



Dear Friend,

## A Bit of Both

This year, Advantage Africa has been heavily involved in the Make Poverty History Campaign - an attempt to change the unjust policies and practices of governments and global organisations that keep people in poverty. But we have also continued our activities at the grassroots, learning from the stories of men, women and children affected by poverty, disability and HIV/AIDS in East Africa and expanding our work among them.

In southern Uganda earlier this year I met a widowed woman called Betty. Betty (right) looks after fifteen orphaned children in her own small home, (where they sleep on the floor, three to a mattress), depending on casual work and the gifts of well wishers to pay for their food and school fees. Last year she started a small women's group in her village where she is a volunteer midwife and a passionate advocate for preventing the spread of AIDS. Betty is herself HIV positive. All in all, she is a wonderful example of the inspirational people whose work Advantage Africa seeks to support; we recently provided her group with a grant of £400 towards the cost of a new house in which the orphans she cares for can sleep in beds of their own, free of the parasites and skin diseases from which they suffered. Our future work with Betty's group will help them to find ways of growing crops, keeping livestock and making crafts to provide the secure sources of food and income they need to care for orphans in their community.



We know that long-lasting development comes from teaching a man (or better still a woman) to fish rather than giving him a fish to eat. But it is also important to look at who owns the fishing rights, what the equipment costs, what access there is to market and who controls it, how the fish are distributed within the family and what impact the fishing has on future stocks. In the same way, our work with single parents and people living with AIDS in Uganda will go beyond small-scale partnerships with people like Betty. It will address the access of people living with AIDS to anti-retroviral drugs and the rights of single parents to inherit property and care for their children. It will attempt to influence the people in power to

change the policies and practices which keep people like Betty living in poverty. In this way we aim to make an even bigger difference than we could hope for by supporting practical projects alone.

So which is better? To provide agricultural training or campaign to Make Poverty History? To promote self-help development or carry out advocacy? Of course each needs and feeds the other; we really need a bit of both.

With many thanks for supporting the work of Advantage Africa,

Andrew Betts, Director

## Supporting and Training our Partners



Workshop participants learn from each other's knowledge, skills and experience; A visit to a community clinic was highly valued by Sylvester Okoth from Obambo Advantage Africa's Director Andrew Betts recently facilitated a workshop for eight of the inspirational community leaders and development workers whose activities we are supporting in Kenya. The workshop, which also involved speakers from other development organisations, helped the participants to assess and improve their leadership styles, learn new skills in monitoring and evaluation, undertake an organisa-

tional 'health check' and discuss ways of caring for vulnerable people. During field visits to the Mitaboni Special Unit for disabled children and a community health centre the men and women attending were inspired to learn from the work of their counterparts in different parts of the country. *'The best seminar I have attended for a long time'* said participant Philip Ndeti.

## Campaign Update **MAKE POVERTY HISTORY**



Advantage Africa helped organise events in Milton Keynes including a campaign rally and the wrapping of the entire shopping centre in white bands by 20,000 children

In the months prior to the meeting of the G8 leaders at Gleneagles in Scotland, the Make Poverty History campaign enabled millions of people to stand up for justice for the world's poorest people. This included nearly 1,000 of you who signed and returned Advantage Africa's campaign postcard - which we delivered to Tony Blair days before the summit.

Although the meeting at Gleneagles fell short of many campaigners' expectations, by the standards of previous G8 summits, an extraordinary amount was achieved. An aid boost of \$48 billion in five years, likely to save 10 million lives, was promised, reversing the pattern of the last 20 years. The debts of 18 of the world's poorest countries owed to multilateral institutions were cancelled. On HIV/AIDS, the G8 leaders produced one of the summit's real successes by pledging anti-retroviral treatment for everyone who requires it by 2010. Tony Blair said: *'It isn't the end of poverty in Africa, but is the hope that it can be ended. It isn't all everyone wanted but it is progress – real and achievable progress'*.

So was it all worth it? For each of those 10 million people mentioned above, the answer must be an emphatic yes! On behalf of millions of others, we must maintain the momentum of the campaign, hold world leaders to account and further challenge them on trade justice at December's World Trade talks in Hong Kong.



Andrew and Jane Betts with their daughter Dulcie and Milton Keynes MP Phyllis Starkey deliver campaign postcards to Number 10

## Healthcare in Obambo

The clinic in Obambo Kenya built earlier this year with support from Advantage Africa has brought good quality healthcare close to thousands of people for the very first time. No longer are sick people pushed for nearly ten miles on bicycles to join a long queue of patients at the Siaya town hospital.

The clinic has been completed with water tanks, latrines, beds and medical equipment and a dispensary stocked with a basic range of medicines. Two qualified nurses, Evelyn and Susan, are treating up to thirty patients each day and the clinic is used as the centre for HIV/AIDS testing and counselling for the whole sub-county three times a week.

Within weeks of the clinic opening a man was brought there severely dehydrated and barely alive. One of the nurses put him on a drip, kept him under observation and provided the treatment and care he needed. *'Often such severe cases get referred to the hospital but in his case I knew he would die on the way so we set about to save his life'* she said. Similar stories emerge almost every day: Geoffrey is a one year old boy who was successfully treated for pneumonia and Josephine's respiratory infection got better because of the care she received. Children from nearby schools are frequently referred to the clinic: Gabriel, for example, had a vicious thorn removed from his foot and the wound properly dressed - a simple solution for a simple problem, but one which could have turned into a dangerous infection.

Together with the UK-based Friends of Obambo, we are supporting the nurses' salaries until these can be fully met from the clinic's locally derived income.



The Obambo clinic; An elderly woman receives treatment

## Other News in Brief

- Advantage Africa is growing! During November, we shall be relocating from a cramped office in the founders' home to more spacious premises in Milton Keynes and appointing a Programme Officer and a part-time Administrator/Fundraising Assistant. We look forward to introducing our new staff members to you in the next newsletter.
- Advantage Africa recently welcomed two new trustees to its board. David Saint is the founder and Principal of the charity consultants Action Planning, and Chris Harvey is the co-founder and Managing Director of the information technology company Salmon. David and Chris have already contributed to two trustees' meetings and the recruitment of our new staff.
- Since the Mitaboni Special Unit began, the children there have eaten their meals under a nearby tree (or in a classroom when it is raining). Work has recently begun on a new dining hall which will also be used as a meeting room for Mitaboni Primary School, of which the Unit is a part, and community groups from Mitaboni town.
- Plans are being made to extend the provision of water to housebound people in Obambo with the installation of a further two water tanks on the village church. The mud-built church which also doubles as a community centre, collapsed earlier this year and has now been rebuilt in brick with funds provided by one of Advantage Africa's supporters specifically for this purpose.
- Advantage Africa is a founder member of the African Coalition on Disability and HIV/AIDS. The coalition seeks to create awareness of the vulnerability of disabled people to HIV/AIDS and ensure disabled people are included in HIV/AIDS programmes.
- Through membership of the BOND (British Overseas NGOs for Development) Disability and Development Group, Advantage Africa has lobbied International Development Secretary Hilary Benn to initiate a clear strategy for the inclusion of disabled people in the British Government's development policy and practice.
- A community fundraising event (harambee) in Thinu, Kenya enabled villagers to learn more about the needs and potential of disabled children and contribute financially to the building of a special Unit within a primary school in partnership with Advantage Africa. The event raised over £1,000 - an astounding total when you consider that most people in Thinu are subsistence farmers, and those with paid jobs earn less than £30/month.
- The kitchen at Learning and Development Kenya's orphan centre in Nakuru has now been completed with a grant from Advantage Africa.
- Our website [www.advantageafrica.org](http://www.advantageafrica.org) has recently been updated with news from our projects and articles setting out our perspective on disability, HIV/AIDS and inspirational people. Additional photographs have been added and there is also a new competition to test your knowledge of development in Africa.

## Funding News and Needs

- Our Christmas cards are now available and among the best value charity cards on sale. Please order some using the enclosed form. And remember you can use [www.ushopugive.com](http://www.ushopugive.com) when buying Christmas presents online to raise funds too!
- In June, Advantage Africa's patron Martyn Joseph, with support from Brian Houston and Kathy Burton, performed a concert in Milton Keynes to highlight the **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** campaign. The artists put on a great show and the evening raised more than £1,000 towards our work.
- The Adidas Dublin Marathon, also known as 'the friendly marathon' takes place on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2005. We are delighted to have nine runners taking part and raising sponsorship for our new programme in Uganda, many of them members of staff from the development agency World Vision.
- In April 2006, Susan Dobson, Nicky Gilmore and Kathy Symonds, known as the 'Happy Hikers', will be walking the Inca Trail in Peru and aim to raise £9,000 in sponsorship for Advantage Africa.

- Please sponsor our runners and hikers online via the events page on the Advantage Africa website. Our link with Justgiving.com ensures that sponsorship donations are secure and Gift Aided for taxpayers too. You can also leave a message of encouragement for whoever you choose to sponsor.
- Forthcoming events include a Ceilidh in Glasgow on the 12th November, a craft fair at Stantonbury Gallery in Milton Keynes from 17th - 19th November and a stall at Martyn Joseph's concert at the Stables, Wavendon, on 20th November. Contact Andrew on 01908 521 267 for details.
- Conflict, HIV/AIDS and social breakdown in Uganda have all contributed to millions of parents bringing up their children alone. We will soon be supporting ten groups of single parents in Uganda in a range of practical projects, including the women pictured here who make and sell cakes and snacks in their local community. Our partnership with these groups to overcome poverty will help them to improve their incomes, access childcare and education for their children, cope with the effects of HIV/AIDS and advance their rights in society. Please help us support these inspirational people and establish our programme in Uganda by using the form below to make a single gift or a regular monthly donation.



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

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

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

Every £1 you give to Advantage Africa goes a long way: •£5 a school desk •£20 HIV/AIDS education materials •£100 an ox plough •£300: one year's special needs education training •£1,000: a tank for safe water •£5,000: a village health centre.

**1** Here's my gift of £                      payable to Advantage Africa; OR: 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:

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.

**2** My name and address:

**3** If you are a UK taxpayer, please tick the adjacent box 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.

**4** Please send this completed form to: Advantage Africa, 3 Lowland Road, Tattenhoe, Milton Keynes, MK4 3AP. **Thank you!**