



SUCCESS STORY

Small Grants, PEPFAR and Peace Corps Team Up for OVCs



OVCs holding the first litter of piglets at the demonstration farm

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The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief is the largest commitment by any nation to combat a single disease in history. Since 2003, the American people invested \$18.8 billion in HIV/AIDS funding, with a reauthorization of up to \$48 billion more to fight HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria over the next five years. In Uganda, PEPFAR invested over \$1.4 billion in

Written by Lynne McDermott, PEPFAR Communications Officer

When Moses Mubala and Peace Corps volunteer Jessica Dyer started their demonstration farm last year, they had a small piece of land and high hopes to support OVCs with an income-generation project that breeds pigs and goats.

With PEPFAR funding through the Small Grants department, those high hopes are now a completed demonstration farm where animals are already breeding and OVCs are already learning how to care for them.

For the 55 Orphans and Vulnerable Children registered with Earnesta Child and Youth Development Project (ECYDP), of whom 40 are HIV positive, this project is sustainable income that will pay for school fees, healthcare, food and a way out of poverty.

Last week, new PCV Nicole Fiol Molina arrived to take over for Jessica. Nicole is tasked with keeping one eye on the progress of the demonstration farm while beginning grass-roots HIV testing and health education.

With profits generated from the demonstration farm, OVCs can now pay for their own healthcare and school fees. The money also gives them hope for an independent and self-reliant future.

US Mission Small Grants paid for the construction of the four animal houses and an onsite office to manage the farm. The grant also funds veterinary care and training and paid for the first stock of goats and pigs. This January, OVCs will receive their first male and female pig, except for Muslim OVCs that receive goats. They all get free training and veterinary care so they can start out profitable and ‘productive’. Going forward, OVCs can return to consult with the vet.

So far, the farm has 45 female pigs. Just last week, the first pig delivered about ten piglets, and several other adult pigs showed signs of pregnancy. And the goats are keeping up with the pigs!

The overall goal of the demonstration farm is to breed enough animals and make enough money to pay for health, education and other costs for the OVCs, and to produce more pigs and goats.

“They’ve [OVCs] been encouraged to start something of their own because they are dependent and vulnerable. Being productive is a meaningful way of being self-reliant,” says Moses. With income from their pigs and goats, he says “they will access basic needs in life.”