

**STICHTING MIREMBE JOINS HANDS WITH ELIZABETH NAMAGANDA FOUNDATION,
UGANDA TO PROVIDE RELIEF SUPPORT TO 3 NEEDY COMMUNITIES**

17 September 2021

Uganda experienced the second wave of COVID 19. As we live in such trying times with this pandemic and its effects on human nature, supporting each other is a kind gesture. Most organization like ENF cannot shun away from such gestures. ENF supported by Stichting Mirembe, NL reached out to the hungry and needy with COVID 19 relief supplies for the second lockdown.

A donation of **UGX .15.251.400** to support the families of the orphans and vulnerable children of ENF and teachers of UCMTI and St. Elizabeth Ggulama, Masaka who have been on lockdown for nearly two years now with food relief was given. The relief supplies procured included; maize flour, beans, sugar, rice, soap and cooking oil.

Originally we had budgeted for 116 people who included: 31 UCMTI staff, 24 Ggulama staff, 17 Grail workers and 44 ENF students. We are happy to report that we have managed to distribute to 170 people, these included: 50 UCMTI staff both full time and part timers, 24 Ggulama staff, 17 Grail workers, 44 ENF current and 20 former students and 15 from Good Samaritan School for the Deaf in Kitengeesa, Masaka. This was possible because by the time of purchase the cost of some items had gone down while for others there was a slight increase. And one lesson was re-learned during this COVID 19 pandemic is ***“sharing is caring!”***

Distribution report to Mirembe on Covid – 19 Food Relief (2nd wave)

Items	Maize flour	Rice	Beans	Sugar	Soap	Cooking oil
Total units per item	1,700 kgs	850kgs	850kgs	850 kgs	340bars	170 ltrs
Cost per unit	1,750	3,700	2,800	3,500	3,800	8,500
Total amount per item	2,975,000	3,145,000	2,380,000	2,975,000	1,292,000	1,445,000
	170 bags of 10 kgs @	17 bags of 50kgs @	8bags of 100 kgs & 50 kgs	17 bags of 50kgs @	17 cartons of 20pcs @	14bxs,12ltr @ & 2 ltrs.
	116 people		170 people			
Item	Budget		Actual			
Maize flour	3,480,000		2,975,000			
Rice	2,030,000		3,145,000			
Beans	4,069,000		2,380,000			

Sugar	2,610,000		2,975,000			
Soap	1,566,000		1,292,000			
Cooking oil	928,000		1,445,000			
Transport	600,000		812,000			
Packaging bags 12 pkts of 50pcs @	0		72,000			
Total	15,283,000		15,096,000			
Actual amount received			15,251,400			
Actual amount spent			-15,096,000			
Cash balance			155,400			

Relief Distribution: A distribution plan in coordination with parties responsible was developed to guide the whole process indicating dates on which each beneficiary was to receive the relief goods.

The coordinators took the food to the beneficiary homes and some of them picked their relief items from the UCMTI centre and they received a transport fee for the boda boda to their residences.

The table below shows the parties responsible for coordinating distribution

Venue	Person Responsible
UCMTI	Rose, Benedicta, UCMTI Matron
ENF	Rose, Phiona, ENF chairman, Parish coordinator in charge of HMTS
MASAKA	Rose, Margaret Nassuna, Natukunda Erarean

The transport refund table

Date	Transport breakdown	Amount
28-29/07/2021	Transport within Kampala for shopping food items	132,000
30/07/2021	Transport refund to UCMTI – staff	120,000
27/08/2021	Transport refund to students within Kampala	50,000

17/08/2021	Transport refund to Lubaga Parish – Mr Butaayi	60,000
19/08/2021	Transport to and from Masaka	250,000
20/08/2021	Transport refund to Ggulama staff	200,000
	Total of transport cost	812,000

Reaction: The family heads and their family members were very happy with the donations. They said that the relief aid came just in time when they needed it most. They had no other alternative to provide food. There is no work to earn from as families continue to pass days half fed with the children being at higher risk of malnutrition.

In Masaka, one of the beneficiary to the relief items said that they were badly affected by the second wave of COVID 19 lockdown. Parents had abandoned 8 deaf children at the house. They lacked food and other basic needs required for survival yet it was challenging to maintain dependents in such hard times. When they received relief items from Gulama and Rose, they couldn't be happier.

Additionally, we want to note that most people were affected by loneliness that is continuing to affect their mental health and happiness. Most of them are worried of when the entire world will return to normal. The children are not going to school, they miss their friends, they miss class, they are growing so much especially the girls and are being exposed to all kinds of social vices because of being idle. Parents are worried about the risks of early pregnancy, early marriages, school drop outs, juvenile delinquency among others. However, some parents said that they had got more time with their children and were talking to them more on a friendship level so that they can be open to them. They also now appreciate more the role of the teachers in the upbringing of their children. Such were the tales of the neediest residents of the ENF beneficiaries and many more!

Please find a pictorial report below.

Pictorial report of the Food distribution



Some of the relief items packaged to be given out to UCMTI staff. Behind, Rose, Benedicta, John Kennedy and two others helped with the distribution



Rose taking a picture with the deaf children at Masaka



One of the teachers at Gulama smiling and happy to receive the relief products from ENF



Margaret Nassuna and her team preparing the relief items for distribution at Gulama, Masaka



In the pictures above, Rose hands over relief products to some of the beneficiaries



A beneficiary picks her relief products at the garage at UCMTI



Benedicta after handing over relief goods to one of the beneficiaries

NB: More pictures and these in their original format will be sent to Guus.

ENF ON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

In our communities found in Kampala (UCMTI) and Masaka (Ggulama), the 2 lockdowns greatly impacted our beneficiaries, staff and families. People were so used to living together, visiting one another, attending church to congregate, gathering and celebrating events and sharing but this trend greatly changed especially with the progress of the pandemic and consequential restrictions. People fought to thrive in order to avoid getting infected or infecting others, it was necessary to maintain social distance from other people. But in doing so, people discovered the cost of becoming socially distanced and the pain of isolation. Many of us learned the hard way that being alone is seriously bad to our health. All this was experienced amidst a HUNGER CRISIS. The COVID 19 disease killed many people. However, some people died not because of COVID 19 but hunger and others developed illnesses due to depression and loneliness. In Uganda, a sense of community is essential to our wellbeing. The loss of the social connection during the pandemic showed us the dangers of taking social relationships for granted.

In the second wave of COVID 19, we tried to find ways of building healthy social relationships while observing the S.O.Ps. As ENF management, we often checked on one another and on some of our beneficiaries. In some way this brought us even closer and unified us. We shared herbal home remedies on how to recover from the pandemic because most of us could not even afford the hospital bills for COVID 19. Some of our friends were lost for example Gonzanga who used to roast the ENF pork for sale and many others. May they rest in peace. As our norm, people found it difficult to adapt to the new norms of burial where no one came to their rescue but just a few family members. However, with the 2nd lock down, people slowly adapted and adhered to the government restrictions.

The ENF beneficiary orphans, the Gulama and UCMTI students are out of school completely due to the lockdown on schools. However, due to the digital divide, they are not able to study online because online studies are expensive. They also do not own a computer or tablet. The teachers also are not able to offer online lessons because they cannot afford the provision for this system. Even accessing the learning material is a problem. Both the students and teachers feel like the lockdown has caused a big back log on their studies and the children miss their friends.

In solidarity with the community, we found solutions not just for our ENF beneficiaries but for the good of the entire community. Our help and support was able to impact people especially in these desperate times. All people needed was food to survive. They survived the second wave yet hunger could have killed them. A good example in the report are the deaf children in Masaka. **The answer of our call by St. Mirembe was like a re-awakening for these communities of ENF, UCMTI and Ggulama.** People felt like ENF increased the community spirit, not just for the ENF beneficiaries but for all our stakeholders (UCMTI and Ggulama teachers).

The solidarity was felt in this food distribution. Those who distributed the food further intensified the message by sharing with the beneficiaries, emphasizing that the war was not yet over and that it was one's sole responsibility to protect themselves in order to protect others. We also shared some tips on how to survive the disease and also depression in case of a new lockdown as seen below;

- Sharing and delivering food if you have more than enough with your neighbour
- Praying

- Observing S.O.Ps
- Receiving the vaccine
- Leading a healthy lifestyle through exercising
- Connecting and looking out for your neighbour more than usual
- Checking on friends and family to see if they are okay
- Watching the children critically for any form of abuse or depression signs
- Showing collective resilience (show care, compassion and cooperation) to those who have lost loved ones
- Take it as a time to connect with families, parents get to have time for their children after a long time for the first time ever and teach them some work at home like cooking, sweeping, cleaning among others.
- Not to stigmatize those who have suffered from the COVID 19 disease but rather show them love and care
- Community mutual understanding i.e. when going through a hard time, turn to the people around you.
- Sensitization; ensuring that no one is left behind as far as understanding that COVID 19 is real and is not a myth or government politics
- Participate in social networks like whatsapp and facebook to stay in touch with friends for those who have access to smart phones.
- People who have access to televisions and radios especially the old should pray on their television sets and radios (from their sitting room) because this option is available for those who still want to connect with God and are missing out on going to mass gatherings.

All the people were happy with the sharing.

Conclusion

The ENF Board of Directors, ENF beneficiaries, UCMTI and GULAMA communities extend their gratitude to the sponsors Stichting Mirembe NL for their generous support at such a difficult, un predictable and strange time. May God bless you richly!

Thank you very much!

Mary Phiona Nalweyiso

Secretary-ENF