



Newsletter



Volume 01 | Issue 01 | REMI East Africa, Health Equity Voice

Announcement

From our dedicated team at REMI East Africa to yours, we are proud to announce the first of a planned series of Newsletters. Our hope is to become more accessible to our partners, supporters, and communities across the globe by highlighting the stories of our rural health workers, providing updates on current projects and their outcomes, and acknowledge our partners and team members who strive to improve the lives of the poorest of the poor.

Our work is dependent on your support, especially during these unprecedented times. We hope you welcome our messaging and offer to share with your networks.

To subscribe please provide your name and email address to Ryan A. Rohde at ryan@remieast africa.org.

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Our Response to COVID-19

Dear REMI East Africa Family,

I can only hope you, your families, friends and loved ones are doing well and healthy. Despite the grave impact of COVID 19 on the physical, social and economic aspects of life.

This pandemic is on the lips of almost everyone, causing loss of lives, anxiety and other effects but it is also highlighting the important need to strengthen health systems to work for all regardless of socio-economic status, geographical location, race etc. This need has been our focus from day one to ensure quality health care for all which can only be summarized as health equity.

Whilst, we are happy that this is being highlighted, we are very worried about the impact of this disease in poorest communities where we serve. And, this because some of the members of these communities have other underlying immune-depressive conditions such as malnutrition, HIV/AIDS, and Tuberculosis which worsens their prognosis. Also, the closure of schools in Uganda increases the risk of teenage pregnancy in a country already grappling with the population pressures on a weak health system. The presumed impact of this disease is enormous and its burden on top of those existing creates mental, physical, economic and social tensions.

This pandemic is a litmus test for our commitment to the poorest of the poor to ensuring they live healthy, productive and dignified lives. At REMI East Africa, we continue to be resilient, adaptive and responsive to the growing needs of the poorest communities and hope you can join us in supporting our COVID19 response which will focus on supporting rural health workers to share best practices in combatting COVID19 in low resource settings, provide linkages to mental health services for frontline caregivers, those in isolation and quarantine, support measures to address sanitation gaps at the grassroots and work with all stakeholders to reduce community transmission.

We are all in this together and acting with solidarity can reduce the impact of COVID-19 on these poorest communities enabling them to remain optimistic, healthy and resilient in these tough times.

Yours sincerely,
Rose Nakame
Executive Director

“This pandemic is a
litmus test for our
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Get to know us

With majority of Ugandans living in rural areas and over half of the population living in poverty, action needed to be taken to mobilize efforts to improve the country's healthcare system. REMI East Africa exists to increase access to quality healthcare for the most impoverished individuals and families living in rural and urban areas by advocating for increased and reliable wages for health care workers, adequate investment in rural healthcare systems, and incentives to engage and retain health care workers in rural and poor settings.

We dedicate our efforts so we may envision a world where everyone can access quality healthcare irrespective of their socioeconomic status or location.



Read what influenced our Founder and Executive Director, Rose Nakame, to commit her life's work to the poorest of the poor. Access story [here](#).

AS we begin to collect stories from frontline health care workers during this global pandemic, realities of limited personal protective equipment (PPE), lack of community education on COVID-19 messaging, spread of misinformation and a need for adequate testing, isolation, and care for suspected and confirmed cases become more evident.

We highlight two stories in this edition of our newsletter. Visit our [website](#) for updated stories and videos.

Dr. Akello Jackliñe, Obstetrician and Gynecologist at Nebbi District Hospital shares her story of frustration but gratitude for being prepared:

“I happen to be the technical team leader for COVID-19 response at my facility, due to the fact that I was a national trainer for IPC and Ebola case management. So, I held meetings and a CME about Covid with my staff and set up a response Taskforce. Interestingly we had expired PPEs of more than 5years old which we used for demonstration.

That very day we set the team, we got two suspected cases of long-distance drivers who had traveled from Kenya and one had almost all the symptoms, it was a bad experience!” [continue reading](#)

Enrolled Nurse, Samuel Oketcho at Mbula Health Center II, Tororo District, Eastern Uganda, highlights a COVID-19 case and the many challenges he and many other health workers face:

“Since its outbreak in December 2019 in China, the disease has spread to almost every country in the world. Uganda, my home country got the first case on 21st March from a 36year old Ugandan who had a trip on 17th to Dubai to buy phone screen guards for his business. On return, he presented with a fever of 37.5°c.” [continue reading](#)



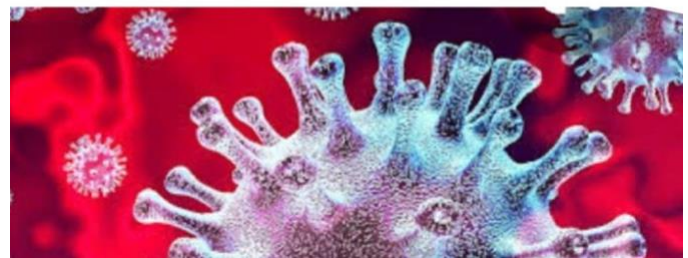
WE ARE LOOKING FOR YOUR COVID-19 STORIES

Are you a health worker on the frontlines of the Covid-19 pandemic in rural areas of Uganda, Kenya, or Tanzania? Share with us your experience, challenges and include any 3 calls to action.

Send in your story today!

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: ONGOING

submit your story to winnie@remieastafrica.org.



COVID-19 story submission applications can be found [here](#).

A Partner's Message

“Amidst the international pandemic, selfless volunteers are stepping forward to serve their communities. They are feeding hungry children, caring for the vulnerable, and supporting our healthcare workers. The Pollination Project offers rapid response funding to individual volunteers who are tackling needs related to COVID-19 in their local communities. Funding can support direct response (WASH projects, sensitization etc.), community resilience, or virtualization of existing grassroots efforts. Learn more, apply for support, or make a donation at <http://thepollinationproject.org/>.”

Sincerely,
Tara



Thank you, The Pollination Project, for demonstrating your belief in our mission and work by awarding The Health Equity Voice project an impact grant of \$5,000! Your continued support began in 2017 as our project's first funder and we are proud to earn your generosity again. Your award will help us share the voices of our rural health workers and advocate for the changes needed in our healthcare system. For that, we are truly grateful!

An Interview with Dr. Rose Nanyonga Clarke



Rose Clarke Nanyonga, PhD (Nursing) from Yale University (2015), is the current Vice Chancellor at Clarke International University; Senior Faculty Lecturer (Health Policy and Planning—Remote Learning); and a Jonas Scholar for Nursing Excellence, Yale School of Nursing. Dr. Clarke Nanyonga has a BSN from Arkansas Tech University (2002), a MSN from Baylor University (2005), a Graduate Certificate of Concentration in Global Health from the Whitney and Betty McMillan Center for International Studies at Yale University (2015).

We took the time to talk with Dr. Rose Nanyonga Clarke, a cherished advisor of ours, to share with us how the current COVID-19 pandemic has shaped her work, primarily with the Ministry of Health. This is what she had to say.

“For me the pandemic is a call to action. We have all been forced to adapt to a new normal in the way we connect with our families, the way we work, teach, learn, or conduct businesses. Sustaining a certain degree of continuity requires astute leadership and agility. Beyond that I am constantly asking—how can I be useful to my community and to the nation?”

An urgent need in any pandemic is data for decision-making, policy and resource optimization. We are currently running a survey to assess nurses and midwives' perspectives on COVID-19. Pilot data highlights urgent needs for nurses and midwives including ensuring personal safety, availability and access to PPE, mental health support, and training to enhance readiness. We are using these results to lobby and recently met the PS to discuss strategies for intensifying support for nurses and midwives on the frontline

I think that to say one has not been affected by COVID-19 would be a lie. But what we choose to do and how we choose to respond is important. My coping strategy: take time to enjoy what I still have in the here and now. Look to the future with hope. Stay purposeful.”





Your Help is Needed

Staying true to our mission and vision, REMI East Africa is working in overdrive to respond to the growing COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring our health workers are equipped with accurate information and the tools needed to protect themselves and care for their patients. Shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other hygienic items are widespread, but even more so in low-income countries such as ours – Uganda. The World Health Organization’s (WHO) recommendations to isolate, wash hands, and use PPE is not afforded to us all, especially the poorest of the poor when generations live in the same home, running water is a luxury, and our clinics and hospitals, especially rural ones, are already low on resources. This is why we at REMI East Africa are asking for your help. Please consider donating to our efforts to purchase essential medicines, PPE, soaps, and other necessary healthcare equipment to provide our health workers. Fighting this public health crisis requires a global approach and for us all to unite in our efforts – we thank you in advance for your contributions, regardless the amount.



Connect with us

rose@remieastafrica.org



COVID-19 Situation Report

Uganda currently is the 13th country with the most confirmed coronavirus cases in Africa.

Table 1: Confirmed Cases as of 25 May 2020

Global⁺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed cases: 5,304,774 Deaths: 342,029
Africa⁺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed cases: 78,343 Deaths: 2,099
Uganda[*]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed cases: 212 Deaths: 0 Active cases: 161

+source: WHO

* source: Uganda Ministry of Health

Resources

Why and how should I wear a mask?

Instructions on making your own mask

What is coronavirus and how do I stay safe?

Stay informed, myth busters

WHEN TO USE A MASK

For healthy people wear a mask **only if you are taking care of a person with suspected 2019-nCoV infection**

Wear a mask, **if you are coughing or sneezing**

Masks are effective **only when used in combination with frequent hand-cleaning with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water**

If you wear a mask then you must know how to use it and dispose of it properly



Want to have your voice heard?

If you would want to record a video of your rural frontline health worker COVID-19, experience, share a best practice or challenges and make recommendations, Feel free to do so and submit to Winnie@remieastafrica.org. Our description of frontline health workers comprises of Doctors, Nurses, midwives, laboratory technicians, health inspectors, and those making up the COVID-19 response team.

Some guidance on how to record a good video using a phone

- Avoid a harsh back light
- Hold your phone horizontally (Don't mind if it has a good or bad camera-Your message is much more important)
- Look into the camera when your speaking
- Stay close to the phone such that the message is clear
- In your uniform, introduce yourself; name, occupation, where you work (Hospital/health center) and location (District)
- Rename your video "Full name_COVID-19_Story"

All stories are published here <http://remieastafrica.org/covid19/>