



IRFF UK 2020 ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT



TRIBUTE TO ROBERT MWOGEZA

Robert Mwogeza will always be remembered for his endless support to IRFF's activities in Uganda.

IRFF INTRODUCTION

2020 has been like no other! Both, the occurrence of the Coronavirus pandemic and the passing of our Uganda director, Robert Mwogeza in November, made life much more difficult and different for everyone.

A great deal was achieved and a large portion of the funding was used to provide hungry people with food.

Paul Isabirye of Kigulu Prime Academy has stepped up to be the Chairman of the IFF Uganda Working Board.

On another note, IRFF UK has started supporting an NGO in South Africa as you'll read later.





A TRIBUTE TO ROBERT MWOGEZA

Robert Mwogeza, IFF Uganda Chairman sadly died on 19th November and was buried on the 22nd. He had been suffering from Diabetes for some time, and caught Covid-19 but did not recover. At the Funeral service, apart from family members, IFF Uganda and Destiny Junior School were represented, and a wreath was laid on behalf of IFF Uganda.

Robert served IFF Uganda diligently since 2008. He often went into rural areas with the Mobile Medical Team to faithfully help local people improve their standard of living by removing jiggers, disinfecting their homes, and talking about basic hygiene.

He leaves behind a wife, Agnes, and five children. He will always be remembered and missed immensely.

After the burial, the IFF Uganda working board held a meeting and Paul Isabirye was proposed to succeed Robert. IRFF UK also approved this move!



UGANDA

Apart from support given to Destiny School, the Mobile Medical Team, the Girl Child Project and WAIT Uganda, a great deal of effort was made to raise funds to support the building of the Perimeter Wall at Destiny School – a requirement thrust upon us by the local council.

DESTINY JUNIOR SCHOOL – KIBIRI

The school term started on 27th January with 74 pupils and 7 teachers, but rose to 120 pupils, 9 teachers and two non-teaching staff by the end of February. 17 Primary pupils will sit the Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) this year. The staff will be busy doing their best to enable the students to pass with good grades.



The school hired 4 acres of land to practice farming with the aim of producing food for the school to subsidise the feeding costs. They harvested 1000kgs of corn and 2 tonnes of sweet potatoes. The UK funds saved by this project were used to top up the staff salaries.



From March, the school created lesson packages for all the pupils who were advised to study from home in groups of 5 who lived nearby. Teachers gave assignments to the pupils from text books which they collected for marking. Sometimes teachers used apps to explain while pupils used their parents' smartphones to communicate to them. Those in Primary 7 seven were given a priority.

Those without food at their homes came to head teacher Jesca. Teachers dropped maize flour and beans to families who needed them. Destiny Junior School reopened on 6th May.

The school continued to harvest sweet potatoes, take the corn for milling, and distributed the food to mainly pupils' homes where people are starving.

Thanks to a donation of £400 from IRFF UK, 60 workbooks were bought for the pupils, making it much easier for the teachers to give assignments. Pupils did the assignments and took their books to the teacher for marking and corrections. The books were used by Primary 7 class, and covered four subjects - social studies, science, English, and mathematics.



Amidst certain restrictions and conditions, Destiny school re-opened on the 15th October with 20 students in Primary 7 class.

During the long lockdown, pupils not attending classes required help. Parents in the community and the local authority asked head teacher Jesca to organise activities to occupy the children as some of them were getting involved in suspicious activities. The school managed to hire trainers in music, dance and drama.

Covid-19 protocol was observed during these activities (washing hands, sanitising and taking temperature).

PERIMETER WALL



As Destiny Junior School is for children, the local authorities asked that we have a wall built to guard the school premises in order for them to not shut down the school.

Thanks to a hugely successful fundraising campaign that was facilitated on IRFF's newly designed website, we managed to raise £10,500 which was enough to complete the wall.

After 8 months and 4 phases of work, the perimeter wall at Destiny Junior School had finally been completed in October.

Thanks to all those people abroad who donated money or contributed in some way to enable this project take place! In Uganda, they managed to raise the necessary funds to buy and fix the two gates. This wall will protect the children at Destiny school from body parts harvesting; provide security for the school community; and also to put in place a crucial requirement by the local authority for not closing down the school.

WORK TO STILL BE COMPLETED AT DESTINY JUNIOR SCHOOL



The perimeter wall, although well-constructed, requires plastering to protect it from the challenges of the weather, like heavy rain. Similarly, another structure is under construction and needs a roof in order to be completed.

We are also reminded that the borehole at the school is not functioning and requires repair work. The school currently uses piped water, but the bills are quite high!

MOBILE MEDICAL TEAM



Workshops for the community leaders were organised in three districts in the eastern part of the country, namely Luuka district at Bumanya village, Kamuli District at Nabirumba village and Iganga district at Bunyiro village.

They discussed the rate at which poor hygiene is increasing day by day in the region. The community leaders blamed it on the lack of local water source; on hearing this, the district officials promised to increase bore holes in some areas.

Most of the children and elderly are deformed due to jiggers and other parasites. The team promised to keep treating jiggers and spray pesticides in their homes, while the district officials will try to improve their living conditions!

During the workshops, the leaders were shown photos of IFF Uganda treating jiggers and spraying pesticides in houses. The district medical officers commended IFF Uganda for their good work, and promised to give support where possible.



From the 11th to 14th of March, the team camped at Kyanvuma parish to remove jiggers, discuss hygiene, and follow up on some people whom they had treated before. At Kyanvuma Muslim School, they found people recovering and had started to follow the sanitation/ hygiene procedures that were taught to them - like keeping both their bodies and the environment clean. The team sprayed parasite-killing pesticide in the classrooms and homes.

During the lockdown in May-June, the team carried out pesticide spraying, hand washing demonstrations, and sanitising households. Over 150 homes were reached by the team, discussing proper personal hygiene and community sanitation. Due to COVID-19, the team avoided body contact with anybody, and focussed the demonstrations of hand washing on mainly children and the elderly.

With Uganda still in a lockdown in July-August, many restrictions were in place, including schools.

On the 13th of August, the team visited Lumino in Busia district which borders Kenya. This time the team was accompanied by district officials and police escort to ensure that they followed the COVID 19 protocol.

They found many children infected by jiggers and a number of girls got pregnant during the lockdown. They managed to treat 10 children with jiggers, and gave instructions on how to sanitise, hand wash, and observe personal hygiene.

In September, the medical team camped in the Luuka district, working at 3 villages, namely Naigobya, Budhabangula and Bukoova. The communities were mobilised through the Covid-19 prevention committee to implement the protocols. The team managed to attend to 21 people with jiggers, and sprayed pesticide in 55 homes to combat bedbugs, lice and fleas that cause jiggers in the company of the district health official, who gave talks on hygiene and sanitation.



TESTIMONY



“My name is Kamidha Kalemb. I am 73 years old and live at Kituuto, in Luuka district.

I hereby thank the medical team for treating me by removing jiggers. As you can see, I am old with visual difficulty, and can't see well.

Thank you my grandchildren for such a helping hand.

Jiggers and bedbugs are about to kill me. It's a problem to get water, soap, salt and my beddings are in rags.

Now that you have sprayed my house to kill bedbugs, removed jiggers, gave me soap, and fetched water for me, I will have a good sleep.

My request is that when you come back, please bring me a blanket, because for me it always becomes too cold in the late hours of the night.

Thanks. May God bless you”.

WAIT/ GIRL CHILD PROJECT



A joint one day workshop was organised at Nabusanke secondary school with a theme “Role of the Youth in the Community - how one can remain HIV/STDs free!” The youth resolved to abstain from sex until marriage and keep educating their peers about the dangers of immoral behaviours. They also discussed girl hygiene, especially during menstruation periods, and also the use of reusable sanitary pads.

On the 18th of March, Tadeo, "Wait Uganda's leader" visited some project partners - Butale Mixed Primary School, Masaka prison, and also Bright Future School; they are all progressing well. On the 28th, Tadeo was invited by the Muslim leadership in Kawule to discuss ways of training youth in abstinence, and offering them skills in agriculture. Brother Juma attended an agricultural training session at Kawule farm, and requested help in setting up a vegetable garden at his home, which was completed on the 23rd.

On the 5th to 6th of May, the team conducted HIV/AIDS awareness activity amongst different youth groups at Nabugabo landing site. They found out that there was an increase in the number of people, especially fishermen, catching HIV/AIDS and also a high rate of teenage pregnancy, hence the need for WAIT activity!

The team met a girl called Namugerwa (pictured below) who was HIV positive and a Senior 4 class candidate. She shared with them her personal life and the challenges she was going through after getting to know them from the many times they visited and supported girls by giving out sanitary pads.



On the 10th of July a team of WAIT volunteers camped in Kiwangala community for two days, mobilized girls and young women, and held sessions on personal hygiene, HIV/AIDS prevention, and menstruation cycle education.

On the 22nd of July, the team decided to address the increase of diseases caused by poor hygiene in the Nabugabo area near Lake Victoria. WAIT volunteers took on the task of helping to construct latrines. The community was happy since most of them lacked these facilities.

As schools reopened for exam candidate classes, it became apparent that sadly there has been an overwhelming increase in teenage pregnancy during the lockdown. The ministry of education allowed pregnant girls to attend classes.

Despite the heavy rain, the WAIT and GIRLCHILD team reached out to Holderguard primary school on 16th October and helped 50 vulnerable girls with sanitary pads, soap, toilet paper and small towels. Five more schools were visited on the 17th and 18th of October, including Migamba primary school, and on the 23rd of October, they were at Luvule Muslim Primary school.

The team made a local hand washing unit and assisted those pupils who could not afford masks which is a requirement for attending classes

From the 8th to 10th of November, the Girl Child Project ran a seminar on the island of Lake Nabugabo. Presentations on health and how the menstrual cycle works were given.

They showed the girls that it was possible to have safe and natural sanitary pads made from papyrus by comparing them with ones that cause discomfort. They gave out drinks and sanitary pads to the girls and women present.

On the 5th of December, the team spent time giving orphans some mattresses, bedsheets, blankets and clothes. Many of these children sleep badly due to the lack of blankets and mattresses.

KAWULE FARM



Kawule Farm is a farming project which hopes to one day finance all of the activities in Uganda that IRFF UK currently supports.

The farm is managed by Tadeo. The land that the farm sits on belongs to his family.

This year the farm generously donated seven piglets to different households. The selling of these piglets per household allowed them to afford school fees for their children.

On the 13th of May 2020, Tadeo gave a presentation on family values at Kawule Farm because many families are breaking up as children go wild during the long lockdown.

At the end, they gave out masks to everyone and sanitary pads to the female members.

Every Sunday, Kawule Farm serves food to the elderly in the community. Every Saturday youth come to the Farm to learn agricultural skills which will help them in their future lives.

Volunteers at the farm managed to plant one acre of sweet potatoes and also 1200 seedlings of green pepper which were covered with banana cuttings to protect from the hot sunshine. They water the seedlings twice a day, drawing water from the well which has proven to be difficult and tedious.

The farm has been progressing well. They have managed to raise and sell pigs. They have earned enough to service the vehicle as well as pay for other expenses.

Recently a business couple from the UK, Alex and Miho Fortune, visited Kawule farm in December. Alex having previous volunteer experience with IRFF has visited Uganda in the past and has kept in contact with the farm manager, Tadeo. Alex and Miho decided to put their own investment into Kawule Farm and help the farm develop further.

The piggery and poultry structures have now increased in size. There are now about 300 chickens and 25 pigs being managed well.

With Alex and Miho becoming more invested in the farm. IRFF UK will take a step back whilst Alex and Miho take more control running the farm as a business. The end goal is that the farm will replace all the money that is sent from IRFF UK through the farm's profits.



GHANA - WAIT



This year, WAIT UK was able to support inter-school activities in Ghana (see photos below), so no funding was required from IRFF UK. However, next March IRFF UK is planning to support a Skills Training project for Girls in Ghana which will run for several months!



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

IRFF UK has been supporting the Hope for Children shelter in Goma by paying for evening meals for 60 orphans since 2018. In February, IRFF UK offered funding to purchase school uniforms and satchels for the children who were allowed into school for free education.



Later in the year, the shelter moved closer to self-sufficiency by starting an agricultural project supported by IRFF UK. After clearing the land, the volunteers were able to grow, harvest and sell corn, raising valuable funds for the shelter!



SOUTH AFRICA - ART WORKS FOR YOUTH



This year, IRFF UK started supporting Art Works for Youth in Port Elizabeth, South Africa (a new NGO partner) to educate disadvantaged youth. However, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, a large proportion of the funds sent have been used to purchase food items for hungry citizens. The NGO has been feeding 150 students three days per week!

Currently, IRFF UK is running a fundraiser to solicit funds in order to build a kitchen which would be part of a Community Centre run by Art Works for Youth. IRFF UK is aiming to raise approx. £5,000 for this project.

*If you would like to support, please go to:
www.irff-uk.org/art-works-for-youth*



A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS OVER THE PAST YEAR!

So, despite the awful pandemic, incredible projects, supported by IRFF UK, were able to start or continue in Uganda, Ghana, the Congo and South Africa in 2020.

Next year, 2021, promises to be just as good and exciting, for IRFF UK and all its many volunteers world-wide!

Please feel free to visit our website (www.irff-uk.org) to read about all the projects carried out by IRFF UK and to sign up to our newsletter, and also check out our Facebook page (www.Facebook.com/irff-uk) to see if you'd like to get involved or support any of our projects.

Thank You for all your support in 2020!