



AFRICAN SERVICES
COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

A NEW DAY



IMPROVING THE HEALTH
AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY
OF THE AFRICAN COMMUNITY
IN NEW YORK CITY
AND ON THE FRONTLINES
OF THE
GLOBAL AIDS EPIDEMIC.

Dear Friends,

My entry into public service began in 1966 as a Peace Corps volunteer in Nigeria. Since then, my professional path has spanned government and non-profit sectors, always pointing to the real-life problems that shape people's lives.

Working in Africa, it was impossible to ignore the most basic human needs that fail to be met every day. I joined African Services' board as a way to sustain my commitment to African communities and support the organization's dedicated staff. What I've come to appreciate most is African Services' leadership philosophy—that an intelligent effort toward meeting those needs is what ultimately makes a difference.

Africans who leave home and pitch their hopes on the United States face many challenges—language, employment, education, and decent housing. These are interlaced with the challenge of an “American” culture that is not one-dimensional, but a tapestry of cultures and influences, past and current, to absorb. Over 28 years, African Services has made an enormous, while largely incalculable, impact on the lives of thousands of African immigrants. They accomplish this by treating newcomers with respect; asking what they need to succeed, rather than assuming their wishes; acknowledging their enormous contributions to their newly-adopted country and to the organization itself, as professionals and volunteers; and committing resources to the delivery of life-saving and life-altering services.

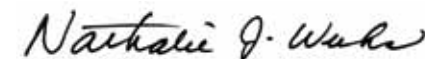
As leaders in HIV testing and care, African Services' programs command respect across New York City, the country and among international NGOs, government entities and donors. They have distinguished their work by delivering quality service in a supportive environment that builds trust with the communities so very much in need of services.

While visiting African Services in Ethiopia in 2008, I saw their exceptional approach spanning two continents and heard a regional director from the Ministry of Health refer to African Services as providing the “gold standard” of care. Their Ethiopian staff possesses a professional confidence that reinforces its reputation as an organization dedicated to doing all it can to meet the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Today, the U.S. and Africa are closer than ever. Since President Obama's election, much has been said about our new American experience. I believe this is because he represents the blending of so many cultural traditions, life perspectives, socio-economic experiences, and international and American institutions. Like so many immigrants, he is both humble and proud; always-learning, yet so knowledgeable; calm and observant; both optimistic and realistic; hopeful in overcoming obstacles, and focused on the future.

These are deeply admirable attributes that we observe each day at African Services, as the newcomers we serve chart their own new, hopeful courses.

Sincerely,



Nathalie Weeks
Board Member



Board member Nathalie Weeks with African Services' staff in Ethiopia.

BEGINNING

AGAIN

AS A NEW MOTHER

May 1981

Asfaha Hadera founds the Committee to Aid Ethiopian Refugees

November 1982

We open our first office at the Community Church of New York

July 1985

Our first grant is made to benefit Ethiopian refugee programs in Sudan

January 1987

Refugee resettlement program is begun in New York City

March 1991

We begin HIV prevention outreach for African immigrants

December 1994

Our name changes to African Services Committee

March 1998

African Services starts providing HIV legal services

March 1998

HIV case management is begun for immigrants and their families

Binta lost her first child before the age of two in Guinea. In 2001, she left her native country—one of the poorest in Africa—to join her husband in the U.S. In 2008, she was diagnosed with HIV and learned that her first child may have died of complications related to AIDS.

As a Fulani speaker, Binta worked with staff medical interpreter Sonia N'diaye, who provided medical escort and translation for her throughout the nine months. Case manager Willa Cochran coordinated Binta's care, advocating for her every step along the way.

“It's difficult preparing for a birth if your heart is not at peace,” Binta said.

This winter, Binta was anxiously looking forward to giving birth again. Through African Services' family case management program, she began prenatal care at Metropolitan Hospital in Manhattan, attended parenting classes and prepared for the antenatal treatment to prevent HIV transmission to her baby.

Through African Services' HIV support group, Binta met another woman from Guinea, who had given birth to a healthy baby three years earlier. In the months before Binta's delivery, they spoke nightly on the telephone sharing experiences. “It's difficult preparing for a birth if your heart is not at peace,” she said.

In April, Binta and her baby returned home from the hospital. Through African Services' housing program, she was able to settle into a new apartment in the Bronx. A new crib was waiting for the baby, and Binta began the next chapter in her life as a new mother in New York City.



GETTING A FAIR SHOT

Over the last year, African Services' community-based legal practice for new immigrants represented over 300 individuals in civil litigation cases and served over 100 immigrants applying for asylum, defending against improper deportation, adjusting immigration status and filing petitions for family reunification.

In one case, staff attorneys represented a woman who had been active in the largest opposition party in Cameroon prior to coming to New York. She organized rallies, recruited

African Services' legal team successfully helped her receive political asylum and has also filed for asylum for her 14 year old daughter, who is living underground in Cameroon due to ongoing police harassment of her family.

We helped the client resolve a landlord/tenant problem, and through African Services' housing program, she now receives a rent subsidy for people living with AIDS. Having secured work authorization, she is working as a receptionist in a doctor's office.

With legal advocates at her side and the support of peers in our women's HIV support group, she has come so far, so fast.

African Services' legal program has provided advice and assistance to hundreds more immigrants in need through community outreach and drop-in clinics. We continue to represent their interests by serving on the Northern Manhattan Domestic Violence Collaborative, City-wide Housing Taskforce, the African Affairs Committee of the New York Bar Association and by building alliances with local legal service agencies and law schools.

members in the non-violent fight for democracy and was detained twice without charges. Both detentions took place in dark, overcrowded shipping containers, and she was denied food, water and sleep. During the second detention, she was raped by a guard and threatened with death.

After being released, her employer helped her get a visa to the United States. She had not seen a doctor since the rape and came directly to African Services. At our testing center, she was diagnosed with HIV and through our case management program began receiving medical care and treatment.

July 1998

The UN Economic and Social Council grants African Services special consultative status to the United Nations

June 1999

Our HIV housing program begins

April 2000

African Services Committee moves to Harlem

June 2001

African Services plays a key NGO role in the first UN General Assembly Special Session on AIDS

April 2002

We join the NGO communities delegation to the board of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria

January 2003

UNAIDS appoints African Services as the North American NGO representative to its Programme Coordinating Board

LIVING IN THE SHADOW



"My family knew I was very sick. The doctor told them my situation. I had, like, three days to live. They visited one day and they never came back. Eventually, I left the hospital, went home, and until this day we never spoke about it."



"For me, stigma is someone shunning my son when they know that I—the mother—is HIV positive. They'll treat my son, or mother, or my relatives differently because of me. I want to disclose—I can disclose, I don't care—but then I'm putting other people in danger. That is what stigma is to me."

OF STIGMA

"It's African culture. We have a different mentality. It's not easy to say it. They think it's a big shame. If you have this sickness nobody even wants to say 'hi' to you."

Last summer, clients of African Services were featured in a multimedia documentary about immigrants coping with the stigma of HIV. All those who participated in the project wished to remain anonymous; however, they did not want to be unheard.

Through a series of diverse profiles, they gave voice to the experience of HIV stigma, defining what it means to them, how it has impacted their lives and often limited their prospects. In self-styled portraits they were photographed doing the things they enjoy most in life. Together, the images and interviews show how four outstanding individuals moved beyond HIV stigma to regain a sense of personal freedom and agency.

This documentary was produced as part of African Services' HIV Stigma Initiative, a multi-year project funded by the New York City Department of Health to improve health in the African immigrant community through targeted, creative interventions that foster dialogue, challenge stigma, enhance understanding of HIV prevention and promote compassion in the fight against AIDS.

 **View the multimedia documentary online at www.africanservices.org**

HOPE AND CHANGE IN ACTION

Hope and change were cornerstones of the 2008 presidential election. They are also lived values that have made it possible for so many immigrants to successfully pursue the American dream.

The election of President Obama was a turning point of special significance to the African Diaspora community in the United States. Immigrants who have settled in the U.S. see their own struggles and achievements reflected in his story and his family.

A record number of immigrants cast ballots in the 2008 election, and others not yet eligible to vote found a place for themselves to engage in the election process working to register voters, canvassing communities and helping get out the vote.

African Services is now involved at both community and policy levels working with immigrant allies and a network of health and social service organizations to advocate for a comprehensive, progressive and non-discriminatory national AIDS strategy, and advance the gains made in global AIDS.



Days after the election, advocates organized the first AIDS march of the new administration calling on President Obama to fulfill his campaign promise and make policies to end HIV/AIDS a priority, including a comprehensive national AIDS strategy for the U.S.

More immigrants than ever are now engaged in the political process and invested in holding President Obama accountable to both his commitments and the opportunity this moment represents. He has given voice to their aspirations and by eliminating barriers to integration will enable immigrants to make meaningful contributions to the country so many of us have chosen to call home.

July 2003
African Services Ethiopia launches its first HIV testing center in Addis Ababa

December 2004
"Deepening Our Roots" begins—the first capital campaign for African Services

March 2005
Our Kombolcha clinic opens in Ethiopia, a public-private partnership with BGI to serve their employees and greater Wollo Province

September 2005
African Services Ethiopia marks an important milestone—25,000 HIV tests provided

March 2006
We expand our community-based legal practice in New York City

May 2006
African Services celebrates its 25th anniversary in New York City

FUTURE IN ETHIOPIA

African Services is helping 20,000 people learn their HIV status each year at our three clinics in Ethiopia. Most of those we serve have been unable to access health care because they are socially, economically or geographically marginalized.

Over the last year, our work has focused on deepening the community-based care we provide—expanding pediatric HIV testing and care, launching a new outreach program staffed by HIV positive former sex workers and creating economic opportunity for the poorest people living with HIV.

September 2006

African Services Ethiopia begins pediatric HIV care

June 2007

Doors open at our third Clinic in Mekele, Northern Ethiopia

September 2007

Our first capital campaign is completed, deepening African Services' roots in Harlem

May 2008

Pediatric HIV care is expanded to our Mekele Clinic in Ethiopia

June 2008

African Services launches *Love & Let Live*, an HIV awareness campaign to combat stigma in immigrant communities

December 2008

African Services Ethiopia marks another milestone—70,000 HIV tests provided



Murad and his family live in Entoto, on the outskirts of Addis Ababa. He helps to coordinate care and support, for other families like his in the community, who are receiving HIV care at African Services' Shola Market Clinic.

Pediatric HIV Care

Since bringing dozens of families into our HIV case management program, African Services Ethiopia has seen children and parents coping with HIV undergo a profound transformation. We're now working aggressively to expand our pediatric HIV programs.

In Addis Ababa and Mekele, case managers Hana Teklu and Selemawit Azene take a holistic approach, helping HIV positive families access ARV therapy, treating opportunistic infections, and providing nutritional support so parents can nurse their children back to health. Comprehensive care also requires helping families develop strategies to support the long-term needs of their children.



African Services' Mekele Clinic staff in Northern Ethiopia.

Microlending for Opportunity

To create greater economic opportunity for families coping with HIV, the Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund supported African Services' first microenterprise initiative—an approach proven effective across the developing world by providing small business start-up capital that is otherwise difficult to access.

In the first round of lending, 13 families in our care received \$100 loans and training to establish their own microenterprises. Each of the families—seven of which are headed by widowed mothers—have successfully launched their own small businesses baking bread, growing vegetables, making butter and beeswax candles, and selling second-hand clothing in the market.

The chance to be productive and self-sufficient has restored the dignity of families formerly unable to meet their basic needs. And as their health and well-being improve, parents can envision a new future for themselves and their children.

HIV+ Women's Peer Counseling Network

In Northern Ethiopia, at our clinic in Mekele, we've also created opportunities for leadership through a new peer-led program for women formerly engaged in sex work. Eager to learn new skills, they were trained in HIV prevention, community outreach and counseling for others at high risk. Through their resourcefulness and compassion, they have reached out to a vast network of women at risk and enabled African Services to extend care to this underserved community.

Approaches like this are effective because they rely on the women's unique capacity to engage those at greatest risk for HIV and provide credible support to help them protect themselves. With HIV transmission stemming in part from the availability of commercial sex, interventions targeting those at most risk are critical.

Our second round of microlending was extended to this same group of HIV positive women, who have successfully started spice, coffee and grain enterprises; tea catering businesses; and a range of other entrepreneurial ventures that represent a world of new opportunity for them and their families.

Through new initiatives like these, African Services is improving the quality of life of people living with HIV and strengthening the fabric of communities burdened by AIDS.

FUNDING AND SUPPORT

June 2007-May 2008

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

FY2008

FY2007

For the years ending May 31, 2008 and 2007.

SUPPORT & REVENUE

SUPPORT

Grants and Contracts	2,310,569	2,267,279
Contributions	607,696	340,750
Total Other Revenue	2,918,265	2,608,029

REVENUE

Miscellaneous Income	33,138	162,692
Total Support and Revenue (Excluding Gifts In Kind)	2,951,403	2,770,721

EXPENSES

PROGRAM SERVICES

Health Services	1,293,125	1,450,954
Housing Services	359,089	380,016
Legal Assistance	394,805	376,350
Social Services	83,638	133,137
International Program	239,250	*
Total Program Services	2,369,907	2,340,457

SUPPORTING SERVICES

Management and General	599,769	415,873
Total Expenses (Excluding Gifts In Kind)	2,969,676	2,756,330

NET ASSETS

Beginning of Period (as adjusted)	520,452	439,262
Change in Net Assets	(18,273)	14,391
Net Assets at End of Year	502,179	453,653

*2007 International Program expenses previously reported in "Health Services"

GOVERNMENT

Federal

- Federal Emergency Management Agency

State & Local

- New York City Bureau of Maternal, Infant and Reproductive Health
- New York CMC (Combined Municipal Campaign)
- New York City Council (City Council Members Inez Dickens, Rosie Mendz, & Robert Jackson)
- New York State Department of Health; AIDS Institute (CDC funding)
- New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (CDC, HRSA, HUD/HOPWA funding)
- New York City Department of Youth and Community Development
- New York SEFA (State Employees Federated Appeal)

FOUNDATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS & CORPORATIONS

- Abbott Fund
- American Jewish World Service
- Becton Dickinson
- BGI Ethiopia
- Brightman Hill Charitable Foundation
- Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS
- Champion Courier
- Citarella
- Columbia University, Institute of African Studies
- Community Resource Exchange
- Ethiopian Airlines
- Financial Securities & Assurance Inc.
- Koonyeung's Corp.
- MAC AIDS Fund
- Merck & Co.
- Ms. Foundation for Women; Women & AIDS Fund
- Penny Harvest of PS 161 & The New York City Museum School
- Quintex
- SAGE Foundation
- Seeds of Change
- David Szerlip & Associates, Inc.
- The Emanuel & Anna Weinstein Foundation
- The Izumi Foundation
- The Roslyn Savings Foundation
- United Way of New York City
- Van Ameringen Foundation
- The Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund

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\$5,000+

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- Monique Millane & Curtis ter Kuile
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\$1,000 - \$4,999

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FUNDING AND SUPPORT

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- Stephanie & Gerald Willinger

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- Milton Wilson
- Stephen Zimmer

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- ACRIA
- Adrian Chalk & Nadja Marcoz
- Africa Action
- American Friends Service Committee
- Alda Building Company
- Arab American Family Support Center
- Art in America
- Benin Mission to the United Nations
- Blue Marble Ice Cream
- Central Harlem Community Supported Agriculture Program
- Cherry's Pharmacy
- City Council Member Robert Jackson
- City Council Member Inez Dickens
- City Council Member Rosie Mendez
- May Cohan
- The Cohan Gallery
- Pamela Collins
- Cozy's Cuts for Kids
- Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Health
- The Fresh Air Fund

FUNDING AND SUPPORT

- Global Business Coalition on AIDS, TB and Malaria
- GMHC
- Sue & Judy Greenwald
- Ruth Gruen
- Health GAP (Global Access Project)
- HIV Law Project
- Ron Koss
- Kress Vision Program
- MAC Cosmetics
- Madiba Restaurant
- The Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs
- MedicaPharma
- Nah-We-Yone
- The New School
- New York State and City Departments of Health
- New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation
- New York Cares
- Non-Profit Finance Fund
- New York Immigration Coalition
- New York University
- Ken & Dianna Oretski of Patroon
- The Pajama Program
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- Transform Fitness
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- Stephanie Willinger
- Yo La Tengo

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- Madoussou Traore
- Evelien van Roemburg
- Yo Watanabe
- Wendy Whitman
- Nejdán Yildiz

SPECIAL SUPPORTERS

Our work is greatly enhanced by a corps of supporters, who lend their skill and commitment to help expand African Services' capacity, deepen the impact of our work and build connections across communities. We are grateful for the many ways they advance our mission.



MELISSA BANKS joined African Services through a fellowship supported by Kirkland & Ellis LLP. Over the last year, she has expanded the immigration legal services we provide, helping launch drop-in immigration clinics and representing clients in asylum, deportation defense and family reunification cases. Melissa also provides support in housing law, family law and public benefits.



SYDNEY DENNISON is one of African Services' most dedicated volunteers, giving generously of her time and energy across agency programs. Syd grew up in Africa and uses her knowledge of culture and love of people to help new immigrants in our ESL program develop the language skills they need to interact and engage with their communities. She also lends her skills as a graphic designer, helping develop health promotion materials for the immigrant community.



LARA GERRASSI, an undergraduate in social work at NYU, spent three semesters acquiring hands-on experience in our family case management program. First shadowing staff and providing client escort, she then took on a caseload of her own. With her French and Spanish language skills she helped African Services' serve more

African and Latino families coping with HIV. Lara was recently awarded the Whitney Young Scholarship to pursue her MSW at Washington University at St. Louis.



SUE & JUDY GREENWALD lost their brother, Lewis, in Ethiopia in 1975. On the 30th anniversary of his death, they visited Ethiopia and decided to start a project in his honor. With Sue's professional background as pediatric social worker, she and Judy worked with Co-Executive Director Kim Nichols to envision an expanded pediatric HIV program as a meaningful tribute. Sue and Judy reached out to friends, family and colleagues asking them to make a five-year commitment to the project. Sue has since returned to our Addis clinic to see how their supporters have helped meet the basic needs of children in our care and plant the seed for a truly comprehensive pediatric HIV program.



STEPHEN LEWIS, former U.N. Special Envoy on AIDS and one of the most admired spokespeople in the global fight against AIDS, visited African Services' clinic in Addis Ababa last year and made a trip to Entoto, on the outskirts of Addis Ababa, to meet with children and families in African Services' pediatric HIV program. His show of support is a special vote of confidence in our work.



ZOE KELLY-NACHT & ALISON FAIRBROTHER

first interned with African Services Ethiopia in 2006. Ali saw that medication alone was not enough to help poor people living with HIV lead a productive life. With Zoe's help, funding was secured from the Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund, and Ali returned to Addis Ababa to launch our first microlending program for families coping with HIV.



JOSEPHINE MUNKOMBA,

originally from Zambia, arrived in New York City in 2004. She now volunteers in our HIV testing center as a way to help others and develop her own clinical skills. "I believe in the African saying: 'Don't turn your back on the problems of others, because they will end up being yours as well.'"



DR. MICHAEL SMITH, a psychiatrist and innovator in the

field of rehabilitation, visited African Services Ethiopia to train staff in acupuncture and launch a leadership project training HIV positive women formerly engaged in sex work to provide community outreach, acupuncture and counseling to others. He is committed to helping poor communities find alternatives to exploitation and enabling women to heal and move forward.

NEW YORK CITY STAFF

Lillian Agyei (U.S.) <i>Testing Center Assistant</i>	Fatou Diop (Senegal) <i>Community Liaison</i>	Sharon Makoriwa (Kenya) <i>Development Associate</i>
Chitra Aiyar (U.S.) <i>Staff Attorney</i>	Claudette Francois (Haiti) <i>Senior Case Manager</i>	Kim Nichols (U.S.) <i>Co-Executive Director</i>
Evariste Akpele (Ivory Coast) <i>Family Case Manager</i>	Getachew Fikremariam (Ethiopia) <i>Client Legal Advocate</i>	Daouda Ndiaye (Senegal) <i>Outreach Worker</i>
Erin Augis (U.S.) <i>ESL Instructor</i>	Coumba Gueye (Senegal) <i>Food Pantry Coordinator & Administrative Assistant</i>	Sonia N'Diaye (Senegal) <i>Medical Interpreter</i>
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Sean Brennan (U.S.) <i>Assistant Director of Health Programs</i>	Asfaha Hadera (Ethiopia) <i>Founder & Co-Executive Director</i>	John Patterson (U.S.) <i>ESL Instructor</i>
Virginia Brobyn (U.S.) <i>ESL Instructor</i>	Muna Hamouie (U.S.) <i>Office Administrator</i>	Bakary Tandia (Mauritania) <i>Case Manager & Policy Advocate</i>
Catharine Bufalino (U.S.) <i>Communications Director</i>	Irma Jimenez (Honduras) <i>HOPWA Housing Assistant</i>	Njoya Hilary Tikum (Cameroon) <i>Paralegal</i>
Willa Cochran (U.S.) <i>Family Case Manager</i>	Jennifer Jones (U.S.) <i>ESL Instructor</i>	Adama Traore (Mali) <i>Outreach Worker</i>
Ibrahima Cisse (Ivory Coast) <i>Testing Center Assistant</i>	Mary Kay Jou (U.S.) <i>Family Social Worker</i>	Michael Washington (U.S.) <i>Fiscal Manager</i>
Alice Clomegah (Ivory Coast) <i>Coordinator, Testing Center & Early Intervention Services</i>	Yuliya Kalshteyn (U.S.) <i>ESL Program Coordinator</i>	Dale Haynes (U.S.) <i>Office Cleaner</i>
Amadou Diao (Senegal) <i>Coordinator, Maternal & Child Health Initiative</i>	Alpha Kassogue (Mali) <i>Health Educator & Medical Interpreter</i>	
Aida Diallo-Diagne (Senegal) <i>HOPWA Housing Coordinator</i>	Ado Lemou (Togo) <i>Testing Center Assistant</i>	
	Amanda Lugg (U.K.) <i>Director of Advocacy & Mobilization</i>	

ETHIOPIA STAFF

Addis Ababa Ethiopia Abera <i>Human Resources & Administrative Assistant</i>	Ejegayehu Tadesse <i>Site Coordinator</i>	Kasech Fitsum <i>HIV Testing Counselor</i>
Habtom Aboye <i>Outreach Worker</i>	Seblewongel Tamiru <i>Outreach, Deworming Program</i>	Teklemariam Hafte <i>Assistant Accountant</i>
Zewdinesh Ademe <i>Receptionist/Data Manager</i>	Mesfin Tekle <i>Lab Technician</i>	Tirhas Hagos <i>Outreach Worker</i>
Ayele Asrat <i>Guard</i>	Hana Teklu <i>Pediatric Case Manager</i>	Asselefetch Halefom <i>Lab Technician</i>
Haregewoyn Asrat <i>Lab Technician</i>	Amelework Tesfaye <i>Assistant Accountant</i>	Mehari Haregot <i>Gardener</i>
Bekele Belachew <i>Guard</i>	Nigatua Yoseph <i>Janitor</i>	Amare Hiluf <i>Guard</i>
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Abebe Mezgebu <i>Accountant</i>	Yordanos Asmerom <i>Office Assistant/Cashier</i>	
Birtukan T. Silassie <i>Storekeeper</i>	Selemawit Azene <i>Pediatric Case Manager</i>	
Sewhareg Tadesse <i>Outreach Worker</i>	Benyam Belay <i>Outreach Worker</i>	

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“I took this picture of myself and when I saw the image, the first thing that came to mind was, ‘What does the future hold?’ I did not know what the future was holding for me or those who depend on me; I just had, and have, the hope that there’s something good on the horizon.”—Paulo, a client of African Services.

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Originally from Brazil, Paulo came to the U.S. in 2003 with an international circus company. During the tour, his HIV status became known to his co-workers, and he was terminated. Trained in the performing arts, acrobatics and the circus tradition, he remained in the U.S. to study English and pursue opportunities to perform in New York City. His doctor referred him to African Services for legal assistance, and he became actively involved in our Independent Living Skills program. Paulo now teaches circus skills in a children’s after-school program and performs with local dance and circus companies.

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AFRICAN SERVICES
COMMITTEE