



**FOOD FOR
THE HUNGRY**

BUKIENDE, UGANDA

MID YEAR PROGRESS REPORT

JULY 2020

PREPARED BY

**Food for the Hungry (FH) Uganda &
Food for the Hungry (FH) Canada**



INTRODUCTION

Bukiende is made up of four communities—Bumutsopa, Bungwaanyi, Bushiangi, Burukuru—tucked along the eastern edge of Uganda near the Kenyan border, within the lush foothills of Mt. Elgon. These communities are relatively new to partnership with Food for the Hungry (FH); FH began walking alongside their churches, families, and leaders in October 2019. Bukiende’s leaders had seen and heard how the nearby communities of Nashisa and Marare had graduated from poverty, and welcomed FH’s help in breaking the cycle of poverty faced by their own families.

Following many meetings with community members, FH helped Bukiende identify goals and establish a plan to go from stuck to thriving. Bukiende has many challenges, but also a great deal of potential. Bukiende’s major goal is for families in its communities to be able to meet their household needs in a sustainable way. Bukiende has also set goals within the areas of education, livelihoods, health, and leadership to help them achieve this greater goal.

This document is the first full report of activities and marks the start-up of FH programming, including close engagement with community leaders.

COVID-19 UPDATE

The COVID-19 pandemic has interrupted the work of the local FH team. Public gatherings and meetings (including training events) are prohibited, but home visits are allowed provided they follow safeguarding guidelines from the Ugandan Ministry of Health. This has allowed the team to continue to interact with the communities on a limited basis, despite many activities being temporarily on hold. In the meantime, local staff have pivoted their work. Most time has been spent offering guidance and resources to teachers, leaders, and volunteer health teams on COVID-19 and ways to stay healthy. Thankfully, relationships are being maintained at a distance, and everyone looks forward to the crisis passing.

For more recent updates regarding FH’s response to the pandemic, please visit: blog.fhcanada.org/2020/03/update-covid-19-in-fh-partner

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE LOCAL FH STAFF

Walking with a community means working through relationships, which is best done by a local and savvy team of committed FH staff. They are Ugandan nationals who understand the culture and live near enough to Bukiende to facilitate frequent visits.

The team is led by Stella Aleper, the Program Area Manager. Stella has seven years of experience in sustainable community development with a focus on agriculture and rural innovation. She enjoys meeting new people and is passionate about holistic community transformation. She is supported by six staff members, including a Finance and Administration Officer, an Administrative Assistant, and four Community Development Facilitators.

“I am dedicated to creating change within communities with personal motivation and enthusiasm... It is my vision to see people loving God and loving each other (Mark 12:30-31). With that in mind, we will have a world without discrimination, stigma, disaster but a world with peace, harmony, humility, and love.”

— Stella, Program Area Manager, **FH Uganda**



EDUCATION

As a result of poor governance and social accountability, the communities have poor service delivery, particularly in the area of education. Schools are not well-supported, community members do not demand more from their leadership, and as a result, literacy rates are low and corruption is common. FH has started the work of addressing these issues with the following activities.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

Information on the importance of education for children and the entire community was communicated to 40 community leaders (11 women, 29 men) in the four partnering communities. These leaders are to play a key role in encouraging families to take their children to school.

The FH team and school management worked together to identify co-curricular activity items for four partnering schools, such as musical instruments and sports equipment. These items will be procured as soon as schools reopen.

CLASSROOM CONSTRUCTION

In order to construct a four-classroom building in Bukhakosi Primary School (Bumutsopa) and a latrine building in Bumaliro Primary School (Bungwaanyi), meetings were held with community leaders to agree on community contribution and access to local materials like rocks, bricks, and water. FH hopes to complete construction this year still, provided COVID-19 related work restrictions are eased.



ACTIVITIES

1 latrine building construction project planned
Assessments of materials needed to stimulate extracurricular activities



1 four-room classroom building construction project planned

COVID-19 UPDATE

The Ugandan Ministry of Health has suspended all schools until further notice. In response FH Uganda is adjusting its short-term work plan to accommodate training on COVID-19 and safety protocols for local school teachers, helping to prepare faculty for when schools are reopened. This includes how to offer psychosocial support for students and stimulate school-based prevention programs, including COVID response clubs, poems and songs, and debates performed by students.





CASCADE GROUPS & MALE CHANGE AGENTS

A total of seven staff were trained on the cascade group methodology. As a result of this training they will be able to form groups (groups that work with men specifically on healthy behaviours and worldview) and facilitate volunteer training. Three Cascade Groups (CG) and one Male Change Agent group will be formed in each of the four communities for a total of 16 Cascade Groups. FH staff mobilized communities to support the formation of the groups and help identify potential cascade volunteers, however, the meetings were not held due to COVID-19 ban on public gatherings. Staff were also trained on Health Module 1 which covers essential care to mother and newborn during pregnancy and birth. This training equipped staff with knowledge and skills to train cascade group volunteers on the module which will be rolled as soon as the groups are formed and group volunteers identified.

HEALTH SERVICES

The community's Health Specialist provides one-on-one medical and nutritional care for families in Bukiende through home visits. During this reporting period, 50 children were identified for having treatable diseases such as tooth decay and malaria. Their parents were advised to take them to Bukiende Health Centre 3, a government facility, for treatment. The fact that there were only 50 referrals is due to continued promotion of the importance of preventive health.

Biannual deworming of children and Vitamin A supplements are being prepared for later in the year. FH Canada facilitated the provision of the deworming medication and vitamin supplements for Bukiende as well as other communities throughout Uganda.

WATER SUPPLY

The FH team and the communities are planning to drill a borehole in Bushiangi for improved drinking water for over 300 community members. They are working together to identify the best location to drill, and to clarify roles and responsibilities for the construction work.

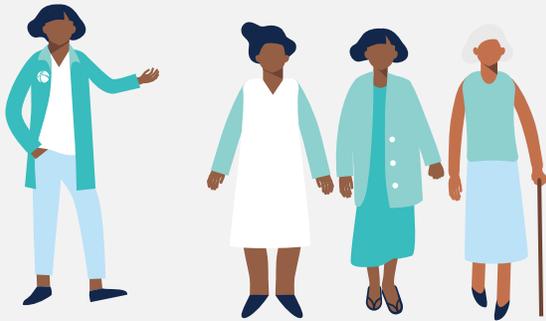


HEALTH

ACTIVITIES

1 bore hole planned

Hundreds of families visited for oral and dental health check-ups



16 Cascade Groups planned

7 staff trained on Cascade Group methodologies

COVID-19 UPDATE

The largest portion of FH Uganda's daily work with community members was shifted to meet needs caused by the pandemic—most of which are preventative measures, as the area is not reporting any major outbreaks. Village Health Teams were provided basic information about COVID-19. Families were given additional training on constructing handwashing stations, as well as on how to make liquid or bar soap at home. Local staff are also planning five special Child Health Promotion days, facilitated in partnership with local health facilities.





LIVELIHOODS

FARMER TRAINING

An important part of FH’s overall program is to train Bukiende farmers on improved agricultural practices in order to increase crop production and support climate-smart practices. The first step is to identify Lead Farmers in each of the communities and set up demonstration plots. A total of six Lead Farmers were identified and trained on growing healthy, organic disease-fighting foods. The Lead Farmer model equips respected community members to train others on how to establish vegetable gardens and implemented improved farming methods. Each of the six Lead Farmers then established their own demonstration plot to model and train their peers in Bukiende.

SAVINGS GROUPS

The leaders of the four partnering communities were offered orientation on the importance of forming Savings and Loans groups in their communities. Empowering local leaders to spearhead the introduction of new ideas and ways of doing things to their fellow community members is foundational to instigating change for the community.

Following these meetings, the trained leaders led larger informational gatherings with their entire community. In total, over 1,078 people participated, including 680 women (most were caregivers of FH sponsor children). The formation of savings groups will depend on the establishment of Cascade Groups which become the platform for the implementation of various activities related to livelihoods, health, education, and disaster risk reduction (DRR). FH will seek to form and train 16 Savings Groups in total over the course of implementation.

Savings Groups Preparation		
Bukiende Community	Female Leaders	Male Leaders
Bumutsopa	2	10
Bushiangi	3	7
Bungwaanyi	2	7
Burukuru	1	10
Total	8	34



LIVELIHOODS

ACTIVITIES

42 Savings and Loans group leaders trained

16 Savings and Loans groups planned



6 Lead farmers trained and demonstration plots established

COVID-19 UPDATE

Due to restrictions on public gatherings and suggested physical distancing measures, all agricultural workshops and coaching have been suspended until further notice.





LEADERSHIP

One of the community goals is to reduce the prevalence of harmful gender and cultural norms. To reach this goal, the FH team is working with community leaders to increase knowledge about the rights of vulnerable demographics such as women and children, promote a safe environment for those groups to thrive, and increase the participation of vulnerable groups in decision making.

Another goal is to improve capacity to recover from shocks and disasters—events like a drought, disease, or mudslide. This will increase safety nets and assist the community in preparing for emergencies. These results will be met through facilitation of community dialogue, media campaigns about the rights of the vulnerable, school clubs and community events, and training on risk and resilience, among other activities. However, the first step is dialogue and training with church leaders and community leaders. This important process will be conducted throughout the project, but the groundwork laid in the first year is critical. Because of this, the number of “activities” might appear low, but each one is critical for building trust and participatory problem solving.

CHURCH LEADER TRAINING

Relationship-building gatherings were conducted with various church leaders to mobilize them to support the role of church in community development. So far seven churches and 40 leaders have been engaged.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Six “town hall” meetings were conducted in Bukiende with leaders from all the communities. The leaders were introduced to the program framework, community contribution, and FH’s expectations of leaders and communities. The meetings were attended by 93 local leaders (70 men, 23 women) serving in either a political or administrative capacity in the sub-county.

HUMAN RIGHTS CLUBS IN SCHOOLS

Four human rights clubs were formed from four partnering schools—Burukuru, Bumutsopa, Bumaliro, and Nabuhoma Primary. The purpose of the clubs is to increase children’s knowledge about their rights and the rights of other vulnerable groups in the community. The clubs have been registered with each school administration, and leadership roles have been taken up by the children. Each club comprises six leaders—each of which two are girls and four are boys. The clubs’ activities will start when schools reopen.



LEADERSHIP

ACTIVITIES

93 attendees at 6 community “town hall” meetings

7 churches and **40** community leaders engaged to build relationships and inspire advocates for change



4 human rights clubs in local schools formed



COVID-19 UPDATE

Training events for church and community leaders and for the Human Rights Clubs’ activities are on hold and will start again when precautions are lifted and schools reopen. Meanwhile, the local FH staff have hosted several small group events to train the local community leadership and village councils on COVID-19 prevention. FH Uganda is also planning to purchase 10 megaphones for broadcasting health messaging throughout the community. The church mobilization process was interrupted by the outbreak of COVID-19 and will continue after the situation normalizes.

GOOD THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

As FH Uganda launches programming with Bukiende, one of the staff sat down with local farmer, Michael Walufu, to hear about his hopes and dreams for the coming 10 years of transformation.

Q: Tell me a bit about your family and where you live.

A: I'm married to Irene and we have 10 children—five girls and five boys! It's up to just the two of us to provide for our large family. Our main source of income is from farming. We live about two kilometres from Bumaliro Primary School and 1.5 kms from the main road to Lwakhakha. There is a stream about half a kilometre from our home where we collect water for household use.

Q: What was your life like before you joined in FH activities?

A: Life was challenging. My wife and I struggled daily to put food on the table. Our children's schools were not well equipped with learning materials, so their education was limited.

Q: Can you describe your community before FH began working with you?

A: Our community has so many vulnerable people; many families are in abject poverty.

Q: What changes do you hope to see as a result of this 10-year journey?

A: I hope to see great changes in my community, especially in terms of nutrition, infrastructure development, strong leadership, reduced alcoholism and domestic violence, more knowledge and skills to increase our incomes, and greater food security.

I believe leaders will come together to embrace unity to foster development in the community and that domestic violence will reduce in homes. I hope to see children's health improve to eliminate



malnutrition and get at least a health centre in the community. We expect to see high enrolment in schools and improvement in academic performance due to the infrastructure FH is bringing.

I would love to see parents take full responsibility to care for their children, like paying their school fees and make sure they finish university. Overall, I hope my community will become more God-fearing and demonstrate acts of love.

Q: What FH trainings have you participated in so far? Are they helping you begin some of those changes?

A: So far, my wife and I have been trained on new farming techniques, for example, growing vegetables for nutrition and for income. FH has taught us how to make compost, establish a keyhole garden, and about the importance of

medicinal plants like artemisia (proving to be helpful in treating malaria) and many others.

Irene and I have started to work together as a family to see that we raise enough in our new vegetable garden – we want to set an example to others in the community. We expect to teach many others what we've learned from FH so far. We hope this is the beginning of transformation.

Personally, I have been encouraged to work harder as a leader and to inspire others in the community. God willing, by the end of the 10 years of our collaboration, I want to have a big testimony—physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.

Q: *Has this process started to change your place in the community?*

A: Before, I did not have a lot of responsibilities and I was not serving my community to the fullness. Now, I lead the team in my community to mobilize resources and am also a contact person.

I organize my community for various activities like FH meetings and for sponsor children to write their letters.

Q: *What signs of coming transformation do you see in your community?*

A: So far, the greatest change we've experienced is our leaders working together. The leaders in my community have been working in isolation; now we see them cooperating to make sure community members are able to also do their part in transforming our community. I think the changes and accomplishments we will realize through our involvement in FH programs will make me feel better and encouraged. I will have reasons to celebrate the milestones reached.

FH has just started its work in Bukiende and we hope much is going to be accomplished through this collaboration. Thanks to FH for considering Bukiende and my community of Bungwanyi in particular!



Thank You

FH Uganda, FH Canada, and the families of Bukiende thank you for your continued support as they begin their 10-year journey out of poverty. This is an exciting time full of hope and we can't wait to see what lies ahead.