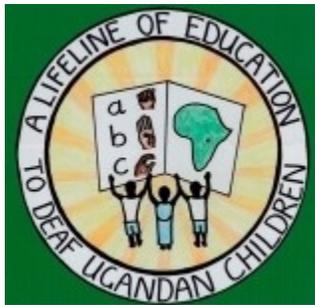


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Jinja DEAF Newsletter

November 2018

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Welcome to our 2018 newsletter!

Jinja DEAF (Deaf Education Access Fund) is a small UK charity which makes a big difference to vulnerable deaf children in Jinja District, Uganda. This year we're celebrating 10 years of providing life-changing support.

In this issue you can read about -

- Changing the lives of deaf children through providing signing staff for schools
- Empowering parents to help their deaf children with 'OPDC'
- Our pupil sponsorship: challenges and achievements
- Providing much-needed educational materials
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- Could you help boost Jinja DEAF's income?
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Changing the lives of deaf children through providing signing school staff

Jinja DEAF enables deaf children to access school education through providing signing staff to schools. Our first Jinja DEAF funded worker started in 2008 and has now made an invaluable contribution to the lives of dozens of deaf children. This was the report in our first ever newsletter

“JINJA DEAF” FUNDS DEAF TEACHER

Communication skills of deaf children at Walukuba West Primary have dramatically improved with the help of their new, sign-fluent teacher, funded by “Jinja DEAF”.

Since the beginning of the 2008 academic year in February, Jinja DEAF has been funding an additional teacher at the Walukuba West School unit for deaf children in Jinja. Miss Victoria Nanyonga, who is herself deaf, was previously teaching in a school for the deaf in southern Uganda. She is a fluent sign language user with a great passion for the rights of deaf children, and her support has proved to be an invaluable asset in a District where there was previously no teacher fully fluent in Ugandan Sign Language. Jinja DEAF Chairperson Emma Heseltine witnessed the difference in the pupils' fluency and confidence since Miss Nanyonga's arrival. She writes, “I was particularly delighted to witness the remarkable improvement in communication of a couple of young children whom I had known previously.

I was sitting with Miss Nanyonga after observing her teaching when the two children came rushing in from playtime and signed to Miss Nanyonga with furious fluency a whole series of spontaneous phrases, all along the lines of “he took my ball”, “that's not true, I had it first”, “she's lying!”. While Miss Nanyonga mediated between the two with an admirable patience, I reflected on how a few months back I had seen these children get into a fight and turn to the teacher, pointing at each other with only plaintive tears and a good few kicks and slaps to communicate their frustration. With the help of Miss Nanyonga these young children were clearly acquiring proper Ugandan Sign Language, and had moved from a world of frustrated pointing and whining to being able to actually express themselves with the richness of a language. We tend to take for granted our use of language to make friends, say what we need, learn at school, and of course, to have it all out in a flaming row! It is just such a tragedy that there are still so few deaf children in the district who ever get the chance to acquire any language, either spoken or signed. This is surely what inspires us to carry on seeking solutions and ways to improve the situation, with the help of supporters in the UK.”



Miss Nanyonga in class with the deaf pupils

Ten years on we are providing four full-time signing school staff. The two main government schools attended by deaf children (Kyomya Primary and Walukuba West Primary) now each have a deaf staff member to teach Ugandan Sign Language (USL), and a USL fluent hearing staff member to interpret. Our sponsored staff face a daunting task. Firstly they help the new arrivals (many with no language skills at all) to learn Ugandan Sign Language. Then, when the children start to be taught in classes alongside 60 or 70 hearing children, our staff support them with USL interpretation and after lessons go through what the children didn't catch in class. The deaf children are immensely grateful for the Jinja DEAF support staff. Each of these hard-working staff members receives a basic annual salary of US\$ 5,640,000 per year, with US\$ 720,000 for running popular Saturday learning support sessions. It's incredible that such a valuable staff member can be provided with what works out at just £26 a week in UK money!



USL fluent school staff sponsored by Jinja DEAF - from left to right: Kyomya interpreter Lydia Nakitende, Kyomya USL instructor Juliet Wabukawo, Walukuba West USL instructor Victoria Nanyonga, Walukuba West Communication Support Worker Yazidi Nawedde.

Empowering parents to help their deaf children: our work with OPDC

In 2014 Jinja DEAF collaborated with a Jinja charity called 'Soft Power Education' to deliver our first Ugandan Sign Language workshops for parents. For many parents this was not only their first opportunity to learn to communicate with their children more fully, it was also their first opportunity to get to know other parents in the same situation. Some enthusiastic and motivated participants then went on to found their own support group, 'Organisation for Parents with Deaf Children, Jinja' (OPDC).

OPDC has done some wonderful work advocating for the needs, rights and potential of deaf children. They have even been on local radio, using a medium which is widely accessed even in remote rural areas without electricity. Such awareness raising is hugely important in a society where deaf people are often viewed as a burden or even as a curse. Very few deaf children get to go to school, they are referred to as "kasiru" which translates as "dumb", and many people assume that deaf children simply cannot be educated.

In 2016 we were pleased to enable OPDC to create a Parent Involvement Program across Jinja District, using a Jinja DEAF grant of 2 million Shillings (about £450). As part of this program OPDC has so far trained 102 people in beginner's Ugandan Sign Language and the needs of deaf children. Those reached include parents, community leaders and health workers. Thanks to the Jinja DEAF funded program, each of Jinja's 12 subcounties now has an OPDC 'Parent Support Link'. These Parent Support Links are parents who have committed to reaching out to other parents with deaf children in their area and co-ordinating a local self-help group at the subcounty level. So far, the families of 328 deaf children have come forward and registered with OPDC. This is a great achievement in a culture which has traditionally considered having a deaf child as something to be ashamed of and hidden away. We are therefore very pleased to work together with OPDC to reach the many deaf children out of school whose parents can't afford the additional travel or boarding costs to attend Kyomya or Walukuba West.



Left: Parents and educators with their certificates, after completing the 2014 Ugandan Sign Language course held by Jinja DEAF and SoftPower Right: OPDC Chair Sebastian Waiswa meets with parents of deaf children as part of the Jinja DEAF funded Parent Involvement Program, Busedde Subcounty, Jinja District, 2017.

Our pupil sponsorship: challenges and achievements

At the moment we are no longer taking on sponsorship of individual children. Our sponsorship of signing school staff, sign language workshops and grants to OPDC are a more manageable form of support to offer as a charity that operates remotely from London, and they reach a greater number of children. Although fees for boarding and tuition at the government and voluntary schools and colleges work out at about £20 a month, the additional costs and complications involved in assessing need and liaising with the families and schools were felt to be too high. However, those pupils whose sponsorship started previously will continue to be supported until the completion of their education.

Charles Waiswa is currently studying for his A-levels at Wakiso School for the Deaf. His ambition is to train and qualify as a teacher, which would be a tremendous achievement for him as a deaf student. We think he would make a wonderful role-model for deaf pupils!

Irene Tyabiwulira completed O-levels in 2017 and is now finishing her education with a vocational course in hairdressing. On graduation she will have the skills to earn a living, and hopefully even provide work opportunities to other deaf children. Long-term supporters may remember that when Irene was a pupil at Walukuba West Primary, her father tragically died in an accident and her widowed mother was unable to pay her boarding fees. Jinja DEAF's sponsorship enabled Irene to continue her schooling rather than return to her home on an island in Lake Victoria where no-one else knew any sign language.

Henry Gawole was sponsored by us to train in carpentry and finished his course at the end of 2016. We bought him tools and materials to help him to begin work. Although it is not easy for someone who is deaf to find work he has done well and is working in a carpentry workshop making furniture with some of his former classmates.



Henry Gawole doing carpentry, and at home with his father.

Providing much needed educational materials

Jinja DEAF is always looking at ways to help our partners improve the education they can provide for the deaf children. The schools face big challenges due to lack of resources. It is common to have seventy or more children in one class, being taught by a single teacher with just a chalkboard and hardly any textbooks or materials. This is particularly a problem for the deaf children who join these classes, as they are largely reliant on illustrated books and pictorial materials for their learning.

Thankfully one thing that the schools are not short of is the motivation and enthusiasm shown by our sponsored workers and the other teachers of the deaf children. In 2017 we sponsored two workshops for educators of deaf children from 3 different schools in Jinja District. They gave their time to learn from each other by sharing the techniques they felt were working well and jointly discussing the challenges they face. High on the list of their challenges was the lack of learning materials. These included books, sign language charts and the craft equipment needed to develop practical skills that the children can use when they leave school. Earlier this year we were pleased to make a grant of USh 2million/£450 each to the deaf units at Kyomya and Walukuba West schools, which covered many of these much-needed resources. We hope to see the benefits of this in the children's progress and development in the coming year. A comparatively small amount of funding from our perspective goes a long way in Uganda, providing benefits well into the future.



Our funded staff receiving books donated by Jinja DEAF, and deaf pupils learning vocational skills.

Exciting new partnership in the UK: welcome to William Patten School!

We are delighted to announce a new school partnership here in the UK for 2019. Some of you may remember our partnership with the Hearing Support Unit at Elmgreen Secondary School. The students in Lambeth exchanged drawings, photos and questions with the deaf pupils at the schools in Jinja, and in both countries the children enjoyed learning about the differences and similarities in how they live. The staff team at William Patten Primary have been very enthusiastic about how this Ugandan connection can contribute to the international dimension of their curriculum. They are also embracing Deaf awareness. In fact, Jinja DEAF founder Emma Heseltine (also a parent at William Patten) was delighted to join an ex-pupil in launching British Sign Language as the school's 'language of the month' for November 2018. The children and staff at the school (all of whom are hearing) can now be seen signing to each other "good morning" and "good afternoon", and one pupil was seen at the end of the school day answering his dad's question in BSL, signing "school good!".

William Patten and Jinja DEAF will be launching the partnership in December with special assemblies for the children and Christmas Shows for the parents. Then in February William Patten pupils Ronnie (Year 4) and Alisa (Reception Year) will be joining their parents on a trip to Jinja District where they will make a short film with the pupils there to share with William Patten pupils.



Children at Kyomya Primary School adding their names to a message for William Patten School.

Could you be our next Treasurer or Fundraising Officer? Jinja DEAF is recruiting volunteer trustees!



Our current treasurer Robert Welsford has done an invaluable job over the last few years keeping proper records and dealing with all our money matters. However, Robert's term of office is due to expire in May 2019. As he is planning to relinquish his voluntary jobs and spend more of his retirement on other things, we will be looking for a new Treasurer.

This volunteer role involves arranging payments to Uganda including termly salaries and school fees, arranging gift aid tax claims, assessing and paying valid expenses, monitoring donation receipts, and producing annual accounts. Robert will be very happy to provide a detailed handover and be an initial support to the incoming post-holder, and if you would like more information before applying he is available for a chat. So if you want to help improve the lives of deaf children in Uganda, and you have some basic experience in financial control systems and a little free time, then we would really like to hear from you. Ideally a commitment of at least three years would be welcomed.

We would also be keen to have a new trustee with a special remit for promoting fundraising. So if you are a people-person with fundraising ideas who enjoys promoting a good cause, networking, organising events etc., then please do get in touch.

Both these trustee roles enable you to be fully involved in all the interesting discussions and decisions we have as we follow up on the situation in Jinja and work as a team to achieve the most we can. As a board of trustees we meet about 3 times a year in one of our homes around London N1. We are a friendly bunch with a variety of differing skills and life experience, and most of us can provide very decent tea and biscuits!

If you are interested in either of these roles please do look at our website for further information about our charity (www.jinjadeaf.org.uk) and please apply to the trustees with a brief description of your skills and interests, by emailing us at contact@jinjadeaf.org.uk.

Financial Review: Could you help boost our income?



In the year 2017 Jinja DEAF spent £7,007 directly on the projects in Uganda. We also spent £176 on administration costs, costs which we keep to an absolute minimum by running our charity as volunteers working from home. That means that 97.5% of our expenditure went directly to helping the vulnerable deaf children in Jinja, which compares very favourably to the UK charity average of 60-70% spent on charitable activities (<https://www.channel4.com/news/factcheck/how-much-charities-spend-good-causes>).

Unfortunately, 2017 also saw a drop in donations and we had to use £513 from our reserves. As we have adequate reserves we do not need to make any immediate cuts. Longer-term, however, it is imperative that we increase our fundraising activity. We would therefore be grateful to hear from anyone with fundraising ideas, for example doing a sponsored run for us or holding an event, or recommending Jinja DEAF for your company's charity fundraising. Of course, if you are able to make a monthly financial contribution yourself we greatly appreciate that, but we also greatly appreciate help in getting the word out and building our support base. Remember that with Jinja DEAF, what seems like a small amount here in the UK can do a very substantial amount in Uganda, and bring about invaluable positive change to the lives of some very vulnerable deaf children!

How to donate

We are grateful for all donations received. Remember that donations go a long way in Uganda, and just 5 donors each contributing £20 a month can provide a signing teacher to a school. Various ways to donate can be found on our website (www.jinjadeaf.org.uk/support-us), or email us at contact@jinjadeaf.org.uk. (NB there will be Gift Aid and Standing Order forms available at the William Patten school office for parents at the school)

How you can help

If you have any ideas of how you could volunteer to help, please email us at contact@jinjadeaf.org.uk. Please keep in touch and find out about future events through following us on Facebook and subscribing to our e-Newsletter. (NB there will be a sign-up sheet at the William Patten school office for parents at the school)



To all our supporters a very warm thank you and very best wishes for 2019!

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