

SUMMER 2021

Walking **TOGETHER**

THE NEWSLETTER OF FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY UK



Welcome Message

GOD IS FAITHFUL

I am sure you will have seen and heard all the reports in the media earlier this year about the UK cuts to overseas aid. Sadly, these cuts brought two of our most extensive programmes to a halt at the end of April (see pages 6&7).

However, we worship a faithful God who is omnipotent and always in control. Scripture teaches us that He does not change. We know that He provided these grants in the first place, so we must also believe that he allowed these grants to end.

Proverbs 31:8-9 tells us to:

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy."

With this scripture in mind, we decided it was right to speak out against these cuts, so we protested on behalf of the marginalised and neglected people we serve. Sadly, we have yet to see any response from our government.

Thankfully, that is not the end of our story with these communities in Uganda and Kenya. While we cannot put our faith in the UK government, we can trust God



to finish what he started. We believe that God wanted these programmes to succeed, so that the poor are cared for and the trust that we built up with the local communities is not undermined. So, in faith, we are committed to continue this work to completion.

And through the generosity of our supporters, God has made a way.

May all the honour and glory go to Him. We do not rely on government funds: we only need to rely on God's endless mercy and grace. May this experience remind and teach us all that we rely on God, not our governments or our efforts and activities.

Best wishes

Paul

Food for the Hungry UK - 47 Burgess Wood Road South, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 1EL
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We are a Christian international development organisation that has been walking with the poor globally since 1971. We tackle the root causes in order to graduate communities out of poverty.

Contributors: Copywriting: Sarah & James Smart (The Smart Solutions Co.) Martin Josten.
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The Ridgeway Challenge



On the weekend of 3rd - 4th July, a team of 40 FH UK supporters joined together to participate in a sponsored challenge event - an all-inclusive walk of up to 50 miles along the UK Ridgeway National Trail.

The purpose of the challenge was to raise £100,000 for the Mwumba, Burundi five-year programme Equipped to Flourish, which aims to transform the Mwumba cluster of villages into self-supporting communities.

We are now so thrilled to let you know that together we have raised a fantastic £100,853, with sponsorship money still coming in. A tremendous achievement, we are sure you'll agree!

We gave each challenge participant a photo of a child from Mwumba to spur them on as they walked. On the back of each image was written:

"I am walking the Ridgeway for (Child's Name), their family and their community in Mwumba, Burundi."

The British weather provided an additional obstacle, with downpours throughout



Sunday, but this didn't stop the walkers - they carried on with smiling faces and a determination to get to the finish line. And despite the rain, others still came out to join the team for a picnic and provide support and encouragement.

The effort of all those involved in the challenge was truly outstanding. Everyone who played a part - whether walking, driving or providing refreshments - did so with enthusiasm and a great attitude. We are very thankful.

One of the walkers, Andrew Snelling, said at the end;

"It was a physical and mental challenge and for a great cause."

We now look forward to next year's challenge - watch this space!



Total distance walked - 89.9 miles

Total time taken - 23h 48min

Total elevation gained - 2,147m

Burundi Update

So far this year, Food for the Hungry has provided nearly a thousand households in Mwumba with “tippy-taps”: an inexpensive and straightforward means of delivering **hands-free washing facilities**. A suspended jerrican of water is tipped using a connected foot-pedal, with access to soap on a string. This basic device significantly improves personal hygiene, resulting in fewer illnesses.



DISTRIBUTION OF JERRICANS

Also, many households are still without access to a clean, **hygienic toilet**, so we have been able to train nine masons in low-cost latrine construction. This training is a significant step forward in equipping the Mwumba community to help themselves. These skilled tradesmen will be on hand to construct high-quality concrete latrines whenever the need arises (and there is much need), while also keeping money flowing within the community.

In June this year, Kagozi Primary School was equipped with a 10,000-litre **rainwater harvesting system**, providing a permanent source of clean water instead of pupils having to bring water from home or go out to collect it remotely. This system is a massive blessing to the school children as it takes away one more burden to facilitate a



RAINWATER HARVESTING SYSTEM

healthy learning environment. A ‘hygiene kit’ was also given to the school, including brooms, buckets, waste bins, soap and menstrual hygiene materials. The school Principal commented that never before had such support come their way, due to the relative isolation of the school from the rest of the community.

Anywhere in the world, **good teaching** depends on keeping up to date with the latest education methodologies. Investing in teachers is investing in the next generation. Earlier this year, forty teachers accessed refresher training over 12 days, covering professionalism, objective evaluations and remediation. Further training since then has focused attention on maintenance of the buildings and facilities.



REFRESHER TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

Savings Groups are an excellent opportunity for women in Burundi to come into their own. There are 65 such groups in Mwumba, currently totalling 1,570 members, more than two-thirds of whom are women.

This is a very encouraging statistic. Training within these groups is not just in financial management but also in conflict resolution, internal regulation of the group and a variety of income-generating activities.

Meet Pascal

Pascal Nsanzimana works as a farmer on Gihama hill in Mwumba. He and 265 others have been working together with support from Food for the Hungry UK since 2019. Serving as a model for the broader community of farmers in the region, Pascal and his fellow farmers have been following Farming God’s Way methodology to maximise harvests while maintaining the health and fertility of the soil.

They grow string beans, maize and soya beans with ongoing technical support and seed provision. The last harvest brought in 3200kg of maize, compared with 300kg previously, and 800kg of soya beans compared with 120kg the year before.



Pascal says:

“For me, I have already learned a lot about increasing the economy in my household because the cooperative serves as an example of what we do at home as well as work. We thank Food for the Hungry for helping us in these development activities for the community in general and our respective families in particular.”



Uganda Success during major challenges

As Paul mentioned in his welcome on page 2, the Ugandan project funded by the UK Government has come to a premature end. However, flexible and creative initiatives by our field staff have enabled them to pull a successful conclusion out of both funding uncertainties and COVID-related lockdowns.

To mention a few highlights:

Remote communications

During successive lockdowns, the response to restrictions was to use multiple forms of remote communications, from radio talk shows to mobile phones and megaphones. The result surprised our field team, achieving even better coverage with health, sanitation and agri-technology messaging.

Kitchen gardens

Closure of the regular markets for staple crops led to a surge of interest in kitchen gardens, producing essential items such as onions and tomatoes that people could sell to neighbours. As a result, targets for the setting up of these small household plots were exceeded many times over.

Support for people with disabilities

Systematic research into the prevalence of disabilities led to uncovering many previously hidden issues, such as dependence on neighbours to fetch water and the inability to attend training sessions. As each problem was identified, our team found solutions that restored dignity and independence to otherwise marginalised community members.

Setting up of farmer cooperatives.

During the project, over 100 small group Savings and Loan Associations were established and trained. These continued to operate under lockdown by following strict social distancing rules and limited numbers at gatherings. Despite this, they flourished and are now merging into larger co-operatives that are self-managed and registered as agents for various agricultural supplies. Their purchasing power will enable them to negotiate better prices for local farmers and aggregate produce for access to broader markets - long after FH have departed.

Kenya Keeping the faith in trying circumstances

Our project to promote livestock markets and increase the income of pastoralists and their families in Northern Kenya has had some remarkably successful results well ahead of targets, despite trying circumstances. We are now just under two years into the three-year project.

The pastoralists have achieved these results despite challenges brought about by COVID (the government shut the markets down during a strict lockdown in mid-2020), drought and insecurity.

We were therefore very disappointed that on 30 April this year, the UK government terminated all Aid Direct grants held by small and medium charities with 90 days' notice as a result of cuts in overseas aid. The success of funded projects and the stage they had reached were deemed irrelevant.

Thankfully, we have been able to raise alternative funding for the project, to ensure the sustainability of its remarkable impact. We also felt it was critical to the long-term resilience of the community that we did not renege on the promises made to local government, community leaders and beneficiaries, including the many women supported in self-help groups.

'This self help group has given me a new identity and a hope. People no longer

identify me as Josephine the paralyzed woman, but Josephine the entrepreneur'

God is faithful. We are continuing the project, albeit on a slightly reduced scale. We pray that it not only builds on the results so far but also has a catalytic impact in the following three areas of work.

We know that the income increases are sustainable by promoting behaviour change in pastoralists and the bodies governing the livestock markets. The involvement of women in the livestock trade also helps ensure that the whole family including children benefit.

We shall complete a guidebook detailing how to promote behaviour change among pastoralists and the lessons we have learnt. This guidebook will be available for government livestock officers and other charities to use in future.

A positive legislative framework can encourage the livestock trade. We have successfully supported the local government in drafting a Livestock Markets Bill for Marsabit County, enforcing good management of markets and matters such as mandatory 33% women's representation in Livestock Marketing Associations. We shall encourage the local Assembly to pass the Bill.



Buuri Cluster, Kenya

Historically, many schools in Kenya were founded and supported by local churches. However, over time due to increased ministry responsibilities, churches became less involved. This has been the case for the two Buuri Cluster villages Laaria and Mutuma.

Recently Food for the Hungry, with support from Child Evangelism Fellowship, were able to roll out a new pastoral programme in the area, involving church leaders who will work with teachers to deliver faith-based teaching to encourage the spiritual development of young children in schools. Alongside this, teachers from Laaria attended a school pastoral course held at Mumui Catholic Church, which aims to re-establish local church influence in schools.

Meanwhile, along with many other students within the region, the village's secondary school-age children attended a youth life skills programme.

During this programme, the students raised the issue of lack of opportunities for young people to express their creative abilities alongside their academic achievements. Food for the Hungry decided to follow this up. In partnership with Save The Children, we held a

talent show for secondary school youth across seven schools, with 73 students participating, including 20 from Laaria and Mutuma.

These young people showcased their artistic skills, including singing, dancing, comedy, poetry, playing musical instruments and fashion design. They all had a great time. Experienced adults will now mentor the students to develop their God-given artistic talents while still pursuing their academic studies at school.

Looking to the future, FH Community Transformation teams have discussed a new 5-year plan, weighing up achievements and setbacks so far. A season of insufficient rainfall prompted farmers to diversify into goat and chicken keeping. At the same time, St. Bernadette's School established its own farm, which supplements school meals. Also, a new local child protection reporting facility has led to the successful conclusion of several cases of abuse.

While many conditions remain challenging, the way forward is shown by the perseverance and winning spirit of the Buuri residents, who have chosen to take control of their own destinies.



73 STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE TALENT SHOW

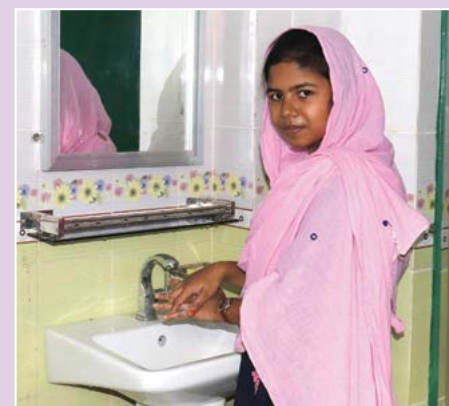
Bangladesh

In collaboration with Food for the Hungry, the Guernsey Overseas Aid Commission has funded a project for improving sanitation and menstrual hygiene in schools in Bangladesh.

After an initial assessment, six schools across the Mohanpur and Deopara regions of Bangladesh were selected to receive new sanitary latrines suitable for girls to use during menstruation. At the time of the evaluation, the existing latrines were extremely unhygienic and with an average of 115 girls using each one. Such situations are shocking, considering the privacy needs and personal hygiene implications for adolescent girls. Research on menstrual hygiene in Bangladesh revealed that 41% of girls reported being absent from school during menstruation, averaging 2.8 days per month or almost 16% of the academic year.

Twelve new sanitary latrines with handwashing facilities were constructed across the six schools, reducing the ratio to 70 girls per latrine, which is a significant improvement.

Focus group discussions with schoolgirls and their mothers in the region confirmed a lack of knowledge about hygiene, cleanliness and sexual health. During menstruation, girls felt the need to hide socially, which then affected their mental wellbeing.



These discussions resulted in the organisation of awareness lessons on menstrual health for adolescent girls and their mothers. Each attendee gained knowledge about maintaining hygiene and the benefits of using sanitary napkins. The open discussions greatly helped the young girls talk to their mothers and peers about their menstrual cycle – an unprecedented move forward in dealing with this challenging subject. Awareness lessons such as these take away the superstitious stigma associated with what is a natural biological process.



At the same time, 40 women entrepreneurs completed a four-day training course in making affordable sanitary pads and marketing skills to promote them among young girls.

A little education, simple but adequate facilities and appropriate hygiene consumables, add up to something greater than the sum of its parts – dignity and wellbeing for young women in Bangladesh.

Updates



Vincent & Green are a contemporary pop-up and online art gallery where affordable fine art can be purchased. They host awareness and fundraising exhibitions throughout the year, and this September, Food for the Hungry is their charity of choice.

While there will be a few private events taking place to raise funds, the exhibition will be open to the public for viewing at Beaconsfield Tennis Club, the Oval, Grenfell Road, HP9 2BP.

11th September 2021, 10am – 4pm
12th September 2021, 10am – 2pm

An exciting collection of paintings, ceramics, sculptures and prints from talented Bucks-based artists will be available for purchase.



THE HEARTBEAT OF FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY



We follow Jesus. We are ambassadors of Jesus in our thoughts, words and deeds.

Our work is relational. We pursue reconciled relationships of grace with those with whom we work, partner and serve.

We invest wisely and focus on results. We are stewards in God's Kingdom and strive to invest all resources to maximise missional impact.

We serve with humility. We recognise the dignity of others and put their interests above our own.

We pursue beauty. In a broken world, we are witnesses through our relationships and work of God's beauty, goodness and truth.



If you are a UK taxpayer, Food for the Hungry UK can reclaim 25% tax for every £1 you give.

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☐ I want to Gift Aid my donation today and any donations I may make in the future or have made in the past four years to Food for the Hungry UK. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Please notify us if your circumstances change or you want to cancel this declaration. If you pay Income Tax at a higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

☐ I would like to make a donation of £ _____ for Food for the Hungry to use where needed most.

Cheques should be made payable to Food for the Hungry UK and sent to us at 47 Burgess Wood Road South, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 1EL

If you would like to make a direct transfer, our bank details are;

Barclays Bank - Account name: FHUK Sort Code: 20-62-53 Account No: 40359173

Please also email us at uk@fh.org to let us know your donation is on its way.

☐ Please do not acknowledge this gift.

☐ I would like to find out more about the Ridgeway Challenge 2021.

☐ I would like to know more about volunteering with FH in the UK.

☐ I no longer want to receive your newsletter, please remove my details from your mailing list.





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