



# St Nicholas World Development Group PROJECT UPDATE

## UGANDA

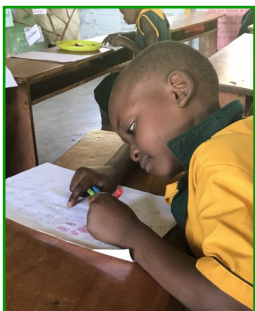
## February 2021

**2020** began with the expectancy that WDG business would proceed much as any other. We celebrated the good examination results of the P7 children at Feed My Lamb School Kabarole in Uganda and prepared for our annual support visit to view all aspects of the school and its projects. We planned to meet everyone involved with the school, from the children through to the School Management Board. Our main aim was to support their financial planning so they could incorporate the profits from their farming, hairdressing and tailoring into the costs of running the school, thus moving towards their long-term mission of self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Little did we know that all the financial and project planning we did would not come to fruition. Within two weeks of our return home the school was closed along with its projects. COVID had hit. Staff and all but two guardians had fled to their homes, leaving 50 of the children in the care of Claire Dorcus and her family.

The two major priorities became health and food. Fortunately, the health insurance we have taken out, supported daily visits of a doctor and free care in hospital for those who needed to isolate. Sadly, since then three children and nine guardians have lost their lives, all but one of them to COVID. To make matters worse Claire Dorcus became very ill, was hospitalised and diagnosed with TB. Her husband Paul and Thadeo and Deo Gratias, two long-serving board members, have been very supportive of Claire Dorcus and the school. More recently she and Paul have had COVID and are both now recovering.

Access to food has been a huge priority. The Government banned people from leaving their homes even to harvest produce from their gardens. Only Paul or Claire Dorcus could leave to buy food for the children and Guardians and the prices had rocketed. They made food parcels for the children and Guardians in the community - becoming a local food bank. The children and Joseph, the farm-hand, did their best to harvest from the compound, to care for the livestock and use the kitchen to cook for all those on site. There is more than one planting season in Uganda and they have been working hard in the gardens. Eggs, milk and several pigs have been sold to supplement our support.



After many months of no teaching, the Government allowed a few teachers into the street children's dormitories to continue lessons. In October, P7 were allowed back into the school building to work towards their examinations which have been postponed until May 2021. Other years can use the grounds for sports and games supervised by the teachers. All staff are back on site. Children read and write in the evenings with materials sent by us. They have spent time teaching the children basic skills, like washing clothes, hygiene and cooking, as well as art and craft activities. It is hoped that the Government will allow the whole school to open in February at the beginning of new school year.

Recently the hairdressing and tailoring projects have restarted, run by the older pupils.

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