



ACE AFRICA SECONDARY SCHOOL BURSARY PROGRAMME - 2012

Information Memorandum

ACE Africa works in Kenya and Tanzania to better the lives of impoverished communities affected by HIV/AIDS, by training them to be able to provide lasting support and care to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and people living with AIDS among them. ACE Africa works in areas which are remote and rural, where 40% of adults are showing the signs and symptoms of HIV/AIDS, 60% of the population live on less than \$1 a day, 1 in 3 households are infected with HIV and every household is affected by it in some way. Here, 1 in 5 children has been orphaned by HIV/AIDS and children as young as 8 years old, or elderly grandparents, are forced to act as head of the household, caring for the sick and struggling to support younger siblings.

In these areas there is widespread shame and misunderstanding about AIDS and high levels of malnutrition, poverty, and at-risk children. ACE Africa takes a holistic approach tackling all of these issues, addressing immediate household needs such as nutrition, shelter and basic health, and longer term needs including training and education for children and families and opportunities to generate income. We also foster increased linkages between communities, local service providers and government to ensure local people are able to tackle their problems themselves.

Eight years since inception, ACE Africa is having a tangible positive impact on community health, attitudes to HIV and vulnerable children, access to locally-produced nutritious food and community ability and willingness to protect vulnerable children. Today ACE Africa is recognized as the leading NGO in Western Kenya for OVC programming and is the local identified partner for the international research project with Duke University, Positive Outcomes for Orphans. ACE Africa works with over 60 local and international partners, including local government and other NGOs. In 2010, on a budget of around £700,000, ACE Africa worked with 3000 local volunteers to provide food, shelter, healthcare, education and protection for close to 200,000 children and people affected by HIV/AIDS

ACE Africa has been funded over the years by a number of international trusts and foundations including Comic Relief, USAID, some of the Sainsbury family trusts and other well known UK trusts, as well as several companies and many individuals in the UK and overseas.

The Secondary School Bursary Programme



Primary education in Kenya is free and 95% of Primary school children in the Bungoma district manage to attend. However, Secondary education is fee paying and unavailable to the majority due lack of money. ACE Africa recognises that the greatest opportunity for children is through furthering their education and in 2005 set up a bursary programme for secondary education for orphans and particularly vulnerable children in the Bungoma and Siaya districts where we work.



The children selected for bursaries are the most vulnerable in society, who have no hope of further education and are destitute. This may be because they have been orphaned or left in highly vulnerable circumstances through HIV/AIDS or because their parents, though alive, are HIV positive and in financial distress. They are in their final year of Primary education and despite their circumstances have a record of high academic performance both throughout their Primary education and in their final national examinations.



The criteria for selection is rigorous and selection is made by ACE Africa working closely with the Ministry of Education, Social Services, schools, counsellors and community members in order to identify those in the most need. The Secondary School Bursary gives these children the opportunity to change their lives. It gives them security, a bed to sleep in, and the opportunity to make friends, eat three square meals a day and have a future. Given the academic ability of the children selected, we hope that their schooling will have a lasting and fruitful impact on them as individuals, their siblings and the communities in which they live.

Guidance for students is given by the ACE Africa Education Counsellor. The children's wellbeing and academic progress are closely monitored to ensure that they have a balanced and healthy lifestyle. Key issues include academic progress, challenges experienced in the course of their studies, career choices, and advice on overcoming and managing stress, particularly in relation to the households from which they come.

The Education Counsellor visits the children's homes during school holidays to ensure that they are living in an environment conducive to studying and are able to balance home tasks with the school assignments. This is also a chance to engage single parents, guardians and community members directly concerned with the education of the child in how best to support him or her. This process ensures that the connection between school and home life is maintained and that ACE Africa can offer support to other members of the household to ensure that the child is not ostracised due to special treatment received as a bursary holder.

After Secondary School

To date 85 bursary holders have finished school. It is pleasing that 42 of them gained university entry level results of whom 27 have started their degree courses. Another 24 achieved results which might qualify them to go to medical, teaching and other colleges of whom 10 are at college.



The state helps fund students' tuition fees where their pass levels exceed a cut-off and 36 of our students are eligible for this support of whom 24 have been awarded it so far. With lower level passes students and ACE Africa work to find local and UK sources of finance for tertiary education. Another 31 students leave secondary school at the end of 2011. In addition there will be 6 students seeking higher education after re-writing their KCSE exams this November.

Alumni with ACE counsellor Wilberforce Simiyu



Towards the end of the four years we ask sponsors to indicate whether they would be interested in helping fund the tertiary education of their sponsored child. This is a complicated issue and will depend on the choices available, level of marks obtained in the final KCSE exams and the possibility of access to state or other local sources of funds. The need may be large, only a contribution to living expenses or nothing.

The Secondary School Bursary Programme Processes

Child Selection:

The process for identifying a child and commitment from sponsors is as follows:

October – Identification and short list of children fitting the ACE criteria.

November – Children sit their national examinations.

November/December/January - New sponsors are recruited for the programme.

December or as soon as committed if later - Fee payment by new Sponsors

January – Examination results released and selection finalised. Children matched with sponsors.

February - Sponsors are informed.

Gender: Sponsors may elect to support either a boy or a girl. ACE has a policy to provide bursaries to an equal number of boys and girls.

The school year in Kenya runs from January to December. Payment of fees to schools is subject to proof of enrolment and attendance at the secondary school. In practice ACE plays an active part in ensuring that the children get to their schools in time and with all that they need.

Sponsors' Commitment & Payment:

Sponsors are expected to commit to four full years of their identified child's education. The annual fee is £380 paid each year in advance, by bank cheque, bank transfer or standing order, which with Gift Aid from the Government will produce £475. Those not eligible for Gift Aid will be required to pay £475 per annum. This fee includes the contribution to the Alumni Fund described below. A standing order is the preferred method of payment to reduce our administrative costs.

The receipt of Gift Aid or an additional fee in its place is essential to cover the costs of running the programme, including counselling and caring for the children and their households. The total fee covers boarding and tuition, food, books and materials, regular counselling of the child and support for its household as well as administrative costs for ACE staff and their monitoring visits to the child, school functions and to the households. ACE Africa believes that the community should take some responsibility for the children selected and requests that other expenses such as travel and basic needs be covered by the community where they live, the teachers from their Primary school and/or from the Ministry of Education. This contribution is assured prior to the agreement of a bursary.

Sponsors are requested to pay the annual fee of £380 (or £475 if Gift Aid is not available) by the end of December 2011 (or immediately if the commitment is made in the New Year) for the first year of schooling, and in December 2012, 2013 and 2014 for the following three academic years. A Sign-Up form should be completed to make the commitment to sponsorship. A Standing Order Form is available for the preferred method of payment of the annual fee.



Arrangement of Sponsorship:

ACE Africa UK arranges financial relationships with sponsors.
If you would like to sponsor a child please contact:

Priscilla White, Manager Bursary Programme
27 Hawley Square,
Margate, Kent CT9 1PQ
Email: priscilla@pawwhite.co.uk Telephone: 01843 291835

Communications with ACE Africa and your Child

If you agree to be a sponsor **Elizabeth Nasambu Achupa**-
Technical Manager, Counselling and Education Services,
Bungoma, will write to you early in 2012 to confirm the name
and details of the child assigned to you, with a photograph,
and name of the school to which the child will go. ACE
Africa ensures that the child gets to school with the
necessary materials, clothes and personal needs.



Elizabeth Nasambu in Bungoma

Corresponding with your child:

Elizabeth Nasambu supervises communication between the child and sponsor and is responsible for the pastoral care of the child, supported by a counsellor, Wilberforce Simiyu. Reports and a letter from your child will be forwarded three times a year. You are strongly encouraged to correspond with your child generally and to comment and give encouragement regarding academic progress. When corresponding with your child please bear in mind that the child lives in a rural area and in extreme poverty, with one parent at most.

Correspondence with children must go through the ACE Africa Office at the following address:

Elizabeth Nasambu, ACE Africa, P O Box 1185, Bungoma 50200, KENYA.

Elizabeth can also be reached on +254 (0) 55 30118 or e-mail: achupa@ace-africa.org.

The Alumni Programme

Graduation of your child from Secondary School

Each year, a "class" of ACE bursary holders will leave secondary school and we work with them to consider their next steps. It is ACE Africa's view that the continuation of some post-secondary education support is a worthwhile and necessary investment, to ensure that the years of schooling are put to good use. As the majority of the bursary students come from totally impoverished circumstances where obtaining even basic needs is a problem, it is not surprising that bursary programme school leavers generally need further assistance for career development, training and higher education. We have therefore established an Alumni Programme and Fund.



The Alumni Programme has the following aims:

1. To provide advice & career guidance to all bursary holders before & after leaving school.
2. To provide each alumnus with training in the rights of the child.
4. To provide a short course in computer skills during the "gap" year after leaving school and before any higher education would commence,.
3. To provide community service experience at ACE Africa offices and community centres during the "gap" year aimed at instilling in all alumni a spirit of service to their communities.
5. To help alumni to secure funding for higher education from among State and local sources, their school sponsor, and institutional sources.

The annual sponsorship fee (detailed above) includes a £50 per year contribution to the Alumni Fund. This is a general fund for support of the needs of school leavers and is not specific to any of them. It is used to pay for an education and career adviser and alumni programme manager, for meetings of alumni to hear about and discuss higher education and career possibilities, and to help with expenses of making applications and attending interviews etc, if necessary. The Alumni Fund is NOT used to pay tuition fees or subsistence costs.

Tertiary education and vocational training are expensive and ACE Africa does not feel justified in attempting to fund either. However the aim of the Alumni Programme is to ensure that all bursary holders find the best way to become valuable members of the communities in which they live. ACE Africa is particularly keen to encourage students to 'give back' to their local communities by giving them experience during the "gap" year after leaving school and before any higher education would commence.



Kennedy Wanyonyi sat his final examination in 2008. In 2009 he worked as a volunteer teacher at South End Academy, a primary school supported by ACE Africa. He started at Kenyatta University in August 2010, reading Education.

ACE Africa hopes that the better performing students will achieve the required grades to be eligible for Joint Admissions Board placement and will thus secure government backed loans for their higher education. Students with good results but below the JAB criteria will have to find other sources of funds for tuition fees and subsistence at university or college. Such sources may be friends or well-wishers, local fund raising initiatives, or institutional sources in the UK (limited).

Sponsors of bursary holders may wish to help with fees and/or subsistence but are not in any sense committed to do so. The progress of each student will continue to be reported to their sponsor once he or she has left school and the sponsor will have the opportunity to consider whether to make a contribution.

November 2011