



Africa Greater Life Mission UK Newsletter

Spring 2022

At Last! The Primary Schools are Back



Perhaps because the demography of Uganda is so different to the UK (with the majority of the population under 17), the rules about school closure were almost completely opposite. Whereas the governments in the UK tended to see primary schools as the last places to close, the Ugandan Government saw them as the first. The children are squashed together in classrooms and dormitories and so “social distancing” would have been non-starter and so this could well have contributed to the decision making.

The vast majority of these children had no possibility of working on-line, something that was difficult enough for secondary students whose “device” is usually only a smart ‘phone. And so it was with great joy that we can announce that the AGLMUK sponsored primary school children are back at Wakiso Town Primary School (WaToPS).

Interestingly, the policy on vaccination was also largely “upside down” in Uganda. Covid-19 vaccines were scandalously slow in being delivered to Uganda and the quantities are also restricted - but when they did eventually arrive teachers and school children were high priorities.

The secondary, university and vocational students have been back in class for a while now but, they too have suffered huge disruption. Let us all hope and pray that education can get back to “normal” and that these children and young people can get back on track.

AGLMUK “Wind-down” Explained

Many of you will remember previous newsletter articles explaining that AGLMUK would gradually withdraw its support to AGLM (the Ugandan NGO). With the change of circumstances, particularly those relating to Wakiso Children’s School of Hope, the “wind-down” has been re-defined. It is probably now most easily defined by reference to Lilian (on the right of the photograph). Lilian is the youngest child in the AGLMUK programme and it is the intention to see her (and all of those that are older) through to independence. We will not take anyone else into the programme unless a) there is a sponsor available to cover the cost of their schooling and b) the child is at the same level (or above) Lilian in the school system. Lilian is currently at the “Primary 1” (P1) level and so any new children next year will have been entering at Primary 2 (P2) ...and so on.



Six New Students in Primary Education



In line with the position outlined above, AGLMUK has just brought six new students into the programme. They all have started at Wakiso Town Primary School and are in classes P1, P2, or P3. This means that they have all previously attended a primary school and progressed to some extent. Their parents or guardians are no longer able to afford school fees. The children are identified by Joseline and will be supported by her as they progress through primary school. She never has difficulty recommending deserving cases – conversely, her difficulty is stopping at the number that we tell her we can afford to take on!

The financial capacity to enable this move has come from a combination of an individual sponsor and the generosity of a fellowship near Preston, known as New Day Church and the New Day Homes and Hope Charity Shop. The shop is currently flourishing and providing funding to three supported charities, one of which is AGLMUK.

We are looking for individual sponsors to secure the future of these children – if you are interested please get in touch.

Climate Change, Ukraine and the Price of Food in Wakiso

The following information is lifted from Tearfund’s web site and gives an indication why AGLMUK has just agreed to send money to help the most needy families look after the “extra mouths” that return home during the school holidays: *Eastern Africa is facing its most severe food crisis in a generation, having experienced its worst drought since 1981. Across large parts of the Horn of Africa, including Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, 13 million people are experiencing severe hunger every day. In South Sudan, 7.2 million people are without enough food, and millions are experiencing food insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo.*

Climate change has altered weather patterns in the region, resulting in droughts of increasing frequency and intensity. Three consecutive rainy seasons have failed in the Horn of Africa, and below-average rainfall is forecast for a fourth. At the other end of the scale, heavy rains and flooding in Rwanda and South Sudan have undermined food production.

The situation was already precarious following the destruction caused by the locust swarms of 2019–2021. It has been further complicated by local conflicts and the Covid-19 pandemic.

The invasion of Ukraine has sent food prices skyrocketing. Ukraine produces around 10 per cent of the world’s wheat exports, 17 per cent of its maize, and is the world’s largest producer of sunflower oil. A significant proportion of these exports go to south-west Asia and to Africa. With local harvests failing, there is a greater need for people in these regions to be able to buy imported food – but rising prices will make this increasingly difficult.

tearfund

Drake – Dreaming of Big Things



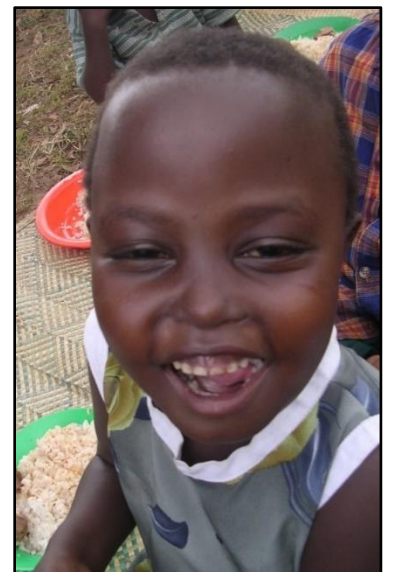
We asked if Drake could contribute to the newsletter by sharing his story. This is what he gave us: *My name is Drake Muwanguzi a proud son of AGLMUK and this is my story. I lost my father at the age of 3 years, mother began the struggle to look after her family with no help, she sold some of the properties her husband had left so that to take care of the family, amidst opposition from her in-laws who later made the family homeless claiming the house was built on family land. However, amidst the storm, AGLM helped us out. It gave me food, medical care, and I was educated right from primary level to college. I'm so grateful for everything and being natured well to become a responsible man today. The challenges I went through growing up and the help offered by AGLM were very inspiring to me as a child. I got a dream of helping people in need more so those that are going through the same life I had before I was given a hand which gave me hope to see a future. I started an organisation called Grander Life Springs, We work within the local communities of Uganda and we assist people who have suffered the effects of poverty, abuse, and disease,*

for example, HIV/AIDs and hunger without any form of discrimination whether along with religion, tribes, race or stigma. My dream is for each person in our care to fully know their value and despite all odds, go on to fill society as empowered and self-sustaining adults. I have been able to start the Youths Encouragement programs, provision of masks, food, and other sub-projects to the vulnerable. This has made us grow. Today we have 199 children, 25 youths, and 64 women registered under Grander Life Springs. My vision for the organisation is to become international, full life support, employ the supported children, and support people of all age groups and deal with challenges associated with the youths to give them a better solution for life hence bringing about transformation in all sectors of life that is financial, relationship and the spiritual life. I'm looking forward to giving hope for the future to children in Uganda as AGLMUK supported me. Looking at the achievements we have had over the short period Grander Life has existed, we hope that shortly Grander Life would love to own its space (land) where it will reduce on costs of buying food because on this land we shall be able to farm and have our food and also do poultry projects which will help Grander Life be self-sustainable in case we don't have doners or funders.

Deborah



Here's another one of those occasions when Chris starts searching the photo' archives to find something appropriate to mark another young person not only graduating from her college course but effectively "graduating" from 16 years with AGLM. The smiley little girl of 2006 has become the, still smiling, qualified hairdresser of 2022. Deborah will stay on the AGLMUK books until we know that she has found a job or built up a customer base – and, of course, we will stay in touch through "Uncle Barry"- but she is another one that we can now largely class as independent.





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Musa

Here are some extracts from notes written by Musa:

MY STORY WITH AGLM, UK
 Sincerely speaking I have hope, courage and strength but not because of me but because of the sponsorship of the mighty organisation AGLM "Africa Greater life Mission", for it has funded my studies since 2014 when was still in senior one up to date beside studies, I have be always medicated whenever I would get sick like recently when I was infected with Delta COVID19, in January,

I am proud of AGLM because I have managed to achieve alot of thing in life where I was once an "assistant head prefect" during high school which enabled get various skills and connections. I donot regret being under te umbrella of AGLM and I am looking forward to potray te same spirit as a doctor but though I already exercise it and hope it will reach its climax ~~ill~~ under the AGLM umbrella.



This what he recently posted on Facebook: *This is a true story. I used never to smile before just because I never had hope and I would not appreciate by a smile in any way because I was so worried about my future and after getting a government scholarship for bachelors of medicine and surgery, smiles started sparkling on my lips even when I don't wish to. Am very grateful to my career makers, AGLMUK. I now feel as if am being hunted by God's Grace with a lot of hope and smiles. And this is my current status.*

Sincerely ; ~~AS~~ SBEKALAA LA MUSA

The Hardship Fund and the Blue Pilgrims



The Beatrice Hankey Foundation, also known as the Blue Pilgrims, very generously donated £1,000 to AGLMUK. The trustees decided that they would use this money to add to the "hardship fund" that we described in the last newsletter – and established initially as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Here are a few examples of how the hardship funds have been used recently (after the early days when the emphasis was as simple as buying food). One payment went to help a teacher who was not receiving any salary because the school at which she taught had been closed. Others were unable to operate their micro-businesses. Payments covered medical costs - such as one of our former students (Moni Cosmos) who was very badly bitten on his leg by one of his pigs - and the wound became infected. He was seriously debilitated for quite a long time and could not look after his animals or crops. More food and basic items such as soap have been purchased for the neediest. Food is incredibly expensive at the moment due a combination of factors (described earlier). Landlords in Uganda demanded rent all through the pandemic with no laws restricting their ability to evict. Several payments went to assist with rent where income had been lost.