

# Advantage Africa

*pathways out of poverty*

## Advantage Africa and The Diamond Trust Supporting People with Albinism in Uganda Report - June 2019

At the beginning of March 2019, The Diamond Trust kindly provided Advantage Africa with a grant of £2,000 to support our work with people with albinism in Uganda. Working with Peter Ogik and the Source of the Nile Union of Persons with Albinism (SNUPA) we are glad to report that this donation was put to immediate use and has had a significant impact in improving people's lives.

### Support for Refugees with Albinism

With The Diamond Trust's support we held our first skin clinic for people with albinism in the Nakivale Refugee Settlement in the west of Uganda from 26th to 28th March. Globally Uganda is amongst the most welcoming countries for refugees, hosting approximately 1.5 million displaced people. The Nakivale Refugee Settlement is home to 120,000 people who have fled fighting and persecution, mainly from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Our skin clinic provided 62 refugees with albinism (most of whom are children) with skin checks, sunscreen, wide-brimmed hats and sunglasses. Having never received any support before, their skin was in a terrible condition and 38 people required cryotherapy to remove small cancers.



*Sitting in the shade waiting for their skin checks, children with albinism and their parents eat chapattis and cool drinks provided by SNUPA.*



*Our dermatologist Dr. Ngobi (right) and SNUPA team member Olive check the burnt, painful skin of some of the children.*



***Dr. Ngobi's assistant uses cryotherapy to remove a small cancerous lesion on the arm of a woman with albinism.***

As well as suffering from severe problems with their skin, people with albinism feel marginalised within the Nakivale refugee settlement. Our dermatologist took time to train the settlement's resident health workers about their needs because as SNUPA reports '*These health workers were fearing to touch the bodies of persons with albinism. They thought that persons with albinism should have special nurses and doctors, but they were amazed to see that there was no difference from black people but only colour.*'

Furthermore, Amida, chairperson for women in Nakivale, told us that people with albinism face daily discrimination in the settlement and 'are not allowed to access services together with the black people, like hospitals, boreholes and schools'.



***Children and teenagers with albinism in the Nakivale Refugee Settlement with their new hats***

For this reason, SNUPA recorded a short film while there which we will use to promote awareness and call for change in the situation facing refugees with albinism with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Uganda Government officials who co-run the Settlement.

SNUPA is due to return for the next skin clinic in Nakivale Refugee Settlement next month. As with their March visit, this will bring tremendous hope and encouragement to the people with albinism there, helping them to know they are not forgotten.

### **Mbale skin clinic March 2019**

Also in late March, SNUPA held a skin clinic in Mbale District in eastern Uganda with support from The Diamond Trust. Although this is a mountainous area which makes travel difficult, 81 children and adults with albinism managed to make their way to Maluku where the clinic was held. Over the course of the day all 81 people required cryotherapy to remove small developing cancers as the state of their skin was very poor. They also all received sunscreen, hats, sunglasses and information about how to keep themselves safe from skin cancer.



*Parents and children and adults with albinism assemble for SNUPA's skin clinic.*



*SNUPA volunteer Flavia advises a man with albinism about how to use his sunscreen*



*Dr. Ngobi administers cryotherapy to remove small cancerous lesions from the arm of a woman with albinism.*

As with the Nakivale Refugee Settlement, SNUPA is due to return to Mbale for the next skin clinic in July 2019. This ongoing support is sorely needed and saving lives. Furthermore, with healthier, protected skin children with albinism are more likely to go to school and adults to work. This shows how SNUPA's skin clinics have a far-reaching impact on people's future prospects.

### Wide-brimmed hats for people with albinism

Thanks to the Diamond Trust, SNUPA was able to purchase 250 good quality wide-brimmed hats for distribution at the Nakivale Refugee Settlement and the Mbale skin clinic. The remainder were stored at SNUPA's office in Jinja for future skin clinics and to be handed out as needed.



*(Left) Peter Ogik with hats ordered from Jinja market. (Right) There's no mistaking this man's joy as he receives his first ever hat!*



Every shilling/pound is put to good use. The normal price of such hats is 8,000 Ugandan shillings (about £1.70) but buying in bulk means that SNUPA can purchase them at 7,500/- each (£1.60). SNUPA has built good relationships with market traders who appreciate them for buying locally and supporting their businesses. This in turn helps to improve attitudes to people with albinism.

## SNUPA Office and Counselling Services 2nd quarter 2019

A crucial element of The Diamond Trust's support has been to cover the costs of keeping SNUPA's small office in Jinja open from April to June 2019. SNUPA provides a vital daily service to parents and people with albinism who visit from across eastern Uganda for advice, emotional and spiritual support and to receive sunscreen, hats and sunglasses. Fazira Kawuma (who co-founded SNUPA and acts as a mentor for Peter) says *'We really appreciate The Diamond Trust for this support in keeping the office open. This is paramount in making us available for people who need us and it gives us a space to plan for the betterness of people with albinism.'*



**Peter, Fazira and Jane from Advantage Africa outside the SNUPA office.**



**The father of a young girl with albinism calls in to the SNUPA office for the first time to seek advice. He is overjoyed to receive sunscreen and a hat for his daughter along with advice from Peter on how to keep her safe from skin cancer.**



**(Left) People with albinism come to the SNUPA office for clothing to protect them from the sun. (Above) Stocks of long-sleeved shirts and wide-brimmed hats.**



## Financial Report

Activities supported by The Diamond Trust's grant of £2,000	Total spend Uganda Shillings	Total spend £ Sterling	Notes
Nakivale Refugee Camp Skin Clinic March 2019	3,225,000	680	1
Mbale Skin Clinic March 2019	1,250,000	264	1
250 Wide-brimmed Hats for People with Albinism	1,875,000	396	
SNUPA Office and Counselling Services (April to June 2019)	3,236,300	687	2
<b>TOTAL SPEND</b>	<b>9,586,300</b>	<b>2,027</b>	<b>3</b>

### Notes:

1. Skin Clinic costs include: liquid nitrogen for cryotherapy; biopsies; dermatologist, assistant and nurse services; drinks and chapattis for all attendees; transport and accommodation for the SNUPA team; regional radio announcements to publicise the clinics. The budget for the Nakivale Refugee Settlement also included costs of making a short film to advocate for improved support for refugees with albinism with UNHCR and the Ugandan Government.
2. Office and Counselling Services costs include: 3 months' rent; water; utilities; cleaning materials; stationery; internet support.
3. The additional £27 was covered by Advantage Africa's supporters.

## Thank You to The Diamond Trust

All of us at Advantage Africa and SNUPA are so grateful to The Diamond Trust for your invaluable support which has directly enabled 143 children and adults with albinism to have life-saving skin checks and resources. You have also kept SNUPA's door open to people with albinism desperate for sun protection, advice and friendship. We greatly appreciate your encouragement, support and prayers and very much hope to be able to continue our partnership with you in the future.

