

September 2020 Newsletter

The Devastating Effects of a Pandemic

Since our last Newsletter in April, schools across Uganda have remained closed as the country implements one of the strictest lockdowns in Africa to fight the spread of Coronavirus. The pandemic has disrupted education across the globe, but the schooling crisis is more acute in Uganda and Africa generally, where the majority of students do not have access to the internet and electricity, making distance learning impossible. In addition, importantly, **Nabugabo Community Learning Centre (NCLC)** provided a safe refuge to vulnerable children, including food, water and care.

The charity Save the Children called the pandemic the “biggest global education emergency of our time” It identified 12 countries in which children “are at extremely high risk of dropping out forever”. Nine of them are in sub-Saharan Africa including Uganda.

Schools also provide safe havens for children from child labour and exploitation. Girls may especially suffer and there is likely to be an increase in child pregnancies, a distressing result that was witnessed during the Ebola outbreak.

Amazing Work carried out by the Staff of NCLC

With these challenges, Headmaster Vincent and the staff at Nabugabo have worked tirelessly to look after the children who would normally attend NCLC. They have implemented a number of important initiatives including:

1. Food provision and monitoring of the most vulnerable families.
2. Food provision for the community distributed by the Village Chairperson.



3. Weekly home school study packs for each of the children in respect of Term 2 and where possible, the teachers have been trying to assist them with home learning.

4. During May, the area suffered from flooding which caused the destruction of crops and accommodation. HUGE employed labour to dig ditches to release the water to the lake and two houses were rebuilt.

5. Most recently, a craft workshop has been set up at the school allowing the children to attend and learn local crafts such as necklaces, craft shoes, hats and mats.

Nabugabo Highlights

One of the children at the school received essential, life changing surgery at **Corsu Rehabilitation Hospital** in Entebbe. This hospital is a charitable organisation which was established with the sole mission of treating children who have disabilities. The child will have to have another operation in October, and it will be a long rehabilitation process, but the good news is that he is now receiving long awaited medical care.

Michael, who looks after maintenance at the school, and his wife had a beautiful baby girl and we all send many congratulations.

The Examination Hall, an initiative instigated by Pangbourne College, was completed by local builders and this accommodation will provide multi-functional space for a wide range of school and community uses. Once school starts again it will become the classroom of P7 and its size will allow the desks to be suitably socially distanced.

We have taken advantage of the lockdown period to install **new perimeter security fencing** around the school to provide a safe and secure environment for all the children when they are all allowed to return.

Reopening of Schools in Uganda

There has been a lot of uncertainty about when schools are reopening but we remain prepared and ready. The school has acquired temperature guns and additional washing facilities for the main gate and each classroom. We are hoping that the P7 Class will start again on the 20th September. We are all eagerly awaiting the President's pronouncement on this.

A HUGE Thank You to all of our Supporters

None of the above would be possible without the tremendous support we have received from individuals and Schools across the globe. A number of schools have undertaken fund raising activities which must have been even more difficult this year! We thank Sotogrande International School/The Kindred Project, Pangbourne College, Wellington College and Parkdale Primary School for their amazing contributions.

In addition, we thank Wellmed in San Antonio, Texas, USA for holding a Jeans to Workday and Rory Hogan and Ed Batten for cycling from Pangbourne College to Padstow on behalf of HUGE.

Above all, we thank everyone for their support and interest and without doubt it is now more important than ever with so many other challenges that now face these rural communities.

The HUGE Partnership



The HUGE Partnership is UK registered charity which has been set up to make a difference to children in Uganda. It specifically provides financial and resource support to the Nabugabo Community Learning Centre, a primary school set up originally by David and Judy Batten solely to provide free education and support to vulnerable and disadvantaged children, who would otherwise not be able to attend school.





Helping **UG**anda **E**ducate

At present the Trustees of the HUGE partnership are unable to travel to Uganda because of the pandemic. However, we are in daily contact with Headmaster Vincent and his team. If you have a specific query or would like to speak to one of the trustees please email **Mel Batten** at melanie.brandon@icloud.com.

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