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Dreams come true; without that possibility, nature would not incite us to have them. ~ John Updike



Notes from the Field

*How much do you spend on your morning latte? Three, four dollars? **Consider this, the average Kenyan survives little more than \$1 a day.***

Making Ends Meet in Kenya

By Seth Okumu

Forty percent of Kenya's 20,000,000-person labor force is unemployed and 75 percent who are employed work in agriculture. The lowest minimum wage for unskilled employees (set by the Kenyan government and based on location, age and skill level) is \$100 per month and the lowest agricultural minimum wage for unskilled employees is \$40 per month. Many people living in the Kopanga/Giribe area where P4P works are low income earners, casual workers and the unemployed.

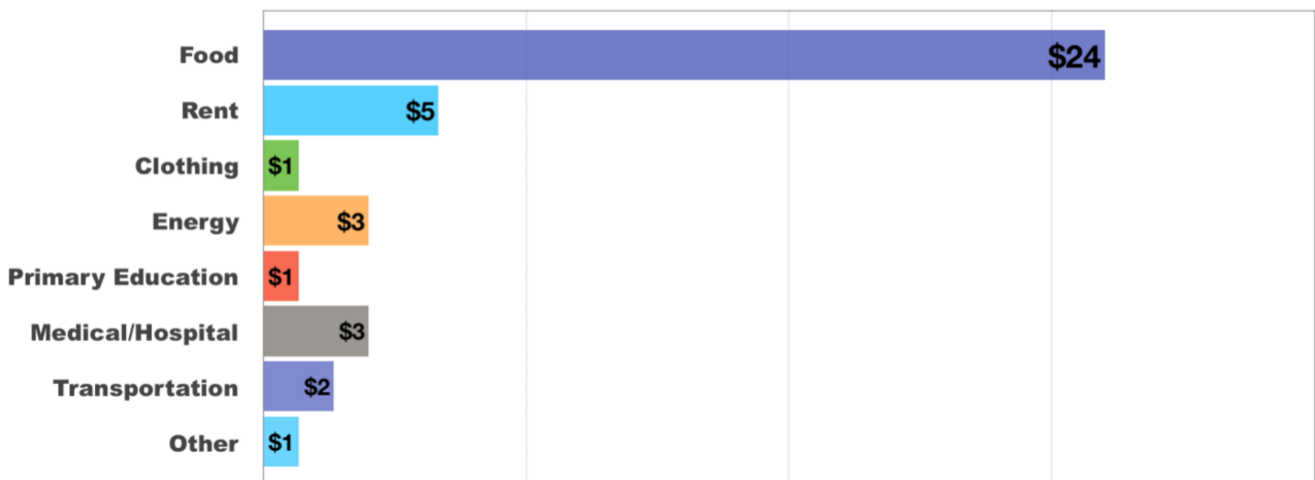


The average household consists of five people and the major focus is basic human survival. Food choices are limited and a balanced diet is impossible. There is very little money for entertainment or medicine, and unnecessary trips are cancelled or subsidized by walking. Education is obtained in the cheapest institutions or sometimes not at all. Good housing is a dream, sanitary water is often not accessible and clean energy is not even a consideration. The fun, easy activities that are taken for granted in the rest of the world are impossible in rural Kenya.

Most Kenyans in Kopanga spend almost 60 percent of their income on food but their diet is also subsidized by peasant farming. This is how an average family's monthly budget of \$40 breaks down:

- \$24 **Food** (Peasant farming is the only savior with this budget.)
- \$5 **Rent** (Those staying on family land uses the money to build and furnish the house.)
- \$1 **Clothing**
- \$3 **Energy** (cooking and lighting)
- \$1 **Primary Education**
- \$3 **Medical and Hospital Expenses**
- \$2 **Transportation**
- \$1 **Other** (entertainment, church donations and funerals)

\$40 Monthly Budget for Family of Five



Forty-two percent of Kenyans live in poverty, and in the Kopanga/Giribe area where Partnering for Progress works, the situation is even more desperate with many families subsisting on less than \$1 a day. With your help, P4P is working with the community to promote economic progress and help families out of poverty.



Decade Stories: You Bring Us Hope

By Sandy Ivers, P4P Co-Founder

In March 2015 volunteers Helen Biggs, Karen Fisher, Wayne Krafft and I met with the Education Committee at the Magongo-Ribe Primary School. This committee, made up of the primary school principals and the head of the parents' association of each school, selects the students who are eligible for P4P's scholarships.

At this meeting, there was a short exchange of thanks. We told the administrators and parents how much P4P appreciates their dedication to promoting the value of education and their continual encouragement of students. In turn, they thanked us for providing scholarships.

At one point, an older, distinguished looking gentleman stood up and thanked P4P personally. "You give us hope," he said.

That was such a reaffirming moment for me. This is why we are here!



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Partnering for Progress, P.O. Box 28191, Spokane, WA 99228. Thank You!



Meet Volunteer Charles Atha Otieno

Charles Atha has worked for P4P as a nutrition assistant for the past five years, the first two as a volunteer and the last three as a part-time paid employee. He also works as an unpaid Community Health Volunteer for his village.

It is obvious that Charles cares deeply for his community and has devoted his work to health care in Kopanga/Giribe. He is also both a loving son who cares for his parents and loving father who is proud of his large family. Polygamy is legal in Kenya and Charles has two wives and eight children. Charles' first wife, Mary Atieno, is mother of their 14-year-old Elvis, 13-year-old Renish Dafrosa, 8-year-old Felix Omondi, and 5-year-old Ostine Beldwine. Charles' second wife, Beatrice Atieno, is mother to their children Roda Achieng, 13; Rooney Regan, 8; Mike Davice, 5; and baby Sheryl

Arshley. Charles is an incredibly kind man who takes great pride in his home and family.

"P4P has changed the lives of people in Giribe and Kopanga in many ways," Charles says. "First in education, second in water projects and third in health. P4P has done much more that can't be counted and the area as a whole appreciates P4P for the work done in our villages and in communities."

"On my last trip," Stacey Mainer says, "Charles invited us to lunch and it was wonderful to see him at his home and with his wives and children. It is clear that family is very important to him and this compassion and value is evident in his work with P4P's Power of Milk. He interacts so well with POM caregivers and children. I see him joking and listening with a lot of concern, but he can also be stern and serious when he needs to be."

Stacey goes on to compliment the way Charles and Seth Okumu, P4P's Project Coordinator, work together. "It is clear they respect each other, they know how to laugh and how to work hard. Charles knows the community on a deep level and has helped Seth, a newcomer to Kopanga/Giribe, navigate and become integrated into the area. On the other hand, Seth has helped Charles learn how to use the computer and encouraged him to set goals and go back to school. They are a great team and P4P is lucky to have them in the field."



[Volunteer](#)



Economic Development in Kopanga

Can you believe 61 goats were presented in our partner villages last year?

Families save \$10 and P4P matches those funds so they can purchase a goat. These four-legged, bleating, butting critters are an ideal economic driver. They feed themselves and reproduce swiftly.

Last year, all the Community Health Volunteers (who are not paid by the government for their house-to-house visits) saved these funds and were presented with goats. Power of Milk graduating families also participated.

Unfortunately, agricultural output last year was less exciting. A serious drought afflicted Kenya and crop yields were disappointing. The rains have recently begun again and corn seeds are being planted and fertilized this month. The Ministry of Agriculture will provide guidance to our 10 farmers this season, and if all goes well, we hope to see two bumper crops this calendar year.

A very exciting new project is underway for 2017. Groups in the villages we serve will submit requests to help fund their own entrepreneurial projects. This will work like a grant process with people submitting ideas for sustainable small businesses that will continue indefinitely. We hope to share some passionate stories about these grants in the coming year!



Inspired and Invigorated

By Eryn Brooks, P4P Volunteer

Last month, I attended the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) Local Conference in San Jose, California, hoping to recruit interns for AEM Consulting, the company I work for. I was so excited to find out that the keynote speaker at the kick-off breakfast would be Celeste Mergens, CEO and founder of nonprofit Days for Girls International (DFG), pictured on the left. My goal became twofold: to promote 50 exciting summer employment opportunities to

bright young women and men from various West Coast colleges and to attend the breakfast and meet Celeste. Success!

I am no stranger to DFG since Partnering for Progress has distributed DFG reusable sanitary napkin kits in Kopanga/Giribe for the past two years. Celeste's emotional presentation explained how the normal, monthly female cycle disrupts the lives of young women in most developing countries. The lack of sanitary supplies keeps girls home from school, disrupts their education and often forces them into early marriage and childbearing. Something so natural that gives life, is shamed.

Many people in the audience, however, were shocked and saddened to realize how women are regarded in some parts of the world and how they must struggle every day. Celeste's message painted a limiting and destructive picture of life in many other countries.

Celeste explained that once she spoke with women in these communities and identified a simple need that could drastically change their lives, the humorous trial and error process of creating reusable sanitary napkin kits began.

Celeste honed in on how all of us, especially a group of engineers, can play a part in making the world a better place by helping those in need through simple acts, listening and working together. Such a beautiful and inspiring message to start the day. And of course, I got to meet Celeste. She is truly a passionate and charismatic woman and was thrilled about P4P's work in Kenya and our distribution of DFG kits.

Learn more about Days for Girls at <https://vimeo.com/204386445/9a75bba49d>



Celebrating the Power of Community

Community can be a powerful tool toward creating a better, brighter future. The first ever Kopanga Benefit Concert will not only bring communities together, but it will also celebrate everything that we have, can,

and *WILL* accomplish. Amazing things can happen when we work together.

So be a ***Dream Maker*** and join P4P on **April 7th, 7 PM - Midnight** at **The Observatory** in downtown Spokane. Help us raise the \$2,500 needed to put five freshman scholarship students through their first year of high school and one step closer to achieving their dreams. *Age 21 and older ~ \$10 donation suggested.*

Live Music - This fun evening will include live music by Troubadour, one of Spokane's most popular cover bands playing everyone's favorite dance music from the 80's, 90's and 2000's, and Funky Unkle, specializing in funk that is sure to get you out on the dance floor.

Amazing Artwork- Enjoy First Friday artwork curated by Art Seed Spokane, and featuring Spokane's own Salik Seville, who has graciously agreed to donate a portion of all proceeds from artwork sold during the benefit concert to P4P.

Raffle- Original Kenya-Inspired Painting by Artist Kaite Staib - Can't attend the Kopanga Benefit but want to support P4P's scholarship program? Buy a raffle ticket (or two) in advance and you'll also have a chance to win a one-of-a-kind Kopanga-inspired painting (seen below) created and donated by local artist **Katie Staib**. *Only 40 raffle tickets will be sold for this special work of art (valued at \$500).* For more information please call [\(509\) 720-8408](tel:5097208408).

Raffle Tickets: \$25 Attendance to win not required.

For more information about the benefit email info@partneringforprogress.org or call [\(509\) 710-3960](tel:5097103960).



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Catch a Broadway Musical & Support P4P

Kiss Me, Kate is a play within a play, a romance within a romance and a lively, unforgettable Tony Award-winning Broadway musical. Cole Porter wrote the music and lyrics for what became his most successful play. Over 1,000 performances ran on Broadway, and in 1949, *Kiss Me, Kate* won the first Tony Award presented for Best Musical.

Don't miss this entertaining way to support P4P. Join us **Wednesday, May 31** at the **Civic Theater in Spokane** for an evening of theater. Tickets are on sale now - \$35 adult, \$300 for a package of 10, and \$30 student. Our

usual pre-function appetizer spread and no host bar will sweeten the evening even more.

Buy tickets using PayPal at <http://partneringforprogress.org/civic-theatre-benefit.html> or for check and credit card purchases call (509) 720-8408.

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