



# Upendo Village, NFP

Life and Hope for Kenyans Living with HIV and AIDS

A Project of the Assumption Sisters of Nairobi

## Upendo Village Update: Fall 2009

### “When I Was Hungry, You Gave Me Food...”

Deadly drought and civil strife have joined to augment the AIDS epidemic, placing Kenya in the midst of famine and exposing millions to threats of starvation and susceptibility to AIDS and other opportunistic diseases. In January, Kenya's President declared hunger a national disaster and pleaded for help to feed 25% of the country's population. Scarcity inflates costs so food and other necessities are out of reach.

Thanks to caring donors, Upendo Village is helping to relieve hunger and stave off starvation for those they reach with food, nutritional supplements, counseling, and home care. Thanks to a grant from Nestle, they also provide the option of infant formula to reduce mother to child transmission of HIV/AIDS.

After each of five regular support groups clients enjoy a hot meal after which they, with their little ones, line up for grain (corn, red beans, corn flour, and a protein-rich multigrain). The latter, with medication, has helped to restore bed-ridden people to active lives.



Families receive “miracle” grains to relieve hunger. A donated truck transports the desperately-needed food.

### Assistance

Comprehensive services and follow ups promote health, awareness and a chance for self-sufficiency. Upendo now serves over 3000 people, including thousands of Internally Displaced Persons, living in tattered tents in desolate camps since January, 2008 - remote from water and other needs. Many are sick. All are hungry.



Sisters Florence and Agnes lift children's hearts with food, clothing, and song as they cope in Internally Displaced Persons Camps.

### “When I was thirsty, you gave me a drink...”

UV's Founder, Sr. Florence, visiting the U.S. on behalf of her people, sadly reported that the worsening drought is magnifying the issues around hunger. Grazing is a challenge for donkeys, goats, and even the wild animals.



People find safe, clean water at the Upendo Village well Kiosk. Here they can get water that is safe to drink (excess fluorine is filtered out).



### Water Well

The centerpiece of Upendo Village is a safe, convenient source of water from their well, provided through generosity of Rotary Clubs of Naperville, Illinois. All are welcome to water at a kiosk, accessed without entering Upendo Village. The Upendo Village water supply is doubly important as, for the first time in Sister Florence's memory, the nearby watering hole is completely dry.

### Mission Statement

The Mission of Upendo Village is to spread the Gospel message of love to women, men and their children, who have HIV/AIDS so that they can live with dignity, self-esteem, self-sufficiency and respect.

We are committed to networking with other agencies and providing healthcare so that our clients can enjoy a free and full life.

Upendo is Kiswahili for Love. We are building a village of love and hope for women and their children living with HIV/AIDS in Kenya.

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## Web Links

[www.upendovillage.org](http://www.upendovillage.org)  
See more regarding the  
Joliet Team's visit to UV at  
[www.paxjoliet.org/  
missions/Medical.html](http://www.paxjoliet.org/missions/Medical.html)  
Harambee Project



Stephanina, Director of Income-generating Programs, displays a product of her craft group—a bag crocheted from discarded plastic bags, to guests, Dr. Gauthier and daughter, Caitlin. Dr. George treated hundreds of Clients during a January 09 visit.

## Operating and Capital needs:

Not surprisingly, the painful economic crunch is effecting Upendo Village's budget, necessitating cut backs even as more clients come, needing services and programs are expanding. Funding is urgently needed for ever-expanding services (especially salaries) and income-producing programs.

Because of generous donations, the Clinic, Community Center and Convent are in use. Greatly needed is an administration building. Nine professional staff share three tiny rooms in the clinic, depriving the clinic of much-needed space. This hardship adds to stresses for Sr. Florence and her staff. A kitchen and dining space is also needed. Daily cooking for groups is done in an outdoor fire pit. Food and dishes are washed on the ground at an outdoor water tank. There is no plumbing in the Community Center, where meals shares space with meetings, classes, training, crafts, etc.

## Microeconomics:

Dr. Kathleen Harrison of Loyola University, directs the amazing Harambee Project that help families to be self-sustaining. Beautiful crafts are sold in the U.S. and proceeds buy supplies and support the craft makers. A recent project is crocheting beautiful bags from recycled plastic. These are best sellers!

## Plant trees: Reforestation—Doing our part

In April, 2009, Upendo Village joined in Kenya's effort to plant trees. Environmental degradation in Kenya is severe—with only 1.7% of the land under forest cover. 217 seedlings have been planted. The plan is to plant two trees for each tree that is cut for various uses.

## Children of Upendo Sponsorship Program

Over 100 children are now sponsored for school, food, and medical care at \$880. per year. Now there is an option for monthly automated sponsor payments or other regular donations. The children below live miserably in tattered tents in a displacement camp. In late August thirty-three Joliet Diocese missionaries spent two weeks giving medical help and improving poor homes. Their stories, especially at the camp, bring tears to ones eyes. Among the volunteers is Bishop Joseph Imesch, the retired Bishop of Joliet, IL. I shared Bob Umhoefer's captivating blogs with all, who shared email addresses. Please share your email for regular updates from us. We want to keep connected while minimizing postage costs.



## Relieve Hunger / Stave off Starvation

**200 lb bag of grain/flour (3500 serving)**  
Uni Mix Flour \$141.00 (\$.04 a Serving)\*  
Beans \$107.00 (\$.03 a serving)  
Corn Flour \$60.00 (\$.02 a serving)  
\*Protein rich, life-saving porridge

## Provide Food and Potential Income:

### (The Harambee Project)

Chickens\$ \$ 15.00 a pair  
Dairy goats\*\* \$ 150.00 each  
Bee Hives \$ 50.00 each  
\*\*2 ½ liters of milk daily and good breeders  
Solar Oven\*\*\* \$ 20.00 each

\*\*\*REPLACE FIRE PITS WITH SOLAR OVENS—SAVE TREES.

**NEW: Donate online with VISA via PAYPAL**  
Automated monthly donations  
Check out our new website:  
[www.UpendoVillage.org](http://www.UpendoVillage.org)

- Share your current email address for quick updates along the way.
- We ask your prayers for our staff, volunteers and all who serve and for the client of Upendo Village. They and we keep our benefactors always in prayer.  
Thank you for your interest and help  
Sister Theresa Langfield  
O.S.F., Executive Director