

Focus on Valuing People

Look Into My Eyes...

Sainsbury's was recently in an almighty furore sparked by one of its checkout workers refusing to serve someone who was speaking on their mobile phone. The company cleverly hedged its bets, apologising to the customer with a gift voucher while privately supporting the action of its employee. In the public discussion that followed, comments such as 'Unbelievable, this check out girl is being paid to scan groceries, not to talk to shoppers!' were far outweighed by people saying things like 'We need to treat others with manners and respect. Equality in all things.' I found the tilt in the balance of comments reassuring. It showed that the majority felt strongly about the importance of human connection and valuing people.

At Advantage Africa we value you, and all our other supporters, a great deal. After all, it's you that enable us to improve the lives of Africa's most vulnerable people. We also value our beneficiaries, staff, trustees, volunteers and partners as we all work together to overcome poverty. That's why we decided to highlight some of these 'Voices of Advantage Africa' in this issue of Milestones.

As the checkout assistant debate raged, I experienced the impact of valuing others myself. I was attending the Institute of



Fundraising's Conference in London to present a session on Advantage Africa's Plate Project fundraising initiative for orphans' nutrition. It was a glossy, glamorous occasion to which some of the big charities had sent 50 of their top fundraisers. We're not glossy or glamorous at Advantage Africa, and I felt like a fish out of water. Then at the end of the day, one of the conference organisers made a point of seeking me out to say, 'I must tell you, it's been such a pleasure to meet you!' It made my day.

Advantage Africa's work is all about human connection and valuing everyone equally. Our partners in East Africa seek out those who have been forgotten and marginalised in their communities, look them in the eyes and help them to

reach their potential. As our strap-line 'pathways out of poverty' depicts, it takes time to walk alongside people making that tough journey to a better life.

The 19th Century Spanish poet Becquer wrote 'The soul that can speak through the eyes, can also kiss with a gaze.' Our own Patron, Martyn Joseph suggested in one of his songs that we 'kiss the world beautiful.' Now, I'm not recommending we lunge at the person processing our groceries the next time we're in the supermarket - that would conjure up a whole new set of problems - but that we meet their eyes and acknowledge our shared passage through a moment in time. And perhaps give the mobile phone a rest.

Andrew Betts
Director

From supporters and volunteers like you, to staff, trustees and those on the front line in Africa, we're all working together to help vulnerable people overcome poverty.

Chris Webster

Regular donor



'When there is a lot to depress you in the world, Advantage Africa throws a spotlight on positive and inspirational people and the energy, leadership and hope they bring to development. I'm convinced that my small investment will grow and grow in the communities they're working in. I trust them, I believe in their approach and know that their projects will make a huge difference.'

Rob Aley

Kenya Programme Manager



Julia Musyoki

Beneficiary of HIV and poultry-rearing project



'My chickens have let me achieve success. They have multiplied and I can sell eggs to pay the bus fare to get my monthly medicines. My nutrition is better too, and I have also paid for my granddaughter to go to nursery school. I say thank you to Mary and Advantage Africa, they really have helped us.'

'My trips to Kenya are a challenge and a privilege in equal measure. I see so much need, and I know Advantage Africa and our supporters can't tackle all the problems. But we work with such incredibly resilient and committed local people that I know we're making a real and practical difference. I'm proud to say that we do manage to get assistance right down to the villages and the people who need it the most.'

Peter Mutaki

Beneficiary of youth and nutrition project



'I like coming to kids club on Sundays – I know I will have fun and enjoy eating together with other kids from poor families.'

The success of our projects is only made possible by regular donations from people like you. Please consider making a standing order to support our work. Just £20 per month will help people like Julia and Peter find a pathway to a better life.

Scott Bader Commonwealth

Philanthropic
Multinational Company



'Scott Bader Commonwealth is proud to partner with the team at Advantage Africa. What impresses us about them is their tenacity, dedication and attention to detail to ensure their beneficiaries benefit 100% from the funding received. They are meticulous in their evaluation reporting to ensure that donors know what has happened with every pound donated.'

Mary Syokau

Community Health Worker



'Advantage Africa's support is different because we know they are committed to long term development and they really listen to the needs of our community. The money they provide has uplifted us, but they also give us encouragement and friendship - actually we are a family!'

Anne Pollard

Volunteer



'I always enjoy volunteering for the Christmas Wrapping Service, it's great fun and such a brilliant way to raise money for Advantage Africa. I particularly like this charity because you can see where the money goes and what a difference it makes to people's lives.'

Sally Easton

Volunteer fundraiser



'I support Advantage Africa because it's a charity with clear ideas and actions to alleviate poverty. I love their involvement with communities and how they change lives for the better. I know that every pound raised from homemade cake sales, sponsored swims and concerts goes a long way in the projects in Uganda and Kenya. I tell my work colleagues, church community and friends about the charity, show them a newsletter, invite them to sign up on Facebook. People like to know that their pound is making a difference.'

Sally has done many things for Advantage Africa, including a sponsored swim the length of the English Channel. Could you do a sponsored challenge or organise an event?

Martyn Joseph

Patron and singer-songwriter



'Advantage Africa is a small charity making a big difference. I love their passion for justice and how they help the most vulnerable. I'm proud to be Advantage Africa's Patron and ask you to support their work in whatever way you can.'

Ann Tennant

Trustee



'Advantage Africa punches far above its weight. It never ceases to amaze me just how much this small team accomplishes. My recent visit to the projects in Kenya was a humbling experience where I saw for myself how this small charity works directly with local people and their communities.'



Burton-on-Trent pupils make a difference

Stephanie Lander, pupils and other teachers at Victoria Community School, Burton-on-Trent recently raised an amazing £653 towards sturdy desks and chairs for Bajjo Community Primary School in Luwero District, Uganda. The 200 children in Bajjo no longer sit on the floor and can learn much more effectively. Thank you to all Victoria staff and pupils!



Lives transformed in Bowa Kibiira

The generous donations we highlighted in June mean that 60 single parent families in Bowa Kibiira, Uganda, have started livestock rearing and fixed their broken borehole to provide safe water. The families will soon be trained in preventing malaria and receive insecticide-treated mosquito nets. The outlook for hundreds of vulnerable children and their carers in this poor rural community now looks bright.



Above: In Bowa Kibiira village, sacks of feed are unloaded for the single parents' chicks and piglets.

MK Quizzers support Katente

Alison Statham's quiz night in Milton Keynes raised £575 to support the vulnerable single parent families in Katente, Uganda, featured in our last newsletter. With sponsorship from her co-organiser's employer on its way, the final amount will exceed £1,000 - a wonderful achievement!



Widows and their children in Katente still urgently need our help so they can meet their basic needs.

Christmas Cheer

Advantage Africa's Christmas cards and our popular donation gift vouchers are now on sale. You can order using the enclosed form or online at



www.shopadvantageafrica.org, where there's also a thought-provoking anthology of poetry from long-time supporter Tom Bartlett on sale.



You can now support Advantage Africa just by shopping online this Christmas and beyond. Shop with your favourite stores and they'll donate a percentage of your purchase to Advantage Africa at no cost to you. Simply join and install Give as you Live



Give as you live®

from www.giveasyoulive.com/join/advantageafrica to get started.

If you live near Milton Keynes and can spare some time in the run up to Christmas, please consider volunteering for our annual Gift Wrapping Service. To find out more, please email charlotte.cashman@advantageafrica.org

Milestones is published by Advantage Africa, who support 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.

Registered Charity Number: 1092719 **Company Number:** 4388034, England

Staff: Andrew Betts, Rob Aley, Sarah Cox, Carmel Schmid, Jane Betts

Trustees: Stephen Blakemore, Chris Harvey, Laura Sullivan, Ann Tennant, Paul Winnan, Charlotte Cashman, Christopher Chapman. **Patron:** Martyn Joseph

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

I'd like to help vulnerable people in East Africa to find pathways out of poverty



1 Here is my gift of £10 £25 £50 £100 £250 Other £.....

Please make cheques payable to 'Advantage Africa'.

This section is for regular monthly gifts only

This section is for regular monthly gifts only

OR: I'd like to make 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 relevant boxes below to add 25p to every £1 you donate:

Please treat as Gift Aid donations all qualifying gifts of money made to Advantage Africa today, in the past and in the future.
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). *Please notify Advantage Africa if you wish to cancel this declaration, change your name/address or no longer pay sufficient Income/Capital Gains Tax.*

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