

HIGH FIVE CLUB

changing lives, £5 at a time

Pre-School for The Deaf, Uganda

We are proud this month to be contributing towards the provision of pre-school education for some of Africa's most disadvantaged and vulnerable children – children in Uganda who are profoundly Deaf – giving them a fairer start in life and a chance to enjoy an education.

Background



Being Deaf can be lonely, frustrating and difficult at the best of times because of the communication barriers faced every day in a hearing world. But for a Ugandan Deaf child these issues are further compounded by extreme poverty and marginalisation. Most Ugandan families with a Deaf child do not have the resources to learn sign language and so their child grows up without the skills to communicate effectively. These children then become completely isolated and dependent on their family, with little prospects for

the future. Because of this dependency and an inability to contribute financially to the household, these children are often seen by the communities in which they live as inferior, and hence are unwanted and often hidden away. Some are even not permitted to stay in the family home and are kept instead with the family's livestock outside, being fed on livestock feed and food scraps, with little human contact.

High Five Club Support

Joining forces with the UK charity Sign Health (www.signhealth.co.uk), the Woodford Foundation (www.woodfordfoundation.org.uk) and the already established, government supported Uganda School for the Deaf, the High Five Club is this month contributing towards the establishment of a **specialist pre-school for Deaf children** – the first of its kind in Uganda.



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This early intervention will help young and vulnerable Deaf children in Uganda to gain the necessary communication skills to access mainstream schools for Deaf children in Kampala and surrounding districts, hence increasing their chances of eventually becoming economically independent adults. It also aims to help reduce the stigma and isolation associated with deafness among families and the wider community and to increase access to medical assessment and therapy for Deaf children.

The pre-school is being constructed and equipped alongside the existing Uganda School for the Deaf and is due

to open late Spring / early Summer. It will undoubtedly make a big difference to the learning capabilities of the children that are fortunate to attend. Not only will the new pre-school prepare the children for primary education, but it aims to open up a whole new world of communication for them through the acquisition of basic signing skills.

It is hence vital that the pre-school has fully trained teachers with the skills necessary to teach young Deaf children. The High Five Club is privileged to be funding the delivery of a training programme in early childhood care for Deaf children for the newly recruited teachers and class assistants. The cost of this training programme is just £570 which is incredible value for money and will really change lives.

In the summer we look forward to sending you an update on progress with the development of the pre-school, along with photos of the teachers being trained and the children at their new school.



For further information contact Dr Cheryl Mvula on Cheryl@highfiveclub.co.uk