UPDATE FROM MIFUMI PRIMARY SCHOOL,UGANDA

Without tv, radio or internet, learning continues under COVID

It's an unusual scene at Mifumi Primary School, a place once bustling with activities before all educational institutions were closed. The school now is a quiet place with classrooms empty with no children except for the guards who keep security at the place.

Over seven hundred children in Mifumi school have been home since 20 March due to the Government of Uganda' Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) prevention measures to close schools with the aim to prevent the spread of the virus.

The government in a bid to keep school going children engaged in studies during the lockdown, rolled out a learning programme where lessons were to be conducted over radios and televisions. This programme much as it is for good intention, does not benefit the rural learners because most homes lack radio and television sets to tune in. Besides that, most homes lack electricity for the operation of the above appliances.
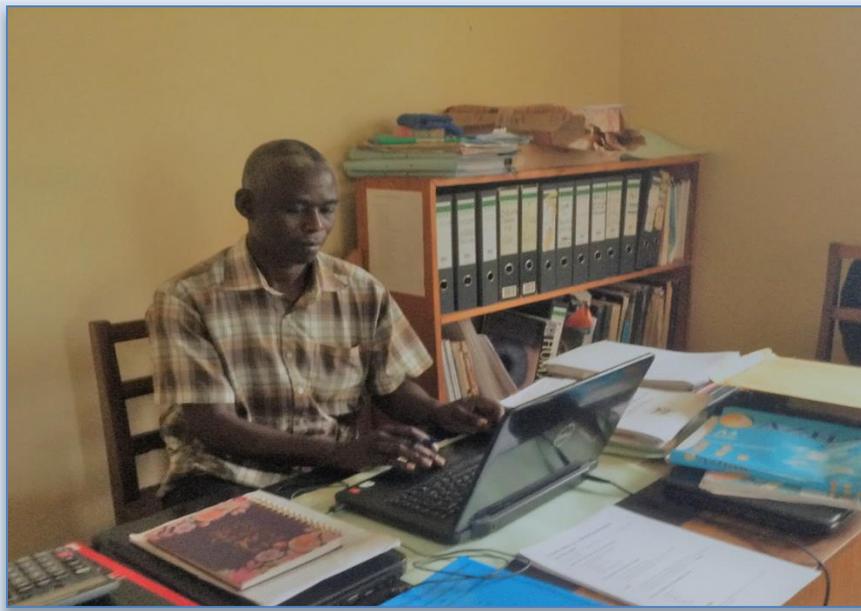
Before schools were closed, the head teacher Mr. Clement Obbo had advised all students to continue with revision work from home so that they do not lag behind in academics. We printed revision materials and coordinated with parents to pick them up for their children.

Mr. Obbo revealed that many students were having challenges in not being able to understand their studies on their own and were unable to receive adequate assistance from parents who didn't have much knowledge on the subjects.

He also noted that children were being encouraged to borrow text books from the school library, in order to supplement on their revision materials. He highlighted the only challenge to this being, the few numbers in stock.

Another issue facing the head teacher is the pressures from the community to have their children access the reading materials that were prepared for Mifumi Primary School children. "Parents of other students have resorted to going to my home in a desperate move to get reading materials for their children" says the head teacher. "This poses a threat to the health of my family members because we can contract the virus in case one is infected."

In a move to ensure continuity of learning remotely, the head teacher has set up a learning task force comprised of a few teachers that live within, to ensure that they keep the children engaged in their studies by developing more reading materials to cover topics that are in the education syllabus.

The head teacher preparing revision materials for students

Responsibilities of the task force are as below;

- Preparation of revision materials for upper primary classes (five to seven) to cover topics that were supposed to have been taught in class.

- Preparation of tests for the primary seven classes to test the readiness of the candidates in case they are to sit for their final year exams at the end of the year.

- Coordinate the distribution of the revision materials to the students while observing the standard operating procedures (SOP) set by government to prevent the spread of corona virus.

- Educating parents on the need to take up an active role in ensuring that their children were revising their books and the reading materials given to them.

- Monitoring the progress of learning of students in candidate classes, by offering support and advice to those who may be having challenges in understanding certain topics

- Making follow ups on students to ensure they are actively participating in remote learning and ensuring that they are observing all the government directives in combating the spread of the virus.

If you wish to know more about what is going on in Mifumi Primary School see our website. If you wish to support our work for the children and community of Mifumi Village click here

(*Keep children learning is a priority*)

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