



# AVFP NEWS

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*“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up”*

*Ephesians 6:9*

## AVFP NEWS SUMMARY

*Written By: James Opiyo (Kenya)*

We give all glory to God for all the accomplishments AVFP has been able to achieve this year. We have been able to continue to educate and care for the needs of seventeen orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and will have two graduating from high school. Bather and Christine will be sitting for their final high school exams from 22<sup>nd</sup> of October to mid November. In September we were also able to support one of our previous graduates George in attending medical school.

Other projects accomplished by AVFP this year were the installation of tap water on their project site and the donation of a well (borehole), which was cost shared with an organization called Ladies in Action based in Kisumu, Kenya.

These two water systems will enable us to increase water security within the community, as well as continuing with agricultural training needed to increase food security.

In August two members of our Kenyan team were able to travel to the USA for two weeks. This was the first time James Opiyo was able to visit America and have an opportunity to meet all of the board members from the USA. Beldina and James were able to work together with the USA board during their Summer Safari Picnic Fundraiser, which is one of the events the USA board did this year to raise funds for the organization. The team was also able to fellowship with the Presbyterian Church of the Mountain in Delaware Water Gap, PA which is one of the larger supporters of AVFP.

## Mission to make a Difference

*Written By: James Opiyo (Kenya)*



Beldina Opiyo-Omolo

Beldina was born and raised in the small village called Amilo, located in Western Kenya. Her mother Alice was a lay leader at a local church in Amilo Village. Alice had taken initiative to help elderly women in the church who were caring for their grand children orphaned by HIV/AIDs. Mama Alice was helping the families with food from her farm in the village.

Sandra Rader was born in Lancaster Pennsylvania, USA and was inspired by her mother Jane, a God fearing woman whose dream was to one day be a missionary. Due to her responsibilities as a mother and wife, Jane was unable to fulfill her dream. However, she would always host missionaries from around the world in her home where they would share stories of their work in Africa.



Sandra Rader

One of the missionaries once told Sandra, when she was a young teenager, that she had a vision that Sandra would one day replace her in Africa when she retired. She did not quite understand what that meant at the time.

Beldina and Sandra first met at the Presbyterian Church of the Mountain in Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania USA. Coming from different worlds, little did they know that they would hold a similar vision of serving God in an extra ordinary way by taking care of orphans and the disadvantaged group in the Amilo Village.

Beldina and Sandra were introduced to one another by their pastor, at the time. Beldina had already founded AVFP, after going to the United States to attend college.

Overwhelmed by the number of orphans and needy children, Beldina was already assisting after Mama Alice passed on in 2009. Beldina met with family members to develop a more formal organization that could meet greater needs in the community.

They discussed the vision that their late parents had, particularly their late mother "Mama Alice". Everyone felt that the project would further a vision she had started of serving God by helping the needy and the vulnerable in the community. It was finally registered officially in Kenya as a self help Group in March 2005.



Later in life, Sandra had a calling to support orphans and vulnerable children in Africa. After meeting Beldina, she decided to assist her in her mission in Amilo Village. As a result, Jane's African Orphan Mission was developed as one of the programs of AVFP.

With the support of their church, family and friends, 12 orphans were able to benefit from school sponsorship where their school fees and other basic needs required to go to school were met. Due to the lack of food reported by the village elders, the feeding program was also initiated at the primary school in Amilo Village and benefited many of the village children.

The decision to begin in Amilo Village in western Kenya was one of practicality, for while AVFP clearly recognizes that there are those who are poor, vulnerable or infected and affected by HIV/AIDS across the entire country of Kenya; it lacked the resources to serve on such a grand scale. The organization started small and step by step it is making a visible difference.

Since Amilo is home to Beldina Opiyo-Omolo and her family, it was easier to start there and identify the immediate needs of the village. As the organization grows in both size and experience, the intent is to expand to other needy areas of the Murohoni District. The ability to do so however is predicated upon the measurable success in establishing the organization in one geographical area. AVFP is now supported by both a board in Kenya and the USA.

## Glimpse of Hope

**Profile: Bather**

*Written By Bather Aching'*



I was born in April 1993 in a small village in western Kenya called Amilo. I am the fifth born in a family of six composed of two girls and four boys. I grew up in a community where it is very difficult to prosper academically as a girl because the male counter parts are given priority over female. Coming from a male dominated family, I knew that I had a very slim chance of ever going to high school; I was able to experience firsthand how my elder sister was denied an opportunity of completing high school by my parents.

School fees for High school are very expensive in Kenya especially for people living in the village without any formal employment like my parents.

My elder brother and sister completed their final primary school exams in the same year but my parents could not afford to take both of them to high school, even though my sister performed much better at the exam than my brother. My parents took my brother to high school at the expense of my sister; this affected her so much that she had to go to the city to live with an uncle. It was difficult to understand why this happened to my sister but that's what it means to be a girl in my village. I was not discouraged by this as many girls in my village would have been, but continued to work hard in school.

At the age of nine, I had already learned to do most of the household chores with my sisters help which included cooking, collecting fire wood, fetching water, doing family laundry and also we had to wake up earlier than any member of our family in order to fetch water for family use and to prepare breakfast and food for other meals.

My mother could not help in most of these as she used to get very sick whenever she cooked or fetch water very early in the morning.

I later learned that she had asthma and the smoke from the fire wood, walking in cold weather or even sweeping the house affected her.

When my sister left to the city it meant that I had to do all these by myself.



Bather & her mother

My brothers and mother had to work equally hard on the family farm as this was the only source of food for our family and also a way of raising income for the family to be able to pay school fees for my brother in high school.

We used to sell farm produce especially maize and beans to Alice Visionary Foundation Project which they used in the feeding program they initiated at Amilo Primary School.

I did my eighth grade exams in 2008 but was unable to get the cut off mark set by AVFP at the time. I talked to some of my primary school teachers and other well-wishers' to help me in enrolling in high school. It was a very difficult path for me but through God's grace I got some support. I was able to be enrolled to a day school not very far from my village but was constantly sent home because of school fees arrears.

At the end of my first year in high school my prayers were answered when AVFP took me up into the school sponsorship program. They understood the challenges I was going through as a girl child in the community and took a step further of enrolling me to a boarding school. I'll be sitting for my final high school exams this year. My performance since joining the institution has drastically improved and I am very confident of performing well in the exam.