busogabugle

Spring 2020

busogatrust water. sanitation. hygiene.

COVID - 19 VIGILANCE *Before entering this home, every visitor must first wash their hands.*

From the Editor

Who would have thought that, 38 years after B.T. was founded in 1982, we would be seen today as one of Uganda's front-line emergency services in the battle against the Coronavirus pandemic? A letter from the Government on March 31st to all responsible for local government stated: "In line with the preventative measures issued by H.E. (The President) against the spread of Coronavirus (COVID 19), **you are hereby advised to prioritise the repair of non-functional boreholes to ensure that the population in your respective area access clean water".**

The President also exempted water agencies from the stringent national lockdown of almost all traffic. In response B.T. obtained the necessary travel permits from the RDCS (Resident District Commissioners). These enable us to move freely in our clearly marked Land Rovers across all the Districts in which we operate. At the time of writing it seems that B.T. is the only WASH NGO still working, despite the request of the Government, and many pleadings in the media for solidarity from Uganda's "partners". To keep working safely is the free choice of B.T. staff under the resolute leadership of Johnson Waibi, The Country Manager.

The appreciation of local people is humbling. One government borehole, out of action for three years, beside a Maternity and Health Clinic in Northern Busoga, was rehabilitated with a stainless-steel cylinder and pipes in one day. The mothers and children no longer need to carry jerry cans of water for long distances. This caused much jubilation!

We shall continue to pull out the stops to respond to this crisis, which we can only do because of the generous kindness of our private supporters. We ask all our readers to stay safe and keep well.

Following their starring role in the last Busoga Bugle, we are delighted to hear from more African voices, and even from our historic B.T. family in this latest Spring Bugle…

(A sight like this first opened the eyes of the Editor and his compatriots in February 1982. It did not seem possible that this was the only water supply for some of our fellow human beings. This epiphany gave birth to Busoga Trust.
*Photo by **Taliba Faridah**)*

*(Cover photo by **Ronald Madaba**)*

2020 - A Happy New Year?

2020 was ushered in everywhere with hope and happiness. But this year the joy was short lived. Thousands of lives have already been claimed by coronavirus across the world. This pandemic does not discriminate. Rich and poor, young and old, black and white, high and low, all are vulnerable. When it knocked on Prince Charles' door I cried out in a loud voice to God: "What will the poor African child do, especially here in Luwero?!".

For WASH programmes like B.T.'s, 2020 will be the year of handwashing to prevent the spread of the virus, just as it is for all humanity.

This puts B.T.'s work on the front line of the fight to overcome COVID-19. Every community urgently needs clean, safe water for drinking and washing. We in B.T. stand alongside Uganda to fight COVID-19!

Joseph Ssebunya, Outrider and Chief Mitigator

Joseph Munubbi, Assistant in Chief

*(Joseph Munubbi, Assistant in Chief. Photo by **Johnson Waibi**)*

Few organisations are blessed with such loyalty and service as B.T. is given by Joseph Munubbi. After a successful and distinguished career as a gold smuggler, Joseph joined B.T. in August, 1988. He is the one you want beside you in a tight corner, always loyal and quick with a panga. He bonds closely with our staff, whether young or old, often cracking jokes and offering words of wisdom from his rich experience of life. "He is", says Moses Mugabane, "our point of reference, a library of information, who has guided and shaped many of us, boosting our confidence".

Now a youthful 72, the E.D. has told him he may not retire until the E.D. retires. If that day should come we shall all miss his faithful presence and his beautiful smile. "He never speaks negatively of anyone", says Moses, "and his work is impeccable". One of the first in the office, and the last to leave, Joseph is always willing to volunteer. You are a great B.T. soldier, Yusuf!

Thank you so much, Muzeyi!

Mose Mugabane, Research and Development Officer

New Life in Kidera

by B.T.'s Poet Laureate

Kidera Health Centre, Mama life,
Once mighty across Buyende,
Was now no longer so,
For life giving water had ceased.

Patients would come to be healed,
Burdened with their own jerry cans of water,
But work in the theatre and labs had all stopped,
Their skilled staff, now idle, unable to serve.

The borehole and tanks were now dry, dry, dry,
Misery stalked Kidera, and the county around,
All Buyende suffered,
Because water, the source of life and joy, had run dry.

Kidera Health Centre,
What was your role now?
Your role was to restore life,
But your failure to do so mocked us all.

Promises, promises, promises,
Every year more promises,
All as empty and broken as the borehole!
Until came little B.T.

Instead of promises B.T. delivered,
In one day, the water flowed,
Kidera Health Centre came back to life,
Its staff were serving patients again.

Bravo B.T. for what you did!
Great is the joy, loud the jubilation,
Laughter rings out again,
Across Kidera and Buyende beyond!

Agnes Birabwa, Buyende Manager

On Not Being a "One Club Golfer"

When no groundwater can be found you, don't give up but you catch water from the sky. That is why B.T. is constructing tanks for rainwater harvesting in Kaliro District for clients who take out low interest revolving loans.

"Home Darling Primary School", with 500 pupils, took out loans for two tanks of 10,000 litres each and have already paid them back. The Head, Augustine, said: "Thank you, Busoga Trust, for the intervention. I can now collect enough water in the rainy season and use the tanks as a reservoir during the dry season".

Ronald Madaba, CDO and entrepreneur of the Revolving Loan Project

*(Children at Home Darling P.S. enjoying the clean water. Photo by **Ronald Madaba**)*

Innovation! Save every drop!

With water scarcity increasing we need to save every drop. Therefore, using wastewater should be encouraged. Here in Luwero we prevent water wastage by constructing an overflow tank. Local people can then use this wastewater for brickmaking, watering their gardens and animals, even some kinds of washing. This reduces the pressure of demand on the hand pump, increasing its longevity, and also ensuring that the well does not run dry.

Vickie Tumbaweze, Luwero Manager

*(New well at Nakaseeta, Luwero, funded by the Rotary Club of Langley and Iver with overflow tank. Photos by **Vickie Tumbaweze**)*

On the front line of the NHS with former Trust employee: Dr. Chris Bodimeade

Working as a junior doctor in a time of coronavirus is an eerie experience. I am less than a year into my professional practice, and so far the only medical (as opposed to surgical) patients I have seen are suffering from COVID 19. The disease that is shredding normality across the world has not spared my hospital. Staff from all other departments - paediatrics, dermatology, psychiatry - have been redeployed to the medical wards, to swell the ranks of the so called front line. Hospital wards, once the territory of specific medical tribes - haematology, oncology, orthopaedics - have all been repurposed as general medical wards. Only the intensive care ward has ominously expanded and now occupies an entire floor including a couple of rearranged operating theatres.

Notionally the hospital is divided - into clean and dirty, red and green, light and dark areas representing parts that are either Covid positive or parts in denial that they are Covid positive. But we all know the disease is everywhere. It is in the bathrooms, the offices, the canteens and the hallways. It has infected patients, doctors, nurses, cleaners and secretaries. Our best efforts to stop it with regular hand washing, surface mopping and personal protective equipment (PPE) are simply not sufficient to prevent infection, it finds a way. The majority of my colleagues have been off from work for days or weeks with symptoms of the disease.

But the staff are united. The time of panic is over. The early weeks where we were anxious of how many patients would flood our hospital and how or where or with what we were going to treat them are over. We know what we have to do for our patients and ourselves. Morale is good. This peak is over. The generosity of members of the public towards the staff has been a source of great comfort and solace. Petty departmental rivalries are in truce while we collectively focus on a threat that makes us all contemplate how important we all really think we are.

Make no mistake that a lot of people have died from this disease. The hospital reported 6 times more deaths in one week compared to the same time last year. These quantities are horrific, but they are compounded by the particular disease that necessitates social distancing and obstructs all normal human instincts to touch and to hold the sick. It prevents loved ones from visiting the infirm. This is the hardest role to fill, to be obliged to be the obstructor. Welcoming patients brought in by worried relatives to the ward, and then kindly telling them that they must say goodbye and we are not sure when or if they will see each other again. As doctors and nurses, we become the medium for deeply personal conversations between loved ones. We have the sombre afternoon talk with friends, relatives, neighbours safely at the other end of the telephone lines, and explain in medical terms how their beloved is doing. These are not conversations we were meant to be having. The hospital does allow a solitary visitor to sit by the patient in their final hours. But up until that point, maybe weeks, the only interaction the patient has is with the staff. We have met some wonderful people, the majority of whom go home after convalescing. But there are plenty who have not been so fortunate.

(Above: Dr. Bodimeade on duty wearing PPE)

(Left: Dr. Bodimeade during his time in Uganda with Busoga Trust)

In all this I do think back to my time working for the Busoga Trust in Uganda. I learnt so many valuable lessons there, it has undoubtedly made me better able to adjust. The importance of communication, compassion, confidence in uncertainty and friendship. **I wish all my Ugandan brothers and sisters the best over the coming months, the value of water and sanitation has never been higher.**

Dr Chris Bodimeade
Former B.T. Liaison Officer & Manager (2011 - 2013)

*(Right: Handwashing station set up by Busoga Trust as part of our COVID-19 response. Each person using the well must first wash their hands. Photo submitted by **Moses Mugabane**)*

The women who walk the lonely path

The aesthetics of the constellations depict a marvel in the skies hovering above the village. As they begin to open, roosters crow – the African alarm clock – while others growl, their hackles raised as they strut through the darkness. In the land of eyebrow hugs people are beginning to stir.

*(A lady carrying jerry cans of water on her head, Buyanga Sub/County - Iganga district. Photo by **Gabriel Angura**)*

Welcome to Namwendwa! While fathers slumber on, the mothers begin their daily trek to collect water under the opening skies. Due to the nature of settlements women usually make this journey in single file, guessing their way. The moonlight guides their path as they glide through the bushy and rough terrain. It's lonely and scary for these vulnerable women, yet even this early they may still find a queue at the well.

And then, carrying 44 pounds of water on your head, with a young baby strapped to your back, means you really don't want to trip and fall on the way home.

Of course, these daily journeys consume hundreds of hours and much energy, sapping the productive potential of each home. And when young girls also pick up the jerry cans, they miss time at school. A whole generation of girls may be lost to education as they are quickly married off on reaching adolescence.

So, when B.T. brings clean, safe water much nearer to their homes, thanks to your support, then girls and women can start to enjoy a proper education and live productive lives. For them clean water means even more than good health. It means you have a life!

Gabriel Angura, Jinja Manager

Hope Returns to Buliga!

In Luuka District Buliga's well had been down for 3 months. The water user committee had lost trust of the community, due to poor accountability and embezzlement. "We will not collect money towards repair of that water source any more!", said Miss Nibiryo, a water user.

However, after sensitisation by the rehabilitation team, Buliga was enrolled into the PBR programme and has paid its contributions consistently since last year.
"Ever since the PBR system was introduced in our communities issues of accountability and breakdowns are now history!", says Patrick Kitabula the Chairperson.

Juliet Ntono, Community Development Officer

*(Chief Technician Hussein Ibanda rehabilitating a borehole . Photo by **Hussein Ibanda**)*

*(A Hand Pump Mechanic fixing a water source. Photo by **Basaliwa Atanansi**)*

Unsung Heroes

It is time we saluted the unsung heroes of The Busoga Trust, who keep the water flowing! They do the essential work of maintenance and they often do it when few others are around. These are the Hand Pump Mechanics or "HPMs". When, across rural Africa, levels of functionality are so low, often only 50%, B.T.'s HPMs are constantly raising ours. In Luuka District they achieved 97%, but elsewhere there is much yet to do. Our 40 HPMs are the backbone of our flagship PBR programme, under the leadership of Patrick, Charles and Henry.

So, three cheers for all our HPMS!
- "Hip Hip….!!""

Basaliwa Atanansi,
Technical Supervisor (Rehab Programme)

"Coronavirus wash your hands! Coronavirus wash your hands!"

*(Handwashing campaign by pupils in Buikwe CU Primary School. Photo by **Moses Mugabane**)*

Thus chanted the children of Musima Primary School as they moved from home to home. Having learned how we can prevent transmission of the deadly coronavirus by simple and doable actions, the children preached the gospel of cleanliness to the homes in their community. There was a thunderous response, especially when they reached the childrens' own homes. Poles were found, pangas sliced through the air, and in minutes tippy taps for hand washing were constructed.Others swept and garnished their compounds amidst great enthusiasm. "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength." (Psalm 8)

Mose Mugabane, Research and Development Officer

Why Shallow Wells are far from second best!

*(Children pumping from a SHDW in Luwero. Photo by **Ainembabazi Jasper**)*

Before I unpack the motorbike, the smiley Munywanyi welcomes me. His facial impression says it all. He's just filled his two jerry cans at Sakabusolo Main pump.

"Hoooo! Thank you Busoga Trust! You gave us the best well and pump. People from neighboring villages come to this well as their own boreholes constantly breakdown and often yield 'brown water'", he happily tells me.

A clean compound, intact structure and fence, is a good indicator of a properly maintained and fully functional well.

I found this courtesy visit to check functionality so encouraging, as hand dug wells are appreciated everywhere in our operational areas, despite the criticisms they have attracted from some ill-informed officials. Munywanyi's story is enough fuel for me to ride to many more communities each day because this is a service we at Busoga Trust take pride in.

Ainembabazi Jasper, Assistant Technical Supervisor, Luwero

Two examples of Women's Vital Role in WASH

*(Ms Zeurence training a young girl in proper pumping. Photo by **Nannyunju Immaculate**)*

1. In Africa, the burden for collecting water in a household is borne by women and children.

Zeurence Nalugonda, a 65-year-old lady from Bugaga Busanga in Kamuli District, had spent over 40 years of her life collecting water from open ponds. In 1994 when Busoga Trust was looking for somewhere to site an improved water source for her community, she and her husband gave their land whole heartedly.

She has made it her life's purpose to ensure the water source remains functional at all times.

"I cannot dream of going back to an unprotected water source. As a woman, I think it is our role to train our children to maintain our water sources by operating them rightly." said Zeurence.

This source is now in the Payments by Results (PBR) programme and is regularly maintained.

Nannyunju Immaculate, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

2. Meet Patrinah, a dedicated and hardworking single mother.

For decades Patrinah from Batajuba in Kisozi gave her life to provide a safe home for all her children, among them her disabled daughter. But she struggled to retrieve enough water each day to bathe her and launder her bedding, before going off to work in the garden. She would rather bear the burden of collecting each day's water herself, so that her children would get to school on time.

But, faced with the increasing competition for water at the borehole, with its long queues, Patrinah decided in 2014 to raise the materials needed for a ferro cement, 6000 litre, household rainwater tank, when a B.T. project came to Kisozi. This clean rainwater has repaid her handsomely. She has enough for her tomatoes as well as her home. And the corona virus, if it comes, will find this home well protected by proper hand washing with soap.

Patrinah says her life is now healthy and hopeful, thanks to B.T.'s support.

Richard Muzaale, CDO and Radio Presenter

*(Patrinah Namukombe with her rainwater harvesting tank. Photo by **Richard Muzaale**)*

Snippets of Wisdom

Decommissioning Old Pumps

Known now as “The Boxer” because people in the villages know not to mess with her, Winifred Musubika, (Winnie for short), bravely agreed to decommission all those old pumps which, for one reason or another, had been abandoned. Yet these outstanding rust free pumps can still be reused after some refurbishment, saving B.T. much precious cash for investment in new wells. Also, B.T. is now teaching the best way to combat coronavirus by regular handwashing. We are on the front line of the battle to stop the pandemic in Uganda: First, clean drinking water boosts peoples’ own strength and immune systems. Second, clean water enables throrough handwashing to keep the virus from spreading.

From conversations with **Winifred Musubika** (Boxer, Head of Stores and Decommissioning, top phone picker and chocolate lover)

*(Every child must wash their hands before collecting water at Kakika water source. B.T. supplied tanks and soap as part of the COVID-19 response. Photo by **Moses Mugabane**)*

"Giving Hope and Dignity to Girls"

12 year old Agnes, a pupil of Kalagala Primary School had no idea her stomach aches were a pre-menstruation sign, but luckily a school friend was the first to spot the blood. Fortunately, her family could afford sanitary pads, but many can’t. That’s why Busoga Trust Luwero is playing a big role in training and equipping girls on how to make reusable sanitary pads with locally available materials. Otherwise, 3 out of 5 girls miss school from embarrassment and discomfort.

Nannozi Rose, CDO Luwero

“Before water can flow money must flow too”

Everything we do begins in the office of finance where I sit.
We ensure accountability, transparency and smooth procedures in the transfer and availability of funds. Without the finance officers nothing could move. This is true team work – “BARCELONA!”

Mulangira Allen, Finance Administrator

World Toilet Day, Thursday 19th November 2019

B.T. participated in the celebration of World Toilet Day in Kaliro District when different Latrine products were showcased. B.T. seeks to achieve 100% Latrine coverage in our areas and raise high levels of hygiene. Just as in the U.K. the latrine is the most important room in the home. (Remember to observe it next year!)

Musa Sentongo, Rehab Manager

B.T. Practise what you preach!

It is not enough to preach good hygiene and sanitation. B.T. must also be seen to practise it ourselves. So when you visit our office in Jinja do make good use of all the facilities, especially the hand sanitiser, soap and, water as you enter. That way you will protect yourself and all our valued office staff! Thank you!

Kyotawaire Zahara,
Office Assistant

Luuka – The Jewel in B.T.’s functionality crown

Engineer Makinabu of Luuka District trumpeted B.T.’s achievement in raising levels of functionality in its District from 41% to 98%. The typical rehabilitated government boreholes, where B.T. has installed stainless steel and plastic, now has a life span of at least 30 years or more as part of the PBR programme.

Musa Sentongo, Rehab Manager

If an army marches on its stomach, B.T. moves on its Land Rovers...

The E.D. has often told our B.T. drivers that they hold the life of the Trust in their hands. That’s how important it is that they drive carefully and ensure thorough maintenance checks on their vehicles. **(B.T. is incredibly fortunate that our Land Rovers are serviced by David Balmer, who volunteered for this task 12 years ago. We would not be moving without him!**).

Emmy Nsubuga, our Land Rover maintenance coordinator, has this to say:

“When I joined B.T. in 2000 what I had in mind was a steady job and a monthly pay package. What I found was not just a job but more a vocation. I have experienced all kinds of challenges and a wonderful opportunity to serve the most needy. I found that the need for clean water in the rural areas was far greater than I had imagined. B.T. specializes in reaching some of the most remote and needy communities that are off the beaten track, and for this the Land Rover is the ideal vehicle. For the last 20 years, I have driven the TDi 300 Station Wagon, which Rev. Andrew bought in the U.K. in 1992. It has twice gone round the world, withstanding the test of time. My prayer is that we keep united and focused on our calling. He who called us is faithful and will complete his purpose in us.”

Emmy Nsubuga
Land Rover Maintenance Coordinator

*(Emmy drove the Land Rover out of the bog without any help. Photo submitted by **Emmy Nsubuga**)*

What will be the lasting impacts of coronavirus on the world? By Former Trust Employee Dr. Chris Marsh

At the start of this outbreak I wondered what the impact would be on the global psyche, of a disease that genuinely affects everyone - rich and poor alike. Working as an Emergency Physician I have borne witness to the savage and indiscriminate attacks this particular Coronavirus makes upon our communities.

However, as time progresses, and I have reflected on the full impact of this virus, I realise that we are not all equally affected; rather, the virus is highlighting the pre-existing inequalities in our world. For many of us the impacts of the virus are still indirect. People here, as in many other countries, are being asked to 'stay at home, protect the NHS, save lives'. Consequently we are contending with long supermarket lines, low flour stocks and cancellation of foreign holidays.

But as an Indian doctor recently noted, "Social distancing is a privilege. It means you live in a house large enough to practice it. Hand washing is a privilege too. It means you have access to clean water and soap. Hand sanitisers are a privilege. It means you have money to buy them." For the poorest in the world these indirect impacts may be devastating. How do you self-isolate when every meal, for you and your family, is earned that day? How do you access clean drinking water when the nearest source is a mile away? And, if you become infected and you are already malnourished and fighting water borne disease, what chance have you got?

With all this in mind, how will we respond to this unprecedented global crisis? Will we become more concerned with ourselves and inward looking? Or will we recognise that, although times are tough, things are a lot worse for those less fortunate than ourselves? Now is the time, more than ever, to dig deep and reach out a helping hand to our brothers and sisters in the global community.

Dr. Chris Marsh
Former Trust Liaison Officer & Manager (2007 - 2009)

Annual Report

2019 was another year of bumper outputs despite a tight budget. **B.T. achieved 188 community sources of new and rehabilitated wells reaching 94,000 people**. Also this year we obtained the full benefit of the Hygiene and Sanitation programmes funded by USAID and ICELAND. **These reached 21,820 people with life transforming improvements in personal hygiene. In total 115,820 people directly benefited this year from B.T.'s WASH programme**. All our work is accompanied by improvements in personal hygiene and we seek to achieve 100% latrine coverage in rural Uganda. Similarly, through the PBR programme, we seek to achieve the "holy grail" of 100% functionality of all water sources. We hope to make faster progress with this, our flagship programme in 2020.

All our operations are supported by constant "testings" of the "actualité". 2,934 surveys were conducted by our Outriders, whose task is to monitor and, where possible, assist with water sources and with community hygiene.

Most excitingly, a new WASH programme was designed for Buyende in Northern Busoga, a very water stressed area, for a U.S. water charity. Although they suddenly said they could not proceed because of COVID 19, B.T. started work on time, 1st April with miraculous alternative funding.

We have high hopes for 2020 as we seek to rise to the huge challenge created by the pandemic. **Water for drinking and washing is more needed than ever!**

UK Manager Walks for Water (and finds it everywhere!)

Every day in the month of March, my partner and I walked two miles (which is often quoted as the distance many women and girls have to walk to fetch water, often from dirty ponds, in Uganda) to raise money for B.T.. Living on the edge of the Peak District National Park, we're spoilt for walking routes and even when the lockdown came in, we could walk 2 miles from our home as part of our daily exercise.

The Peak Park is also infamous for its changeable weather. On one occasion we'd set off in light clothes and half way through the walk, the wind began to howl and rain began to pour, and as the first utter of a complaint left my tongue, my partner said "at least you're not carrying a 20 litre jerry can!". Every walk we went on, we came across a freshwater stream, river or reservoir and I was reminded of the irony of my first week working for B.T., when I was evacuated for one week from my home in Whaley Bridge because we had *too much* water, which led to our high reservoir dam wall almost collapsing and flooding the village!

I'll never truly know what it's like to walk to collect water for drinking and washing every day, but I do hope that one day nobody will have to.

Would you like to do you your own Walk for Water? If so, please do get in touch at **ukhq@busogatrust.co.uk**

Lydia Slack, UK Manager

WHAT YOU CAN DO

FUNDRAISE FOR US

Get creative and help bring safe water and improved hygiene and sanitation to overlooked rural communities with no other chance of getting out of their current desperate situation. Your donations can provide:-

£3,500: New Well
£2,000: Rehabilitation of a Borehole
£1,500: Major Rehabilitation of a Shallow Well
£800: Minor Rehabilitation of a Shallow Well

**We ensure not a penny of our funding is wasted with only minimal amounts spent on fundraising thus maximising the funding used to make a direct difference to the lives of those who need it most.*

DONATE TODAY!

Become a regular – Our regular donors are invaluable. They share our vision of the world as one and share what they have with those in need. You can too by using the details below:

Online via our website –
www.busogatrust.co.uk/donate-today

Bank details for standing order –

Name:	The Busoga Trust
Sort Code:	60-07-29
Acc. No:	39810399

Cheque – payable to "The Busoga Trust" and sent to our address below.

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Registered Charity #: 288388

*(Before this water source was rehabilitated by B.T. the people in this village had to wait for hours due to its poor performance and low flow. Photo by **Juliet Ntono**)*