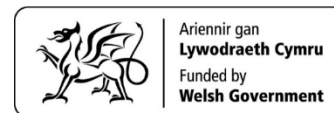


One of the Responses of AGLMUK to Covid 19 in Uganda

Welsh Government Funding

The Welsh Government's WalesAfrica Programme advertised a round of grants that would enable organisations such as AGLMUK to provide an "Immediate Covid Response" in the communities with which they partner. AGLMUK applied to the Welsh Council for Voluntary Action that was administering the scheme and was successful in securing £2,250 to spend on food for vulnerable members of the community in and around Bulabakulu.

Cynllun Grantiau Cymru ac Affrica Llywodraeth Cymru



Welsh Government's Wales and Africa Grant Scheme

The Response by AGLMUK

Our local team of Barry, Joseline and Harriet have purchased bulk supplies of poshu (maize flour), beans, rice and soap for distribution to families that were known to be in dire need, in and around Bulabakulu, Wakiso, Uganda. Many of the families assisted were those looking after children and young people that are in the educational programme of AGLMUK. These children/young people would normally be in boarding schools at this time – but all schools in Uganda have been closed for over 5 months now. Joseline and Harriet in particular are well respected and long-standing members of the community and were/are in a great position to identify those in greatest need.

Barry has been buying food in bulk for the Wakiso Children's School of Hope for many years and was therefore well-placed to purchase at competitive prices – thus stretching the grant as far as possible. Joseline, Harriet and Barry were able to recruit others to help in the delivery of the goods to the 68 families concerned.

366 people in 68 families were assisted with vital basic necessities.

The Challenges involved in Delivering the Programme

The biggest challenge of all would have been the making of the very difficult decisions around who received the available assistance. There would have been some heart-breaking decisions to be made but Barry and Joseline are all too familiar with having to make such calls. Joseline has been involved with AGLMUK ever since we started operating over 14 years ago and has had to make so many decisions about which children to accept into the education programme. The core of the recipients were those that already had a relationship with AGLMUK (through the sponsorship of education for their children or wards).

Another challenge was travel and transport. Barry, fortunately was able to use a private vehicle to collect the food and then Joseline, Harriet and colleagues did most local delivery on foot.

The final challenge is that the urgent need has not gone away. Schools are still not open and lock-down measures only partially eased. AGLMUK has just resolved to release more funding for a similar round of food deliveries as was funded by the WG grant. Barry and Joseline have also been asked to administer a special hardship fund for those that are associated with AGLMUK – but previously considered to be on the "now independent" list.

Three of the Families Assisted

1. Doreen

Doreen is a primary school teacher – teaching in what the UK would know as infant classes.

She is a resident of Kikokiro trading centre, Wakiso (on the north western outskirts of Kampala). She is married and has two daughters of her own and another four adopted children. Her husband is a teacher of traditional music.

When the Covid -19 pandemic started spreading, the Government of Uganda ordered the closure of all schools in the country on 19th March 2020. The schools have been closed for over five months. Her school (along with the vast majority of other schools in Uganda) has not been in position to pay staff salaries since the lockdown. This has cut off her source of income. She is finding it very hard to feed her family and has been surviving on her small kitchen garden and taking food from the shops around on credit.



Doreen (right) is accepting her delivery of poshu (maize flour), beans, rice and soap from Barry Atugonza (left) who is the Project Coordinator for AGLMUK. Kikokera Trading Centre lies very close to Bulabakulu which is the base for AGLMUK in Uganda.

2. James

James Okello is boda-boda rider - a form of public motorcycle taxi. He operates in the Wakiso Town and Banda area on the outskirts of Kampala.

He has a family of 5 which he takes care of. He acquired the motorcycle at the beginning of the year (2020) on loan and this has been his source of income. However, he has been affected by the lockdown since the outbreak of the covid-19 pandemic. During the first period of severe lock-down boda-bodas were completely prohibited from operating but even when restrictions were eased somewhat, they were only allowed to carry "freight". He has found it very hard to feed his family and the loan repayments on the bike are long overdue. He has exhausted all his credit options and has gone as far as begging in the neighbourhood.

Harriet (right of picture) is paid by AGLMUK to look-out for the health needs of children currently funded to receive primary and secondary education. She works closely with Joseline and they are both long-standing and respected members of the local community.



3. Rosemary

Rosemary Nakawungu is a resident in Bulabakulu village, near Wakiso Town, Uganda. She lives with three of her children and her main source of income was making and selling handicrafts at the crafts market. The customers at such markets are almost exclusively foreign tourists.

On 19th March 2020 the Government of Uganda closed all borders, including the international airport at Entebbe. This resulted in the collapse of the crafts market. Rosemary and other artisans have nowhere to sell the crafts and thus left her with no source of income. She has never had enough income to allow her to build up savings. She also used to get assistance from her elder son who is an electrician but he has not been able to work during lock-down and so has no income with which to help his mother.

This has meant Rosemary and her family have been skipping meals. She has resorted to working in the neighbours' gardens where she is paid in-kind but this has not been sufficient to cover all her needs.

Rosemary is the mother of several children and young people that have been, or are still being, assisted through the education and training programmes funded via AGLMUK. Her electrician son was one such beneficiary.



Joseline (centre of picture) is paid by AGLMUK to look-out for the children currently funded to receive primary education. She is also the joint pastor of Arena Praise Church and has very many contacts in the community. She was ideally placed to identify those that need help the most and deliver the food parcels. Rosemary is on the left of the photo' and a faithful member of a local church team is on the right.



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