

22STARS FOUNDATION UPDATE 30-09-2020

Dear sponsor!

As my email got longer and longer, I decided to throw it into a pdf for you! In name of everyone at 22STARS we would like to thank you for your support. If you have no time to read the full update attached to this email, then this is the short summary:

“We are doing well regarding given circumstances; the lockdown measures eased up a bit, however schools are for most kids still closed. Thanks to your help and that of many extra donations we are able to teach the kids in small groups at our offices in Jinja and Kampala, keep them safe, healthy and serve them daily a meal. We are planning to send you an update report of your child made by our homework teachers at the end of the year. All help is still needed more than ever to keep going. So, thank you for your support!”

Much love,

*Stella Airoidi (project manager global),
Aidah Wafula & Susan Laker
(project managers in Uganda)
& the full 22STARS team!*



Aidah, Stella and Susan

1. January, February & March; everything was still normal

At the beginning of the year everything looked quite normal, after the Christmas holidays, our kids started their new school year in January with term 1. In Uganda, the school year always goes from January to December! And *normally* one school year has 3 school terms in it. And *normally* we send you after each school term the school report of the child you sponsor with an update. *Normally* I also visit myself Uganda at least 3 to 4 times a year. And *normally* together with our local team I organize Social Impact Retreats (Workations) for English speakers and Social Impact Trips in partnership with Stefanie Oeffner for German speakers to Uganda.

“We started the year really great with many new sponsors!”

I am very grateful that we kicked off the new year with a very good start: over Christmas I held a Social Impact Retreat and celebrated Christmas with our children at 22STARS and in February/ March we were able to hold together with Stefanie Oeffner two social impact trips, which gave us a lot of extra donations and new sponsors in!

We were able to increase the number of children that we could send to school to 375 kids, handed out new small business loans to their parents and provided the kids with a lot of extra's, such as more meals, mosquito nets, medications, mattresses, lights, sweaters, homework help and so on. Also, many of our kids got new glasses and went to the eye doctor and two even started with an education at the Optician School in Masaka sponsored by our partner WirHelfenSehen E.V. I left Uganda 12 of March, thinking I would be back very soon. But then, as you already know the schools closed 21 March, which meant no report for term 1 and neither a report for term 2 and also businesses and the airport closed down.



Our children in Kampala lining up to receive their meals.



Our social impact trip participants at our 22STARS cooking workshop.

2. April, May, June; the lockdown began

In the months of April, May and June we had a **full** lockdown in Uganda. This meant that not only schools were closed, but also businesses, the airport and all public transport! Private transport by car from one place to the other was only allowed in exceptional cases, if you received permission from the local police and could show why you needed to drive. All shops were closed, people were not allowed to be on the streets without a good reason, no groups of more than 3 people and there was an evening clock set in place.

"Families live hand to mouth; meaning they normally earn \$1 a day and had now nothing."

To sum things up: as the families of our children live hand to mouth, there was quite some chaos and panic as very quickly families had no food anymore to eat. Most parents are illiterate and have no savings, because what do you want to save if you earn less than 1 USD a day? With factories being closed and the women also not allowed to sell their jewelry to tourists; whole families had from one day to the other nothing! Our 375 kids live spread over 267 families with each family having between 5 to 10 family members! Due to the lockdown, we could not cook food at our office for them -which we usually do- and invite our kids over to receive their meal. Neither could we run around with meals packed in boxes like a Pizza Delivery service to bring it to each kid's home... The government stepped in with some food supplies, but it took more than 7 weeks to reach the first families and was not enough to feed everyone for even two weeks.

“Before we knew it we were feeding 2000 people a day thanks to our big fundraiser!”

We immediately launched our first Covid-19 emergency fundraiser end of March to keep the families in April fed. One month of lockdown quickly became two months and then three months. We raised with our first campaign 34.000 euro's through 567 donations. We provided the families with sacks of posho, rice, beans, salt, sugar, soap and so on which they then could cook for their family to survive. Of course, we could not ask a family to use the food only for our sponsored children and not the other kids. Hence before we knew it we had to feed around 2000 (!) people every day! In addition we also needed to help families medications and buy a simple car to actually being able to do all the shopping and move from one place to the other. We printed out homework for 375 kids which was more than 20 thousand pages and arranged computers so they could follow online their education. There were many restrictions and rules regarding how the food should be bought and how the food should be handed out and so on. We kept lists with names of the families and kids who received food and so on. ds needed on board to make it happen. Also, for some of our most vulnerable kids and families including our project manager Susan Laker (who are HIV positive etc.) we had to arrange transport to bring them to a safe place in the village for 3 months. We definitely had our hands full to arrange everything and decide on how to spend our budget. Thankfully our local team was able to get all hands-on to help us out and we got amazing support from donors!

“We did not use school-fees money for this, but thankfully got extra donations in!”

Initially we budgeted 100 euro per month for one family of 5-10 people, which would have meant with 375 kids spread over 267 families, raising 26.700 euro each month. We quickly realized that that was impossible and that besides food the families also needed other basic things and hence we just helped out whether we could to make sure everyone would survive this pandemic. Thankfully we got additionally a big donation in from Sascha Boampong and Timo Eckhardt of 14.550 euro and from Bastian Barami of 2.000 euro to keep us going. We did not use the school fees money for this, since we already had paid for term 2 of most of our schools and we were also not sure when the schools would start again and what exactly was going to happen then. So, whether we still would need to pay for all terms this school year or not. As it could have been that they might would just shorten the terms and still would demand payment of three school terms from us.



One of our families in Jinja receiving supplies.

3. July, August, September: some rules started to ease up

For the months of July, August and September the lockdown in Uganda eased up a little bit, but different rules started to apply in Kampala and Jinja. Public transport was allowed again and also some shops could open up, but schools stayed closed. A lot of rules were still a bit unclear, hence why we refrained from posting too much on Social Media to avoid that we post something that might could be taken out of context. Especially since in Kampala different rules applied than in Jinja. There was a lot of uncertainty regarding when the schools would open and what would happen, which made it quite hard for us to budget accordingly. Also, as we are dependent on donations, which we not always know beforehand when we will receive what, our budget plan frequently changed according to new donations coming in and new updates that we received from the community with their needs.

Initially we got only in Kampala permission from the local council to have 30 children at a time at our office. This finally allowed us to give meals to only the sponsored 22STARS children in Kampala (we got 220 kids in Kampala and 155 kids in Jinja). Even though we of course would have loved to feed their whole family, we were not able to raise enough money to do so. In Jinja we were not allowed to have that many kids over at our office, and hence in Jinja we had to continue giving out food to all families of our children.

“Thanks to you guys connecting us we got new donations in from businesses!”

We started our second Covid19 emergency fundraiser to raise money for meals for July, as the old one was receiving less and less donations, and we had to update also the situation status in Uganda. We managed to get in 5500 euro for our July fundraiser. And for our third Covid19 emergency fundraiser to raise money for meals for August/ September we got in 1200 euro. As you see the individual donations were declining more and more.

Thankfully Stefanie Oeffner got us a new big sponsor in: Hempamed/Solidmind who donated 8000 euro to our foundation, which we divided over several of our campaigns (more of the campaigns below). And thanks to Cornel Dolff we got a donation in from the Dutch Magazine Hapinez of 4530 euro. Then we got 2020 euro from Marco Lachmann-Anke from Geldhelden, 1500 euro from Jan Doering and 1000 euro from Martin Irmeler. That is the power of a business connection!! We are a Dutch Anbi foundation and tax-deductible in most countries, hence if you know a business that finds CSR important and loves to donate to a good cause, please think of us! Additionally, we would love to thank Jessica Packy, Sandy Hauser and Regina Schiele who threw a birthday fundraiser for us and Lisa Wilhelm, Lisa Praxmarer and (yes again) Stefanie Oeffner, who sold a lot of our 22STARS bracelets for us bringing in extra donations for our foundation!

“Besides handing out meals, we had to build toilets and give medical access to the kids!!”

Besides our Covid19 campaign to raise money for in particular meals ([#GIVEAMEAL](https://donorbox.org/corona3)). (<https://donorbox.org/corona3>) We had to start a campaign to raise money for medication for our kids who got sick with pox due to bad water sanitation and polluted streets full with shit. ([#MEDICALACCESS](https://donorbox.org/pox)). (<https://donorbox.org/pox>) And we had in particular to start quickly a campaign to build toilets and repair houses. ([#PLEASEGIVEASHIT](https://donorbox.org/toilets)). (<https://donorbox.org/toilets>) Because great if you get a meal and have a full stomach, but all you eat has to get out somewhere as well... Due to a big storm, our community toilet buildings

—that were made of mud- destroyed. A big disaster, especially in this times. The first corona cases started to show up in Acholi Quarter, and telling the kids to wash their hands if they don't even have a toilet to go to and while shit was flushing down the streets felt a bit ridiculous. Hence why we set up a big campaign for it, which a couple of volunteers and the people from Charity-Makeover helped us setting up within a day. Thanks to you guys who donated to one or even all three of our campaigns and the extra business and birthday donations we received we could make it happen that the first building block of toilets and washrooms is built in Acholi Quarter and we are hoping to soon also continue with the other toilet blocks.

“Homework help, computer lessons, teenager education, and much more!”

Since the lockdown eased up a bit from July onwards we were able to do more activities with the children. In both Kampala and Jinja we were able to buy extra gifts for the children whose sponsors made extra donations for them and to also give them the letter from their sponsors in case they received one from their sponsor. (Don't worry if you have never interacted with your kid, you can still do so if you like, but it is absolutely not mandatory.) Additionally, we gave out mosquito nets to our children as malaria cases were on the rise again. For our Covid19 prevention program we provided the children with masks, got more washing facilities at our offices and temperature check guns.

As we started to realize that schools were not going to open and we would not need to pay that full term to schools, we started to make a plan on how to use the school fees money for was it was meant to be: education. To keep the kids on track and make sure they would not lose the full year. Because even though the schools in Uganda are closed, children still received a lot of homework! Kids who would not have been able to print out schoolwork, buy pencils and books and whose parents are illiterate were missing out a lot. In addition to the standard homework help we organized a 3-month long teenager training for our teenager girls, as we realized that them being home quickly would result in unwanted babies, hence we hired a local organization to conduct these trainings with them and also hand out enough sanitary pads for them, underwear and so on.



In both Kampala and Jinja our children received pens, books and their homework printed out. And we hired several teachers to help them with their homework.

We hired private teachers for our kindergarten, primary and secondary school children to help them with their homework and teach them at our offices. In Kampala, this meant 30 kids per class for 2 hours a day seven days a week. And in Jinja this meant 7 kids in our new established computer room. We were not allowed to have bigger meetings there, but we still made sure all the kids got their homework and had enough books and pencils. And we hired still teachers who corrected the homework of each child and wrote feedback and explanations for them on their homework. We are making sure that every single sponsored child of 22STARS receives this extra education!



Our kids in Jinja in our computer room.



Our kids in Kampala in our office.



Besides food we also handed out mosquito nets and underwear to the children.



In both Kampala and Jinja we bought temperature check guns, extra washing facilities and face masks for the children, so we could let them come safely to our offices.



For more pictures, please keep an eye on our social media stories.

4. October, November, December: what is next

The president of Uganda finally announced that our exam class students can go back to school, hence they will start next week! For the other children, most likely school will stay still closed. As the money of our fundraisers is by far not enough to give our children their daily meals which they normally would get at a school and also would not cover their extra needs for homework help, we decided to use the school fees money for that as it was also donated by you for that cause: education. We already started with the homework help in Kampala in July, but are now able to have up to 70 children in our offices. In Jinja we are also able to have the kids in our offices in addition to our computer room. So, the plan is that the kids keep coming to our office. In order to make sure that this is done in a safe way we have temperature guns in place, masks, disinfect, soap, water and so on. The children also need new 22STARS uniforms again as some are totally worn out and broken.

Additionally, the schools that open up now for our exam kids also asked us to help them out with water tanks, to help them making sure their sanitary facilities meet the standards, to help them out with temperature guns and so on. So, as you see the needs are still very high and teaching the children at our office with private teachers is much more expensive than if they would have been in school. We don't raise the school-fees money as we hope that the situation will still go back to normal next year. Hence to overlap this period of time we still have our Covid19 emergency help fundraiser to help us covering extra costs in addition to the sponsorship money.

The airport of Uganda will officially open in October, however many rules are still a bit unclear and it seems like that it is not allowed to visit local communities, but rather only go on a safari to the national parks. Hence we had to cancel our trips for this year and are hoping to start 2021 as great as we started 2020.

“Thank you for giving a child a future that it otherwise would not have!”

Thanks to you a child is still alive today! You might think, oh but then someone else would probably save him/her. Well sadly not. Each day quite some people die within our communities in Uganda, just because there was no money. To give you an idea. Malaria is a disease that is easily treatable with medication! Still not everyone has money and hence access to medication. Resulting in 3000 death people a year only in Uganda from only malaria. So, you can imagine how grateful we are that you chose to support one or more of our kids and make a true impact in their lives and that of their families.

Besides donations our work depends on volunteers, so if you like to help us out, please let us know. Many things relate to administration, data entry, organizing, editing files, content writing and designing.

As we don't have school reports to send you this year of the child you sponsor, we are planning to prepare individual “report” cards for our children made by their homework teachers, which we will send out at the end of the year to you!

“Together we can make a positive change in this world!”