Jane Betts on jane.betts@advantageafrica.org



Christmas cards

Please don't forget to order your Christmas cards and donation gift vouchers using the enclosed order form or online at:

www.shopadvantageafrica.org

Advantage Africa supports people affected by poverty, disability and HIV to improve their education, health and incomes. Our work helps people to help themselves and build a better future for their families and communities.



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