



# PAAV Perspectives

## December 2022

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From Dr. Frew Tegene

I hope you are all doing fine. Your help during the last years has been beyond words. I thank you all for all the good you have been doing and for all those we have been able to help in Sendafa Beke throughout the past years.

As you might know our beneficiaries are those who live in dire poverty, what the experts call “the poorest of the poor”. Among these we find PLHIV (People Living with HIV) and female commercial sex workers. Almost all female sex workers in Sendafa are women who have been forced into prostitution due to poverty. None of them became prostitutes willingly or because it generates enough income to sustain them. They became prostitutes out of sheer need, in order to LIVE. Most of these women and those with HIV are uneducated, illiterate, with no job experiences, shunned and loathed by the society and who have no self-respect or dignity. These are the women we help. Every time I encounter one of these ladies, I ask myself “What if I was one of them?” If I was one of them then I would surely want someone to help me get out of prostitution and out of poverty.

During the past year, we were able to help PLHIV start their own businesses; like retail shops, making and selling food, growing vegetables and selling them and also fattening and selling cattle. We were also able to bring some female commercial sex workers out of prostitution by giving them jobs and by helping some of them reunite with their families. These people are poor but if they had the opportunity that I had, if they were raised in an environment where education was treasured then they would most probably have become physicians or teachers or engineers. But life wasn't good to them like it has been for some of us and they ended in poverty, HIV and prostitution.



*Income generating activity at the market.*

Also during the year we were able to provide school bags to students who were born from poor parents. Some of the parents of these students have HIV while some of the students themselves have HIV. We can only break the vicious circle of poverty, HIV and prostitution by helping kids become educated and come out of poverty. One of the other things that we did during the year was building toilet rooms using plastic bottles at the Sendafa Primary Hospital. The hospital begged us to build them pit latrines since they didn't have enough toilets for the patients coming to the hospital. Using plastic bottles for construction has many benefits. It is an environmentally friendly way of construction; it is cost effective and doesn't require much trained manpower.



*School bags for children.*

In conclusion, your help and generosity has been invaluable. You have been so kind to those living in poverty, sorrow, pain, without dignity and without hope. The smiles I see on the faces of some of those we have helped, the warmth of spirit, the eagerness to work and get rid of poverty I observe in our beneficiaries makes me happy and rejoice in what I do. I hope you will continue your good work since it has impacted many people in a positive and constructive way. Even helping just a single person during these hard times is a great job. But helping so many people is beyond mere words.

I thank you from the depth of my heart.

*Dr. Frew*

**Donations can be made online at [FriendsofPAAV.org](http://FriendsofPAAV.org) or by sending a check to Friends of PAAV, 3301 Church Road, East Berlin, PA 17316.**