



Mukuru Promotion Centre

Empowerment Step by Step

Sponsored by Sisters of Mercy

www.mercymukuru.co.ke

Information II

7th April 2020

An Update to our Supporters, Friends and Partners regarding the works of Mukuru Promotion Centre and the CoVid 19 Pandemic

Firstly, we wish to express our deep gratitude for your support to the destitute families in Mukuru Slum. From your generosity we organised for five pick up points for the 'immunity booster' parcel.

Given the restrictions of gatherings we had to develop a workable plan with the Village Elders in the different communities. We wrote to the different government officials so that our staff would not be in violation of the rules announced by President Uhuru Kenyatta. We visited Sub-County Commissioners, Chiefs, and Police Stations in the area so that the distributions could be completed without incident.

Initially, when we tried to distribute to St Elizabeth Primary, the slum dwellers did not observe the social distancing rule and were pushing to get through our gate. Two of our social workers were arrested and kept in custody after the villagers were dispersed by tear gas. After an hour's negotiations they were released. We were relieved as they could have got a six month jail sentence for organizing an assembly against government orders. Since then the social workers have been very careful. By the end of March, we managed to distribute 1,267 parcels, with the help of our social workers, security guards and the local Chiefs in the different areas. The patients who attend the Clinic are receiving the immunity booster parcel:

1. St Catherine's Primary – Dunga Road
2. St. Bakhita and St. Michael – Likoni Road
3. Sancta Maria Mukuru - Kayaba
4. St. Elizabeth – Lunga Lunga
5. MPC Clinic – Immunity Booster Parcel and Nutrition

Since our first update much has happened as we are sure that your home area is undoubtedly similar. Mukuru Promotion Centre received a number of emails from people who wanted to help the destitute and we are very grateful to people around the world who are facing major upheavals themselves from their normal routines and yet are willing to help thousands in Mukuru.

Our schools will be on holidays during the month of April, but we normally have holiday food parcels for the 30% destitute population in our 6,500 children. Last week we already had distributed 1,297 parcels to families. We envisage doubling that number within a week. The majority of our parents are casual workers who have not received any income since March 16th. The food parcels will certainly help them. The logistics is a big task under the current regulations, but we will be

assisted by the local Police. Next week we will distribute to the families in the Maasai Village, which is next door to St Bakhita. We know of 400 families who are without an income.

We will continue to distribute to other villages in co-operation with government officials and village elders.



Part of Masai Village

In the first few days of April we managed to distribute another 547 food parcels as well as 50 food boxes, donated by the Comboni Fathers. The food box contained rice, maize meal, bread, wheat flour, cooking fat, soft drink and sugar. This will help a family for a fortnight.

The Government is requesting the use of some schools as testing centres. St Catherine's is one of our schools to be used if the virus escalates. There are very few testing kits within Kenya, all of which are in Government hands except one which is in a private clinic who is charging 13,000 Ksh (\$123US) for a test. So far there are only 142 cases in Kenya, but this could be more of a reflection on how much testing is being conducted.

There are 47 Counties in Kenya. The ones that have CoVid19 cases are Nairobi, Kilifi, Kwale and Mombasa Counties. The metropolitan area of Nairobi accounts for 82% of the cases and the other counties make up 14%. As at the 6th April 2020, 4,283 persons have been tested for the virus, 158 have tested positive; 4 people have recovered from the virus while 6 have died. The Government introduced further travel restrictions within the metropolitan area and the above counties. The few confirmed cases outside of Nairobi and Coastal strip can be traced to persons who have travelled from overseas.

We are planning to have clean drinking water available as we have not seen any plans for such being made by others. It seems that those who are testing positive will be held until such time that they can be transferred to a Government hospital. Those with the means will go to private hospitals.

While the middle and upper class areas are all quiet with people staying at home, the slums are teeming with life and hundreds of people are spilling on to the surrounding roads. It would seem an arduous task for any police force to contain. We have seen on television scenes where extreme force is being used on people. While the Government spokespersons are giving dire warnings, slum people, besides their concern about food are in very good spirits. They believe God will protect them.

The Government plans to build a borehole in St Elizabeth's Lunga Lunga for both the community and the school. As it is an emergency and the slum dwellers need water, we agreed for the borehole to be built. Our concern will be about the electricity and maintenance costs. As the water is urgently needed for drinking and hand washing, we will worry about the costs later.



Our clinic remains open and operational. It is yet to see a CoVid19 suspect. They are treating the normal sicknesses of about 100 people daily. They see a number of malnourished children each day, for whom we provide immunity booster parcel. The street boys are still in residence and not happy to stay inside the compound. After a life of roaming about on the streets some found it too hard to be confined and left. We have 45 boys in residence currently.

There are rumours circulating on the media that from next Tuesday 7th April for three weeks, there will be a total lock down. In other cities this may be possible, but in Nairobi where over 50% stay in houses with no indoor toilet and no piped water, it will be an impossible directive to adhere to.

Stories from the Community

One of our social workers told us a story from a person they met. One client who received a parcel yesterday was very grateful for the food. She is a single parent at St. Bakhita Primary who has 7 children and is also taking care of her niece, making her family a total of nine members. Before the CoVid19 she had been selling second-hand socks but now it is not possible due the outbreak. The immunity booster parcel will provide them with a meal.

There was a second family of five members where the father has been jobless, the mother does bead work to make a living and the little she receives supports the family. For the month of March, she had no income as there is no one who can now buy her bead work. To her the food will help the family for some time but only hopes that the situation in the country gets better. Life at the moment is not easy for the family.



Families at Sancta Maria Mukuru Kayaba School



Families from St Elizabeth Primary



The Assistant Chief

helps with order at Sancta Maria Mukuru Kayaba



Student from St Michael's



A pupil from St. Elizabeth receives food under the watchful eye of the Police

The staff of MPC and the Sisters are all well. We rejoice in our ability to assist at this time

Thank you for your support.

Sr. M. Killeen

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