

This issue's theme: COVID-19

The impact of COVID-19 in our partner communities

Seemingly overnight, the world has become a different place due to COVID-19. The people that Advantage Africa supports are affected by HIV, disability and albinism and are at great risk. They're vulnerable not only to the disease, but to the impact of the lockdown and the diminishing opportunities to earn an income to meet their basic needs.

The cases of COVID-19 in Uganda and Kenya where we work are relatively low so far, although limited testing means the true extent of infection is unclear. Both countries have introduced strict measures to control the spread of the virus, closing borders and schools, introducing night-time curfews and enforcing restrictions on movement and gatherings.

Kenya and Uganda are poorly equipped to deal with the pandemic should it take off as it has done in the UK. Their health care systems and

water supplies are inadequate to deal with a crisis of similar scale. For example, Uganda has only 55 intensive care beds for a population of 45 million people, and most communities don't have running water for hand washing.

The majority of people in our partner communities live from hand to mouth, and there are no social welfare services to support families who are losing their livelihoods. The situation is causing food shortages and extreme price increases for basic goods. People are terrified about the future, and we're gravely concerned for those already living in poverty and affected by disability or HIV. Vulnerable people lack food and medication and are selling their few assets. There is a very real risk of starvation, and severe depression and incidents of domestic violence are increasing.



COVID-19 is causing widespread fear in our partner communities. Face masks are now commonplace.

'People are panicking about hunger. Things are breaking up because of this lockdown. There is more depression, people are becoming ill from stress and there is more family violence. People's trust and hope is in us!'

Peter Ogik, Director of our partner organisation SNUPA in Uganda.



Promoting hand washing and providing accurate information.



Our response

Advantage Africa is working tirelessly to protect the most vulnerable people against COVID-19 and its impact. Most of our regular projects have been paused to comply with government restrictions while we support our partners to deliver new services in response to the pandemic. These include:

- Distributing food and hygiene packages including maize, rice, beans, cooking oil and soap.
- Redressing misinformation and providing accurate advice about the virus.
- Promoting hand washing and social distancing.

- Ensuring people living with HIV can access vital antiretroviral drugs, and people with albinism have life-saving sunscreen.
- Continuing essential health services where there is a higher immediate risk than from COVID-19, including skin cancer surgery for people with albinism.
- Advocating for people with disabilities so they're not overlooked in government responses.
- Shifting community outreach to telephone-based support for the most vulnerable people, including those at risk of domestic violence.

Angela

Angela 'lives positively' with HIV in a village in eastern Kenya. She's vulnerable to opportunistic infections and anxious about contracting COVID-19. She says: 'We're keeping to the government rules. We've made face masks and a hand washing station, but I'm very scared because I can't go out to earn money. I have no income now and I don't know how I will feed my children.'

Advantage Africa has helped Angela to secure a three-month supply of antiretroviral drugs for HIV and provided a care package for her family through our partner organisation Rescue Team for HIV & AIDS. Your support will help us sustain many other families like hers until the impact of the lockdown is over.



Angela (left) with her baby and eldest daughter.



Maryam receives her posho.

Maryam

Maryam, a single mother with albinism, lives with her four children in a small town in eastern Uganda. The restrictions mean that she can't find work, all her money has gone and she has nothing to pay the rent on her small home. Unlike those in rural areas, Maryam doesn't have land to grow food and therefore has no means to feed her family. We supported her with a care package containing posho (maize flour), beans, cooking oil, salt, sugar and soap to maintain her family's nutrition and hygiene. Our partner the Source of the Nile Union of Persons with Albinism (SNUPA) keeps in regular contact with Maryam and many others like her to provide a listening ear, information about staying safe from COVID-19 and emotional support. Maryam now knows she's not alone and feels loved and cared for. She is increasingly confident that she and her children will get through the crisis.

How you can help

You can support vulnerable people like Angela and Maryam to avoid hunger, stay safe and build their resilience by making a donation to our COVID-19 Appeal. Please use the enclosed donation form or donate online at www.advantageafrica.org/COVID-19 Thank you.

£10 provides 50 bars of soap for essential hand washing.

£30 pays for a food and hygiene package for a vulnerable family containing maize, rice, beans, cooking oil and soap to last for three weeks.

£100 enables a community group to distribute health information and support victims of domestic violence.

Other fundraising ideas

Times are tough for many of us right now and we appreciate your creative fundraising!

Concerts and running events aren't possible while social distancing, but there are many other safe ways to fundraise for Advantage Africa during the lockdown. Here are some ideas to get you thinking:

If you're working from home, could you donate the cost of your

commute or morning coffee? Your weekly rail, petrol or Starbucks spend could make a huge difference to vulnerable people facing hunger. How about donating from money saved on haircuts, trips out or the gym?

It's still possible to get sponsored for a challenge such as a walk, run or cycle while social distancing. If you play an

instrument or sing, would your friends and family enjoy an online performance with a virtual tip jar for donations? Could you hold a virtual pub quiz, game tournament or curry night on Skype or Zoom with donations going to Advantage Africa?

Please contact us if you need help to prepare invitations or set up a JustGiving page. Thank you.

JustGiving™ 

Milestones is published by Advantage Africa, who support people affected by poverty, disability and HIV to improve their education, health and incomes. Our work helps people to help themselves and build a better future for their families and communities.

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Staff: Andrew Betts, Rob Aley, Carole Holloway, Jane Betts

Trustees: Christopher Chapman, Rebecca Sherriff, Pratima Dattani, George Mwaura, Mandy Smith and David Barnett

Patrons: Martyn Joseph and Jon Snow.

Address: Advantage Africa, 9 High Street, Olney, Buckinghamshire, MK46 4EB. **Tel:** 01234 711005

Facebook: www.facebook.com/advantageafrica **Website:** www.advantageafrica.org **E-mail:** office@advantageafrica.org

I'd like to make a single donation to Advantage Africa's COVID-19 Appeal

(Please turn over for regular monthly donations)



1

Here is my donation of:

☐ £10 ☐ £30 ☐ £100

OR my own choice of £_____

Date:

2

☐ I enclose a cheque/charity voucher made payable to **Advantage Africa**, or

☐ Please charge my Visa / Mastercard / Delta / Maestro / Amex / Charitycard

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If you are a UK taxpayer, **please tick the box below** to add 25p to every £1 you donate. If your name is recorded as a couple above, please circle which of you is making the declaration.

☐ I want to Gift Aid my donation above and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to Advantage Africa.

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 tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Please notify Advantage Africa if you want to cancel this declaration, your name or home address change or you no longer pay sufficient tax on your income

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Please return to:

Advantage Africa
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Olney
Bucks
MK46 4EB

Thank you

You can also donate online at:
www.advantageafrica.org/covid-19

Registered charity number 1092719

Advantage Africa 
pathways out of poverty

I'd like to make a monthly donation (pto for single donations)

We will put your first four months' donations to our COVID-19 Appeal and use where most needed after that.
Please fill out this form in full and return to us.



Advantage Africa
pathways out of poverty

Registered charity 1092719

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To: The Manager

Bank/Building Society

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Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Bank/Building Society account number

Branch Sort Code

Service User Number

6 9 1 2 1 3

CAF, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4TA

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Please pay Charities Aid Foundation Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with Charities Aid Foundation and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

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Date (DD/MM/YYYY)

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Donation Details

I would like to make a regular donation of £

☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Half Yearly ☐ Annually Commencing

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Please Gift Aid this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years. 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 tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Please notify us if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address or if you no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

☐ Tick to apply

This guarantee should be detached and retained by the Payer

The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This guarantee is offered by all Banks and Building Societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit, Charities Aid Foundation will notify you ten working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request Charities Aid Foundation to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by Charities Aid Foundation or your Bank or Building Society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society - If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when Charities Aid Foundation asks you to
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also send a copy of your letter to us.

