

Annual Report 2008

School against Aids (SaA) has got 8 partners:

St Moses, Reach Out, Kuddiza, Have Mercy (Uganda); Busia (Kenya); Tafika and Chiawa (Zambia). As one of SaA's aims is to guarantee students the *whole* primary education, few new students have been taken on. The association tries to honour long-term commitments and finds it therefore more important to support those it has already been assisting: **At present more than 1000 children and young people are helped. The food situation has worsened. In some cases there has been an increase of food prices of up to 100%, which has seriously affected thousands of families who already lived in extreme poverty.** A qualified teacher receives a monthly salary of 200'000 UGX (about 125 CHF), whereas a kilo of rice costs 2000 UGX (about 1.25 CHF). Several families only have one meal a day, the evening meal. A 10-year-old girl missed school for a week due to malaria; as a result she kept fainting at home for lack of food. In view of the food crisis SaA has raised the budgeted amount by 30-50%.

SaA's financial support for the young people's education has enabled them to gain basic knowledge in reading, writing and maths, **but also to get information on the prevention** of illnesses such as e.g. HIV transmission and malaria. Several students have passed the end of primary school exams: 18 are in secondary school and 3 at university. In addition 4 young girls are doing a short apprenticeship. SaA has chosen girls because they are far more vulnerable at the age of 12-15 if they are not at school.

Thanks to our food programme, **deficiencies due to malnutrition and undernourishment have been countered** and the nutritional state of the children has improved. In general **the teachers or our local partners have noticed that the number of orphans who don't come to school has decreased**, in other words they no longer hang out in the streets.



The wooden planks of the wall used as a blackboard

UGANDA

At Have Mercy the main building of the school made of banco collapsed due to heavy **rainfalls and an inundation in January. SaA responded to an appeal for an emergency aid** to build a shelter of boards and corrugated iron with doors and windows to be ready for the new school year.

150 children take part in the Saturday Club or Child to Child Club. Through dancing, acting, films, debates, sport and games, social workers and voluntary staff show the children how to face difficulties in everyday life: nutrition, clothing, shelter. **These clubs replace parental advice and allow children to talk about their problems.** They also further the solidarity between HIV+ and HIV- children, which helps reduce stigmatization.

The institutions supported by SaA constantly try to improve the children's health in their everyday life (washing of hands with soap before meals, clean water, sometimes distribution of vitamins), but also on the medical side by regular tests (HIV) and treatment if possible. The follow-up is often done in collaboration with the families. Although the condition of the children who attend school has improved, several difficulties, however, remain:

- Children whose parents die and who are taken out of school without warning and taken to villages where their traces cannot be followed.
- Increase of children who are HIV+ or ill.
- Poor school results



The teacher's shoes

KENYA

At the beginning of 2008 the area around Busia was the prey of intertribal violence and the inhabitants of the orphanage Mama Orphans Home were confined to its compound for several weeks. Luckily none of the 96 children came to grief, but **the economic situation had worsened dramatically. Once again SaA showed its support by increasing its financial aid.**

ZAMBIA



Due to particularly heavy rainfalls in February and March the HIV-malaria prevention programme started 2 months late. For a long time communication routes were cut off by the rise in river levels and the villages couldn't be reached. The planned programme was modified so that the objective of sensitization could still be fully attained: **A Zambian NGO, a theatre group,**

"Seka" (Sensitization and Education through Kunda Arts) **gave performances on the theme of health in all the schools of the valley** to replace the information days spent in the camp base and the visits to the villages.