



# SUCCESS STORY

## A Program in Zambia Helps Orphans and Vulnerable Children Finish School

**The Luapula Foundation, with USAID support, provides education and support services to OVC.**



Luapula Foundation

*Belinda Fungamwango was able to overcome financial difficulties she faced as an OVC to complete high school, thanks to a USAID-supported education program.*

***“Luapula Foundation is really doing a good thing in our community and in my life. I don’t know where we would be without them.”***

– ***Belinda Fungamwango***

AIDS is one of the most serious threats to development in Zambia. About 56,000 people die from AIDS each year, leaving more and more children as orphans. In 2007, the number of Zambian children orphaned by AIDS was 600,000.

Orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) are faced with an increased risk of psychological distress, economic hardships, exploitation, trafficking, and HIV infection. Many stay home to take care of a sick relative or must work in order to provide an income for their families. Due to these challenges, OVC are less likely to attend and complete school.

With funding from the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Luapula Foundation has developed a comprehensive program for education, psychological support, health, nutrition, shelter and economic advancement in Zambia’s Luapula Province. As part of this program, the Luapula Foundation began an education initiative that helps OVC attend and finish school. Belinda Fungamwango is one of the initiative’s students.

Belinda’s mother has raised Belinda and her five siblings in the Luapula village, Mutti, on her own since her husband died in 1990. Belinda was unable to go to school after grade seven because her family could not afford it. She was out of school for two years when she went to Luapula Foundation for help. The Luapula Foundation, with support through USAID, sponsored Belinda, who graduated from high school in 2009.

Belinda has bigger dreams now. “I hope I can manage to go to college. I want to study hotel management and catering, and then I hope to assist my mum to raise the young ones,” she said.

Since its inception, Luapula Foundation, a first round partner in PEPFAR’s New Partner’s Initiative, has provided services to almost 6,000 OVC in Zambia, and has helped almost 600 graduate from high school.