



Hello to all of our supporters

Firstly, we hope that you are well in these unusual times. We've missed you! We thought it would be timely to update you on the situation at the NCF Project in Kampala. Also, at this time of year we would normally have our 'Milford Open Gardens'. Clearly it isn't possible to have this physical event but we know that many of you have been busily working away during the lockdown period and your gardens will be looking glorious, so we have an alternative opportunity for everyone to be able to get involved. Read on for more details ...

Update from NCF (Namuwongo Community Foundation)

Covid-19 has had a significant impact in Uganda, but in a very different way to here in UK. Like most African nations, they acted quickly and have enforced a very strict lockdown for the last few months. Reported cases across the country are less than 1000 and thankfully no deaths have been recorded. Lockdown restrictions are just being eased. However, in a developing economy where existence is far more 'hand to mouth' the impact of not being able to work has caused mass hunger and deprivation. You can probably imagine the impact of this in a slum community of some 20,000 people like Namuwongo. Times have been very hard.

NCF had to cease operations immediately - no Primary School, no Secondary or Further Education, no food supplies, no medical support/clinic, no social care. This was strictly enforced by the authorities. It has been hard to watch this. The good news is that restrictions are being eased and the staff will be returning next week. P7 class will be returning in July with social distancing and hygiene measures in place. Primary 7 is the senior class at NCF Learning Centre and the children will be sitting exams for their 'Certificate in Primary Education' later in the year. We don't know when other classes will be allowed to return.

On a brighter note, Teacher Barbara (P2) gave birth to her second child last week (a daughter called Nicola!). However, Headmaster James has had a serious bout of malaria but is now recovering (cases of malaria have been significantly increasing in this period of hardship). Medication has been hard to get. We ('Friends of NCF') are now funding the clinic, Nurse Agnes and medication - so this will be a priority area as operations return to some form of normality in the weeks & months ahead.

Talking of funding, thanks to your generous support we have been able to transfer the budget requirements for Term 2 (May - Aug). However, this has pretty much emptied our Bank Account and we are behind with our fundraising plans this year due to coronavirus impact (a situation shared with many other charities). With so many worthy causes close to home, a challenging economic environment and a significant reduction in disposable income for many people, we are under no illusion about the scale of the challenge we face to keep

funding NCF. Rest assured that we have great faith though and are now 'rolling up our sleeves' to ensure that we can continue to meet the needs of some of the most vulnerable children, women and families in the Namuwongo slum community.

On that note, we would like to launch our first event since lockdown ...

Virtual Open Gardens

Would you like to have a look at other people's gardens? Would you like to share the best bits of your garden? Well now you can! It's June and many of our gardens are in their prime. This year many gardens have had more care and attention during the lockdown period than ever. The weather has been glorious to coincide with the busy spring gardening season ... and the wildlife has been amazing too.

Whilst we would love to give you the opportunity to walk around our gardens we don't think that this would be sensible at this time. But we would love to see your photo's.

From now until Sunday 21st June we are asking all of our 'friends' to get involved. Simply take some photo's in your garden and send us your 4 favourites (email to friendsofnfc@gmail.com or send them to either Matthew or Nicola in the easiest way for you). We will then load them onto our website <https://www.friendsofnfc.org/> and our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofnfc/> for everyone to see. We'll try and load new pictures regularly to keep it fresh and interesting. I've just posted a few of our garden on Facebook so that you can get an idea (not put them on the website yet).

If you feel able to make a donation then we would be very grateful. By now you will know that one of our principles is that every penny donated will go directly to fund NCF in Uganda, not a single penny will go on administration or other charges. The easiest way to do this is to go to our website and click the 'Donate' button. You will have the option to either give a 'one off' payment or alternatively you can set up a monthly contribution. Have a look here: <https://www.friendsofnfc.org/> Alternatively then please feel free to give a cheque or cash to any of the Trustees.

During the lockdown period we've all probably saved quite a bit of money on treats like coffee & cake at the cafe, so how about considering giving that saving to children and vulnerable women in the Namuwongo slum community? We can assure you that it will help to change lives.

Thank you in advance for your support

Nicola, Matthew, Liz, Steve, Sue & John

'Friends of NCF' Trustees