



Uganda during the Corona Pandemic

Interim report on the situation - early October 2020

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Dear sponsors, donors and interested parties!

As Corona continues to shape our daily lives, we have decided to write a second interim report on the situation in Uganda to answer the many questions we have. If you know any sponsors, donors or interested parties who are not included in our mailing list, we would be pleased if you would forward this information to us in private.

Thank you very much for this!

1. general situation:

Imagine if our country had been in lockdown since mid-March and all schools, day-care centres and many other facilities were still closed - this is the current situation in Uganda in early October 2020.

Those who follow the press may have heard that corona counts are very low in many African countries. This is also true for Uganda, where only 8965 cases were officially reported by the beginning of October, not least because of the low number of tests. What is almost never mentioned, however, are the rigid protective measures taken in Uganda and other African countries to protect the population, which are both a blessing and a curse.

At the same time as Germany, the government of Uganda announced the country's lockdown. This would affect all businesses and markets with the exception of basic food supply, catering and hotels, industry and commerce. All religious, political and cultural events were also reported, public transport was suspended and the borders closed. For a few weeks even the private use of cars as well as bicycle and motorbike taxis was forbidden. Since then, all public places and streets have been subject to compulsory masks and a ban on assembly (we reported in May).

While Germany ended the lockdown as early as mid-April and school lessons began again after Easter holidays, in Uganda there were only four weeks later and much more restrained slight loosening of the lockdown. Since then, more and more businesses and companies have been able to resume work. Worship services have only been permitted for a few weeks with a maximum of 70 people, where otherwise several hundred people meet for prayer on Sundays. Buses are running again

under strict conditions and with clearly restricted timetables. Even bigger events and family celebrations are still undeclared. The same applies to the large weekly markets, where the rural population can otherwise obtain supplies at low cost. Schools, educational centres and universities, the international airport and the borders are still closed (end of September). At present, at least the students in the examination classes are hoping to return to the schools from 15 October onwards. It is still unclear whether this and other loosening measures planned for October, such as opening the border, will be implemented or whether they will last, given the rising number of infections worldwide.

Without any form of state support and tourism there is a lack of purchasing power throughout the country, so that many businesses and businesses that were allowed to reopen cannot keep their costs down and have had to lay off employees.



The rural population in Uganda is also extremely vulnerable to corona protection measures. Most of the farming communities here live as small farmers on the poverty line. Even in normal times, sufficient supplies are a problem for these families and quite a few of them suffer from hunger in

the dry season. Since the school was closed in March, the children have been at home. There they help with field work, household tasks or fetching water. The Ugandan government promised each pupil in Uganda a radio in the summer and wanted to offer daily radio lessons, but unfortunately the promise was not kept.

For many children, regular schooling is no longer necessary, which represents an additional burden for the children's families, because the low yield of the fields must now be sufficient for more people, especially in the dry season that is now beginning. These people cannot afford to pay for hygiene products or new clothes.

2. Help through Together for Uganda:

We are very happy that, thanks to the close network and the good cooperation with our volunteers on site, we have been able to maintain contact with the families of our sponsored children, but also with many other extremely poor families, and that we have been able to press ahead with important projects.

2a. Godchildren and orphans:



After the successful first distribution of aid packages at the beginning of June (we are currently informing you),

the families of our foster children received more than 200 further AIDS orphans in the Mutolere region by cooperation for Uganda also at the end of July and in September aid packages with food, Hygiene articles (soap, detergent, toothpaste) and washable masks for everyday use, and once there were also new clothes. In this way, we can at least support the poorest of the poor by ensuring their basic needs and providing a minimum level of hygiene. We would like to continue the distribution of aid packages during the Corona crisis, and we are planning another aid package at the end of November, which will be larger than the previous one in view of the upcoming Christmas Eve. It will continue in January when the lockdown is in place. For the financing of the aid packages we depend on your support.

All sponsored children of our sponsorship programme in primary school age (up to the end of 7th grade) as well as candidates for the A-level exams (Abitur) also received non-fiction books in a one-off action. The students of the Secondary School (from grade 8, at least 14 years of age) were given pocket money which they can use themselves. Before Christmas, a small amount of money per child will be paid out to the sponsored children's families, from which the families can buy clothes or other necessary things. This was recommended by our Ugandan helpers because the needs of the families vary according to their situation.



2b. Hospital

St. Francis Hospital in Mutolere remains the only clinic in the district to be certified by the WHO for the treatment of corona. So far, only a few cases have been treated here and the hospital has been spared deaths

from corona. A few days ago, the first corona death occurred in nearby Kisoro.

Since the easing of the protective measures, the urgently needed renovation of the laboratory at the hospital has been started, which is made possible by donations. The tilers are currently at work. We already reported in May about the great importance of a functioning laboratory, especially in the current situation. 25,000 euros are needed for the necessary renovations - to cover the costs and complete the renovation, we have been instructed to make further donations.

Together we all hope that the pandemic will soon be overcome or a vaccine found so that life in Germany as well as in Uganda can resume its usual course.

At this point we would like to thank you, but also all sponsors and donors, who give us the financial support for our work.

Our work on site is more important than ever during the Corona crisis. We would be delighted if the people in Uganda and St. Francis Hospital could continue to count on your support at this time!

Ngahoo – see you soon,
please stay healthy

Anja Mecking

Chairwoman