

In the UK

Although we were forced to cancel our trustee meeting in April, we have been able to keep in touch with each other via the internet and discuss with our partners how they are affected by the situation. All of our planned fundraising activities during the first half of this year have been put on hold, which will of course affect the amount of money that we had hoped to raise for the ongoing support of our partners. All charities are facing a challenging period.

Our Partners

The pandemic, and the measures taken by different Governments to manage it, has had an effect on our partners and their work which is profound, and wide ranging. Rather than go into lots of detail, in an ever-changing situation, I am going to concentrate on some specific needs from each of the partners.

Umutara Deaf School. Our partner is managing a food programme in the local area to support the poorest families, some of whom have disabled members, who are starving as a result of sudden loss of daily income on which they rely to buy food. We (DeafReach) are supporting this work. Dominique, director, reports – *This program has now helped 74 families with 518 people who are from different families.*

Donations reference *Umutara Food Aid*

Nyabihu Deaf School. Loss of income at the school due to enforced school closure and therefore no fees being paid, means that some support staff (matrons, cooks, etc) will not be able to receive their regular income. Again, as most incomes are low, these people do not have any savings and live on the money they receive from their meagre salary. We heard yesterday (May 1st) that schools in Rwanda will stay closed until September.

Donations reference *Nyabihu Salary*

Uganda. Preschool Programme. As with Nyabihu above, the loss of school fees means that it is extremely difficult to be able to continue to pay the teachers during this lockdown. Without pay, many will suffer hunger and may look elsewhere for employment. The skills that these teachers have acquired in beginning the education of young deaf children is immense and we do not want to lose these valuable teachers!

Donation reference *Uganda Salary*

Burundi. The government here has not closed the schools, or made any decisions about social distancing. Concerned about the effect of this on their pupils, the residential deaf schools took it upon themselves to keep the children at school over the Easter period, as to send them home would have risked infection. They are safer at school! However, the cost of extra food needed to support this action has not been found!

Donations reference *Burundi Food Aid*

If you would like to make a donation, please go to the Donate Page.

If you would like to donate to a specific cause, then please send Rod Clark an email to this effect, (info@deafreach.org) using the references above.

Thank you

Isobel Blakeley

Rwanda Lead Trustee