

PIAF FELLOWS' FLYER

News and views for and by current Princeton in Africa Fellows.

December 2007



IT'S HERE!

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DATES TO REMEMBER

Princeton in Africa Wine Safari

A tasting tour of South Africa's diverse and delicious wines led by Marnie Old, director of wine studies for the acclaimed French Culinary Institute. Tickets: \$50.

December 5 — 7:00 PM

Astor Center, New York City

Tickets are sold out, but you may email
piaf@princeton.edu to join the waiting list.

Firsthand from a Fellow: Adam Herling
2007-2008 Fellow Adam Herling, who will be passing through Princeton from western Kenya, will share highlights from his fellowship thus far at One Acre Fund. Read more about Adam and his fellowship on page 2.

December 7 — 2:00 PM

Bobst Center, Room 101

Application Deadline

December 18

Fellowship applications and more details are available at www.princeton.edu/piaf

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

December 11
Eric Leroux

December 18
Beverly Lien

December 29
Thomas Bohnett

... and **HAPPY HOLIDAYS**
TO ALL!

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

by Adam Herling, '07-'08 Fellow at One Acre Fund in Kenya

Living in rural western Kenya for three months will change the way you see things. Events that were once mundane and almost everyday in college, like eating a piece of pizza or a good hoagie, have now become momentous epicurean delights, experienced only in daydreams or on rare trips to Nairobi (9 bumpy hours by bus). Conversely, things that when I first arrived here in Bungoma shocked me, like the countless children who don't go to elementary school because their parents can't afford \$5 dollars for a uniform and a couple of notebooks, now seem sadly ordinary.

The organization I am working for, One Acre Fund (OAF), is an innovative non-profit that works on the business principles of transparency and achieving measurable results. Based on the philosophy of microfinance, we do not give handouts; instead, we invest in farmers to permanently increase their incomes by 100% or more. We work with the very poor farmers, so common in this part of Africa, who own one acre of land or less. These are the poorest of the poor, families often headed by single women that suffer from an annual "hunger season" several months out of the year and a child mortality rate of 15% – while living amid some of the most fertile farmland in all of Africa.

OAF lends these farmers agricultural inputs (such as seed and fertilizer) and provides the training necessary to more than triple their harvests. We then offer improved market access so that they receive fair prices for their crops. With their incomes more than doubled, our members can easily repay One Acre Fund for the initial farming inputs we provided them on credit, while enjoying a greatly and sustainably increased quality of life!

I have found the work the organization does very exciting, and the responsibilities I have been given personally in my short time here are both engaging and certainly a bit daunting. I am currently working on several projects, ranging from developing the curriculum for our health volunteers who give monthly presentations to our members on pressing child health issues, to streamlining our department of pest and disease control so that problems afflicting our members' crops are addressed as quickly and effectively as possible.

I am lucky that many of my projects involve substantial time in the field, which allows me to meet some of our farmers and to work closely with our talented and dedicated local staff. The generosity of the farmers we work with continually astounds me; though they have so little to give, they are eager to invite me into their homes for a cup of tea, some bread, and maybe a mug full of live termites – a local delicacy I have yet to acquire a taste for. It is these personal interactions with the people our organization serves that have made my job so incredibly rewarding. Right now I still wish that they were offering me a chicken parm sub rather than live insects for lunch, but maybe by the end of my time here my perspective on that will have changed, too.



Above: Adam at sunrise in Kakamega Rainforest



Left: The children, house and chicken of a One Acre Fund farmer; below: A happy One Acre Fund farmer in front of her very healthy passion fruit vines



NOTES FROM THE FIELD

by Sabina Sequeira, '07-'08 Fellow at the Maria de Lurdes Mutola Foundation in Mozambique



Above: Sabina with Maria de Lurdes Mutola, 800-meter Olympic gold medalist and founder of FLM

My first 3 months in Maputo have sped by, yet I feel like I've been here awhile. The city, filled with peddlers selling goods ranging from paintings to power outlets, and active with expatriates from all over the world driving along streets named for Communist leaders, in many ways now feels like a unique new home. Outside the city, the rest of the country is largely rural and spattered with straw huts that belie Mozambique's extensive poverty.

At the Lurdes Mutola Foundation (FLM), a small but rapidly-expanding organization founded in 2001 that promotes development in Mozambique through youth sports and education programs, I've enjoyed working on a mix of meaningful projects and assignments. My job offers me a great opportunity to work on all aspects of programs—from development to implementation to monitoring and evaluation—that focus on Mozambique's youth (who make up more than 54% of the population) to help push the country out of its cycles of poverty.

One of my first tasks at FLM was to research rural Mozambican girls' obstacles to secondary education and design a girls' scholarship program to contribute to a solution. Mozambican girls commonly face the threat of sexual abuse in schools, in addition to challenges posed by costs, distance, and a culture of inequality that promotes child marriage and subsistence agriculture rather than secondary education. To address these obstacles, the program combines 3-year scholarships with afterschool programs, leadership courses, and protection from a female community leader hired to support scholarship recipients. This year, in its pilot phase, the program will provide scholarships to 20 girls at two secondary schools. In its next phase, the program will fund scholarships for 500 girls in Manica province.

Find out more about the girls' scholarship program at www.globalgiving.com/pr/1900/proj1882a.html

Another assignment of mine is implementation of Cantina Escolar, a pilot project that has allowed FLM to create student-led sports, culture, and literature associations in two secondary schools and to build multipurpose areas (or Cantinas) to house their activities. For the program, I've made weekly trips to Moamba, a small rural town about 50 minutes outside of Maputo city, to meet with the student leaders of each association and guide them along the process of forming their associations and planning their activities. In October, I flew to Chimoio, a small town on the border with Zimbabwe, to visit the other Cantina Escolar pilot project and do a 3-day association building workshop with students. The trips have shown me some of the challenges of implementing youth programs as well as given me the chance to wing it with my Portuguese!

My final long-term project has been writing a concept paper and proposal for higher education resource centers for Mozambique, managed by the FLM. The project, which will create a main center in Maputo and three satellite centers in other provinces, will have resources, courses, and training sessions to help secondary and higher education students graduate. It will also give many who are unable to go to school the chance to continue their education in the areas most important to them through tutorials on subjects such as entrepreneurship.

Helping to bring these projects to life at FLM as the organization grows has been such a privilege, and I expect the next 9 months will go by as quickly as the first 3!



Left: Photos depicting Cantina Escolar activities. 1. A group of girls celebrate after winning a soccer tournament organized by the Moamba Sports Association. 2. Three girls sing and dance at the Moamba Culture Association's fall talent show. 3. Moamba Literature Association leaders pose for a group picture for the first edition of their newspaper. 4. Members of the Chimoio Sports Association grin alongside their new equipment.

Background: An aerial view of Maputo's coastline from Mao Tse Tung, the street where Sabina lives.