

**Learning by Ear**  
**People Who Make a Difference**  
**HIV-Orphan (Kenya)**

PEOPLE WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE  
EPISODE 10

Author: Jan-Philipp Scholz

Editor: Stefanie Duckstein

Proofreader: Tony Dunham

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**CHARACTERS:**

Announcer: Female

Sound clips: David Owiti (male, 18 years)

Benson Obudko (male, 70-80 years)

Randiga Eliazar Keya (male, 28 years)

Lorraine Onyango (female, 20 years)

### **INTRO (Announcer):**

Hello and welcome to Learning by Ear. In this series called „People Who Make a Difference“, you meet some of the ordinary heroes of day-to-day life in Africa. They are courageous, genuine and committed. They have a vision for the future and they believe in their dreams. Today you are going to meet David, an 18-year-old orphan from Kenya whose parents died from HIV/AIDS.

### **TEXT:**

1. *SFX: Opening of goat cage*

2. *Sound Clip David:*

*“Now, I’m removing the goats from where they are sleeping. I want to tie them outside there!”*

3. *SFX: Sounds of goats walking to a place for grazing*

4. *Sound Clip David:*

*“After finishing this job – they are now set over there – what I do is to prepare the ox plough. Then we can move to the garden where we are going to weed. That is the next thing I am going to do.”*

5. *SFX: Urging of oxen (cattle sounds, cracking of lash etc.)*

6. *Sound Clip David:*

*“So... let me continue!”*

7. *SFX: Urging of oxen continued; cock crows*

It is half past five in the morning. It is dark, and everybody is still asleep in the small village of Alwala in western Kenya. Well, not really everybody, because David Owiti is already working hard in the garden. The plough and the cattle that he uses are heirlooms left to him by his parents. Both of them died fourteen years ago of HIV/AIDS.

8. *Sound Clip David:*

*“All the work that I am doing I learned from my grandfather. He started teaching me this work around 1999, when we were with him alone. I was assisting him doing this work. So I was learning bit by bit.”*

David was only four years old when his parents died. He has an elder sister, named Lorraine, and a younger brother, Benson. Since David is the oldest son in the family, he has a special responsibility to take care and provide for his siblings.

The hardest part, as he says, is to scrape the money together for their education. David has just finished high school and would like to go to university. But his siblings come first. He wants to make sure that Lorraine and Benson both get a good schooling before he continues with his education.

9. *SFX: Morning sounds; David taking a bath behind grandfather's shack*

Around seven o'clock the sun slowly rises above Alwala. David has just completed his garden work. He quickly takes a bath behind his grandparent's small shanty and gets ready for his second job. He has just started work as an assistant teacher at a local primary school. During his long walk there he has some time to explain why there is only one dream job for him: to become a medical doctor.

10. *SFX: David walking to school*

11. *Sound Clip David (speaking while walking):*

*"It is because of the suffering that I have gone through since my parents passed away and now I want to be somebody. You know, if you rescue somebody's life the kids will not be suffering. When my parents passed away I was still young. I still needed to be close to them. So I think if I can rescue somebody's parents the child will not suffer, will not go through the conditions that I had to go through."*

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) about 12 million children in Sub-Saharan Africa have lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS – and the number keeps rising. Many of these orphans still have to quit school. Some face discrimination by their communities. Orphans that are not fortunate enough to have the support of their

extended families often end up living on the streets – begging, stealing or trading sex for money.

David still considers himself lucky as his grandparents are still alive. They are old, but they do provide emotional support, shelter and a feeling of security for the three grandchildren.

*12. Sound Clip David (speaking while walking):*

*“In my life my role model I can say is my grandfather. He is the one who has always taken care of me.*

*[Speaking in Luo to some friends that he met on the way (15 seconds).]*

*He is the one who took care of me since my parents passed away. From my childhood up to now: He never lets me down! By now he has become old and tired. So I also need to take the responsibilities which he used to carry.”*

Besides taking care of the siblings and finding his own way in life David feels that it is also his duty to give something back to his grandparents.

His grandfather’s eyes shine with pride when he talks about David, Lorraine and Benson.

*13. Sound Clip Benson Obudko (Luo):*

*“My grandchildren really help me a lot in life. I tried to help them when they were young, now they give it back to me and support me wherever they can. When my son died I thought that nobody would be left to help me but now my grandchildren do a wonderful job. They always work as a team and they are quite different compared to their age mates. They act very responsibly because they are orphans and had to live through many difficult times.”*

When David's parents passed away, his grandfather was very sick as well. However, he says that because his grandchildren needed him, it gave him new strength to overcome his illness. He does not know his age and his face is clearly marked by time and life. Nevertheless, his brain is still clear and sharp.

*14. Sound Clip Benson Obudko (Luo):*

*“The advice I can give them is to have respect and to work hard for their future. I can also talk to them freely about HIV/AIDS. I tell my grandchildren to protect themselves. They should not have unprotected intercourse. I am an old and respected man in the community and I teach everyone without fear.”*

*15. SFX: School children playing and waiting for David*

When David arrives at school, he finds the children waiting impatiently for his arrival. Even though he has only been teaching there for a few months, David has already gained their trust, respect and sympathy. Many of them live in similar circumstances, and they view David as a role model and older brother. Randiga Eliazar – his supervisor – is astonished.

*16. Sound Clip Randiga Eliazar Keya:*

*“Dave is a very good chap, he is very good! I have not seen any bad thing with him since he joined us here. They really like him. At times, when he misses coming to school they all ask us ‘Where is Mr. David?’ Pupils always like somebody who is close to them and appreciates what they do. He is always trying to tell them that they should not lose hope in life. This year, we also have some pupils who are not having parents. So he is a very good role model to the pupils because he also has the experience in life.”*

*17. SFX: David teaching in class. We hear him greeting the students  
Today’s lesson: The human body and the blood circulation.*

David teaches everyday from nine o’clock in the morning until four o’clock in the afternoon. The money he earns is little – less than 20 Euros per month. But it is also the feeling of providing important information to the students that keeps him motivated. Today’s lesson is especially important to David, because it is about the human body and blood diseases.

*18. Sound Clip David:*

*“In that class we were dealing with the myths and misconceptions about HIV/AIDS. We also looked at the causes and the preventive measures. Some people believe that AIDS is not real. And some also believe that somebody who is having AIDS is due to some curses. And some also say that those having AIDS may at one point have acted against the community’s beliefs. I do get angry! They are misleading people. They make those people having AIDS to be discriminated against and most people will not like to socialize with them and they are just people like us!”*

David and his siblings do not have the virus themselves – unlike many other orphans who are already born HIV positive. For his sister Lorraine an infection was very close once: She was raped by someone who pretended to help her. She did not get HIV, but she did become pregnant. Now, she has a little daughter to take care of.

While David is teaching at school, she usually stays at home taking care of her child and doing household chores like cooking and washing the clothes. For Lorraine, the struggle to make a living is particularly difficult.

*19. SFX: Lorraine doing some washing in front of the shack*

*20. Sound Clip Lorraine:*

*“With my life I cannot say I am happy with it because of the way I am suffering. Sometimes I have to go to school walking and when you reach there you don’t have anything to eat – you don’t even have a soap to clean your body!”*

In her hard life, Lorraine is very happy to have a brother like David who tries hard to help her with some financial support.

*21. Sound Clip Lorraine:*

*“When he gets something small he buys for my brother clothes and I can get something from him to go to school with. So he is really helping us.”*

*22. SFX: David coming back from teaching; starting to take care of the animals straight away*

Even though David has finished teaching for the day, his work is not over yet. After the half hour walk back to his grandparents, he still has to take care of the cattle. This usually keeps him busy until at least half past six in the evening.

*23. SFX: Cattle grazing, David giving instructions to animals*

*24. Sound Clip David:*

*“The grazing is going to take quite long. Mainly, I will have to do it all of the afternoon.”*

With such a workload, David admits that he would like to have more time for himself. So he tries hard to allow himself some time to relax, but it is difficult. He is simply human and sometimes wants to enjoy life like other teenagers.

*25. Sound Clip David:*

*“It is not that I work all the day six days a week. I do get some chances some days. During my free time I spend most of the time with my friends, reading newspapers and when there is a football match going on I like watching such.”*

There is one more thing that David did not mention. It has to do with someone who is very special for him. Someone he can go to when he feels like everything is getting too much to cope with – someone who gives him new strength and keeps him going no matter how hard the times may be.

*26. Sound Clip David:*

*“Okay, I have a girlfriend. We met when I was in High School. She was learning in a nearby school. Now we could share things that happened in their school and our school. That is how our friendship started. It was not something that was planned...” (starts to laugh)*

### **OUTRO (Announcer):**

That was the story of David, an 18-year-old orphan from Kenya whose parents died from HIV/AIDS. Despite his difficult situation David does not give up. Above all, he understands that no man is an island and also accepts responsibility for other family members. What do you think about him?

If you would like to give us your comments, read more about the topic or just listen to his story again, why not visit our website at:

d w world dot de slash l b e ([www.dw-world.de/lbe.](http://www.dw-world.de/lbe))

Thanks for listening and we hope you'll join us next time for a new story in this Learning by Ear series called People Who Make a Difference.