



ADVANTAGE AFRICA
SUPPORTING INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE

Advantage Africa News

Issue Eight, April 2007

2007: A Year of Anniversaries

2007 marks Advantage Africa's fifth year as a registered charity and more famously, the 200th anniversary of the ending of the transatlantic slave trade. Conscious of the bicentenary, we were excited to start the year by moving our office to the historic Buckinghamshire town of Olney, where the hymn writer and slave-trade abolitionist John Newton was curate from 1764 to 1780. Newton was himself enslaved and then a slave trader before becoming a minister and mentor to William Wilberforce, and his autobiographical, beloved hymn 'Amazing Grace' has touched millions of people around the world. During my recent trip to Kenya I heard it sung in churches and on mobile phone ringtones. In one small town I even spotted the 'Amazing Grace Kinyozi' (barber)!

Olney's other famous son is Newton's close friend the writer William Cowper, who championed the cause of Olney's lacemakers kept in poverty by poor wages and unhealthy conditions - our office overlooks his house, now the Cowper and Newton Museum. After one meeting between the two friends at which they discussed the slave trade abolition movement, Cowper wrote a poem 'Pity for poor Africans' which was published in the Northampton Mercury. The poem begins like this:

***I own I am shock'd at the purchase of slaves,
And fear those who buy them and sell them are knaves;
What I hear of their hardships, their tortures, and groans
Is almost enough to draw pity from stones.***

***I pity them greatly, but I must be mum,
For how could we do without sugar and rum?
Especially sugar, so needful we see?
What? give up our desserts, our coffee, and tea!***

Cowper's call for justice and equality in relationships with people in Africa still rings true today. Were he still walking the street below I hope that he would approve of Advantage Africa's focus on genuine partnership with inspirational people and community groups in Africa.

In this issue, we provide a snapshot of what this partnership with inspirational people means in practice with pictures and brief news from some of the projects we are supporting in Kenya and Uganda. Through our recent training workshop and activities on World AIDS Day and World Disability Day, we are greatly encouraged that our partners in Africa are learning from and working with each other in order to advance their work among people affected by poverty, disability and HIV/AIDS.

Celebrating anniversaries and understanding our history is important, especially if it helps us to learn from the past and resolve to do better in the future. This is our vision for 2007 as we aim, with your support, to reach more disadvantaged people than ever before.



John Newton



William Cowper

Working in Partnership with Inspirational People in Kenya and Uganda

Advantage Africa's projects pictured here are all changing lives; please support this work by using the form overleaf



Above left and right: In Obambo, Kenya, a daily feeding programme funded by Advantage Africa is now reaching 60 vulnerable children, the majority of them orphans who would otherwise remain malnourished. The programme complements nutritional and medical support provided to people living with HIV, AIDS education and a village clinic.



Above left: Advantage Africa is helping to establish a new unit for children with learning disabilities in Kisayani, Kenya. *Above right:* Children are taught in a special classroom within Kisayani Primary School.

Below left: In Mitaboni, Kenya, a rehabilitation project has begun to enable graduates from the unit for disabled children to undertake activities such as poultry keeping and goat rearing. *Below right:* A new dining hall for the unit has been completed and will be shared with children from Mitaboni Primary School and used by various community groups.





Above left: Our November 2006 Partners' Workshop in Nairobi brought together seventeen participants for a week of sharing experience and training on project management and working with vulnerable people. Thought-provoking visits were also made to a foster care community and HIV testing centre. Pastor Jack Okoth said 'Advantage Africa has very good partners. This workshop will really help us go forward stronger than ever before.. We have learned so much.' *Above right:* Jack distributed AIDS badges made by members of his community for use on World AIDS Day.



Above left and right: In five communities we supported our partners to celebrate World AIDS Day (1st December) and World Disability Day (3rd December). 3,000 people attended their activities including a bicycle race, interactive drama and speeches about prevention, care and fighting stigma. Our phones buzzed with excited text messages as our partners reported how so many people had responded. Following the events we are confident that people will be motivated to adopt orphans, challenge the abuse of disabled children and protect themselves from HIV infection.



Above left: Advantage Africa is supporting the Kibwezi Disabled People's Organisation in Kenya to establish a workshop for the manufacture and repair of mobility aids. Here technician Nguli Mutisya repairs a member's wheelchair. *Above right:* Widows in Muzinda, Uganda, receive skills training as part of their bakery project.



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Advantage Africa supports the ideas and work of inspirational people in Africa to overcome poverty and disadvantage. We work in close partnership with determined individuals and community groups, supporting their ideas and plans so that disadvantaged people can improve their lives. This particularly includes people who, alongside poverty, face prejudice and stigma as a result of disability or HIV/AIDS. Advantage Africa provides encouragement, resources, advice and training as well as links to other sources of knowledge, skills and funds.

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

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

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE

Address: Advantage Africa, 26a Market Place, Olney, Buckinghamshire, MK46 4BA. **Tel:** 01234 711005
Fax: 01234 711006 **Website:** www.advantageafrica.org **E-mail:** information@advantageafrica.org

Funding News and Needs

Anna Melvin, pictured here with children in Uganda, will be running the 2007 Flora London Marathon for Advantage Africa on 22nd April. Anna says Advantage Africa do 'wonderful work' and is proud to take on the challenge of 26 gruelling miles. You can help Anna reach her **£1,500** target by sponsoring her online at <http://www.justgiving.com/marathonmelv>.



Phil Cross is leading a team of five to Everest Base Camp in memory of their friend Alex Hill who tragically died in a car accident. They describe the trek as 'an inspirational challenge, in memory of an inspiring person, to support inspirational people', and aim to raise **£10,000** for Advantage Africa. To sponsor them please visit <http://www.justgiving.com/challenge2change>.



The cast of Milton Keynes Theatre's pantomime Cinderella turned out to support Advantage Africa's Christmas gift wrapping project in December (left). 95 volunteers, including staff from HSBC Bank, wrapped over 3,000 presents in the Milton Keynes shopping centre and raised **£7,350** towards our work.

Entrepreneurial children at Stanway School in Colchester raised **£1,079** in February by selling sweets and cakes, holding sponsored bike rides and taking a collection at a golf club.

To expand the Obambo orphan feeding programme we need **£15/month** for each additional child and to equip and run a nursery school for 60 children **£5,100** is required over the next year. Please fill out the form below to support our work or contact Teleri in the office for help in organising a fundraising event.

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

•£5: a diagnostic test for HIV treatment •£15/month: a daily nutritious meal for an orphaned child •£30/month: home-based care for a widow living with HIV •£60/month: a salary for a community worker •£1,000: a simple kitchen for an orphan feeding programme

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: Here's my single gift of £ payable to Advantage Africa.

2 My name, address and postcode:

3 If you are a UK taxpayer, please tick the box below to add 28p to every £1 you donate at no cost to you.

I am 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.

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4 Please send this completed form to: Advantage Africa, 26a Market Place, Olney, Buckinghamshire, MK46 4BA. Thank you.

Thank you for your generous support!