

# GENEROSITY IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

VOLUME 2

A Compilation of stories on Giving in the time of the  
Covid-19 Pandemic in Uganda

Period Covered

May 1st - June 30th 2020





# About CivSource Africa

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CivSource Africa is a philanthropy support and advisory organization committed to nurturing a more sustainable, effective and connected civil society that advances the dignity and voices of all people. We do this through promoting reflective, responsive, and accountable philanthropic practice.

CivSource Africa is also passionate about promoting African philanthropy and telling the stories of African giving and generosity.

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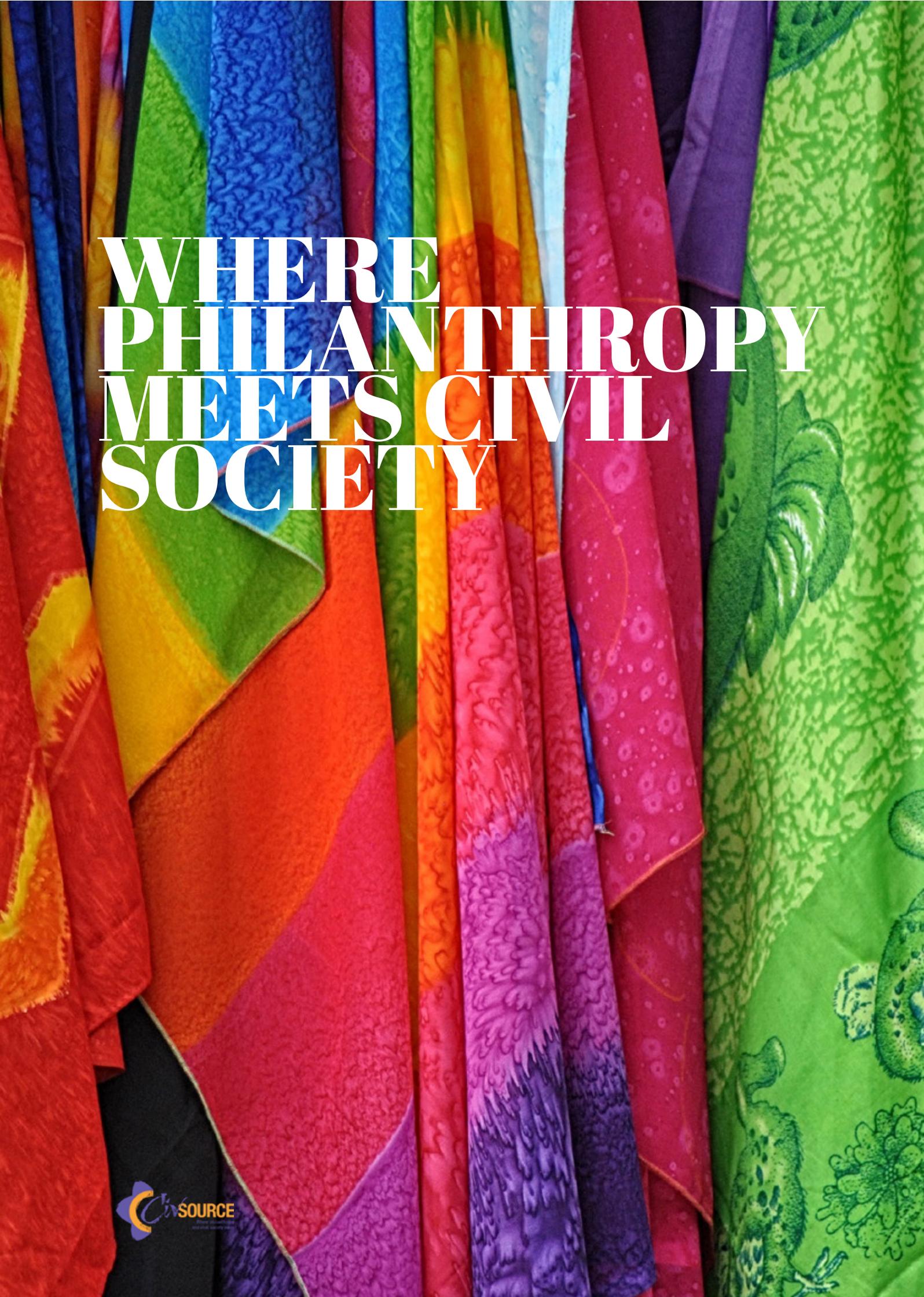
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# WHERE PHILANTHROPY MEETS CIVIL SOCIETY



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# Foreword

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It gives us great pleasure to bring you the 2nd Volume of the report “Generosity In The Time Of Covid-19 Vol.2”. Just like in the first edition of our chronicles, this report continues to fetch stories and interviews taken from individuals and organizations, that shared and gave, during the time of the COVID-19 lockdown in Uganda.

Even though, the lockdown seems to be waning, more people seem to be in need of a helping hand. However, we are certain that the ‘UBUNTU’ spirit still dwells amongst us. Because the stories we share here, show that Ugandans are indeed capable and willing to step in to give a hand to those who in need.

In this 2nd volume, we bring you the story of a young boy, who gave the equivalent of \$2, towards the fight against corona virus. This only goes to show that it is not what’s in the hand that counts, but what’s in the heart. And we believe that

such a boy and all others like him, will form the next generation of givers and philanthropists in Uganda. We thus need to continually highlight these stories, as a way to encourage all people to give whatever they can.

We also reiterate that our report is but a small glimpse into the multitude of giving stories across Uganda. We hope this report helps us appreciate and celebrate the giving hearts, but then again, we also hope it will drive us to both seek for accountability for that which is given, as well as work towards defining and developing a more supportive legal and policy framework for giving and philanthropy in Uganda.

We wish you good reading!

Karibu!

CivSource Team



## Acknowledgements:

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We owe a great debt of thanks to Ms Caroline Ariba who helped compile the stories in this report. We also thank Ms Barbara Sebalu Sematimba, Ms Peace Kadondi and Ms Jacqueline Asimwe who helped us edit this report. We thank Mr. Stuart Nsingwire who helped with the publication design.

We thank the team at NakivArt, who allowed us to use their painting for the back page of this report. NakivArt is an art collective for and by refugees that live in Nakivale Refugee Settlement in Isingiro (in Western Uganda). NakivArt uses drawing and drama to heal trauma.

NakivArt used their art skills to educate their community about keeping safe during the Corona pandemic.

This report was made possible by the generous support of Global Fund for Community Foundations.

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# Acronyms

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COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease of 2019
PPE	Protective Personal Equipment
VHTs	Village Health Teams
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
ISPs	Internet Service Providers
UGX	Uganda Shillings
URN	Uganda Radio Network
PPPs	Public-private partnerships (PPPs)
AMREF	African Medical and Research Foundation
KRRH	Kabale Regional Referral Hospital
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
KABSOM	Kabale University School of Medicine
IUIU	Islamic University in Uganda
AHfD	Automated Hands-free Dispenser
KAB	Kabale University
ICU	Intensive Care Unit
IRCU	Inter-religious Council of Uganda



# Background

This is volume Two of the 'Giving Stories' during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic due to the coronavirus in Uganda.

In the first issue, we brought you stories of the giving that happened between the months of March and April 2020. This volume covers giving stories that happened in the months of May and June 2020.

At the end of 2019, the world received its first case of the coronavirus. Though miles away in Wuhan, a city in China, the highly infectious virus found its way across borders and into countries like Uganda.

The reaction of most countries, including

Uganda, was a lockdown.

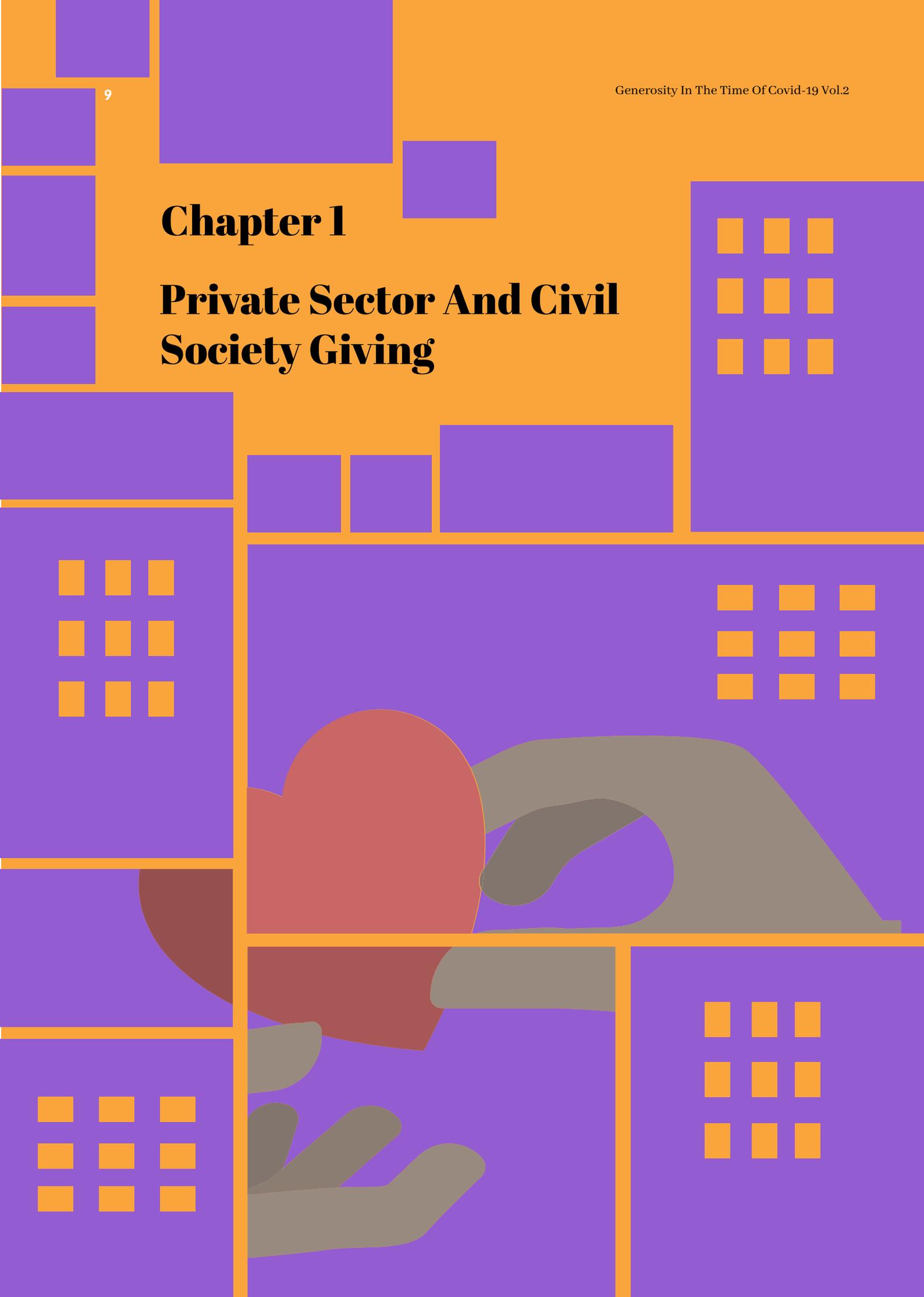
Uganda went into a coronavirus-induced lockdown on March 31st, 2020. Despite the easing of the lockdown in late May, the impact of the slowed economy and trade on the lives of ordinary Ugandans remained very alarming. More and more people gave to help ease the burden of the lockdown. We are happy to bring you these stories in this second volume.

This report may not have exhaustively captured all the giving that took place in Uganda during the months of May – June 2020. Our commitment, however, is to document as much of it as possible.



# **Chapter 1**

## **Private Sector And Civil Society Giving**



As we compiled this volume, one of the things that worked in our favor was that the Office of the Prime Minister [OPM] released the official data on all donations made during this period. Previously, no data on the response to the philanthropic acts, had been compiled or released as the official summation of all donations made by public or private entities.

According to the Uganda Radio Network (URN), [https://ugandaradionetwork.net/story/donations-to-national-covid-19-fund-valued-at-ugx-28-billion-since-its-establishment-in-march-2020-the-national-covid-19-fund-received-donations-worth-ugx-28-billion-\(about-\\$7.5-million\)](https://ugandaradionetwork.net/story/donations-to-national-covid-19-fund-valued-at-ugx-28-billion-since-its-establishment-in-march-2020-the-national-covid-19-fund-received-donations-worth-ugx-28-billion-(about-$7.5-million).). The donations included; cash, assorted food items, medical supplies, vehicles, and other non-perishable items.

In the report presented on May-20th-2020 to Parliament by the Prime Minister, Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda, it was noted that the cash donations totaled

to UGX 15 billion (about \$4 million). With UGX 170 billion as the targeted amount and a set target of 10 vehicles for each district, the fund still had a long road to go.

“We are still faced with the challenge of raising another UGX 139 billion (\$37.6 million) to meet the proposed target of UGX 170BN (\$46 million). We call upon more well-wishers, corporate bodies, and organizations to donate generously in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic,” Emmanuel Katongole, the Fund Chairman made the call through the Vision Media Group. <https://www.newvision.co.ug/news/1010921/covid-19-donations-hit-sh31b-mark>

During the period of compilation of the stories for this volume, we found out that giving was still happening, though not being channeled through the National COVID-19 Taskforce, as was done between March, April and May 2020. Instead, most giving was taking place

directly to the communities/ persons facing hardships brought about by the lockdown.

Amongst Civil Society, for example, organizations introduced the COVID-19 pandemic relief component to their social responsibility projects. For many, the efforts were channeled through the district health and sanitation programs. AMREF Uganda for example, donated Personal Protective Equipment [PPE], to the National Taskforce, then focused the rest of its activities directly to grassroot communities where it operates.

AMREF explained how in Uganda as in other countries, the COVID-19 response was to begin at the community level, with a focus on risk-of-disease communication and the prevention of transmission through improved water, sanitation, and hygiene [WASH].

“We have partnered with district leaders and media in Arua and Amuru Districts to develop health messages

enabling communities to understand what COVID-19 is, and how they can protect themselves. We have also conducted mass awareness-raising radio campaigns in Kabarole and Bunyangabu Districts (Western Uganda), and all nine districts in Lango Region.”-AMREF Uganda.

AMREF also trained health workers of all cadres, including a total of 336 Village Health Teams (VHTs), on infection-prevention and control. In Arua District for example, a porous border region that hosts 120,000 refugees from neighbouring South Sudan; a total of 136 VHTs were trained to work with AMREF to install ‘tippy-taps’ in communities and refugee settlements where access to clean drinking water was limited, along with providing soap and disinfectants.

As noted in our first report, when the country started registering cases of COVID-19, MTN set up a fully equipped call center

at the MTN head offices to support the Ministry of Health workforce to receive calls from members of the public seeking referrals and those seeking general information about the deadly coronavirus.

According to the Nile Post, MTN Uganda also allocated media space worth UGX 316 million to the Ministry of Health to run the much needed COVID-19 communication across different media platforms.

They noted that in order to facilitate the free flow of information, MTN zero-rated the Ministry of Health website to enable people get timely information without the need for data. MTN was among the companies that donated cars and food to the National Task Force.

Like many companies and organisations, MTN too, started giving directly to the intended communities. In partnership with Salam Foundation, MTN donated foodstuff worth over UGX

100M (\$27).

This food was distributed to 4,700 people through various Muslim communities, starting with the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council in Old Kampala and the Office of the Supreme Mufti in Kibuli. Just before that, they had donated at least UGX 41million to the Kasese flood victims and later on donated a boat to Kiyindi Landing Site.

The giving in this period was characterized by meeting needs on a case by case basis. Not all these instances being televised or broadcast. The giving that was not marred with bureaucracy or linked to any political setting.



**Anonymous Donor**

UGX 100 Million  
(\$27,000)

**The Sri Lankan Community in Uganda** donated an automatic disinfection chamber which has been installed at the Ministry of Health Head Quarters in support of the COVID-19 response.

**Seed Global Health** partnered with the Ministry of Health and trained 180 frontline health workers at Mulago, Butabika, and Kiruddu hospitals in COVID19 case management, continuity of essential health services and infection control and prevention.

**Airtel Uganda staff** donated a sum of UGX72 million (\$19,400) for the procurement of PPE for the health workers at the border points of Elegu, Mutukula, Malaba, and Busia districts.

**The staff of the Uganda Registration Services Bureau** donated UGX22 million (\$5,900) from their personal salaries.

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**The Government of Denmark** gave additional financial support of \$1,000,000 (UGX 3.7 billion) to the Ministry of Health to support the COVID-19 response.

**MTN Uganda** donated 6,120 packs of sanitary pads, UGX41 (\$11,000) Million to the Kasese flood victims, and UGX 100 Million (\$27,000) to the Muslim community. MTN also donated another ambulance and emergency response boat to the Kiyindi Landing Site to improve emergency response amidst the current health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. MTN continues to support the COVID-19 response via communication, call center agents and equipment, logistical support for surveillance, and case management teams among others.



**Pearl Dairy Farm Limited** donated liquid milk worth UGX345 million (\$93,100).

**Amagara Skincare LTD** donated hand sanitizers worth UGX2 Million (\$540) towards the COVID-19 response.

**Seven Doctors App** partnered with the **Ministry of Health** to provide free consultation with a doctor, health tips, and prescriptions to those that needed such support.

**Indo Bali Distributors Ltd** donated sanitary pads worth UGX5 million (\$1,350) and financial donation of UGX5 million.

**AMREF Uganda** donated an assortment of Personal Protective Wear worth UGX25 million (\$6,748). <https://amref.org/uganda/success-stories/bunyangabu-district-received-personal-protective-equipment-worth-ugx-25-million-support-health-team-fight-poor-sanitation-covid-19-district/>

**Toyota Uganda Ltd** donated a truck valued at UGX225 million (\$60,700), UGX20 million cash (\$5,400), and 6.5 tons of maize flour worth UGX15 million (\$4,050).

**Fountain Publishers Ltd,** donated a total of 47,000 textbooks worth UGX 354 million (\$95,500). The textbooks include science, mathematics, English and social studies, and others of 10 different local languages to benefit learners at the primary level.

**Bethany Women and Family Hospital** donated UGX10 million (\$2,700) cash.

**UNDP** donated technological equipment worth USD 1.4 million (UGX 5.2 billion); these include laptops, cameras, display screens, video conferencing systems, and drones, among other equipment.



<p><b>African Initiative for Relief and Development</b> donated UGX50 million (\$13,500).</p> <p><b>Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU)</b> announced a donation of items worth UGX 31 million (\$8,300) to the COVID-19 National Taskforce.</p>	<p><b>Cho King International Construction Company</b> donated 200 blankets.</p> <p><b>Roke Telkom</b> donated UGX20 million (\$5,400).</p> <p><b>Prudential</b> UGX 300 million towards relief food (\$80,000)</p>	<p><b>BAPS Charities Uganda</b> in conjunction with <b>Prayosha Group</b> and <b>POA Tanks</b> donated food items, water tanks, and hand sanitizer worth UGX 61,625,000 (\$16,600).</p> <p><b>Technology Associates Uganda</b> donated UGX75 million (\$20,200).</p>
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## Chronicles of Giving by Companies and Individuals

Life as we knew it changed. The world became virtual, and whilst seeking out philanthropy stories, we found that giving in the virtual space had increased as well. While this was viewed as more of a financial move than a philanthropic move, we still view the decision for print media to give content free of charge, a huge step. Vision Group put all its content, even the usually priced one, online. It created content just for the pandemic and alerted the public each time it was published. Papers like The Daily Monitor and New Vision, which even in their digital form, cost UGX 2000 (0.54 cents), were given out for free. The Ministry of Health had a toll-free call center within the very first weeks that the first coronavirus case was reported.

In an article <https://www.unwantedwitness.org/covid-19-uganda-internet-service-providers-join-the-battle-but-key-concerns-remain/exploring-the-internet's-place-in-the-fight-against-the-virus>, Unwanted Witness told of the various offers. The writer,

Lawrence Muyomba explored Public-private partnerships between ISPs and government agencies, beginning with the toll-free center for the line ministry.

“Major Telecommunication companies automated coronavirus prevention messages as ringtones and periodically send unsolicited pandemic control text messages to their customers,” he stated. “Different service providers have further introduced data packages as incentives to their customers during the pandemic.”

Muyombo spoke about MTN-Uganda’s work from home data bundle, which saw people pay just a mere UGX 2000 to access the internet from 9:00am-5:00pm. MTN explained that this was to enable its customers to conduct business while at home. The company also suspended charges on Mobile Money transactions of up to UGX 30,000 (\$8) for 30 days.

According to Muyombo, as MTN gave offers, Airtel Uganda partnered with a number of

websites to provide free access to health tips. This included free access to the Ministry of Health and WHO websites made possible without any charge on data fees, an initiative that MTN would later join.

He further explained that the scramble to fill the education gap was also evident as institutions of learning were closed and children sent back home. Both Airtel and MTN introduced a package on homeschooling free of charge. MTN Uganda provided free access to 17 learning sites called “Learn from Home” for those without internet connectivity.

Keeping in mind that the government of Uganda publicly announced intentions of collaborating with different telecommunication companies to use mobile phones to track the location of over 2,000 suspected coronavirus contacts, the continued pertinent contribution of philanthropy in the technological or virtual workspace is critically important.



## A Donation for the Tour Guides

A cash donation of UGX 17.2 million (\$4,600) was handed over to the Uganda Tour and Safari Guides Association by Friends of Tourism. While handing over the cash at an event in Kampala, Lydia Nandudu, the coordinator of the Tourism Private Sector Task Force, said the money was meant to help the guides survive the lockdown.

Indeed, market analysts argue that tourism has been the worst hit by the global lockdown as many lodges and tour companies were forced to close business for several months now. Speaking at the beginning of Uganda's lockdown, tourism enthusiast, Amos Wekesa said that the tour operators were laying off up to 70% of their employees.

"That means these people are going to be very desperate in the villages and millions of people are going to lose opportunities because tourism is not just lodges," he said.

According to Nandudu who manages Nkuringo Safaris & Lodges, the lockdown caused a loss of livelihood for the guides who depend on a thriving tourism sector.

"When lodges and tour companies lost business, the most affected were tour guides – the backbone of the tourism business," she told the online site Africa Tembelea.

At the event, Nandudu was accompanied by the Executive Secretary of the Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration

(IGCP), Dr. Andrew Seguya, Dennis Ntege of Raft Uganda, and Isa Kato from Pristine Tours. Kato said that many tourism businesses had not just lost old bookings but did not have a single new booking beyond the lockdown. Ntege expressed concern that this would only get worse as no one knew just how long the lockdown would last.

The funding grant to boost the tourism sector was given to three major tour guide associations: Uganda Safari Guides Association which received UGX 3.2 million, Freelance and Jinja Rafting Guides received UGX 4.5 million, and the Tour Guides Forum Uganda (TGFU), UGX 9.5 million.



## Delivering much-needed Insulin

When the ban on public transport was introduced, a trained social worker, Ivan Okoth, foresaw the worst for diabetic patients in need of a daily dose of insulin. Until the lockdown, his time at the Sonia Nabeta Foundation working with Type 1 Diabetic (T1D) patients had seen him deliver the much-needed daily insulin with ease.

As anticipated, a few days into the lockdown, he got a call from a T1D patient who lived in a municipality outside Kampala. She was out of insulin and was worried that she would not make it through the day. Quickly, he reached out to another T1D in the same municipality who agreed to share part of his stock.

What that meant, however, was that the second diabetic patient would also need his insulin replaced in just a few days. Ivan narrated how the predicament led to his giving initiative.

At that point, he had started receiving calls from other patients (whom he refers to as warriors), looking to get their insulin refilled.

Ivan knew he had to do something or risk losing his warriors. "Since there was a ban on all public transport, the only option was to repair my bicycle and ride to the two warriors who had first reached out," he says. Once he made his first delivery, the calls increased and soon, they became more than he could manage. What worried him is

that the patients' health could easily get critical in a matter of hours.

Together with colleagues from the Sonia Nabeta Foundation, they thought of a bigger, faster, and better way to deliver the essentials. They succeeded in the delivery of the insulin by boda-boda (a motorcycle-taxi), an initiative that will be taken on permanently by the Foundation.

"The plan for the future is to extend this boda-boda project and develop a network of delivery of these supplies to the warriors who already incur a lot of expenses on transport," he said.



## The Engineer Disinfecting Entebbe's Hospital and Police Stations

When The Independent magazine first ran a story <https://www.independent.co.ug/tag/semu-nsibirwa/> of a good Samaritan disinfecting Entebbe Regional Referral Hospital, the major hospital treating COVID-19 patients in Uganda, and police stations in Entebbe District, we took note. Semu Nsibirwa, an ICT Engineer and the proprietor of Mobile Computers LTD, a software and hardware store on Kampala Road started this exercise when Uganda confirmed its first COVID-19 case in March.

"When the first COVID-19 patient was admitted at Entebbe Hospital, I drove to Entebbe from Kampala every day to provide disinfection services

as part of my contribution to the fight against this virus," Nsibirwa explained.

To do this, he approached the management of the Entebbe hospital and Entebbe police stations, which are also part of the rapid response and surveillance teams, and presented his offer on March 25. Each day of disinfection of the hospital and police stations, Nsibirwa spent UGX 150,000 (USD 40) on fuel and disinfectants like Jik bleach and liquid Dettol soap. He has done this a few days each week for about three months now.

The 45-year-old told media outlets that the decision to spend personal resources was

inspired by the Christian notion to put faith into action, as well as it being a personal honour to serve his country.

"A journey of 1,000 miles starts with a single step. It has truly been an honour every single day I have stood with the health team to help our country fight COVID-19. It is a war out here, but we will win it in the precious name of Jesus," he says.

Impressed by Nsibirwa's selfless gesture, Dickson Mushabe, founder of an online fundraising platform, Dolphin Fund called on many to support him, and they did. Dolphin Fund donated UGX 332,000 (USD 89) to Nsibirwa's initiative to disinfect the Entebbe Regional Referral Hospital.



## Rotarian Donates Food for Families Surviving On Banana Peels

A video of two families in dire need of food made rounds on social media. Two single mothers and their children had been reduced to eating boiled banana peels after the lockdown rendered them jobless. "I just watched this video and cried. These women and their children eat banana peels for survival," Ivan Wanyama first wrote on his Facebook wall.

Journalists from Salt Media explored the story a little more and found that in spite of the Government's food distribution exercise in Makindye, a suburb in Kampala City where the families live, government officials had not reached them.

The reality of the dire need of the crying mother left to feed her children boiled banana

peels was heartbreaking.

Like many, Rotarian Muweesi Charles-Lwanga was touched by the women's predicament and decided to do something about it.

He said that apart from being a Rotarian who has understands the importance of giving, he is also a farmer who grew up knowing that in Uganda, banana peels are used as animal feed. "Seeing mothers give peels to their children in broad daylight, hurt. I got teary and quickly reached out to my good friends like Brother Augustine Mugabo (Head teacher of St Henry's College Kitovu), to see what could be done for these ladies," he said.

He was surprised to find the

women hopeful in spite of the dire situation. "I found them very pleasant; all they needed was support; they were very welcoming," he says.

They delivered an assortment of food stuff and soap to the mothers.

As a believer in philanthropy, Muweesi further explains the concept of giving: "Giving is from the heart, no one will ever give enough.

Such cases are common in our daily peripheries, therefore all those who can give anything, however little, should give to those who need it." He quickly adds, "There is no better satisfaction in life than seeing another person happy."



## Remembering those in Rehabilitation Homes

**E**Proseed, a financial technology company, donated food to vulnerable children and women many of whom had not received government relief food. The Sunrise Newspaper was present and told the story.

During the event, Dr. Jingo Robinson, the Country Partner of eProseed, presented a consignment of food consisting of four tonnes of maize flour and one ton of rice and sugar. He told the Newspaper that

beyond answering the call by the President to donate food and other essential items to support the needy persons during the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, the company specifically also wanted the aid to go to patients in rehabilitation homes and hospitals.

With that in mind, eProseed's officials decided that their assistance should go to four beneficiaries: Nsambya Babies Home, Katalamwa Children Rehabilitation Centre, St. Apollo

Church of Uganda Maganjo and Kawempe Mothers Ward.

A representative of Katalamwa Children's Rehabilitation Home expressed gratitude to eProseed for reaching out to them, noting that the donation was timely since no entity had reached out to them to provide food relief from the start of the lockdown.





[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=503415443330580&id=100002015597841](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=503415443330580&id=100002015597841)



[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=1553440368164296&id=753844631457211](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=1553440368164296&id=753844631457211)



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<https://twitter.com/streetLIGHTSug/status/1270456804473032705>



[https://twitter.com/Comrade\\_Otoa/status/1269642827149062144](https://twitter.com/Comrade_Otoa/status/1269642827149062144)



The community of the arts was also a beneficiary to this giving. Specifically, though, most of the giving came from singers and artistes themselves. Most of the music written on COVID-19 was released in the first month of the lockdown and was documented in our first volume. Through the regional curations, Northern Uganda was found to have had more songs released about the virus than any other region. There was a definite digitilisation of how artists perform and present their music. Delivered with wit and comforting humor, the creatives

didn't disappoint. The message shifted from alerting the public about the virus to re-echoing some of the concerns. Some delved into the details of the impact of the disease and tactfully helped demystify myths about the virus. Katoto, a cartoon character created from the hills of Kabale, was reborn during the pandemic. He showed up to tell the public about a COVID-19 Health App, which would save many a trip to a health facility or help avoid showing up when it is too late.

The Daily Monitor cartoonist,

Atukwasize Christagon- aka Ogon, mastered the art of satire to skillfully weave his message and voice the issues around COVID-19. The Observer's Cartoonist, Dr. Jimmy Spire Ssentongo, also through his writing and cartoons brought to light the challenges found within government's quarantine centers.

If it was not in a song, the creatives put their thoughts in either a piece of art or poetry. Here is a poem by renowned poet, Sam J. Ssemaganda, which has made rounds during this pandemic:



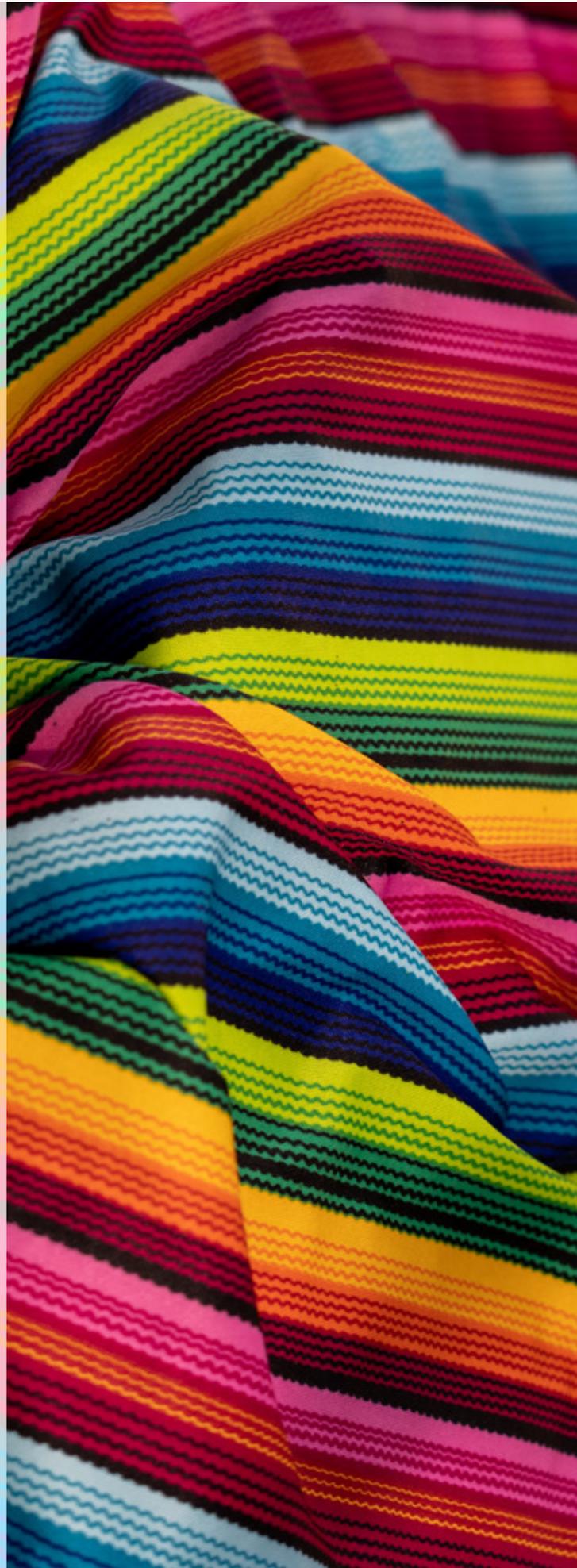
Dear life,  
If I never hear from my Italian friend  
again,  
I'll know it's you;  
Together with your new girlfriend,  
COVID-19  
I hope this finds you in time  
You're quite busy lately, no time.

The speed at which you run out of us  
What's with the rush?  
The dead silence, ghost towns in Italy  
Everyone is gone, most gone forever  
The cries in USA, UK, Africa, China, Iran  
Is that music for your morning run?  
The tears and misery in Spain  
What's you're gain in our pain?

I'm talking to you, life  
I heard a man dying, begging you;  
"Please spare my kids and wife"  
But who pissed you off in China  
Was it really in China?  
My house is now an open prison  
Every morning I open the door  
But nowhere to go.

I know I have taken you for granted;  
We've only cared about material trumpet  
Treated fellow humans like trash  
Got drunk on arrogance; life with a splash  
Now here we're stuck with all our cash  
But death won't stop dragging us onto  
its bus  
Please, let's talk;  
I think you've had enough fun  
I know you want to run  
But let's walk  
And now that you've ignored my calls  
I hope you read this when you find a  
minute  
I hope it won't be too late!  
Regards,  
Human!

- Poem by Sam J. Ssemaganda





## A-Pass in a Musical Sensitization

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Aside from his collaborations done during the pandemic, the singer A-Pass released a song, on the coronavirus, as a solo artist. Singing in his emblem style, English, Patois, and a few lyrics in Luganda, A-Pass delivered a melodious tune talking about the impact of the virus in his song dubbed the Coronavirus song.

The usually controversial A-Pass urged people to protect themselves by washing their hands, emphasizing that this to be best known way to protect one's self as the disease spreads faster when hygiene is not maintained.

In the song, he re-echoed the 'stay-at-home' guidelines by government and implored everyone to abide by them to avoid the spread of the virus. Written and produced by A-Pass himself, with a few beats from the renowned audio expert, Herbert Skillz, the song garnered a lot of airplay on the national scene.



## Chapter 2

# Universities: Giving Cash, Innovations, Skills, And Information

When news of the novel coronavirus broke, many universities in Uganda, both private and public got to work. To date, one of the biggest testing facilities is at Makerere, the country's largest and oldest university.

In this section, we highlight the contributions by some of these institutions of higher learning towards the fight against COVID-19.



## Guiding the Lockdown Process

**A**t a press conference held on 16th-June-2020 at Makerere University, a research team from various universities led by Makerere University presented a report. Named the **Mathematical Model of COVID-19 dynamics in Uganda: Using a locally parameterised system to enhance intervention policies**, it was timely.

The aim of the research from which the model is developed was to study the dynamics of COVID-19 in Uganda and use the results to provide a comprehensive forecast of the disease's trends. The model endeavours to provide appropriate evidence-based policy support to the government on the timing and nature of intervention measures.

The research team that worked on the study was led by Prof. Joseph Y.T. Mugisha, a Professor of Bio-Mathematics (Department of Mathematics, College of Natural Sciences). Professor Mugisha

is also the Principal of the College of Natural Sciences, Makerere University. Other members of the team are Dr. Juliet Nakakawa Nsumba (Makerere University), Dr. Joseph Ssebuliba (Makerere University) Dr. Amos Ssematimba (Gulu University), and Dr. Cliff Richard Kikawa (Kabale University).

The Vice-Chancellor - Makerere University, Professor Barnabas Nawangwe, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Academic Affairs, Associate Professor Umar Kakumba attended the press conference.



## IUIU Donates University Innovations



**T**he Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) announced a donation of items worth UGX 31 million (\$8,300) to the COVID-19 National Taskforce. Among the items handed over by the University Rector, Dr. Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo, were 5 sets of the recently

created Automated Hands-free Dispenser (AHfD), 200 wearable 3D face shields, and 400 litres of instant hand sanitizer.

Dr. Sengendo explained that the AHfD prototype innovated in March 2020, was a research idea of two ICT students looking to help fight the pandemic. “These dispensers minimise contact with potentially contaminated surfaces during the hand sanitisation process.

The AHfD also minimizes water wastage as the user draws just enough water required to wash their hands without opening or closing as conventional taps

do, by employing an automated dispensing mechanism that utilises proximity sensors to decide when to open or close the taps automatically.”

The University also recently innovated the wearable 3D face shield that is reusable and easy to clean or disinfect. Dr. Sengendo explained that unlike the ordinary cloth masks, this specific one is very convenient to use because it allows enough oxygen through it and is compact enough to protect the user from contracting the virus.

“The wearable 3D face shield is transparent enough but also



hard enough to shield the user from any possible droplets carrying the coronavirus,” he emphasized. Besides, the AHfD and wearable 3D face shield, IUIU, through its Department of Pharmacology also produced

instant hand sanitizers, some of which were donated to the National Task Force.

The University has continuously developed several innovations from their Motion

Analysis Research laboratory (MARL), located at its Kampala Campus. These include the Coin Counting Machine, the Automated Green House, Pothole Detector, among others.

## Kabale University goes Above and Beyond



**K**abale University is located in the inter-border region between Uganda, Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) which is a high-risk region. Given the porous nature of the borders where cases of the people affected have been reported, the region required an increased vigilance in preparedness.

The Kabale District Task Force (DTF) and the Regional Referral Hospital identified key urgent areas that were to be addressed to reach the expected level of preparedness, should an outbreak of the coronavirus occur in the region. Under a memorandum of understanding

between Kabale University (KAB) and Kabale Regional Referral Hospital (KRRH), the hospital serves as the teaching hospital for Kabale University School of Medicine (KABSOM).

The hospital facilities are used for the teaching of medical students in addition to the normal health delivery systems. Supporting the renovation of existing facilities falls within the strategic goals and aspirations of creating a conducive environment for medical training by the university and fulfills the national Government objectives, especially within the current environment where the Government health systems

and funding are constrained.

Kabale University provided UGX 72 Million (\$19,400) to renovate the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) which would be used as the treatment center, in case of any patients during the current national fight against the coronavirus pandemic. The hospital has been operating without an Intensive Care Unit facility. KAB contractors executed the works.

This intervention was identified as a priority area, by the District Task Force, in consultation with the leadership of Kabale Regional Referral Hospital (KRRH). Following the

renovation, the region of Kigezi will be prepared to take on coronavirus patients, as well as to care for other medical needs of those patients who require critical care.

The ICU will continue to play a role beyond the COVID-19 pandemic and will further provide important infrastructure for medical student training for the university.

Thirty (30) staff members of Kabale University School of Medicine joined the rest of the health professionals in the region to provide expertise as and when needed. Six senior members of KABSOM are part of the Kabale District Task Force, serving on the different committees. The university was also on standby to mobilize and deploy at least 15 more health workers if need arises.

The general staff of Kabale

University also responded to the call of the President of Uganda, by individually contributing UGX 3.3 million (\$890) towards the fund to fight COVID-19. This money was given to the 7 districts in the region of Kigezi, by depositing it at selected petrol stations to enable the District Task Force have access to fuel.

Each district received a minimum of 150 litres for emergency vehicles. This would enable them to have transport available for emergency cases, including women in labour and all those constrained by other ailments.

As soon as the Government of Uganda embarked on the process of averting the possible spread of COVID-19 across the country, Kabale University gave 259 fuel to the Kabale District Task Force and 50 litres of fuel to Rubanda District Task Force. In addition, a university 14-seater van was immediately available to the

Kabale District Task Force. This van has continued to serve within Kabale Municipal Council, running errands, and aiding those who need emergency transfers to hospitals, such as pregnant mothers. A university driver is permanently on standby.

Kabale University has also pledged to work with Kabale Regional Referral Hospital to fundraise for the following additional essentials:

- Generator for the ICU – UGX 55 million (\$14,800)
- Renovation of the Isolation Operation Theatre – UGX 20 Million (\$5,400)
- CCTV system for the ICU – UGX 10 million (\$2,700)
- Mobile C-arm X-ray Unit for the Isolation Ward-- UGX 85 million (\$22,900)
- CT Scan for the ICU – UGX 2 billion (\$540,000)



# Chapter 3

## Women And Giving

We have watched in total admiration as women contribute to the Ugandan giving scene during the pandemic. Some gave food and cash, time and skills, anything to ensure life was a little easier especially for fellow women. In this section, we bring you the stories of these women who gave as individuals and through organisations.





## Standing up for the Woman during COVID-19

Efforts by Uganda Women's Network's (UWONET) to ensure that the plight of the Ugandan woman is not forgotten during the pandemic has been notable. UWONET addressed the fact that more women who, compared to men, have disproportionately insecure labour based on menial and very temporary income, were hit hardest by the economic impacts of COVID-19. This was the reality that most women faced in Uganda, who take the brunt of responsibility to raise and feed children. UWONET sought to ensure that business responses to COVID-19 do not exacerbate gender inequality in the workplace, marketplace, and community.

When women vendors were beaten by security operatives claiming to be following the President's lockdown directives, UWONET raised their voice and pointed out this violation of women's rights. The use of excessive force against civilians in Kampala, particularly women street vendors by security forces whose mandate is to serve, defend, and protect all Ugandans was unlawful, unprofessional, unfortunate, and unacceptable! UWONET demanded that the perpetrators should be held accountable.

Women's Right's organisations quickly recommended that human rights and gender perspectives be central to all COVID-19 responses, such as the lockdowns, quarantine periods, and other efforts to flatten the COVID-19 curve, and should be carried out in strict

accordance with human rights standards. As soon as the government released guidelines on prevention of the coronavirus, UWONET addressed the need to secure and avail basic hygiene supplies for handwashing with soap and water, as the basic doable policy to combat COVID-19.

UWONET brought together stakeholders on 14th-May-2020 to discuss a gender-sensitive approach to service delivery during the pandemic.

UWONET also called for the strengthening of a gender-sensitive responsive service delivery post COVID-19. Present at the discussion was Hon. Frank Tumwebaze, the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Hon. Winnie Kiiza, the Woman Member of Parliament, Kasese, Hon. Norbert Mao, President of Democratic Party and Ms Bireete Sarah, the Executive Director Center for Constitutional Governance.

UWONET Secretariat collected a total of UGX15 million (\$4,050) towards the purchase of Personal Protective Equipment for health workers. UWONET provided the following donations delivered to the Secretariat:

- Gloves (medium) - 90 packets or 4,500 pairs
- Gloves (large) - 90 packets or 4,500 pairs
- Thermometers – 10
- Face masks - 60 packets or 3,000 masks
- Sanitizers (500ml) - 100 bottles

## Maxensia Takes Action in Lubaga Division



For the past seventeen years, Maxensia Takirambule Nakibuuka has been championing philanthropy.

Through Lungujja Community Health Caring Organisation, she has been offering treatment and support to individuals, families, and communities affected by and infected with HIV/AIDS in Rubaga Division, Kampala City. It did not come as a surprise therefore that she chose to take action during the coronavirus-induced lockdown in Uganda.

When the pandemic broke out, the Lungujja Community Health Caring Organisation immediately set about mitigating the impact that the COVID-19 restrictions would have on their clients with HIV/AIDS. They incorporated this

response into the already existing project funded by Aids Healthcare Foundation (AHF). As was the norm during the lockdown, they channeled activities through the Rubaga Division COVID-19 Task Force. Awareness programs on COVID-19 were included to help identify possible cases to be referred to the Rubaga Division COVID-19 Task Force. This would also alleviate possible contact with their clients so as to prevent concomitant infection.

This was done through increased screening and testing for COVID-19, by setting up testing using infrared thermometers. Luckily, no positive case was found. They treated those with coronavirus-like symptoms and helped counsel the survivors discharged back into the community with guidelines on social distancing or quarantining as was appropriate for each case. They also helped the community understand the essence of hygiene and constant sanitization while providing handwashing cans and masks to women in markets.

In addition to introducing a COVID-19 project, they made sure their clients living with HIV/AIDS were not forgotten

during the lockdown. They continued to identify HIV/AIDS clients and other chronically ill people who had not been able to reach their respective health centres for monthly refills of medication, and arranged for medication to be obtained. They also assisted pregnant mothers to access antenatal care during the lockdown.

The organization provided foodstuffs to 200 families of people living with HIV/AIDS, lactating and expecting mothers, the elderly, and people with disabilities. They identified people who had missed their appointments and those who had not been taking drugs and got them back on their treatment.

In the period May-June, they arranged for mediation for 24 clients. They counseled more than 50 people with different social problems and mediated in many families with domestic violence. Sadly, Nakibuuka reckons that there is so much need for psycho-social support for those affected by the lockdown. "Many people lost jobs and loved ones during the lockdown. We also have sick, unemployed people with no hope, we have children stuck at home and yet families have no food," she said.



## A Landlady from Heaven

At the beginning of the lockdown, Faridah Kwagala sent a text message to her tenants in Namugongo, a suburb in Kiira Municipality, Kampala District. It read: "I understand what you are going through. Don't pay me until one month after the lockdown is lifted."

Two months later, one of her tenants, Marion Achipa could not stop talking about her landlady's generosity. "I am a temporary worker at an institution, there is no way I could have raised three hundred thousand shillings (Approximately \$80) to pay my landlady during this lockdown," she said. When the lockdown began, Achipa, a single mother of two, had only saved up for one month. She thought that the first two weeks were the longest the country would be on lockdown. She, like many, was wrong.

"In two weeks, I was down to nothing; I was choosing between food and electricity. We were having just one meal a day," she recalls. Scared

that she would be evicted, she was in a difficult position. That was when Achipa requested for a break in one-months' rent from the landlady. After a few weeks of this gracious incident, the same landlady, Kwagala, had fresh food from her own garden delivered to Achipa's house:

"I got two bunches of matooke, about half a sack of fresh beans, sweet potatoes, onions, and tomatoes," she recalls. It has been two months now since Marion last paid rent. While many

sadly stay up at night worried about rent arrears, her landlady has told her that she will only

pay for the months after the lockdown. "God sent this lady into my life; I have never seen anyone with a heart like this," Marion said.



## Brenda Sekabembe: A Baker to the Rescue

Brenda Sekabembe is mostly known for her cakes. During the lockdown, however, she took on a philanthropist role, one that would see her fundraise for a mother whose world was crumbling. In the end, she raised UGX3 million (\$800) for the mother. She used her online presence to start this campaign. Her story is below:



**Tuesday 26th May 2020 was a normal day for me until 7 pm when I sat down to watch Amasengejje news on NBS Television. The evening news carried a story of a sad woman, Berna Nakalema, a resident of the Wakiso town council. Her son and major breadwinner of the family had lent his motorcycle to a policeman to use. It was returned without fuel and the officer refused to pay him UGX 4,000 (just about \$1 and 5 cents) as per their agreement. Their argument turned into a scuffle that resulted in him being beaten thoroughly. Eyewitnesses added that the policeman called a colleague who came with a gun that ended Berna's son's life with a single shot.**

She narrated her story on NBS TV, breaking down at intervals as she wiped her tears. The deceased left a wife and a two months old baby who are now under Berna's care. Her only source of income is



a small vegetable stall at Wakiso market where she sells tomatoes and onions. She has four other children to take care of.

She had mortgaged her house to get a bank loan that enabled them to purchase the motorcycle, and since the incident, there was no way of meeting the monthly instalments, and yet there was an outstanding debt of 2 million, to be paid to the sellers of the motorcycle.

The strain on her has been great, while she waits

on the police to release the motorcycle when the murder case is concluded.

This story bothered Brenda for the rest of the week, probably because she too is a gunshot survivor. She kept putting herself in Berna's shoes. That's how she knew she had to do something for Berna.

Brenda used her Facebook page to make an appeal, through which she raised money to support Berna to help both buy food, as well as pay the debt for the motorcycle. Berna is still waiting for justice for her murdered son.

## Namboka is helping Female Vendors Raise Capital

Her passion for women's rights is unequivocal. Her commitment to addressing the female vendor's plight remains unmatched. Esther Namboka is often found wherever and whenever issues of the female vendors are being discussed. It, therefore, did not come as a surprise that she would stand for and remind all about the female vendor's plight during the lockdown. She started a fundraising drive to raise modest capital for the vendors who had since the lockdown



found themselves without any income. Namboka ensured that every donation is acknowledged, and every shilling accounted for.

"My joy and happiness cannot be defined in words. When I see the women vendors smile because each

one of you has given them financial support, I say thank you so much," she notes when a donation is made.

Namboka speaks on behalf of the vendors whose dignity she fights to represent as being deserving of the capital, and greatly appreciates the funders to this initiative. For example, a woman vendor, whose son was recently electrocuted in their incomplete shanty house, will receive UGX 100,000 (\$27) startup capital. This was been made possible by Harriet Generosa who donated UGX 135,000 (\$36); with the 35,000 (about \$9) going towards another woman.

She also tells a story of a vendor who despite getting government food, still needed help getting back on her feet and being able to meet her family's financial needs. "This woman was stuck at home with no capital. She received food from the Government but it all got finished because she has children. She also struggles to educate her children," she explains. In explaining and accounting for every donation, Namboka's fundraising efforts have attracted over UGX 1million (\$270) in donations, with being anonymous donors.

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=3349851988371796&id=100000410846407&comment\\_id=3349909321699396&notif\\_t=comment\\_mention&notif\\_id=1591628953875231&ref=m\\_notif](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=3349851988371796&id=100000410846407&comment_id=3349909321699396&notif_t=comment_mention&notif_id=1591628953875231&ref=m_notif)



## The People Power Women's Wing Delivers

Standing with fists up, the People Power Women's Wing District Coordinator Flavia Kalule Nabagebe announced their donation to the flood victims Kasese and Buliisa District. The donations, specifically towards women affected by floods, were handed over to the People Power Coordinators of Buliisa District led by the Team Leaders Angalia Godwin, and Grace Asiimwe.

The donations included Mama Kits, sanitary towels (including reusable towels and underwear), soap, beddings (blankets, bedcovers, bed sheets, and mattresses), children's clothes, bags, shoes, plates, cups, jerrycans, and basins.

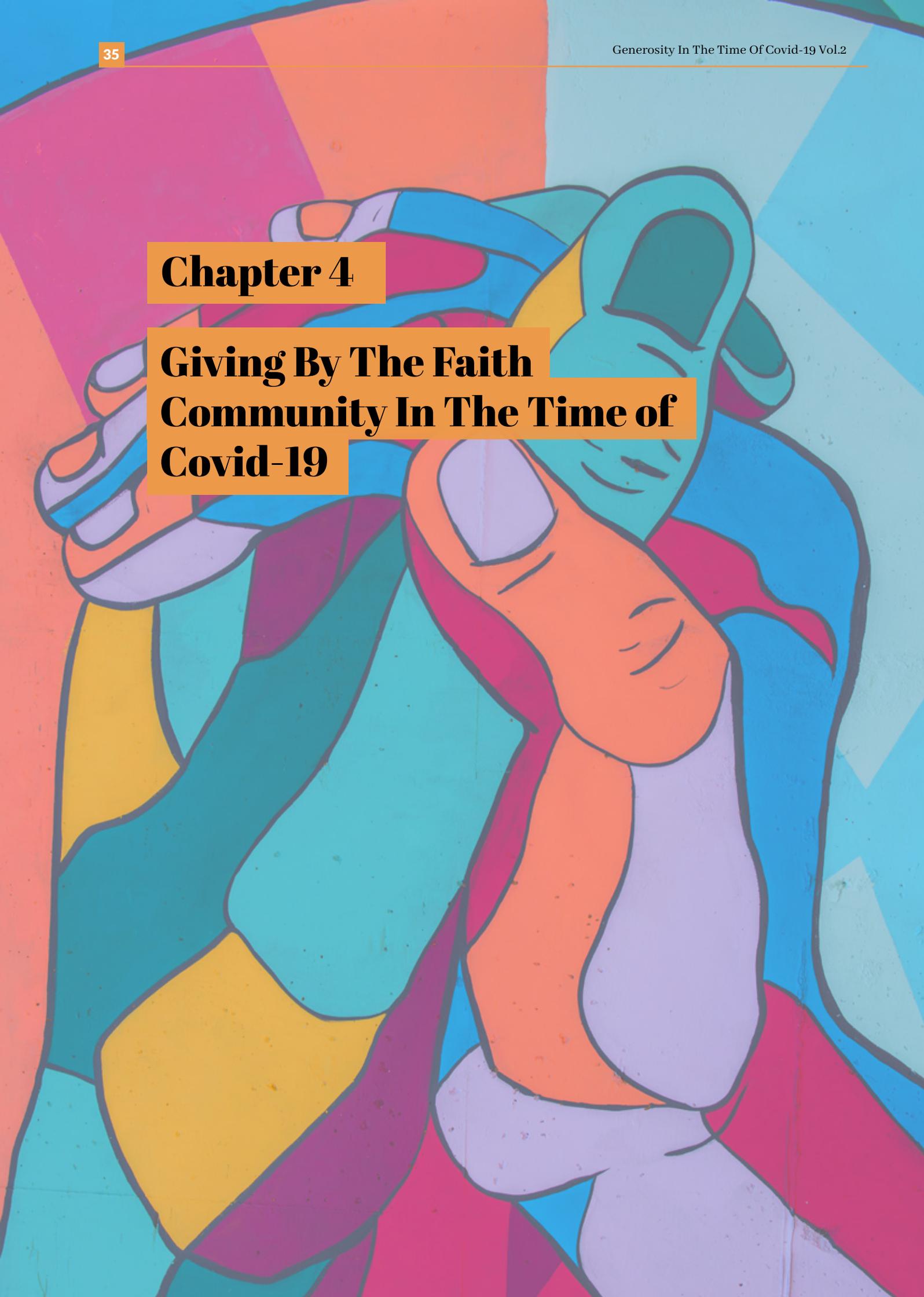
They thanked the various groups and individuals

that contributed to this cause, which gave hope and courage to the people of Buliisa District.

In Kasese, the group celebrated donations from Mutima Gwa People Power (People Power's heart). The donations included: 120 plates, 20 jerrycans (10litres each), and 420 cups.

There is still need for the following items that are being collected: Mama Kits, sanitary towels and mosquito nets, amongst other necessities. This donation came after a deliberate fundraising drive to ensure the mothers and girls in the two districts affected by floods, had supplies for their basics.





## **Chapter 4**

# **Giving By The Faith Community In The Time of Covid-19**



When the Muslim community was fasting, the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) donated food to them. They then sought out the taxi drivers who were out of work and made food donations to the Taxi Association. The Muslim community started a fundraising drive to help raise food for all those in dire need across the country. Upon hearing the frustration of the slow distribution of food across the country, the Muslim Council volunteered to help with food distribution as well.

Speaking at the launch of the campaign at St. James Church of Uganda Masajja on the outskirts of Kampala, an online journal, PML Daily, quoted Sheikh Ramathan Mubajje, the Chairman of IRCU, to say that he had met the President and together agreed to join the food

distribution.

“As the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, we want to help all Ugandans. We ask whoever wants to make a donation or any assistance to bring it to the churches and mosques for distribution, as some few countries have religious leaders assigned to distribute food,” he told the PML Daily site.

Bishop Joshua Lwere, who represents IRCU on the COVID-19 Taskforce, said all food donations would be handed over to the Uganda National Bureau of Standards to be checked before distribution by the churches and mosques.

Musa Ecweru, the State Minister for Disaster Preparedness, thanked the religious leaders for joining in the distribution exercise, following President Museveni’s directive to

distribute food door to door.

Part of the distribution happened in the slums where living conditions were shocking, with some youths living in houses without doors. In some cases, there were no access roads through the slums, and these had to be reached by the foot-men carrying food supplies for miles, from laden trucks parked at the parish police station.

Over and above the IRCU, the religious leaders arranged for donations from their own congregations and communities, and supported this cause through the use of their structures and networks to help locate and get food to the most vulnerable and to all that needed it. This support was invaluable as grassroots structures are deeply linked to their religious affiliations.

## Christian Life Center Gives

Pastor Jackson Ssenyonga, founder of the Christian Life Church (CLC), in Makerere, launched the first phase of the relief distribution from his church as reported by New Vision (<https://www.newvision.co.ug/news/1519164/pastor-ssenyonga-donates-relief-food-worth-sh300m>).



At the event held on 20th- May-2020, Pastor Ssenyonga said the church was put in place to rehabilitate and help people. He pledged to continue supporting even the hard to reach people in need, by making use of Mobile Money deposits to reach those that supplies may not be

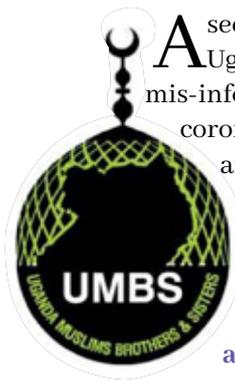
able to reach, as CLC had been doing prior to the lockdown.

CLC donated items worth UGX 300 Million (\$80.000), like food, soap, and sugar, among other items, to its congregants. Ssenyonga said the church was to distribute food to different parts of Kampala under the guidance of the National Task Force, with the support of the Local Councils and the National Pastor's Alliance of Uganda to identify those in their communities that needed food relief.

Even if a ban on physical gathering stopped church attendance, he noted that more followers than before had joined his online broadcasts, because the church meetings and messages are being broadcast on different media platforms.

Sanyu Muwanguzi, a resident of Bwaise was grateful to CLC that supported and provided for them during the hard lockdown times. She also applauded the National Task Force that provided them with relief food.

## Uganda Muslim Brothers and Sisters Dismiss Myths



A section of the Muslim community in Uganda took a stand to correct any mis-information or myths surrounding the coronavirus. A statement was released and circulated across different Muslim platforms. It read:

**Assalamu Alaikum.**

**For the past few days, we have seen a varied opinion on the coronavirus.**

**The reality is that this virus is real and very contagious.**

**Most nations around the world are taking drastic measures- so should Uganda. We encourage you to ignore and delete all social media posts that nullify or down play the existence of COVID-19, and know that it is a very real pandemic with life-threatening effects.**

**We believe in multi-pronged public health promotion. Most people tend to believe in those they respect and adore more than experts. We feel it is important to pay attention, to make sure you use proper hygiene, and to stay healthy. It is important to remain diligent.**

**It is important to do research. It is also important to think deeply about what you post on Facebook because both positive and negative waves make ripples. Outside Uganda, many people have indeed recovered from coronavirus. It is also true that healthcare systems in the early affected areas are overwhelmed. Precautions are necessary to slow down the expansion of this virus.**



## Catholic Church Gives and Cautions Against Myths

Uganda's Catholic Church donated five tonnes of maize flour and five tonnes of beans to the COVID-19 National Taskforce. Online journal, PML Daily captured the events of the day that happened on the 5th- May-2020. (<https://www.pmldaily.com/news/2020/05/covid-19-update-catholic-church-donates-to-national-covid-19-taskforce.html>).

The donations were handed over to the Prime Minister, Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda, in Kampala by the Chairman of the Uganda Episcopal Conference, Bishop Anthony Zziwa, along with the Secretary-General, Msgr. John Baptist Kauta and Mr. Gervase Ndyababo, the Head of Laity in Uganda.

Dr. Rugunda hailed the Catholic Church for this gesture, and called for widespread distribution of food all over the country, particularly to those in greatest need, throughout all diocese of Uganda.

In his remarks, Bishop Zziwa appealed to Ugandans against being complacent with the COVID-19 pandemic and cautioned against indulging in myths. He said it was time to put to an end to the notion that COVID-19 is not a disease for Africans. Even worse was the myth that the virus is not in Uganda, a rumour that will put Ugandans at greater risk.



## The Latter-Day Church Giving

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints donated food items to Ugandans affected by the lockdown constraints including posho, rice, matooke, beans, and sugar, to especially needy families.

This was done in partnership with charities like Reach the Children Uganda, who helped identify those in dire need. The food was distributed across the Central, Eastern, and Northern Regions.

Many of the beneficiaries were in the more densely populated urban areas of Mbale,

Kampala, Jinja, and Gulu. The food was given to widows, the elderly, the sick, and single-parent households first, then later to all else in need.





## Watoto Church Giving

In the first phase of the lockdown, Watoto Church Uganda, one of the largest churches in the country, opened up phone lines for people to seek mental health support. For counseling needs, an open phone line was set up. For months now, the lines have been open to not just solve domestic disputes, but help the depressed, lonely and scared to stay afloat and supported.

Watoto also contributed Personal Protective Equipment towards the safety of health

workers at the frontline against COVID-19, as acknowledged by the Health of Ministry.

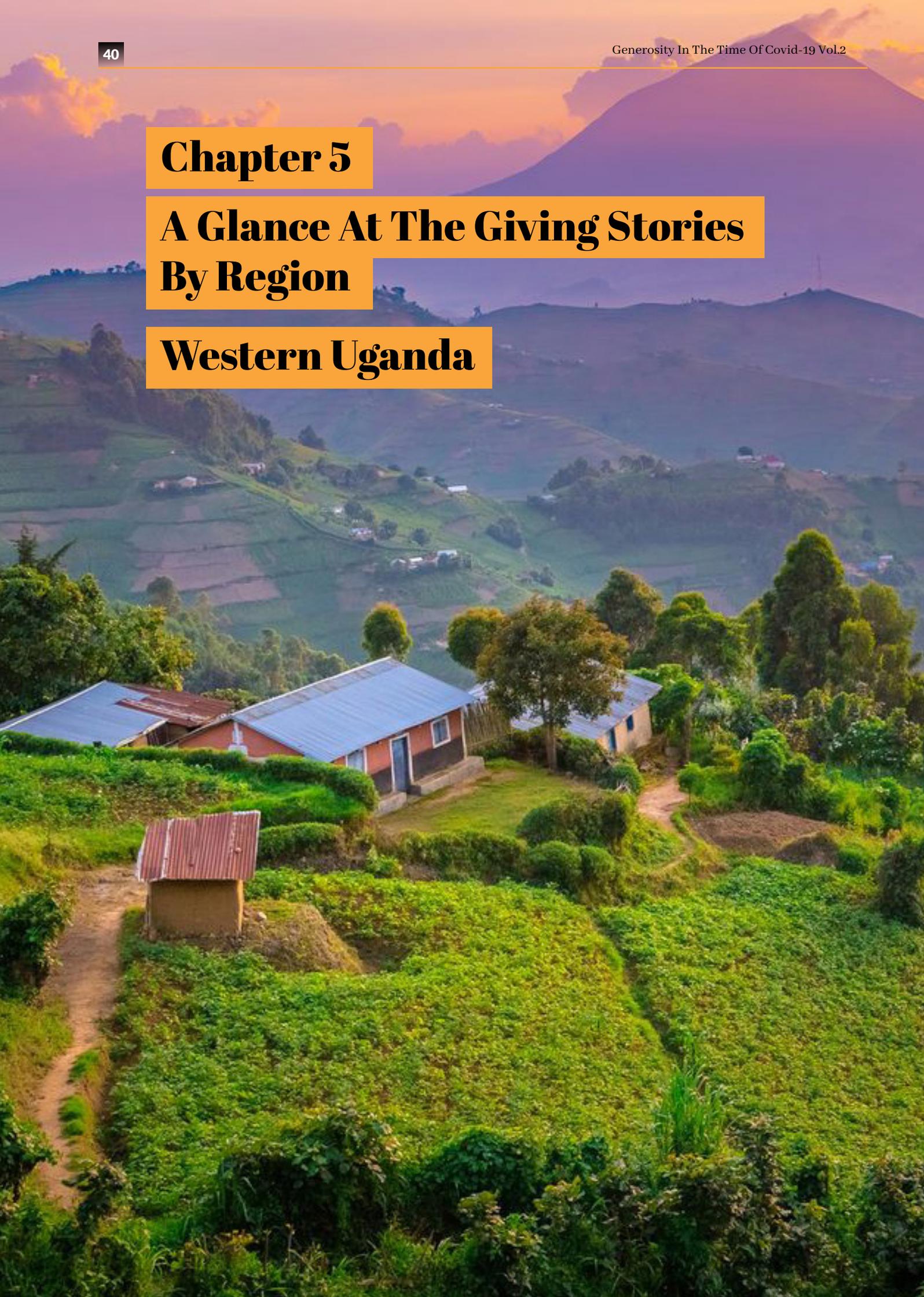
Donations were also received through Watoto structures from alumni of the Watoto Homes, whose lives the church had invested in. Some of the incredible Watoto graduates donated towards a contribution of maize flour that went to their little brothers and sisters on the Watoto Villages. The owner of Zambogo Maize Millers who supplied the flour, Duncan Mboga, is also a Watoto graduate.



## **Chapter 5**

# **A Glance At The Giving Stories By Region**

## **Western Uganda**



Like in the first volume our report, the giving stories from Western Uganda mostly came from those giving to the flood victims in Kasese. Very many families in Kasese have provided shelter to people displaced by the floods. They have taken in both those known to them and complete strangers as well. Before the world could react, the locals had opened doors to mothers and children, and patiently waited with them until the government organised the camps.

The Kasese Woman MP, Winnie Kiiza took center stage in the fundraising process. MP Kiiza attracted donations from all parts of Uganda, which saw the displaced people of Kasese District receiving basic needs.

In a bid to provide basic amenities to thousands of persons displaced by the Kasese floods, Hon. Kiiza announced the partnership with the Rwenzori Social Justice Initiative to launch a fundraising drive under the theme,

### Contribute and Restore Hope.

In response to Hon. Kiiza's call for support, the following donations were made towards the Kasese disaster relief fund:

- Hon. Peace Mutuzo the Bunyangabu District Woman Representative and State Minister for Gender, Labour and Social Development donated relief food items.
- Three water bowsers from Hon. Beatrice Anywar, the Kitgum Municipality Representative and State Minister for Water and Environment, to help deliver clean and safe water to the displaced people.
- Private-sector donations to a tune of UGX20 million (\$5,400).
- Relief items from Counsel Carol Achak of Kiiza and Mugisha Advocates.
- Two relief mattress and clothing items from Glamour Dry Cleaners that were handed over to us by Ms. Olivia Kemiyyondo Akiiki."



## Clean Water for Kasese

When news of floods in Kasese District broke, Malteser International responded. Through their Uganda office, they committed to ensuring clean water for the affected people. Without a place to call home, they worried that the displaced people would be at risk of catching waterborne diseases.

Laura Beutler, a Technical Coordinator for Malteser International in Uganda, said: "The largest hospital in Kasese had to be evacuated, leaving people there without much-needed medical care. We will be sending eight ambulances and a medical team in support of health facilities in the district.

A lack of urgent medical care would be catastrophic, especially under the present



circumstances of the coronavirus pandemic." The organisation worried that the floods would only make the battle against COVID-19 even harder among the 30,000 displaced people who had since found themselves homeless. "This disaster could have major implications for the COVID-19 response in the area," said Beutler.

**"Those displaced have been forced to seek refuge in makeshift shelters where social distancing is practically impossible. The risk of COVID-19 spreading there is now high. To reduce the risk of infection, Malteser International will be providing daily access to clean water for up to 1,000 people affected by the flooding. We will also be working with our partners to provide information on safety measures against the novel coronavirus."**

## Food for the Marginalized Batwa Community

When the country went into lockdown, Kisoro Concern for Marginalised People Organisation, a local organisation, sprung to action. With donations of up to 120 kilograms of beans, 200 kilograms of maize flour, 40 bars of soap, and a carton of salt, they reached out to over 50 families of the indigenous Batwa Community.



Speaking during the handover of the items, Alex Nambajimana, the Director of the organisation said that he was responding to a plea for food by the Batwa Community. The Batwa, he noted, are known to seek jobs in people's fields, but sadly the jobs have been scarce and they need all the help

they can get.

He further said that this was anticipated by the organisation whose objective is to improve the livelihood of the marginalized people and assisting them in becoming self-reliant people. "Kisoro Concern for Marginalised People Organisation is a community-based organization operating in the district of Kisoro, South Western Uganda," he said. "We have been involved in organizing communities especially the indigenous minority people (Batwa), refugees, widows, street children, people infected with HIV/AIDS, orphans, and other vulnerable people in ensuring that they have a better life."

During the lockdown, they continued to make sure that vulnerable communities, especially the little people in Nyakabande and Nyarusiza sub-counties in Kisoro District had food and water. The organization also helped ensure that the indigenous people had all the information they needed to prevent the virus which could easily prove catastrophic to small communities like theirs.

## Community Settles Deceased Couple's Outstanding Rental Arrears

Recently, a couple died in a road accident on the Kabale-Kisoro highway. Hillary Namanya, the Programs Manager of Rukundo International, a volunteer organization in Kabale District, and his wife Barbra Natukunda were going to attend a wedding when they got into the accident and died. On the day of their burial, it was learned with utter shock, that the landlord had allegedly put a padlock on the couple's door.

He insisted that they should pay the UGX 750,000 (\$202) owed him, even in death. No amount of pleading seemed to faze the landlord who threatened to take over the property in the house, despite the deceased being survived by minors. He insisted that the relatives of the deceased should pay the bill almost immediately.

An announcement was made during the burial to that effect. Though they had initially planned to give all the money raised towards the fallen couple's dependents, the residents immediately started fundraising for the rent. Despite the grim

COVID-19 situation, they raised UGX 870,000 (234).

Though the act by the landlord left many feeling really bad, the giving by the community at a time when many were home without work, was humbling. In the end, they were able to get the couple's property from the house and hand it over to their dependents.



## 9-year-old Sells Rabbit and Donates Money

A Primary Four pupil at Muhanga Golden Primary School donated UGX 7,000 (about \$2) to the Rukiga District COVID-19 Task Force. At just nine years old, Timothy Ainomugisha said that he knew that the district needed support fighting coronavirus and he hoped the money would help.

When the Rukiga Resident District Commissioner (RDC), Pulkeria Mwiine Muhindo asked how he got the money, the young Timothy said that he had a rabbit project and that he had sold one rabbit just for the cause. "I heard on the radio that sick people, especially pregnant



mothers, are struggling to reach hospitals, so I want this money to help them," a beaming Ainomugisha said.

Impressed by the young boy, Muhindo celebrated Ainomugisha's patriotism and urged more parents to teach their children the love of country. "I would like to thank the parents of this young boy, they have taught him right. Now, can't we all learn from them?" he asked.

Besides the love of country, the RDC also encouraged parents and teachers to instill the value of sharing in their children. "Nurturing these characters starts when the child is young; it can be done by parents, but teachers too can do it," he said.





## Kyaninga Lodge looks out for Children with Special Needs

**B**efore the lockdown, the little girl was improving. Then the lockdown happened, and the severe malnutrition crept in. Steve Williams, the proprietor of Kyaninga Lodge had to do something. In these hard times, Kyaninga Lodge like most of the tourism sector had been affected. However, through the Kyaninga Child Development Center (KCDC), the philanthropic arm of the lodge that helps children with disabilities cope, they quickly reached out to families with special needs children.

"It has been pretty flat out here. The lockdown has resulted in many children living with disabilities becoming malnourished. With no income the families have been struggling, and I'm afraid it's the children living with disabilities who have suffered the most," Williams explains. Besides impairing incomes, the lockdown also brought movement to a screeching halt and so the organization had to figure out a way to deliver the needed help.

"We got special permission from the district to travel for the KCDC team to reach these children. We have managed to get out over 450 hampers to individual children (we include enough for the whole family) which have a variety of nutritious food, some therapy materials, educational and coronavirus-related information," Williams said.

When they arrived at the different homes, the KCDC team was shocked by how quickly some of the children got to a critical state. "It's tough. Before we were seeing 800 children a month and now can only reach 30%, but we are finding new approaches to help our team reach the children. The team of 35 are working around the clock to get to the most critical kids, especially children who are severely handicapped," he said.

In a bid to make sure they had jobs, Williams kept his staff from the lodge to help out on the much-needed philanthropy. "I managed to re-employ all the lodge staff during the lockdown for another philanthropy project we started called Kyaninga Mobility," he said. "It is a proposed workshop that will design, test, develop and manufacture wheelchairs, standing devices, seating apparatus, prosthetics and other mobility equipment that is specially tailored to the rural setting we operate in, allowing us to supply mobility equipment in far greater numbers, reduce waiting times and transform lives."

The organization will be 100% not-for-profit and through sales of equipment to third parties, help the company become self-sustaining. The ultimate goal is to channel all proceeds thereafter towards supporting the work of KCDC.

## A Coronavirus Song for Bunyoro

**B**unyoro's Wispa, Burnic MC, and Servant PRO have a coronavirus song out to sensitise the Banyoro on the deadly virus. The hip-hop song titled Corona Virus, is laced with street language that the youth relate to.

The choice of words is deliberate and cuts straight to the point. The song features three artistes who open the song with a strong caution:

### Coronavirus is here. Stay home. Wash your hands.

They go on to emphasise just how pertinent it is to adhere to safety regulations. The song tells of the genesis of the virus from Wuhan China and how it was first dismissed as a rumour. They further narrate how this rumour would then be confirmed by international media outlets like Aljazeera and CNN.

The Artists continue to be role models in sensitizing all to buy and use effective sanitizers,

practice good hygiene with ordinary soap and water and distance socially.

They rap about nutrition; advise people to eat garlic, food rich in vitamins, and to drink lots of water. They caution against being in overcrowded places and shaking hands while insisting that everyone adorn a mask at all times.

The rhythm and lyrics are both catchy and easy to remember with the chorus, acting as a repetitive call for all to join the fight against the virus. Written in both English and the local dialect, Runyoro, the group sings:

All we-  
We can fight COVID-19  
All we-  
We can fight COVID-19  
Twena-  
Tukusobora kurwanisa  
Twena-  
Tukusobara kurwanisa  
Coronavirus kuruga  
mu Uganda



# Chapter 6

## Eastern Uganda



The Eastern Region received its fair share of giving. It was the heart-warming kind of giving; giving that re-energizes the concept of community. It was as much from organizations as it was from individuals. There was a lot of cash and non-cash giving, strangers reaching out, but most impressively, it was the attention to the plight of women and girls that stood out.

In Bugweri District, philanthropist Aminah Mutesi Nalugoda noticed the need to look at life beyond COVID-19. She was specifically worried that the food basket was getting depleted and trees were being cut at a fast pace in the district. She initiated the distribution of maize seeds to women groups in Bugweri. This project started in Makutu Village, but Aminah intends to reach out to all women in all the villages in the district. This will reinforce

increased food production and storage in Bugweri that will address the anticipated challenges of food shortage in the community.

Besides food, she also started a tree-planting drive around her home area. She sees tree-planting in Bugweri as a way to save not only the trees in her home area, but in the globe in the long run, as trees, in particular, have a large role to play in the environment by creating the majority of the oxygen almost all life on this planet needs to survive.

Mutesi believes that Bugweri can use this time to support the healing and reforestation of the environment by planting trees and farming to prevent the threat of a looming famine.

## Safe Delivery, Maama Kits and Food for Young Mothers

Margaret was an expectant mother who had no means to buy the Mama Kit needed by the hospital to help welcome her baby into the world. It was hard before, but COVID-19 only made it harder, as the cost of the items in the Kit had increased since lockdown.

A local community organisation called Community Concerns Uganda (CCU) came to her rescue and supplied Mama Kits to the expectant mothers at the health center where she attended her antenatal clinics.

“God is great!” she exclaimed. “Who knew that I would also get this...honestly, God hears our

prayers. I only had a pair of gloves ready. Thank you so much for this!” Six hours after she received her packet, she went into labour and was taken to the health center by CCU where she delivered a baby boy.

The second was Sirina; a teenage mother without food.



“Today I received food—porridge and milk powder; my baby makes a week today, and I have been experiencing a shortage in breastmilk. I have high hopes that with this food donation, I will improve my diet to produce more milk for my baby,” an elated Sirina said.

CCU was stepping in to fill the gaps in service delivery by providing transportation and basic needs to pregnant women, since having food to eat, let alone a balanced diet in the past 3 months has been a challenge, as well accessing health care when needed.

CCU focused on donations of Mama Kits and baby receivers, when pregnant women attended antenatal care and therefore stepped up pregnant women’s attendance and delivery at a health facility. They sensitized women on the effects of COVID-19



and support to prevent conflicts in homes. The organization donated Mama Kits and receivers to 63 pregnant women from 9 villages in Jinja and Mayuge districts within the ages 17-24 years.

## A Reminder: Periods Don't Stop for Pandemics

Much of life as we know it has changed in the past few months. One thing, though, has not: menstruation in women and young girls continued its regular cycles.

In Mayuge, the locals carried out a Rural Community Empowerment Week, supported by Wimat Development Foundation, to raise funds for sanitary pads for young girls and women. They used the very platform to also fundraise for masks and other hygiene necessities for girls and women. To draw more awareness to the cause and encourage more donations, the Wimat Foundation wrote:

**Imagine spending seven years of your life feeling shame for your body and unsure about how to obtain the necessary hygiene products? In the poorer regions of Uganda, young girls miss an average of 2-3 days a month due to a variety of factors related to menstruation.**

Some of these factors include the lack of doors in bathrooms or changing areas in schools; little to no access to sanitary pads or tampons, the stigma of being “dirty” that is associated with menstruation, an unpredictable supply of water, and a poor sewage system that contaminates water.

Even in their own homes, rural women face these challenges and more. With the COVID-19 lockdown, there is a decreased supply of hygiene products. To combat their lack of sanitary products, many rural women have succumbed to using stained and dirty strips of old cloth, banana leaves, or other non-traditional items as replacements. This poor menstrual hygiene

is known to cause a variety of health risks and increased risk for urinary or reproductive system infections.

To address this need, Wimat Development Foundation visited rural areas and provided clean sources of water, changing areas, proper waste disposal facilities, and sanitary kits to



rural women. They held a Rural Community Empowerment Week (between 20-24th of June-2020) in Mayuge District, and donated 200 masks, 250 bars of soap, and 200 sanitary kits.

Wimat hopes to target adolescent girls and young mothers in their future community projects, and will focus on including more hygiene kits and food. They need all the support and partnership they can get to make it possible so that both women and men have basic hygiene products and food to eat.



## Students Donate to Eastern Region Journalists

Despite being away from university, students at the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU), Mbale Campus, donated food items to journalists reporting about COVID-19 in the Eastern Region. According to the university, the donations were collected by the student's guild body and delivered to the District Taskforce by their Guild President, H.E. Welunga Yusuf.

“As the procedure requires, through the district task force headed by the RDC, we handed over

be neglected in the fight against coronavirus,” Welunga stated. He maintained that the media risks their lives to bring information to the general public and deserve the relief package. “As students of IUIU, through these small donations, we want to show journalists that we highly recognize the great job they do and encourage them to continue playing the fourth estate role,” he explained.

Welunga also observed that the media in the



bags of rice, maize flour and bunches of bananas to be given to journalists from different media houses in Mbale,” Welunga revealed. The Guild President explained that they opted to support journalists because of their important role of reporting and sensitizing the community about COVID-19.

“Behind the microphones, cameras, and papers are the journalists whose role cannot

Eastern region had been left out when it came to relief donations, and yet their efforts are worth noting. While receiving the donation, the Mbale Deputy RDC Lilian Nakawesi commended the IUIU students for the gesture. “This is an exceptional gesture and I call upon all student leaders from other institutions to emulate what IUIU has done,” Nakawesi stated.



## How This Village Shared Harvests

This year's harvest season in the Eastern District of Bukedea was different for many. In Kachumbala sub-county, about 15 Kilometers away from Mbale Town, families shared with neighbours. Not that it was unheard of before among the Iteso, (a highly communal people), but it had been quietly vanishing for a while now. This time round, whoever harvested first sent a basin of food to their neighbours and a message of encouragement.

"I have harvested fresh beans and shared it with the surrounding homes," Margaret Ogwang, a resident of Otem, narrated.

"Unlike in the past where we sold it, this time around when my jackfruit got ripe, we shared with neighbours." She notes that this was different and that neighbours



have stepped up to help ensure that everyone is well.

A few weeks before she harvested her fresh beans, she received a bunch of matooke (green bananas) from Christine Omongole who also shared this harvest with other people in the community. Fruits, vegetables, and seeds were shared with those close by even without them asking.

The villagers collectively harvested crops from each other's gardens at no fee, since many would not afford to pay for labour. They harvested groundnuts, beans and maize, and helped each other carry the harvest to the yards for drying out in the sun. Whenever the adults were unavailable, they sent their teenage children to provide extra harvesting hands at the neighbouring gardens. Coronavirus might have left a trail of death across the world, but in this small village in Kacumbala Sub-County, it kept the ubuntu and neighbourly spirit alive.

## Stepping Up for a Neighbour Locked Up in Kampala

On the night Lorna Wanyenze's her husband was supposed to travel back from his trip to Kampala, the President announced a national lockdown. With just a few weeks left until the birth of her baby, the very pregnant Lorna went into a state of panic.

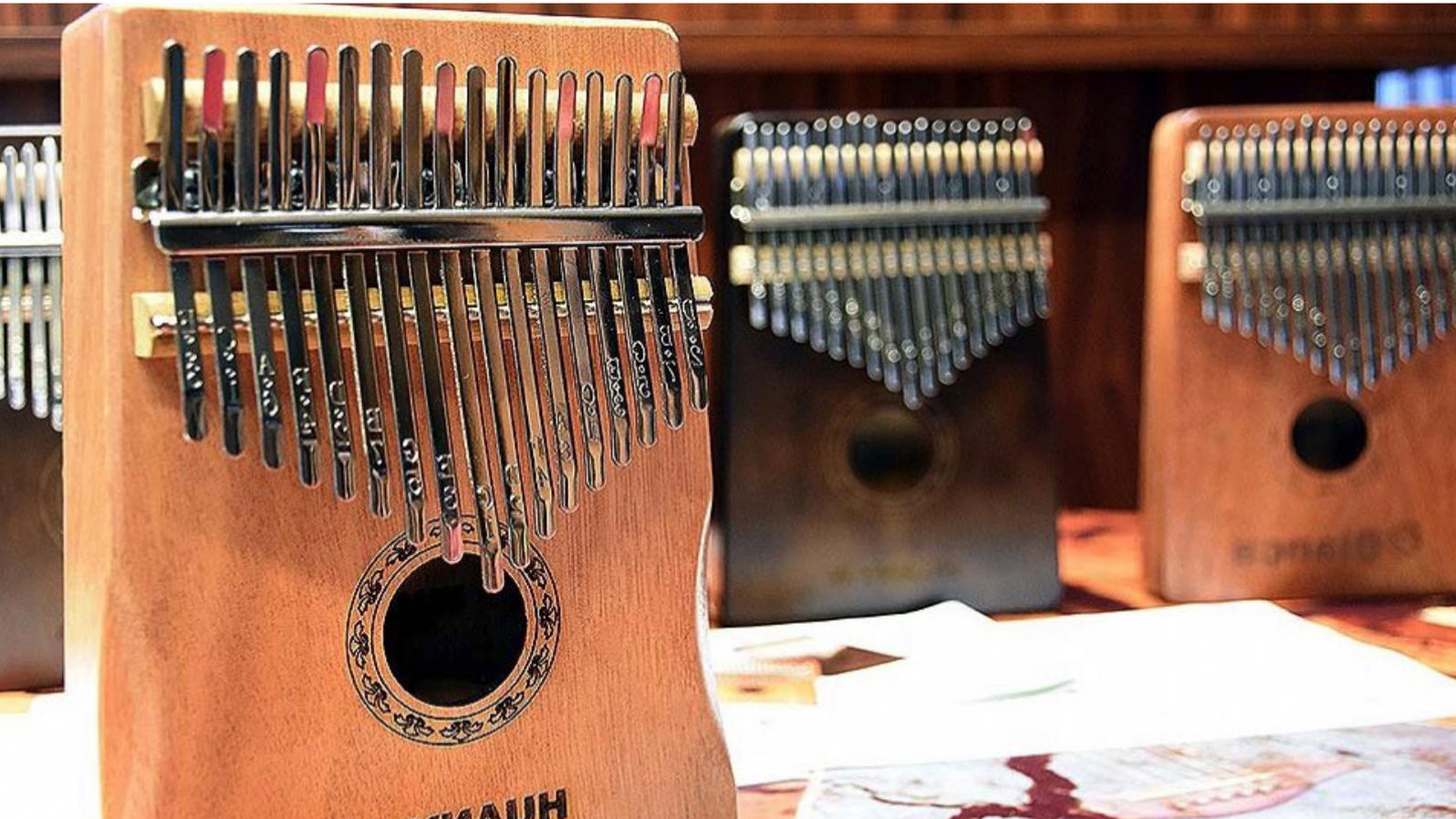
She was new to the trading center in Butiru Sub-County, in Manafwa District. She knew no one and was counting on her husband to be there for the birth of their son. As soon as her neighbours noticed that her husband was away, and would be stuck wherever he was, they started trickling into her small compound with help. "First they brought a bunch of matooke, and then avocado," she told of the giving that unfolded right before her eyes. "The next morning, I heard a knock at my door. About three or four women who had brought me more food and water."

The neighbours did not stop at just food items. They went to her home and stayed with her, in turns, until her child was born. "By the time I

went into labour, I was with three neighbours who helped arrange a car to transport me to the hospital. Two of them stayed with me until I was discharged since none of my relatives could travel to help out," she recalls.

When her husband arrived, her child was over a month old and she lacked nothing. "I have never seen this type of kindness in my life, I used to cry tears of joy!" Until they saw that her husband had arrived, her neighbors didn't stop making sure she was fine.





## The Thumb Piano Delivers the Coronavirus Message

Though barely ten years old, Solomon Asiata, aka Akogo Boy, delivers the message on coronavirus through song. <https://www.facebook.com/emusoit.ali/videos/1841485689315783>

Despite battling a heart disease, the talented young boy, a pupil at Faith Junior Academic in Kobwin, Ngora District beams when performing. He combs through the thumb piano, also called akogo, with such skill that it won him the name Akogo Boy.

He first burst onto the scene when his video went viral on social media. He was filmed playing a thumb piano, the akogo, which is a rare thing among Teso children today. When the virus broke, the talented boy composed several songs cautioning the public to follow guidelines.

Most of the songs Akogo Boy wrote and played were educational songs played in free-style. In one of the songs, he begs the heavens to protect the people from the virus while reminding them that they too must play their part, taking heed of what the government advises. He is a darling of many mostly because of how easy and clear his message is.

Akogo Boy commands respect in the region and has used his platform to ensure that the message about coronavirus is delivered. As soon as his videos are uploaded, they are widely shared among the Teso community on social media and later replayed in the trading centers for all and sundry.



## Celebrated Eastern Uganda Orthopaedic Surgeon Talks Philanthropy

**D**r. John Ekure is the Director of Kumi Orthopaedic Center, the biggest privately owned bones only hospital in Uganda with clients across East Africa. He also doubles as the Chief Orthopaedic Surgeon at the hospital. He is the Vice President of the African Orthopaedic Association. Outside of the hospital, he is the former Kumi District President of the Lion's Club, and a true believer in philanthropy. The **CivSource Africa Team** recently caught up with him to discuss philanthropy.

His personal account follows:

At Kumi Orthopaedic Center, giving has been weaved into our DNA. The foundation of the hospital is built on that principle of giving back to

future at the time was shattered, until the community decided to help. They supported me financially to finish my education; and that was the giving that impacted how I view society today. Years later, I built a hospital in memory of my mother and mostly to give back to the community that supported me.

I give to the people of Teso to show them that we can get out of poverty by being focused. I want to inspire them by doing something of value; giving service and helping other people see that growth is possible even in the most difficult of situations. This hospital is built in the Eastern District of Kumi as a thank you to the people of Teso.



the community.

When I look at my story, and why I built the hospital, it was meant to give back to the community. You see, I was raised by my mother right here in Kumi. She was a midwife at Kumi Health Center during the time of insurgency, when sadly she was killed.

Mum died when I was in High School and my

Knowing that this is one of the most depressed communities economically, I felt the need to share my skills with my kin. I had to give back in terms of providing the scarce resources that this community required. I also built the hospital to give back to God.



## Giving as a Responsibility

Giving for me is simply about sharing and love. Sharing what you have with others who do not have; supporting others who require it. I worry that people take givers for granted, so you must learn to give those that need it. Sadly, this is what I believe has deterred the giving spirit in Africa.

As you give, you also receive. We have indeed been able to grow because in offering this service, people bring something in return. Interestingly, that is where we get even more to give to other intuitions and communities. We have helped with the building of churches, supported the education of different children, both orphaned and with parents.

We have supported the training of some doctors and medical personnel like nurses. I have several examples: A young lady we met in the church came to me to say that her parents could not afford her further education after Senior Four. She had attempted to join a Nurses' Training School but failed. We helped her join another one, met all her financial needs and when she completed, we gave her a job. Now she can support her family and her siblings who are still in school. That is the kind of giving that brings joy to my heart; it is very impactful.

Away from the health field, we have given to the education sector in the region. We have donated to schools like Ngora High School, made several contributions to Teso College Aloit, mostly in my capacity as an old boy. We have supported a host of institutions in the region.



We have also given to churches for various reasons; sometimes for the treatment of a member or construction of worship halls, among many other things. For us who believe in God and

support the work therein, we know that the church has a big role to play in the development of human beings.

We have also given to the local communities as well. Last year, there was a gentleman (sadly he passed on), who lived in a dilapidated and condemned building just opposite our hospital. We foresaw a disaster, so we built him a house back in his village and resettled him there. It might have cost quite a lot to put up the two-bedroomed house, but knowing that his wife and children are safe is worth it.

We have prioritized giving to the very need: for example, we give food, clothes, and shoes to an orphanage within Kumi District. During this battle with COVID-19, we contributed a fair amount of money to the National Task Force through the Lions Club of Uganda.

In this time of COVID-19, the hospital is equipped to screen those with signs and symptoms of the virus, and quickly refer them to the responsible authorities. All our staff and frontline workers are protected with cloth masks and N95 masks as they go about this screening, and also receive an extra mask to take home with them for protection out of the hospital premise.

We have given information about COVID-19 to the community. In giving constant information and educating the community, we have helped spread awareness and tips on how to prevent the virus. We emphasize sanitization or handwashing; we have explained why people need to use alcohol-based sanitizer and not just any sanitizer. To ensure that no one is left out, we now plan to have more radio conversations within the communities.

Outside of our skill set, we decided as a hospital to give blood. There is no better gift than the gift of blood because it is part of our bodies and it literally saves a life. During this COVID-19 time, therefore, our staff donated blood to the National Blood Bank.

## Joining a Philanthropic Club

**D**ue to our love for philanthropy, many like-minded people came together to see how to better our community and the world as a whole.

I belong to the Lion's Club of Kumi Central, a subsidiary of the clubs of District 114B. Lions are generally about service; they give free services just to experience the joy of giving and putting people back in a place where they feel like they belong.

As members of the Lions Club of Kumi Central, we have given generously to our communities. We give food, protect the environment; we have

planted one of the biggest numbers of trees in Kumi District.

We have organised young people in schools into what we call the Leo Club. In that club, we show them the benefits of serving the community. We work in five areas; youth, sight, hunger, pediatric cancer, and diabetics. The District Club conducted eye camps and diabetic camps. We are running the Teso diabetics project together with the Lions Clubs International Foundation. These activities cover the districts of Bukedea, Kumi, and Ngora.



## Take-home Message

**I**love to give as I understand the impact it makes. Giving starts, first, by identifying a need; then having a dream and a passion on how to meet that need. You then build on that dream and make the money that will allow you to give even more people.

To help with improving one's hygiene, for example, resources like water and soap are required. It means you must have resources to facilitate your giving.

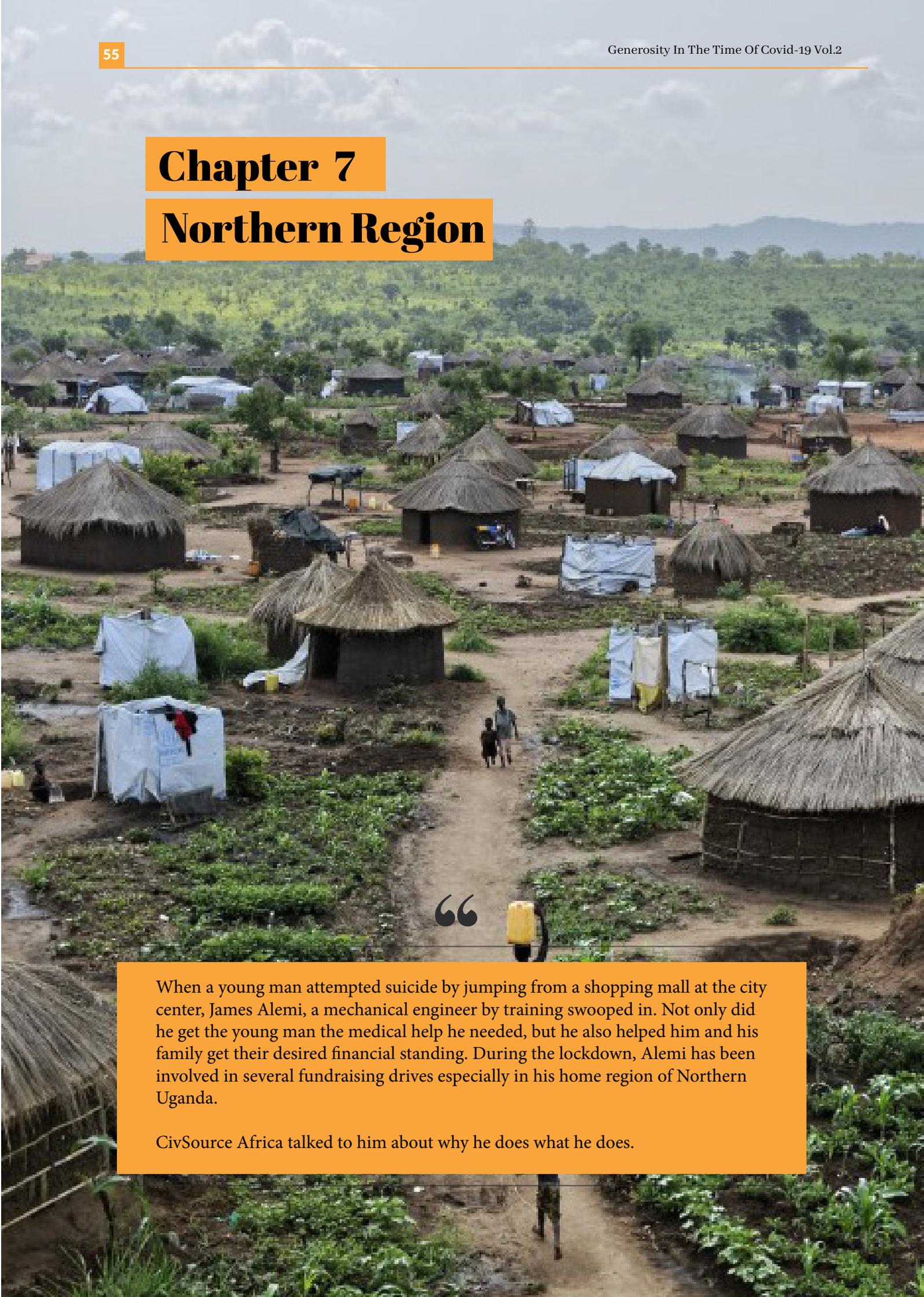
Once you get those resources, a cycle is created. Once you give, it comes back to you, and you get better at giving more.

Interestingly, even giving of my time is a rewarding form of giving for me. Listening to people helps you know their need. For example, a mental health need is addressed by listening and not leaving anyone alone in a state of depression.



## Chapter 7

# Northern Region



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When a young man attempted suicide by jumping from a shopping mall at the city center, James Alemi, a mechanical engineer by training swooped in. Not only did he get the young man the medical help he needed, but he also helped him and his family get their desired financial standing. During the lockdown, Alemi has been involved in several fundraising drives especially in his home region of Northern Uganda.

CivSource Africa talked to him about why he does what he does.

## James Alemi is a Giver

I was born into a family of abject poverty. I know what it means to lack, especially if you look at my childhood. I remember the days when my grandmother could not afford to buy meat for my sister and I. I vividly recall life especially during the ages of 7-9 years of age, 24 years ago. I have those memories, they influence so much of the giving I do today.

I was also born nationalistic and patriotic. I love helping my country and my President especially in creating jobs for young people. I am blessed to have the privilege of working for the affluent and the super-rich Ugandans.

I believe it is my calling by God for me to always bless His people by



giving back. When I make money, I ensure that I bless a needy person I find on the streets or social media and in turn, God blesses me even more. For example, if I make UGX2 Million (\$540), I make sure I give UGX500,000 (\$135). I make sure I share. God will bless me with another UGX10 million (\$2700) or UGX30 million (\$8000). The true meaning of being rich is impacting the life of the vulnerable in society.

I help children affected by war, street kids, school dropouts, orphans of HIV by skilling them in professional and modern mechanics. Once they can earn their own money, that is a good thing, I celebrate that. I have so far trained 268 young people, for free, since 2013.

## Community Protects Girls and Women

As the urban centres worry about coronavirus affecting their incomes, girls in Karamoja worry about being married off before schools open. Even before the coronavirus, this injustice was happening in Amudat District. Many parents were choosing marriage over education for their teenage daughters, in exchange for a few goats.

In Katabwok Sub-County, Amudat District, the villages are remote and justice is not easy to seek. What this meant was that many of the young girls currently at home, as a result of the closure of schools, were worrying about being married off. With this in mind, the community occasionally met to make sure any cases of early



marriages are settled.

Some of the teachers who are still living within the school compounds offer refuge to girls whose parents might want to marry them off. In the same spirit, the community has vowed to send whoever marries off their child during this time, to the police station.

Besides early marriages, the community in Katabwok is also keen on monitoring those who might use this time to carry out Female Genital Mutilation on the girls who are not in school. The Village Health Trainers are alert and have made it known to all that they will be arrested for this crime.

The United Nations estimates that over 120 million girls and women are mutilated every year across 29 countries in Africa and the Middle East alone. In Uganda, over 400 girls are mutilated during the circumcision years in the Karamoja and Sebei regions.

## Kitgum's Sixteen-Year-Old Donates Her Pocket Money



**E**unice Oting Okidi, a 16-year-old student at Seeta High School in Mukono District, donated UGX 100,000 (\$27) to the Kitgum District COVID-19 Task Force. The soft-spoken Okidi said the money came from her savings and felt that this was the right cause to spend it on. "I hope this money helps with the district activities to fight coronavirus," the teenager said while handing the money over. She then explained that she specifically wanted the money

to go towards easing the movement of the sick during the lockdown.

"I know many people cannot access health facilities due to the lockdown but with the little I have given, I know the ambulance will be fueled and some lives will be saved," the beaming teenager said.

She encouraged fellow teenagers to do as she has with the little they have. "This money was pocket money given to me by my parents, I saved it and I now would like to share it with my people. I know some teenagers have also saved their money, please share it with our people."

Impressed by the young girl, Kitgum Resident District Commissioner, William

Komakech, who also doubles as head of the District COVID-19 Task Force, said they had all been challenged by Okidi.

"To see a young girl like this giving her money to us and yet she does not have a job, is impressive. She has indeed challenged us," he said.

Komakech quickly re-assured the teenager that her money would go towards buying litres of fuel for the district ambulance.

"We must respect her wish and that of all the donors. If she wants to make sure that sick people who can't walk long distances to hospitals are helped with our ambulances, that is what we should do," he added.





## Sunday Olyel Remembered People with Special Needs

As the world withdrew into their homes due to the deadly coronavirus, people with special needs were forgotten. When it came to community sensitization, for example, people with hearing impairment were barely catered for. It was important to include messaging that reached them as well. Sunday Olyel, the founder of Persons with Special Abilities - Africa (PESA - Africa), saw this gap in Gulu District and did something about it. With support from The Pollination Project, Olyel and the team started **the Corona Must Go Campaign** which supported 100 people with hearing impairment. “In a time of crisis, as it happened with the

coronavirus pandemic, people with special needs are often left out. We had to do something,” he explained.

They produced 400 litres of liquid soap for free distribution and heavily subsidized over 2000 litres for the general population. The 400 litres were specifically given to people with hearing impairment during the sensitization visits. “We reached out to 100 people with hearing impairment and their families to inform them about the current situation; we explained what precaution they needed to take and also provided each of them with 4 litres of liquid soap,” he said.

This campaign reached an estimated 500 people as each

home had about five people on average. Today, he takes pride in knowing that the decision to take sign language sensitization to the people with hearing impairment, helped spread awareness of COVID-19. “They now know how it spreads but most importantly, they understand how it can be avoided,” he observed. After registering success among those with hearing impairment, Olyel partnered with HIVE Uganda (an organization that trains people with visual impairment in beekeeping), to make 920 litres of liquid soap which were distributed to 300 people with visual impairment.





## I Played My Part By George Abedi

For the two decades that I have been alive, I have not seen anything quite as scary. It has been a time of global panic, with thousands of people dying on a daily basis. I have seen nations lost in figuring out how to help their people, while the majority have been left with nothing but hope for a better day.

Despite this, most of the people in Zombo District, where I live, do not seem bothered by the news of the virus. I did not see anyone going out of their way to follow the guidelines issued by our health ministry.

In fact, by mid-April, people still gathered in groups; the streets were busy, markets still operated normally, children continued to play together and there was no observation of

social distancing at all. While this might have looked like negligence at first, I soon noticed that it was more about ignorance. There was an information gap in my community; if they knew anything about the coronavirus, the information was scanty, or worse, mythical. I knew then I had to do something; I couldn't just sit and watch passively. No way! I took action.

I started a one-week sensitization campaign in my neighborhood. I moved door to door, met and interacted with the youth, children, elders, and women, all the while emphasizing prevention. Many people were amazed, the local leaders joined my campaign and together we instantly noticed a change in behavior.

I then went on to interact with businessmen; the goal was to encourage them to set hand washing facilities at their premises. It worked. Every day I took note of how many people I had talked to and by the end of the week, 350 people had proper information on the coronavirus. By that end of that week, over fifteen households had handwashing facilities. I also noticed that the business and market authorities had started ensuring the prevention guidelines were followed. I continue to preach prevention among the illiterate and semi-illiterate homesteads in my area. We all have a part to play and I am glad I did mine.



## Koboko All-Stars Caution the Kakwa Community

Music has undoubtedly played a very significant role in the sensitization of the public about coronavirus. In Koboko District, artistes came together in a song titled 'Coronavirus'. It is a slow Rhythm and Blues (R&B) and Hip-pop piece written in Kakwa, a local dialect in West Nile. The lyrics contain the following message:

The Koboko All Stars also highlight the signs and symptoms of this virus which include sneezing, high temperatures, persistent flu, cough, and difficulty in breathing, among others. The group advises the public to maintain social distance, wash hands at all times, avoid public gatherings, and wear masks while in public. Most importantly, they ask the people to stay at home and keep safe,

**“Wash your hands, report to the health centres through the contacts provided by the Ministry of Health when you notice any signs**

**and symptoms, stay home and keep safe. Corona has led to the closure of schools, mosques, and churches, disabling of businesses, and a pause in the world's economy. We cannot take this virus for granted, lest we die just as it is the case in the USA, Italy, China, and other countries.”**

as human are the major means through which the virus can spread.

Written purely in the local dialect, the message is delivered in a brief and crisp approach. It is no wonder that this song has been a choice for those looking to sensitize masses in Koboko.



## The Karamojong in the Diaspora Fundraise for the Region

Aware Uganda, in partnership with The Karamoja Community United Kingdom Foundation, has launched an appeal to support the vulnerable communities in Karamoja. The proceeds will go towards rebuilding the lives of the region's vulnerable women and children during and after the coronavirus. Prior to the fundraising drive, they committed to contributing Personal Protective Equipment across the Karamoja Region.

When COVID-19 broke out, the group helped spread the message on the prevention of the deadly virus with the following lyrics:

**“Wash your hands with soap and water often – for at least 20 seconds. Wash your hands as soon as you get home. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands again; do not touch your face if your hands are not clean.”**

The Karamojong Community United Kingdom Foundation was formed to advance Karamoja's development through advocacy and the sharing

of information on experiences, and strategies in the diaspora. Their ultimate goal is to strengthen the Karamojong voice and capacity to participate effectively and influence decisions made at national, regional, and global levels for the development processes of Karamoja.

They are committed to ensuring that the region, which was also recently hit by cholera, is not left behind. “As Karamojong in the diaspora, our focus will be to look at trends, challenges, successes, and opportunities to be explored in Karamoja,” they explained.



Keeping in mind that a lot of efforts have been put in place by local, national, and international bodies to enhance Karamojong development. They believe that this is also a time to reflect upon what has and has not working in the development process of the Karamoja region.

## Brayo and Jeron Sensitise Northern Uganda

A song by renowned Luo singer and producer, Brayo gained an enormous amount of airplay in Northern Uganda. The song about coronavirus that features another lead singer in Northern Uganda, Jeron Keen, is written in Luo.

It starts by demystifying the myths around COVID-19 as the singers dismiss the notion that the virus is a laboratory project by the Chinese to conquer the world's economy. They then advise the public to be vigilant and protect their lives and that of others so as not to contract the deadly virus.

**“Corona has no cure or vaccines yet, stay home and keep safe. I sing this song for my life and yours, you are precious, don't expose your life to danger by being negligent, let us all make this little sacrifice, and we shall win the fight and come out of it stronger. Maintain social distance, handwashing, and being vigilant about any signs and symptoms related to the virus. Use sanitizers, don't touch your nose, eyes, and**

**mouth; let us not take chances, youth”** – this is the key message in the song.

They warn that thousands of people are dying in other countries and that they would not wish to see that happening in Uganda. The artistes also dismiss the myth that only the elderly have died and insist that coronavirus has killed across different age groups.



The song, a merger of Rhythm and Blues (R&B) and Dancehall, is very short and clear.

The words are precise and nothing is lost in translation. Educated and uneducated members of the public can relate to this especially beautiful song. Without a doubt, Brayo and Jeron Keen delivered this with the utmost skill.

## Paidha Artists Sing about Prevention

Paidha All-Stars released a coronavirus song to accelerate the sensitization in West Nile. The song featuring Hassla, Leza Nathan, Kaga Boy, Riaso Boy, and many others is titled Fight Corona. It is a blend of Rhythm and Blues (R&B) and hip-hop; a music style that appeals to many people. The song starts with the mention of some killer diseases like malaria, gonorrhoea, ebola, HIV/AIDS, and then skillfully introduces the topic of coronavirus. The artistes make a strong call to action and warn that if the public doesn't unite against the virus, death would occur.

The emphasis is on the need to stay at home, wash hands, sanitize, and pray. The song acknowledges that in the midst of the challenges like the lack of money and general life hardship in these times, the need to stay alive is most important. The artists then describe the



signs and symptoms of the disease such as high temperatures and flu-like symptoms. The call is therefore to stick strictly to the health guidelines such as avoiding handshakes, and wearing masks while in public.

There is a call for people to be deliberate about good nutrition; eat garlic, greens, drink a lot of fluids,

The song is a blend of both English and the local dialect, Alur. Here's a short translation of one of the verses:

**From malaria, gonorrhoea, ebola, HIV, today it's now corona.**

**If we don't unite in this fight, we are gonna die. Kadi Peko tiye, atwonga, muwa iwu utiye Nia wu gwokuru:**

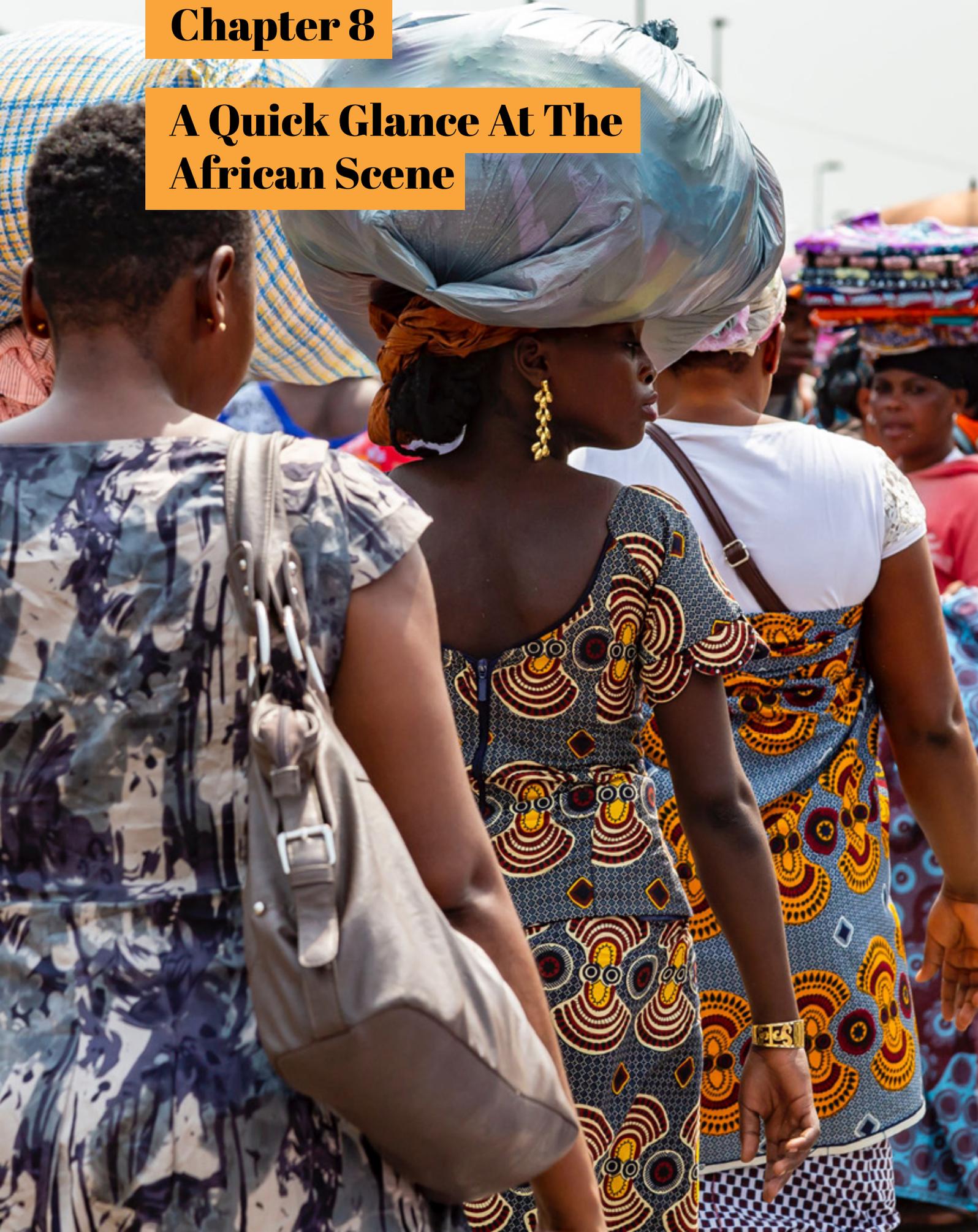
**(the message is keep safe),**

**Wubed ipacu, kud wuwoth akeca (stay home, do not move about),**

**Ulwok cingu sawa ceke (wash your hands at all times).**

## Chapter 8

### A Quick Glance At The African Scene



This might be a collection about the giving stories in Uganda, but what is the Ugandan story without the African one?

In this section we explored some of the giving that happened at a continental level and trickled down to Uganda.

In a bid to celebrate the health workers at the frontline in the fight against the coronavirus, artists from 11 African countries came together and recorded a song. The song, carefully executed in three different languages, is a project by Dr. Rasha Kelej, the Chief Executive Officer of Merck Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the pharmaceutical giant, Merck.

It is a melodious reggae tune featuring the talents of A-Pass from Uganda, Cwezi from Ghana, Kambua from Kenya,

Mahmoud Al Leithy from Egypt, Nikki from Nigeria, Rozzy from Sierra Leone, Salatiel from Cameroon, Sean K from Namibia, Sunita from The Gambia, Tom close from Rwanda, and Wezi from Zambia. Dr. Kelej explained that the song is a salutation of the great sacrifice the health workers are making during these trying times. She further said that the song, done in Arabic, English, and French, is a project woven under her personal initiative called, Separated but Connected. "I am very proud that I have been able to coordinate, direct, and produce this gesture of support across 11 African countries through these 11 talented singers in three languages," she said.

While famous Cameroonian singer Salatiel (who sang with

Beyoncé and Pharrell in the latest Lion King movie) sang his part in French, Mahmoud Al Leithy, also a famous singer and actor from Egypt, sang his in Arabic to represent African Arabic speaking countries. The rest of the group, also very famous in their countries, sang in English.

Although many would know her from her role with Merck, Dr. Kelej maintains that she has experience in production and presenting TV programs from her time at Abu Dhabi TV. "I have also produced and directed many documentaries with the aim to break the stigma around infertile women and to empower women and girls in education, in Africa and Asia, as part of Merck Foundation programs."





## African Rugby Players to get Aid

Given the current health crisis, the Rugby Africa Executive Committee has approved the immediate release of EUR 170,000 (over UGX 700M) from a solidarity fund available to all member federations as financial aid, to support their rugby communities.

In a press release through the African Press Organisation, Rugby Africa said that the funds will go towards the distribution of food packages, Personal Protective Equipment, and medical support for clubs and players in their respective countries. While speaking about this decision, Khaled Babbou, the Rugby Africa President, said:

**“As centers of shared values and spaces for individual and group development, our federations play a key role in rugby’s success in Africa. More than ever, the current health crisis is having a major impact on all federations and their clubs, their coaches, and their players – the pillars of Rugby Africa. This financial support supplements a range of initiatives already rolled out to boost our rugby community and highlights the shared values and cooperation dear to our organisation. We must also stand together and continue to do everything we can to support those combating the pandemic.”**

Although Rugby Africa is

planning safe, practical protocols at a local level to get back on the playing field and TV screens, they maintain that the priority remains to help federations deal with this complex situation in the best possible way while ensuring health and safety for all.

Rugby Africa, previously known as the Confederation of African Rugby (CAR), was established in 1986. It is one of the six regional associations of World Rugby, the international organisation in charge of managing the Rugby Union and Rugby Sevens (a game involving seven players on either side).





## Ensuring Africa has the Correct COVID-19 Information

Opera News, one of the world's leading browser providers for digital content, is partnering with the African Press Organisation Group (APO) to boost the prominence of truthful news articles related to the spread of COVID-19 across Africa. This collaboration integrates the APO Group Newsroom website into the Opera News platform used by 200 million users worldwide. This partnership stems from the need to reduce the consumption of misleading news articles that include deliberate disinformation about COVID-19 in different African countries. It will provide millions of Opera users in the African region with official information from trusted and reputable online sources, and are committed to fact-checking and ensuring

that anything that could be misleading is nipped in the bud. "Providing the public with accurate information about COVID-19 is crucial, especially as Africa's coronavirus response is regularly obstructed by fake news," said APO Group Founder and Chairman, Nicolas Pompigne-Mognard. "This initiative will provide the millions of Africans who use Opera mobile applications with access to genuine, credible news content. We are proud to join forces with Opera to ensure that truthful, helpful, and potentially life-saving information gains wider prominence in Africa." Jørgen Arnesen, of the Mobile Browsers section at Opera said this collaboration will benefit those searching for information on the virus. "We just hit a new record of 200 million users with

Opera News, which positions our news service as one of the largest in the world. We believe our partnership with APO Group is a great fit for our mobile apps and will benefit hundreds of millions of users who search for COVID-19 information every day on the Opera Mini browser and the Opera News app." Users looking to read the APO Group feed of news releases on the Opera Mini browser can tap on the Coronavirus Channel tab in the browser's newsfeed. Once there, they will easily identify the news releases as they appear under the Africa Newsroom option. The link to the platform is: <https://www.africa-newsroom.com/>



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