



April 2020

The impact of the Covid-19 virus has been quite serious in Uganda, as well as elsewhere, of course. Families who are dependent on weekly income and have no savings were not prepared for the travel restrictions, which left them without a sufficient food supply. Grandmothers who are caring for their grandchildren for various reasons are among those who are really struggling.

A few weeks ago we sent money to the Development Team members (Paul Evans, Sam Jackson, Denis Colins and KD Buyinza) to purchase food supplies for their families for at least 1-2 months. Each of them have others living with them now so they have more mouths to feed. Sam's brother-in-law was sent home from university but his parents don't have access to electricity and he needed to keep up with his research assignments to continue his studies. So he walked 25+ miles (11 hours) to live with Sam and Racheal. He is a very serious student!

Below is a recent report from Paul (mostly in his own words, although we did amend it a bit for clarity). Say Yes sent him funds to purchase food supplies for three families in his neighborhood but something happened along the way ...

We reached out to quite many families more than what we were budgeting for...because we realized that it's a time of not giving a lot to a few people but at least try to reach out to many so as they can survive for at least a week or two, rather than giving a lot to three people and they survive for months and yet some have no hope for the next day. (We did not capture videos or photos of the food distribution because that would attract the eyes of many and they would converge thinking we can also provide for them.) We were able to reach to 7 families; four of them were elderly with grandkids (the three I told you about inclusive). These oldies had no hope. These are people who are just peasant farmers, but the season to harvest is not yet. Given the current situation they were feeding on porridge once in a day to make sure they live. The other 3 families were not aged people but families which are currently needy. They were totally depending on the daily wages, but now they no longer work and have no savings. Surely most of the Ugandans are undergoing this, almost 90 percent of the Ugandan population are daily wage or commission earners and now are very desperate and needy. We were filled with love and compassion to be able to reach out and extend support to some people who have no hope. We utilized all the money sent by Say Yes, bought the necessities, and divided it amongst the seven families.



Paul's family worked to divide portions of food on this bodaboda for all the families to receive it - they were being very thoughtful in the whole process.

Meanwhile, I have been praying to God so as we can get some customers to buy our pigs. I wanted to reduce on the number of pigs so I am not overburdened trying to feed the mature ones. Selling them will help me sustain the remaining flock. Thank God today we were able to unleash three mature pigs. I had to let go our big male pig and two mature females. The three pigs gained us 1.4m UGX (about \$388). I am working towards selling the mature pigs and leave the young ones as the next generation. This way the rate of feed consumption is reduced because the young ones don't consume as much.

After realizing the goodness of giving from the time we started with corona virus in place, we knew we had to continue giving. After utilizing the Say Yes funds we still saw the need. There are still families we identified and straight away needed to touch their lives by helping with their food supplies. So we will use money from the sale of the pigs (550,000 UGX - about \$152) to purchase food supplies for at least four more families.

I hereby extend the sincere appreciation and excitement to Say Yes Friends from the needy people we have reached.

The government has posted travel policies that everyone is expected to abide by or be arrested if they don't. Unfortunately this means no one can use their vehicles to shop for food, go to hospital, or tend to other personal needs. Ugandans are only allowed to walk or pay a bodaboda (motorcycle) guy to get their food order from stores in town, if the food is available. We have heard reports of pregnant women dying as they tried to walk to hospital to give birth. There is provision to get permission from the Resident District Chairman (RDC) to travel to hospital IF you know where this person lives. If caught driving to the RDC location for a letter of permission people are arrested and imprisoned. Just the other day Sam Jackson's wife, Racheal, needed medical attention. They had to walk several miles to the hospital for treatment. Thankfully they reached okay but, of course, the medicine she needed was not available. Sam will have to return to pick it up when it arrives from Kampala....and, no, we don't know who or how the medicine will get there in light of the travel restrictions.

Some of the other restrictions in place include a 7pm curfew, all borders with other countries are closed, not more than three people in trucks delivering food to stores, only 1 person in a vehicle to deliver food for animals, the sale of non-food item is suspended, all non-essential stores/garages are closed, and the President of Uganda recently extended the lockdown for another 21 days. This list is not all-inclusive but gives you an idea of how serious the situation is, much like other countries, including the USA.

As a side-note, Paul said Annet was recalling what it would have been like for her and her daughters to still be in the slum during this crisis....she cried because she knows they would have died if left alone there. God used Say Yes to relocate this family last Christmas at just the right time! Thank you Jesus!

In spite of the mountain of bad news out there, God is using people like you and us to bring hope in such difficult times. Can you imagine what it would be like to be a parent or grandparent with no food to satisfy your child's stomach? And not seeing any hope of getting that food? And then the miracle happens...out of the blue, without any hint it was coming, someone brings you food! What?!?! Can you imagine the joy and resurgence of hope? If you can let yourself imagine that, then you are better able to understand the impact Say Yes is making in a country half-way across the globe. Hallelujah!!

And in the midst of all of that, Say Yes was able to help Denis & Sarah Colins finish the sleeping room and toilet structures on their property, along with a simple solar setup for light. The guard/caretaker is so happy and he's working very hard. He watches over the rabbits and takes care of the crops. The theft we mentioned to you at Denis' property a month or so ago set things back quite a bit but there is now a light at the end of the tunnel for this one situation! YAY!



The tall structure is the sleeping room, shorter one is the toilet. In the foreground is the old shack.

Yes, the challenges remain many. But we stand convinced our God is greater and more than able to bring us all through to the other end in victory! And we encourage everyone to be aware of those around you in your community who may need help and ask God how He wants you to reach out to them in prayer and/or in practical ways.

We say it often, but it can't be said enough – thank you so much for standing with Say Yes! The donations we receive are an immense help ... we couldn't do any of this without you!

Many blessings as we look forward to helping even more people in Uganda...

Virgil & Joy

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