

# Reach Out Mbuya Parish HIV/AIDS Initiative Newsletter

Quarter 4  
October—December



## The Young Mothers' Gathering

The Young mothers gathering took place at Naguru High School on 9 November 2019. A programme under Reach Out Mbuya Parish HIV/AIDS Initiative that seeks to empower girls who are victims of early or teenage pregnancies to cope and give birth to healthy and HIV free babies. In the gathering they received a talk on parenting, HIV prevention, Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission, Adherence, Financial empowerment.

Young mothers are also encouraged to know their HIV status through free HIV counselling and testing offered by ROM to prevent transmission to their unborn babies.



*A young mother undergoing HIV testing by a ROM counsellor.*

Mariam (not real name) said that through the program she got to know her HIV status and how to take care of herself during pregnancy.

## ROM celebrates International Day of Older Persons with the grandmothers of Luwero District.



*The guest of honor the Chief Administrative Officer of Luwero district hands over a goat to the winners of the drama presentation .*

## ROM successfully holds the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Charity Run 2019

Reach Out Mbuya Parish HIV/AIDS Initiative (ROM) in conjunction with Our Lady of Africa Church held the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Charity Run 2019 on 7, December 2019, with the aim of raising funds to support the Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) attain uninterrupted quality education through our Orphans and Vulnerable Children Program.

A cumulative total of 11,000 OVC have received education support through ROM thus far and currently 900 OVC are active in our child support programme.

On average annually the organization needs for; Lower Primary – UGX 765,000/= Upper Primary – UGX 1,080,000/= O-Level – UGX 1,800,000/= A Level- UGX 1,800,000/=. The Charity Run, is one of the local fundraising innovations aimed to meet these financial costs.



*Winners of the Charity Run during a photo moment with ROM 's senior staff.*

This year, many people turned up to support the cause including the chief runner Eng. Alex Gisagara from National Water and Sewerage Corporation who pledged to support ROM 's work in the area of supporting orphans and vulnerable children.

On 13, December 2019, Reach Out Mbuya Parish HIV / AIDS Initiative (ROM) with support from the Stephen Lewis Foundation held the International Day of Older Persons at Kasaala- Luwero district. The event brought together a broad range of stakeholders including; grandmothers, local council leaders, government officials, ROM staff, youth and children and was crowned with mass led by Rev. Fr. George Previdi.

The grandmothers also displayed various skills in presentation, creativity and business management through exhibitions. In her presentation, the representative of the grandmothers mentioned that before the coming of the Stephen Lewis Project, they had no support, they would languish from disease and lack of basic needs but now we receive medicines, mosquito nets, goats, mattresses to mention but a few.

The Executive Director of Reach Out Mbuya Parish HIV/AIDS Initiative, Josephine Kaleebi commended the grandmothers for teaching the rest a lot about preparation for retirement and old age. She called for those who have benefited from the knowledge they receive during the trainings to pass it on to others.

The Chairman board of Kasaala Health Center 4 Mr. Katureebe Kizito suggested, that there is need for a local fund for sustainability of the support given to the elderly.

In his response, the guest of honor the Chief Administrative Officer Godfrey Kuruhira Akiiki, said his team is working to ensure services for the elderly are offered without them making lines. He also mentioned that the district leadership was working with the central government to ensure that medical suppliers for Non-Communicable Diseases like; pressure, diabetes do not run out of stock at Kasaala Health Center 4.

As a take home for the grandmothers, they were advised to improve on recording keeping and conceptualization of their business ideas for their respective businesses to grow.

## Communities Make the Difference: World AIDS Day 2019



*Representatives from of NWSC (right) and ROM (left) light a candle as a symbol of continued partnership in the fight against HIV/AIDS.*

1 December, is an important opportunity to recognize the essential role that communities have played and continue to play in the AIDS response. This year, Reach Out Mbuya Parish HIV/AIDS Initiative (ROM) celebrated World AIDS Day with National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC).

The team from NWSC hosted ROM staff who took them through a discussion about HIV/AIDS. The NWSC staff used the opportunity to ask questions on HIV/AIDS. The team from Reach Out took them through discussions on HIV discordance, PEP and HIV testing and counselling.

### Site Visit with Rev.Fr. Anthony Kimbowa Kibira



On 27, November 2019 Father Anthony the board chairman for Reach Out-Mbuya Parish HIV/AIDS Initiative visited the ROM sites in the areas of Banda and Acholi Quarters where he had an opportunity to interact with members of the community. He gave them hope and motivated many like; Lakot a grandmother who is undertaking kitchen gardening at Acholi quarters and has been able to feed her family and sell some of her produce.



The community was happy to receive the board chairman and for them it was a confirmation that ROM follows up on work done which was reflected from the visit of the board chairman.



ROM was also represented at the first Philly Bongoley Lutaaya memorial lecture week that took Imperial Royale Hotel, under the theme 'sustainability of Uganda's HIV and AIDS response beyond 2020'.

At the lecture the Queen Mother, Rosette Kerunega of Alur Kingdom: shared her testimony of how she was bedridden for months after being given only 6 weeks to live. But here she was years later, still alive.

The lecture recognized Lutaaya's selfless effort in breaking the stigma and discrimination around HIV/AIDS and provided an opportunity to explore possibilities of increasing domestic financing for Uganda's HIV/AIDS response. The keynote speaker at the lecture was Dr. Alex Countinho, an experienced Global Health leader.

## ROM in the Media

*The ROM Community Support Officer during a talk show about the Orphans and Vulnerable Children on NTV.*



*ROM technical staff attend a talk show to share expert views on HIV Discordance.*



*In partnership with Wakiso District ROM staff attended a talk show at CBS a head of the World AIDS Day.*