

Report on Local Partner support to ‘St James by the Park’, Southampton
The testimony of the love gift to each of the Local Partner’s families

Report compiled by Karobia Njogu, Cross-Cultural Mission Manager, CMS-Africa
July 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ at *St James by the Park*, Southampton

Greetings and grace and peace be with you in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank you so much for your generous gift to our Local Partners. Due to Paul Thaxter’s CMS role in Africa and his strong engagement with CMS-Africa, it was thought best to keep anonymous this love gift to our Local Partners. We hope you can appreciate this. Here is an update on the love gift you made to our Local Partners, which enabled them to make a huge difference in the lives of people in their neighbourhoods and communities in the midst of a global crisis.

Enter the covid-19 crisis/pandemic

Shortly after the year 2020 begun, the issue of coronavirus became a global crisis. Of course, Africa’s countries were not left unscathed, albeit on a much-reduced scale compared to the damage to human life in terms of deaths and infections as was seen in particularly parts of Asia, America and Europe. Governments responded by implementing stringent measures to curb spread of infections and resulting deaths and possible overwhelming of health care systems and institutions. Some of the actions taken included instituting curfews to limit social interactions, locking down some areas, and restricting both local and international travel.

As a result, communities that were already vulnerable were rendered even more so, with churches closed and economic activities severely curtailed. Local Partners as members of the communities were also affected- they love and work in the same communities.

The Gift from St James by the Park Southampton

In June, you heard about the ministry of Local Partners, and how they were continuing to serve and persist in ministry, dutifully and faithfully according to the call of Jesus in their lives. In particular, the Local Partners as mission leaders in their respective communities were having to face the burden of many community needs, apart from managing the pressures on their own families.

You responded generously to a one-off appeal for these selfless and committed people in mission by giving a love gift to each of these Local Partner families. This love gift in the form of a cash amount was sent to the CMS-Africa International Office which then sent the funds to each of the Local Partners. The cash gift was definitely a complete surprise and the Local Partners were effusive in their gratitude to God who sees all things and is aware of each hair on the head of His Children.

Testimonies from the Local Partners



“Thank you very much brother Karobia for the great encouragement for the ministry that we are doing. Thank you also for the great support for the family. I will report to you as soon as I am done with the project. Be blessed”.

Michael Aban, South Sudan.



“Thank you for the 2 amounts of financial support. It is miracle for myself. God bless you and the donor. I will use the money according to aim. Thanks, and God bless you”.

Rev. Nkusi Josias, Rwanda

"I am very thankful for the gift to my family and appreciate it very much. May God bless the giver abundantly."

Joseph Noel, South Sudan



“I am very thankful for God's faithful for miraculous provision, and the family we are thankful to those who have given this gift, please send our gratitude to them! Thank you! About the other money, will work on it and give the report! I know getting some receipts will be a challenge and some may not have phones. So will try my best to get information needed for report!”.

Paul Kibona, Tanzania



“Let me extend my gratitude to the organization/person who donated £350 to my family I'm really greatly appreciated! Tell them I am very happy for the support. From now onwards, I would be able to buy enough masks for protection from Coronavirus; it was my great challenges in the field. Here I bought it today and tomorrow it got expired and has consumed my little funds I have plus traveling to local churches for visit and give them awareness about Coronavirus. At the same time, my family will be able to buy enough food and even me here in South Sudan my situation will be reduced few months to come”.

Rev. Capt. Paul Lueth, South Sudan



“Thank you so much for your commitment. I'm blessed to have that support of 350 Pounds for my family. May Almighty God bless who ever who have donated that funds. I will give you the report of minor proposal accordingly after activity been done dear”.

Regina Lueth, South Sudan (on maternity leave in Kenya)



“Thank you for this communication and for the support sent for my personal support and my community relief. I am humbled by the kind generosity extended to us in these trying times. Send our sincere gratitude to whoever provided and supported this cause”.

Judith Murungi, Uganda

“Praise God for this good news! Thanks very much for the information you sent and we also give word of thanks to God and to the person who blessed us”.

Sam Malish, South Sudan (exiled in northern Uganda)



“As you are aware, COVID-19 has affected every sector of our society since March when the virus was discovered in Kenya. From my workplace everything was well until we had to close down due to the disease. From thence since my department does community service, I was told to proceed for two months leave without pay. This was to last until beginning of June, but since the disease has not been contained, the unpaid leave has been extended to the end of September.

On the other hand, since the partial lock-down began, the church was closed thereby making it difficult to get any little allowance that could have cushioned me a bit. So when you shared that my family had been blessed with a grant of £ 350, my heart was filled with gratitude for God who had remembered me. Allow me to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you, CMS Africa and our partners for this kind gesture towards my family. This will go a long way in buying for us the things my family lacked but seriously needed”.

Rev. Meshack Okumu, Kenya

How was it for CMS Africa to disburse such funds to your LPs?

For CMS-Africa, it was very humbling to see the Local Partners being so blessed and encouraged by this obvious gesture of Christian love and charity. While it was clear that the funds had not come from CMS-Africa but from Christians who were convicted to give, CMS-Africa felt honoured by God that He could provide for its People in Mission so generously.

It was confirming what CMS-Africa believes about mission: that mission belongs to God and He will sustain His mission. Hebrews 1:3 says that "...He sustains everything by the mighty power of His command." (NLT). The Local Partners themselves were being provided for by God in unexpected ways, which helps keep their eyes on Jesus Christ, who called them to His work.

The Bible is replete with examples and stories of God meeting the needs of His People in miraculous and surprising ways. But in each case, the provision was timely, apt and what was exactly needed. This is the same case in the provision of the love gift from the Christians and church that gave in this instance.

What has this achieved for CMS-Africa as an internal community in mission?

- It has helped remind us that we are members of the Body of Christ, whereby one part sees the need in another part and responds generously (according to ability, in faith).
- It has confirmed that mission is a partnership and collaboration and each party contribute their wherewithal according to the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- It has strengthened the commitment of each Local Partner to the call that God has placed on the individually. It has thus strengthened the relationship of the Local Partners with CMS-Africa.

In conclusion, CMS-Africa is very grateful for the kind, considerate and generous gesture to the Local Partners, core people in mission of CMS-Africa. May God add to, and in every way, bless you, the givers of this gift. May each of you and your local faith community, be refreshed as indeed you have refreshed the families of the CMS-Africa Local Partners.

Your generous gift has also enabled each Local Partner to serve in their local community to meet the needs of vulnerable people. I will update you on the use of that part of the gift in a few weeks when the reports have come in.

Shalom!

Karobia Njogu
4th August 2020.

APPENDIX

Background to the Local Partner Programme

A Local Partner is a mission leader who based in his indigenous context and involved in making disciples, transformation of communities and developing pioneer leadership.

We have 17 Local Partners, (3 sisters and 14 brothers in Christ), spread across diverse communities in 8 African countries. They serve for a term of three years, a tenure that can be renewed once.

What do Local Partners do?

They serve with in close collaboration with churches in Africa, either as clergy or priests, pastors, or run various community transformation initiatives. The ministries are in various aspects of human and community life, including:

- evangelism and discipleship,
- rehabilitation of homeless children,
- peace, reconciliation efforts in conflict zones,
- economic development efforts like Business as Mission,
- environmental stewardship projects like biogas programmes,
- natural medicine, etc.

The Programme offers each Local Partner a support network for:

- encouragement and fellowship,
- prayer and intercession,
- training and capacity building; and,
- a platform for resource mobilisation, including provision of an annual grant; and,
- enhances their ministry capacity by connecting them with other people in mission, agencies, and programmes to use in their work of community transformation.

The LP Programme is a major strategy for CMS-Africa's outreach to churches and communities in Africa and beyond with its wholistic transformational training programmes. Because of their connection with the local churches and proximity to communities, the LPs are an invaluable plan for the implementation of these programmes.