

BUCKNER KENYA TODAY

The magazine of Buckner Kenya

4TH EDITION



Hope shines here.®



BUCKNER® KENYA

Hope shines here.®

Mission

To transform the lives of vulnerable children and build strong families through Christ-centered values.

Vision

Become a global ministry maximizing resources and leadership to serve vulnerable children and families.

Core values

Our core values define our personality and provide clarity about how we engage with others.

We are:

Christ Like: meaning, we're mission driven, preferring to give the glory of service to someone else and exhibiting the qualities of self-sacrifice and forgiveness.

We have a **Servant Spirit** we are humble, we treat others with respect and put them first.

We're **Passion-Driven**, dedicated to the mission and purpose of Buckner and striving to carry out that mission through perseverance, reliability and hard work.

LEADERSHIP

BUCKNER KENYA E.C.D
Mr. Dickson Masindano

DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS
Mrs. Rosemary Wasilwa

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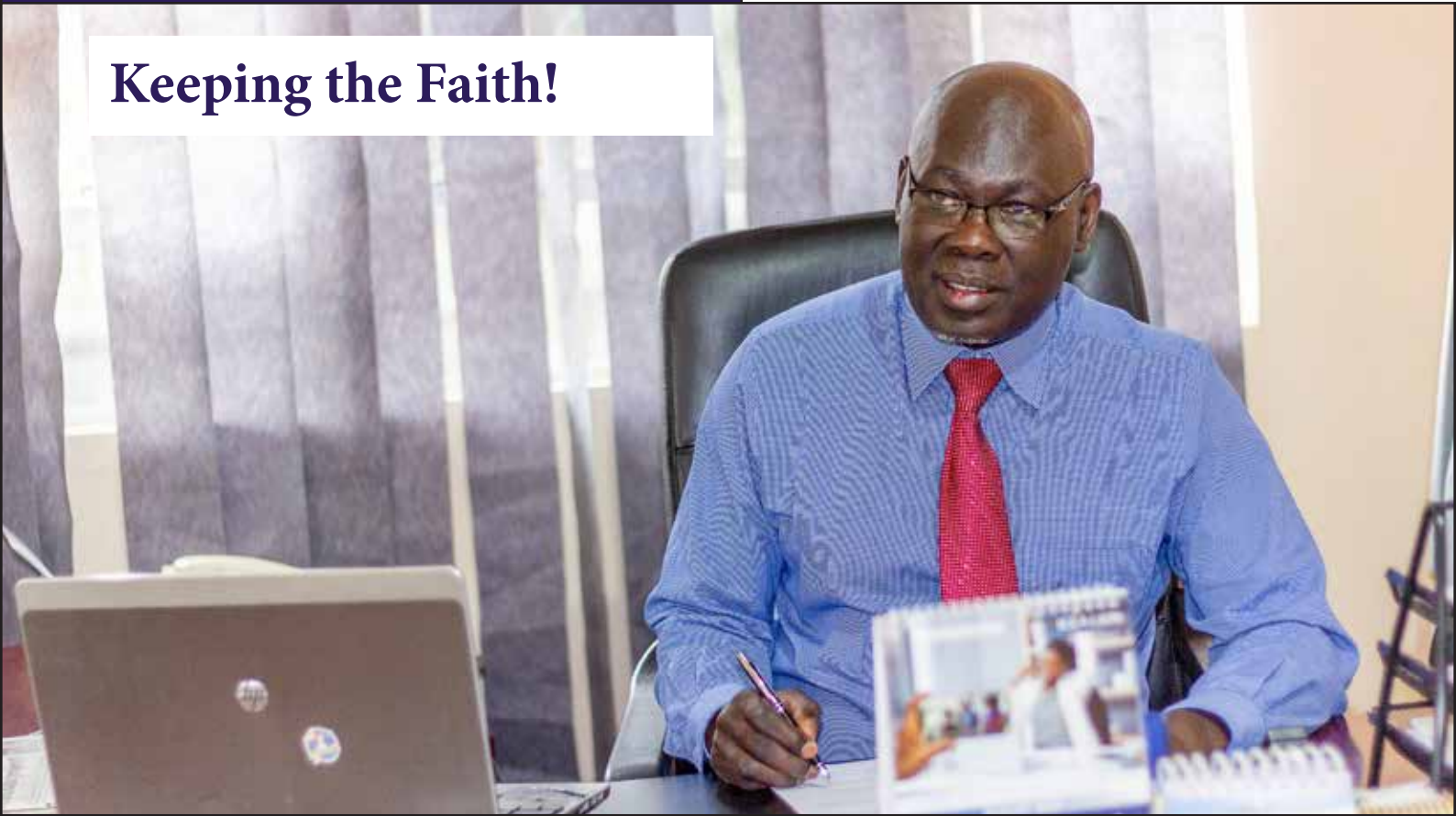
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Keeping the Faith!



Extraordinary times call for extraordinary leadership to stay the course, it has taken God's hand to navigate the new normal since the advent of COVID-19. It has been an opportunity to be more aware and remains close to our maker like never before. We have always prayed to our God for safety and many other issues in our life's but COVID-19 ushered in new prayer practices and frequency for many of us who are Jesus Christ-followers.

The Buckner Kenya leadership has remained steadfast and obedient in the service to him. We have marked and witnessed many milestones during this period. Our God has granted us the grace to stay the course and given us the strength to maintain the faith amidst everything. It has not been easy to be an encouragement and maintain that spirit in times like this, amongst ourselves and those we serve.

At the leadership level we have learned and indeed faced a difficult time to maintain that humility and patience when everything seems to change every day. At times like this, we are so grateful and thankful to our Lord in heaven forever being faithful to his promises particularly for those who take shelter under his wings.

He has granted us not just wisdom to forge ahead as a team is shining hope in our communities but also continued to provide the necessary resources

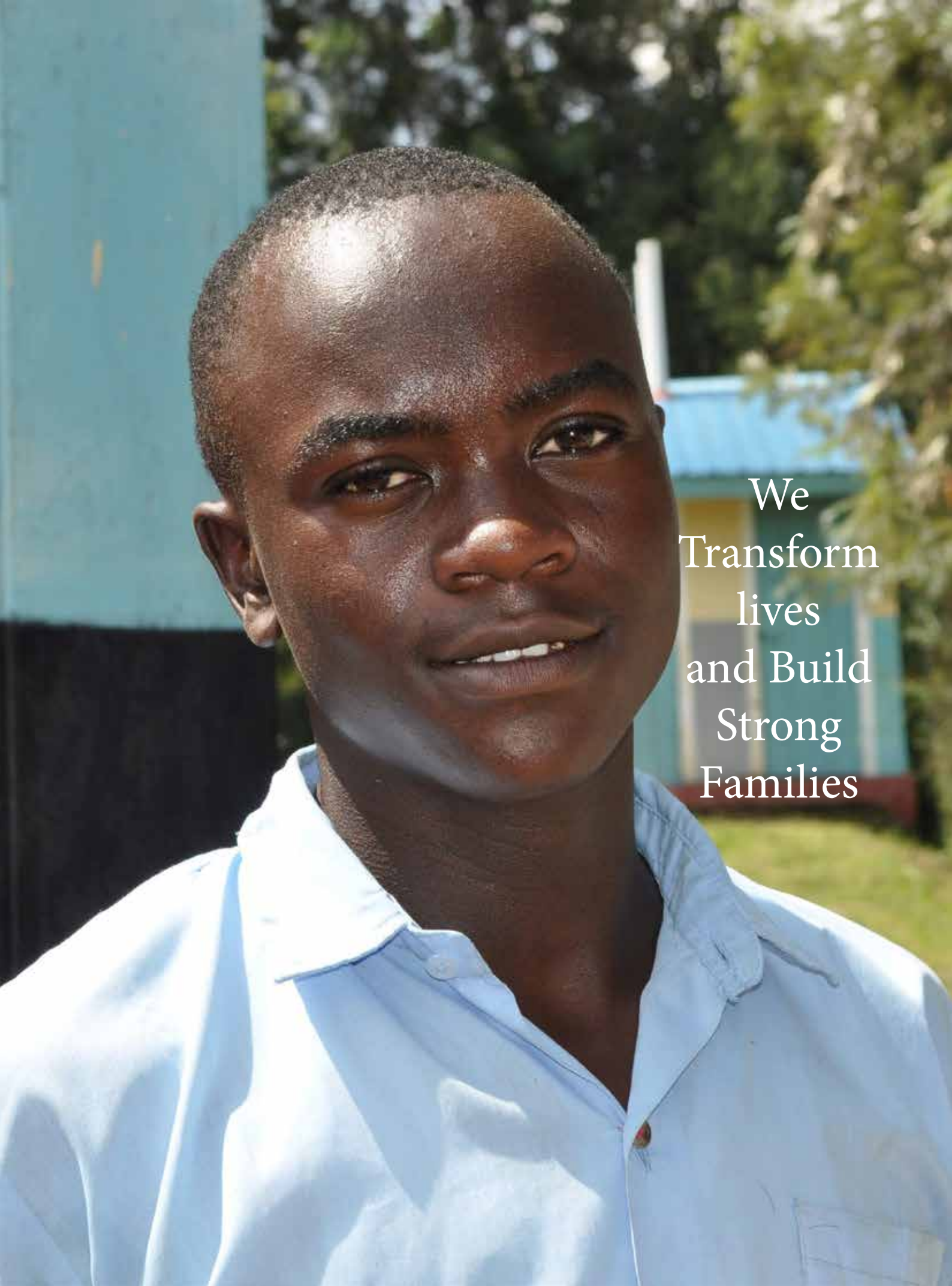
needed to serve his people. We will forever be grateful to all individuals and corporations who managed to offer their resources at such a time.

Our Buckner international humanitarian team has been amazing in the way they have maintained the supply of food coming even when we thought it wouldn't happen. Thank you all for the service.

We have not only been able to remain in touch with all our clients offering psychosocial support during such a time but we have also been able to serve them with food and even direct MPesa cash transfers to all our clients to cushion them against the adversity of COVID -19.

Much credit to our frontline staff who every day somehow manage to find a way to save a soul from starvation. You have always acted quickly and locally in your jurisdiction in all circumstances. We are glad that you have remained creative in your approach, and somehow continued to remain relevant in our communities even today. It's a big faith to continue serving even when physical contact is no longer possible.

God Bless Buckner!



We
Transform
lives
and Build
Strong
Families

®
Hope Shines Here.

Humanity during the pandemic

COVID-19 is a virus that reared its ugly head, at a time when the globe was ushering in a new decade. The increasing number of infected patients and deaths spread like wildfire. Intensive Care Units in some countries are flooding faster than we could phantom. Kenya has been hit hard too and the exponential curve does not look good at all.

At the time of working on this magazine, the country had reported more than 10,000 confirmed positive cases, by the time the magazine is published, the figures would probably have quintupled.

The omnipresent, anti-social virus that caught us unaware, puzzled lives and livelihoods, called for unprecedented responses to a reality that grew from an epidemic to a pandemic.

As Kenya's economy was dwindling, several families faced seismic shocks as scientists dug into their arsenal in search of vaccines. Front-line workers are the real heroes of these virulent times, trying their level best to ensure that the disabled, vulnerable, and elderly are safe.

Desperate times call for desperate measures, and we will experience tremendous societal switch, during and after we surface on the other side of the tunnel in the corona conundrum.

The fourth edition of Buckner Kenya Today illuminates the effort put in place by family coaches, teachers, medics, and other members of staff, to shine hope in families that suffered under the yoke of the virus.

This magazine sheds more light on the measures taken by teachers to prepare learners for their national examination, despite the pandemic, the effects of COVID-19 across the globe, and how the virus that led to the loss of lives, jobs, and economic bleeding can be prevented.

Buckner Kenya mourns with our neighboring countries Tanzania and Burundi for the loss of their presidents, John Magufuli and Pierre Nkurunziza, who succumbed to the virus.

We are grateful to everyone that was inspired to inspire the vulnerable. God bless Buckner Kenya. Stay safe and enjoy reading this special edition.



Bertha Lutome -Communications
Coordinator



Fridah Aura- Senior Manager
Business Initiative and Empowerment

Family Hope Centres Transforming Lives during the COVID-19 Pandemic

“A friend loves at all times and a brother is born for a time of adversity- Proverbs” (17:17)

COVID-19 presented many challenges, hardships, and pain both locally and globally. The foregoing verse reminds us that God is in our world and more so in unusual moments of fear, anxiety, and hopelessness; and He has tied us together by the codes of His Love and faithfulness.

At the point when our families and communities were hurting and heartbroken, looking for solutions in life amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, Buckner Kenya Family Hope Centres, passionately raised to the occasion and opened its doors of service to the heartbroken, the hungry, and those experiencing loss.

Shifting most of the services online but still building a community of love and brotherhood in the moment of adversity. In small but very impactful ways, and through long-term partnership and support from Buckner International, Buckner Kenya received donations in terms of food (manna packs), and financial support.

On average, we connected with over 10,000 children and families from Family Hope Centres and 1,000 community members since the outbreak of the virus in March 2020 to date. It was an incredible opportunity to help hungry families access food, provide school supplies for school-going children, masks, hand sanitizers and offer psychosocial support at a time when social interaction was limited due to fear of exposure to the virus.

And so, I remember one time, through a phone conversation a member of the community commented after losing her brother to COVID-19 “I am grieving the loss of my brother not only because he is dead but more so for the fact that I could not visit him on his sickbed to share the last moments, and worse still we could not give him a decent send-off as a family due to COVID-19 restrictions, he was buried by public health officers instead of family members.....”

Slowly the lady broke into tears. A few minutes later she picked up the conversation again and added “I am grateful to God for bringing a family of friends into my life through Buckner, you all have been like an angel sent by God for a time like this”.



Bringing hope in the life of this lady through a phone call conversation and encouraging her in a moment when she needed somebody to lean on. Many families have had increased stress, anxiety, low morale, less energy, relationship problems within families as a result of hard economic times and other psychological issues brought about by the impact of COVID.

It became apparent that these people needed counseling and psychosocial support, Buckner Kenya’s team of family coaches came in handy in offering this kind of service.

These families have lived to see another day with a lot of hope and aestheticism. They were also encouraged to participate in group table banking initiatives as the COVID-19 season eased, sensitizing families on saving through the Buckner Kenya SACCO despite the hard economic times.

Providing knowledge and information on COVID-19 and how to stay safe by keeping social distance, washing hands, and wearing masks. These best practices have gone a long way in creating awareness and helping communities adapt to the new normal. Above all, shining hope in their lives. Indeed, Hope Shines

Rosemary Wasilwa,
Director of Programs, Buckner Kenya

COVID-19 Pandemic Portal

Indian author Arundhati Roy describes a pandemic as a situation that forces human beings to break with the past and phantom their world fresh. This is exactly what happened when the first CoronaVirus positive case was reported in one of the world's most industrious nations, China.

The virus spread at a supersonic speed and left more than 1,800 deaths and 70,000 individuals fighting for their lives in the Intensive Care Units (ICU) of different hospitals, within the first 40 days of the epidemic.

A situation that prompted China to construct a 645,000 square-foot hospital, equipped with 1,000 beds, isolation wards, and 30 ICUs, in just 10 days. Italy, Spain, and the United States were the hardest hit by the novel virus, with the elderly and those with chronic illness being at high risk. The respective countries experienced an increased death toll in 24 hours, leading to a gradual shift from the first to the second wave of the virus.

COVID-19 situation in Africa

Africa wasn't left out either, although the virus spread more slowly on the continent than any other. The continent reported 47,118 positive cases and 1,843 deaths as of May 2020 and as several countries took preventive measures to stop the spread of the virus, Tanzania believed that the power of prayer protected them from contracting the virus, an ironical belief that led to the loss of lives.

The COVID-19 situation in Kenya brought a twist into the lives of many. The government made it mandatory for everyone to wear facemasks, reduced the number of people attending events to 15, enacted cessation of movement in and out of COVID-19 red zones, brought into place curfew, advised people to work from home, closed churches, schools, stadiums

and recreational centers.

International tourists were also blocked from visiting the country, with those landing in the country forced to self-quarantine for 14 days. The skyrocketing cases of COVID-19 patients in the country led to the opening of Kenyatta University Referral Hospital, to act as the largest isolation center in the country.

Myths and Misconceptions about COVID-19

Some of the myths that revolved due to the pandemic include;

- High consumption of garlic and ginger help prevent and cure COVID-19
- Drinking disinfectants or bleach kills the virus
- COVID-19 cannot affect Africans and the young since they have a stronger immune system
- Drinking black tea without sugar cures COVID-19

The search for a vaccine led scientists and researchers from across the globe to spend sleepless nights in the laboratory trying to look for a vaccine for an unknown virus. Madagascar came up with an organic herbal drink derived from Artemisia, a plant with proven anti-malarial properties. The herb is believed to cure the virus within 10 days.

However, Africa's Center for Disease Control (CDC) did not approve the administration of the herb. However, clinical trials were conducted in different countries, before the official administration of the Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson's, and Astra-Zeneca vaccines.

COVID-19 PREVENTIVE MEASURES



Wear facemasks properly



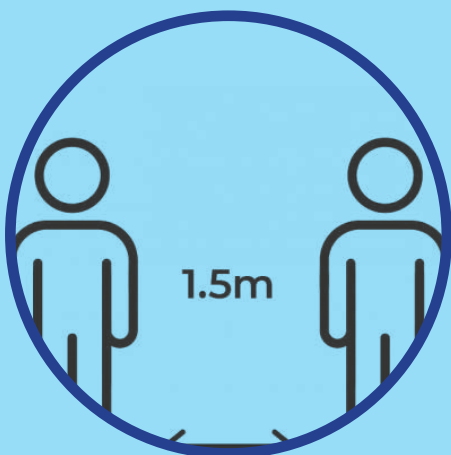
Wash hands with soap and running water



Cough & sneeze on a flexed elbow



Avoid touching your nose, mouth and eyes



Maintain social distancing



Avoid shaking hands

Maintaining a healthy diet during the COVID-19 pandemic



Research conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) reveals that consumption of a well-balanced diet during the pandemic plays a crucial role in boosting our immune system.

“Good nutrition is crucial for our health, particularly in times when the immune system might need to fight back. It is also important for everyone to remain physically active, for optimal health,” WHO

It is also recommended that people should consume plenty of vegetables, fruits, sesame, peanuts, whole grains, and low-fat dairy sources. Avoid sugary drinks and processed foods with high calories and salt besides staying hydrated.

How the coronavirus gets into the body

Coronavirus gets into the body via contact through the nose, mouth, or eyes, it then flows into the healthy cells and creates multiple virus particles which inactivate the cells and make them dormant.

The body tries to fight the infection in vain, hence causing inflammation, making it easy for the virus to duplicate.

The virus makes its way down to the lungs to become inflamed, hence causing pneumonia. Fluid leakage into tiny air sacs in the lungs can result in Adult Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS) which makes it difficult for the lung to move oxygen from the air in the lungs to the bloodstream.

Common symptoms of COVID-19

Fever, dry cough, tiredness, aches and pains, sore throat, diarrhea, conjunctivitis, headache, loss of taste or smell, a rash on the skin, or discoloration of fingers or toes, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, chest pain or pressure and loss of speech or movement.

COVID-19 prevention measures

Prevention is better than cure, therefore, the spread of the virus can be combated through maintaining social distance, washing hands regularly with soap and running water for not less than 20 seconds, and proper wearing of facemask especially in public places.

Shinning hope in Mulumia's Life



Above: Mulumia's family receiving aid in Busia

Life took a different twist for Mulumia just like most Kenyans after the confirmation of the first COVID-19 case in the country in March 2020.

Those living below the poverty line had hot nails placed on fresh wounds after the government made it compulsory for everyone to wear face masks when visiting public places, an essential need and mandatory requirement that left many people contemplating between placing food on the table and purchasing a facemask which was more than a dollar then.

The innovativeness and creativity of Buckner Kenya's tech department came up with reusable face masks made at Nairobi Family Hope Centre and distributed among Buckner programs. The mass production of facemasks granted Family coaching clients a chance to build their skills and fend for their families.

"The gap between the rich and the poor in the country is big, therefore, those living below the poverty line could not afford a facemask. Buckner Kenya is here to protect the vulnerable by providing them

with food, facemasks, hand washing detergents as well as buckets, during the pandemic," said Dickson Masindano, Executive Country Director, Buckner Kenya.

Mulumia Okumu, a 72-year-old resident of Busia county, solely depended on peasant farming to make ends meet. However, life took a different twist following the government's move to enact curfew between 4:00 am and 9:00 pm.

A situation that had limited his movement and sale of his produce, outside his jurisdiction.

"The COVID-19 pandemic made life very difficult for my family. Most of them depended on me, yet I had nothing to offer. My children were re-trenched, hence forcing us to take a meal a day or even sleep on an empty stomach," said Mulumia.

Mulumia's family is now a happier lot having received facemasks that enable them to sell milk to their neighbors without the fear of contracting the virus.

Offering psychosocial support to families suffering under the yoke of COVID-19



Above: Families receiving food at Bungoma FHC

The sudden change in trends of life has drastically affected the lives of many, as everyone struggles to adjust to the new normal. Kenya has experienced an increased number of domestic violence cases, with the majority of the affected families, blaming it on the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic that has left many people depressed.

Buckner Kenya continued to provide counseling to families suffering from the yoke of the virus. Case managers provided the affected families with skills for economic independence and granted them room for social participation.

The programs shine hope in the lives of thousands of people, the young, old, ladies, and gentlemen. All of them have been offered humanitarian aid, to ensure they lived better lives, during the pandemic.

They secured existential needs to ensure they acquire good health, hygiene, nutrition, and shelter, as well as take them through stress management skills.

Imelda Simiyu is a 25-year-old resident of Bungoma county. The mother of seven suffered depression for the better part of her life, with getting married at an early age being the foundation of her entangling state. The choking poverty that sought 'ref-

uge' at their homestead prompted her to get married to several people while looking for a soft landing.

Research conducted by UN-WOMEN indicates that 45% of women and girls aged between 15- 49 have been victims of domestic violence, yet this is still one of the most under-recognized pandemics of our time, with even less consideration given to how it affects the children who witness or suffer through it.

For Imelda and her children, the effect was their separation at that critical stage when children

needed their mother the most. Her interaction with Buckner Bungoma Family Hope Centre revealed light at the end of the tunnel.

She went through several counseling sessions that have enabled her to make lemonades from lemons.

"Life was tough for me, before my interaction with Buckner Kenya. Lack of a stable source of income led me into a depression since I was the sole breadwinner of my family. I am grateful to Buckner Kenya for walking with me through my journey to success. I have developed a tough skin and can comfortably handle what I thought was impossible," said Imelda.

"Buckner Bungoma FHC continues to cultivate quality relationships with communities as we represent the image of Christ in modeling hope within Bungoma County." Said Pamela, a case manager at the program.

Adding, "We have and continue to support vulnerable families through humanitarian aid, a bridge through which solid relations have been founded and cemented as we pursue potential family coaching clients in our quest to transform lives,"

Extending a helping hand

More than 46 families from Hututu village in Cherangany Subcounty received manna packs and face masks from Buckner Cherangany Family Hope Centre, amid the (COVID-19) pandemic.

The one-day event saw more than 406 packets of manna packs and over 100 facemasks distributed to their family coaching and Kinship care clients, besides the residents of Hututu village and the neighboring community.

Buckner Kenya's ECD Mr. Mashindano acknowledges the move taken by family coaches to shine hope in the lives of many, especially during this time, when the country's economy is dwindling.

"Our family coaches are more than ready to offer food to the vulnerable in the communities that we serve and even outside. We understand that most people barely survive on a dollar a day and depend on casual labor for a living, but have now been disrupted by the pandemic that has led to the closure of open-air markets," said Masindano.

He also encouraged members of the community to adhere to the COVID-19 protocols. Jackline Muindi, a 67-year-old mother of nine and grandmother of four, visited Buckner Cherangany FHC in dire need of food for her family. She spent most nights on an empty stomach, since smoke emerged from her small, round, grass-thatched kitchen, once in a blue moon.

"I am very grateful to Buckner Kenya for giving me food. I didn't know what my children would have for dinner today since I don't have money to place food on the table. We ate porridge yesterday and have not taken any other meal. My grandchildren have become emaciated but I am glad that this meal will put a smile on their faces. May God Bless Buckner Kenya," said Jackline



Above:Families receiving food from the DOP

Judith Nafula, an FHC client from the program who depends on small-scale farming to fend for her family was left in a dilemma following the restriction of movement between 7:00 pm- 4:00 am. She hawked her farm produce in the community, until late in the night, until the routine was disrupted and all she did was to watch her crops rot in the garden, due to restrictive measures.

"Saying thank you is not enough for me to show my gratitude to Buckner Kenya for the support. I will continue praying for its leaders, donors, and members of staff to continue transforming the lives of many, globally. I will always share the good deeds that Buckner has done for me wherever I go," said Judith.

Most residents of Trans Nzoia County depend on maize farming, with a handful majoring on dairy and horticultural farming.

Stella Nanjala's Story of Hope



Stella Nanjala is a 32-year-old resident of Namawanga village, Bungoma West sub-county in Bungoma County. She is married and has been blessed with three children. Nanjala's education came to an end after she completed her primary school.

Her parents could not afford school fees for her Secondary school education, a situation that prompted her to seek refuge in marriage. In a County that contributes the highest to the national poverty index, the COVID-19 has drastically affected this already struggling family.

Nanjala and her husband Isaac earn peanuts from casual labor, hence making it hard for them to fend for their family.

"Getting a job is tough for me since most people who offered me casual jobs have been laid off. Businesses are incurring losses, and people are getting retrenched. I am also scared of looking for jobs from areas that are outside my neighborhood, for fear of contracting the virus and spreading it to my family members. I am calling upon well-wishers to extend a helping hand," said Stella.

Stella's husband, who works as a Boda Boda operator, has experienced the same challenges. The pandemic struck the motorbike taxi business. Few clients requested their services for fear of contracting the virus since social distancing was not observed.

This meant that the family could no longer afford three meals a day, hence relying on well-wishers for survival.

The local administration through the village elder referred Stella to Buckner Bungoma Family Hope Centre for support. Family coaches took Stella through psychosocial support and encouraged her on alternative job opportunities that she can create, amidst the pandemic, to help sustain her family.

Stella also received a box of manna packs, hand washing soap, and face masks to help her fight the challenges COVID-19 had brought to her life. Stella has come to terms with the changes that happened in her life due to the effects of the coronavirus. She decided to fully concentrate on farming instead of seeking casual jobs from her neighbors. She believes that she will achieve the best and also sell groceries to her neighbors.

The Dawning Reality of COVID-19 Pandemic



Tears, sad faces, and malnourished bodies welcomed us to Jeniffer Lukaye's house in Nairobi's Dandora slum. She is a woman in distress, following the situation that grew dramatically from an epidemic to a pandemic, rendering her jobless, hopeless, and frustrated.

Lack of adequate food for the family sounds like a luxury, compared to spending the night and day on an empty stomach, due to the COVID-19 pandemic that brought the country and the world at large on their knees.

The closure of learning institutions by the government left many in a dilemma. She now has nine mouths to feed, despite living from hand to mouth, before the pandemic. Two of her children were also rendered jobless, and her husband who worked as a casual laborer to make ends meet could barely work due to strict measures on social distancing that was instilled by the government.

"I am a woman in distress. This pandemic has made me lose hope and trust in everything, including God. I am hopeless. I moved from living from hand to mouth to spending most of my days on an empty stomach. My grandchildren are malnourished since they don't eat a balanced diet," said Jenifer.

Not knowing any other best way to express

their feelings, the children are always in tears demanding food, a rare commodity in the homestead. On a lucky day, they could afford two meals a day, and it does not matter whether they adhere to nutritional value or not; of importance was to ease the discomfort hunger pangs.

She could no longer seek help from relatives since movement was restricted, and each day presented its challenges. Running out of options, Jennifer made a call to the Nairobi Family Hope Centre, seeking help in dire need of food. Bearing in mind the hard economic times, the case manager was able to respond immediately, offering food to the family.

Jennifer received three packets of manna packs, three packets of maize flour, and two packages of green grams as a short-term solution to the prevailing circumstance.

Members of her family could not hold the tears of joy that rolled down their cheeks, upon the foods received. Her grandchildren were overwhelmed by the fact that they could eventually have food, not just for the day, but weeks to come.

Family Hope Centres Model

ELEVATE
Family coaching
Counselling
Economic Strengthening

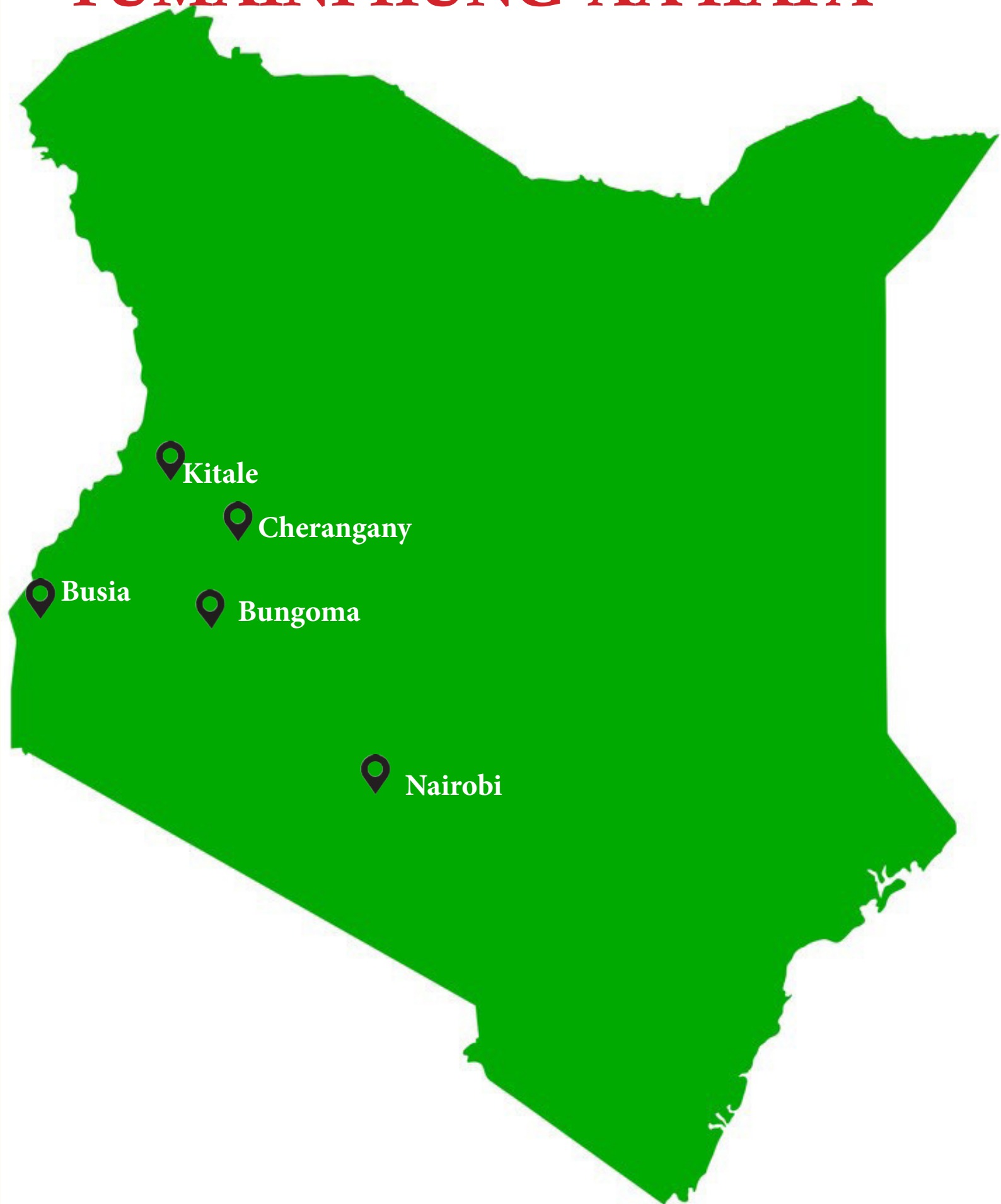


EQUIP
Parent education
Economic empowerment
Child and youth development
Spiritual development



ENGAGE
Family Assistance
Community events

TUMAINI HUNG'AA HAPA



Kitale

Cherangany

Busia

Bungoma

Nairobi

Standing with the Hopeless During Tough Times

Imagine life when cessation of movement in and out of several parts of the country is the order of the day. Life when we all have to get home before curfew hours, life when we all have to wear facemasks and maintain social distance when visiting public places, and life when we all cannot hug our loved ones, during tough economic times.

Yes, this is the life that most people adjusted to, the new normal! The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic brought about several changes in the lives of many people, residing in different parts of the globe.

Thousands have lost their livelihood, and are surviving on a shoestring budget. The majority of them cannot afford a meal a day, hence spending their nights on an empty stomach. Buckner Kenya, through its programs situated in different parts of the country, offered humanitarian aid to COVID-19 hard-hit families, through the food distribution exercise that saw thousands of families receive maize, maize flour, beans, manna packs, and seeds, to keep them going, during the tough times.

Justine Nanjala, a resident of TransNzoia County, can comfortably put a smile on her face, thanks to the food distribution exercise at Buckner Kitale Family Hope Centre.

The mother of five was struggling to sustain the family since the announcement of the first COVID-19 positive case in the country, which rendered her jobless by default.

“I am very grateful to Buckner Kenya for their continued support during these tough times. They have changed my way of thinking and given me a reason to live again. The food distribution exercise offered to my family has played a big role in ensuring that we eat three meals a day and lead a healthy life,” said Justine.

Phanice Simuyu, the case manager at Buckner Kitale Family Hope Centre-Seed of Hope, acknowledges the fact that most people residing in TransNzoia



county live below the poverty line and therefore, the pandemic has rendered most of them hopeless and depressed, even though TransNzoia county is the food basket of Kenya.

“The move by Buckner Kenya to offer food to most of our clients shined hope in the lives of many vulnerable people in TransNzoia county. More than 1000 individuals received maize and beans monthly, while more than 50 children benefitted from the education fund, since April 2020” Said Phanice, adding, “We thank God that most of these families no longer go to bed on hungry,”

Going Above and Beyond to Boost Food Security during the Pandemic

Going Above and Beyond to Boost Food Security during the Pandemic Agriculture is the backbone of Kenya's economy, with approximately 75% of Kenyans in the rural set-up, relying fully on agriculture as their source of income.

Buckner Kenya revamps lives and cement families by empowering vulnerable families to adopt the practice of modern technology in farming for sustainability.

A broad smile covers Jenifer Khavere's face, as she ploughs her farm and feeds chicken in Liyavo village, Kitale town. A smile that she could not afford two years ago, before the inception of Buckner Kenya, through Buckner Kitale Family Hope Centre- Seed of Hope.

Jennifer's life drastically changed upon enrollment in the family coaching classes at Kitale Family Hope Centre, where she was equipped in better parenting, economic strengthening, faith and finance, and volunteering.

The announcement of the first COVID-19 positive case in Kenya in March last year prompted Jenifer to venture fully into farming so that she could fend for her family. The knowledge she acquired from the program enabled her to grow maize, beans, sweet potatoes as well as practice poultry farming.

"I am grateful to Buckner Kenya for training me on various aspects of life, most of which I did not have an idea of. The knowledge came in handy, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, since I am able to provide for my family, comfortably, by selling farm produce and poultry.

According to Phanice Simiyu, the center manager, "many families that enroll for training have the desire to practice farming, but lack knowledge on how to handle finance or even the best way to practice farming, hence the need for family coaches at the facility to create goals and walk them through the journey of making their dream a reality".

"It warms our hearts when we see clients who



have gone through equipping classes in our program become successful in life, the transformation seen in different families gives us hope that indeed there is light at the end of the tunnel," said Phanice.



Caption: Above, Jenifer's kales planted on sacks. below, Part of Jenifer's Chicken



Dilemma of Choosing Between Life and Livelihood

A visit to Nairobi's Dandora slum, on one chilly morning, lead Buckner Nairobi Family Hope Centre case managers into long, hectic walks, forcing them to pass through several secret routes and jump over countless, filthy, wide trenches, polluted with polythene bags and waste products from different parts of the city, in search for a lasting solution for most vulnerable families residing in this part of the county.

The case managers placed their best foot forward and played the role of social entrepreneurs, offering the most sustainable channels for creating a long-lasting impact. It is here that they first interacted with Janet Nduko, a single mother of two boys, residing in an old, single-roomed story building, whose exterior had gone to ruin for lack of upkeep.

Underneath the broken windows, peeled paint, and rotting sealing, was a bed, kitchen area, and living room, situated under one roof, leaving no room for someone to relax comfortably. The announcement of the first COVID-19 case in Kenya and the stringent COVID19 protocols put in place by the government left Janet in limbo, on choosing between life and livelihood.

She lost her full-time job and found refuge in doing laundry for her neighbors, generating as little as Kshs. 400 (4 dollars) on lucky days. The pandemic forced her to live from hand to mouth, with the closure of schools and initiated dusk to dawn curfew making her suffer a setback. Her children ate one meal a day and often went to bed on an empty stomach since she earned peanuts.

"This pandemic has changed my life to the worst, I survive with the little I get from well-wishers and mostly prepare porridge for my children as their daily meal," said Janet, further stating that "It hurts me when I see my children crying for food while tugging on my cloth, yet I have nothing to offer,"

Buckner Kenya headed to her plea and offered her a couple of face masks and several packets of manna packs to ensure that her family is not hun-



gry. Henceforth her children could comfortably wear a smile on their face as they played about with their agetates thanks to the newly acquired facemasks, an essential they couldn't afford.

"I am grateful to Buckner Kenya for providing me with facemasks and food. The manna packs have immensely contributed to the growth of my children during this tough time," concluded Janet.



*Caption: Above, Housing condition in Dandora
Below, Dandora dump site*





Above: Caroline's family receiving aid in Busia

Cash Transfer Elicit Smiles to Families Hit Hard by COVID-19

A bubbly smile filled the face of Caroline Wandera, a 67-year-old grandmother of five and a resident of Nambale Sublocation in Busia county, after receiving COVID-19 relief funds from Buckner Kenya, amidst the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. A small mud structured house and iron sheeted roof, on a small piece of land, is where Caroline and her family call home.

Her husband has been bedridden since 1998, following the demise of his mother, making Caroline, the family's sole breadwinner. She resorted to doing laundry for her neighbors to earn a living; however, the meager earnings from her business could not sustain her family. Her grandchildren failed to attend school regularly due to lack of school fees, stationery, and proper school uniforms.

"Life has been tough on my side, especially after my husband suffered a stroke. We all depended on him, roles reversed and I had to look for a casual job to sustain my family, but the income from the business was insufficient," said Caroline.

That pessimistic situation has made her rely on the support of well-wishers to place food on her table. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic exposed Caroline to a meltdown, making her hopeless. Her children lost their livelihoods, a situation that forced her grandchildren to go to bed hungry.

"This pandemic has reduced us to beggars. My children lost their jobs, I also can't go to people's homes to look for work, since most of them do not have enough money to pay for my labor, we are leaving from hand to mouth and depend on well-wishers for food," said Caroline.

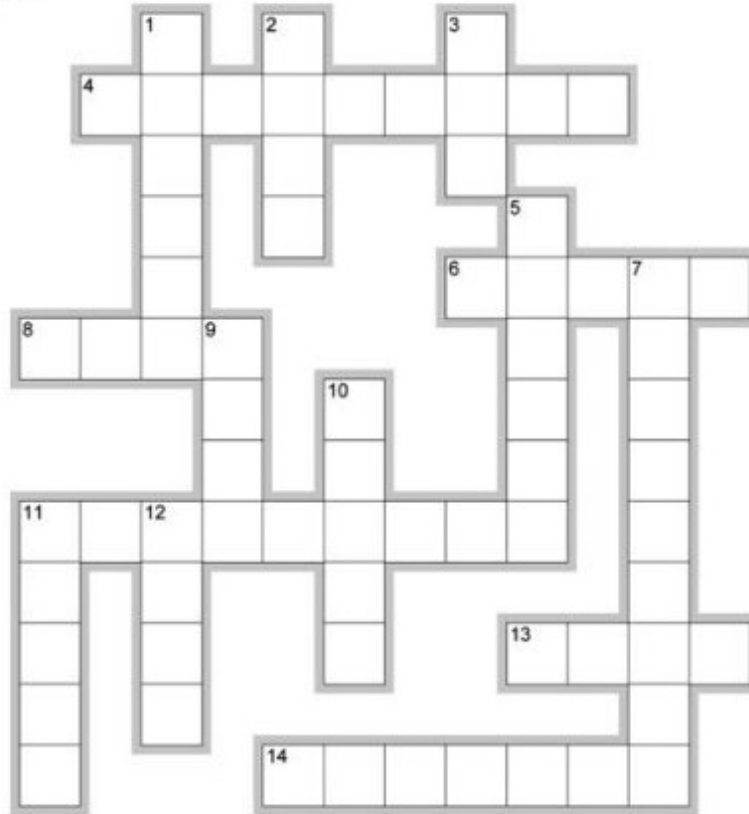
To ease the family burden, Buckner Kenya gave Caroline some money through its money transfer initiative, aimed at lessening the aftermath of COVID-19 on vulnerable households residing in rural areas and informal settlements. Caroline was able to purchase cooking oil, salt, sugar, millet, maize, fish, bar soaps, and tea leaves for her family.

"I am grateful to Buckner Kenya for providing me with money to purchase essential items for my family, during this pandemic," said Caroline.

More than 200 vulnerable families in Cherangany, Busia, Nairobi, Kitale, and Bungoma benefited from the cash transfer program.

COVID-19 CROSSWORD

This COVID-19 crossword will remind you of ways you can protect you and your family from the spread of this disease.



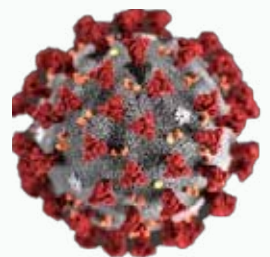
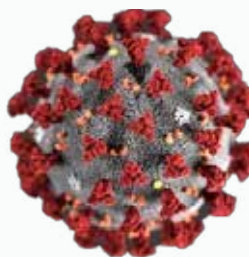
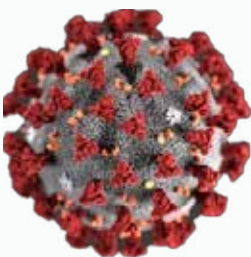
Across:

- 4. An important warning sign of COVID-19 is difficulty ____ or shortness of breath.
- 6. Do not shake ____.
- 8. ____ your hands frequently.
- 11. Handle food ____.
- 13. Avoid handling __, if you are ill.
- 14. If possible, open ____ to increase ventilation

Down:

- 1. Avoid large ____ of people.
- 2. Try not to touch your ____.
- 3. Limit close contact with others, staying about ____ feet apart.
- 5. Stay home if someone in your ____ is sick.
- 7. Disinfect surfaces like tables, desks and ____ regularly.
- 9. Stay ____ if you are feeling sick.
- 10. Always cover your mouth when you ____ or sneeze.
- 11. People with the COVID-19 virus sometimes feel pain or pressure in the ____.
- 12. If someone in your family is ill, give them their own ____, if possible.

Together we can fight C  VID-19!



Coronavirus

COVID-19

S L T C A T N O C P K Y F E V E R
 U H T L A E H L F I R Y K S I R C
 R S G C E X E Y Z O S C X O I O Z
 F U L U Z V Y T T H U A D N R R W
 A R X Z O L U A O I S R F O M Y R
 C I Z N D C R R E U K E N Z B X M
 E V B A A I T S H S C A Z P P P O
 G H E R P N A K S T V H S E O H U
 C D Z S E E V E E I A R I S E W T
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 O R S I E L T U X K E I R G G I S
 S H D S L Y S H R K B E Z B R J T
 E Y M I L D E O E L S E V E R E S
 D A E R P S W S Y D R O P L E T S

CORONAVIRUS
 DISEASE
 NOVEL
 RESPIRATORY
 ILLNESS
 SPREAD
 DROPLETS
 VIRUS

COUGHS
 SNEEZES
 BREATHE
 TOUCHING
 SURFACE
 MOUTH
 NOSE
 POSSIBLY

EYES
 CLOSE
 CONTACT
 INFECTED
 RISK
 HEALTH
 CARE
 WORKERS

MILD
 SEVERE
 DEADLY
 FEVER
 COUGH
 SHORTNESS
 BREATH

Every Child Deserves a Family-Adoption Services



Transforming lives and building strong families is at the core of every service offered by Buckner Kenya. Since the licensing of the Buckner Kenya Adoption Services in 2012, the focus has been to continually

“Shine Hope”. But how could this be achieved in the face of the pandemic that ravaged the entire world? There are many challenges that came with Covid-19 including, but not limited to travel cessations, work from home orders, and limited human interactions. With adoptions work heavily dependent on human interactions, 2020 was a tough year to pull through and achieve goals.

The projected number of finalized adoptions for the year 2020 was forty (40). Along the way, the many setbacks that affected the day-to-day activities in the adoptions department came into play, and courts were not spared either. Thankfully the Family Division of The High Court of Kenya embraced technology and did most of the cases via online platforms. Traditionally, adoption cases are held in private and so the online platforms offered a safer place for these to continue.

However, some clients could not fully participate because of the technological challenges. Despite these challenges, the set target was met and even surpassed by two more finalized adoptions. This is the

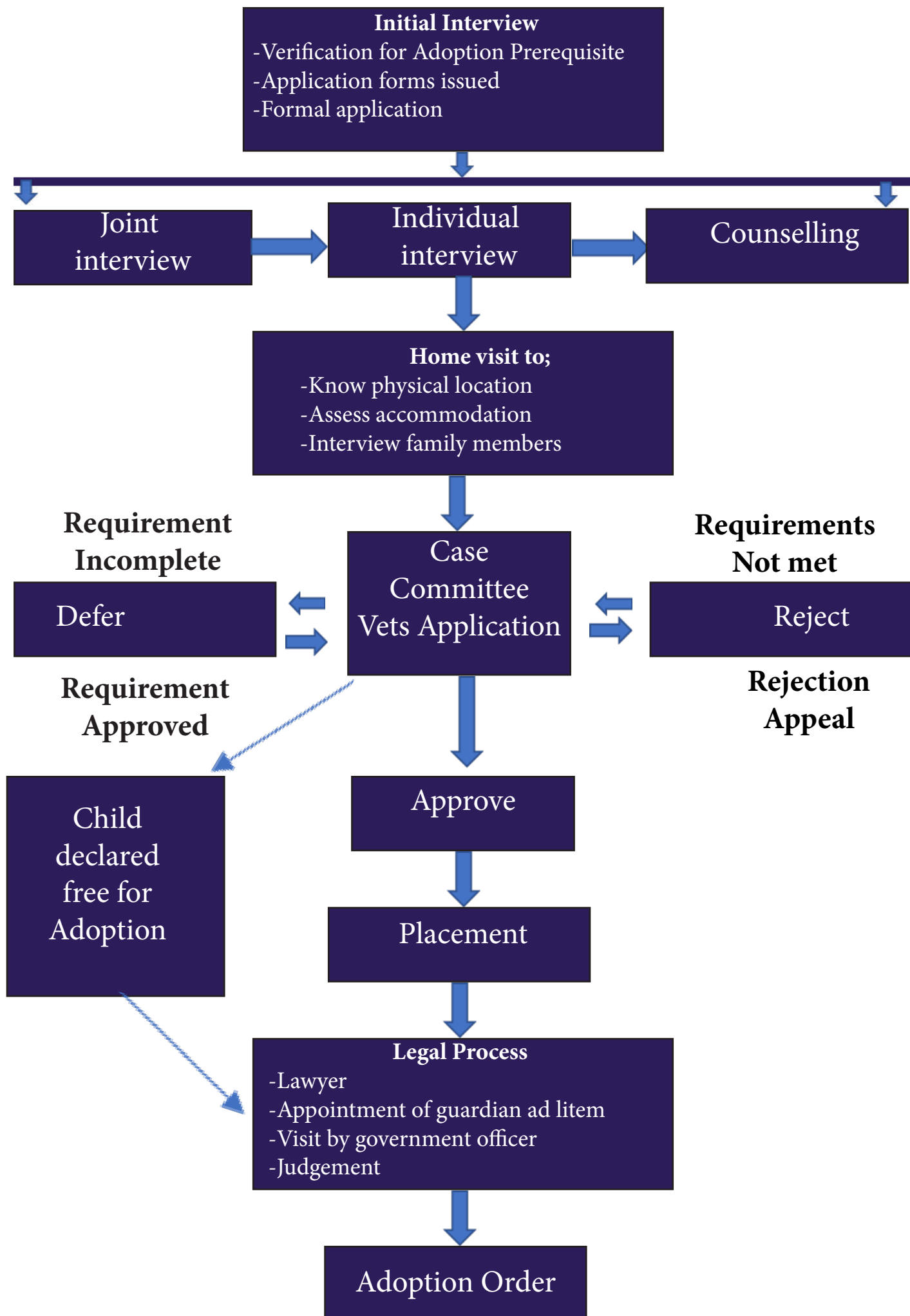
highest number of finalized adoptions since the inception of Buckner Kenya Adoption Services.

One of the strategic objectives under brand excellence for the year 2020 was to increase the awareness of Buckner Kenya Adoption Services’ brand amongst stakeholders and direct clients. Creating awareness for adoption is an intentional effort to address myths and stigma around adoption in Kenya.

This effort saw the Buckner Kenya Adoption Services invited for an hour-long discussion on adoptions on the NTV, a national broadcaster on December 2nd. This discussion was vital seeing that the number of people reached with the right information was enormous and from this single appearance, the number of inquiries almost tripled.

Creating awareness and disseminating the right information is necessary to break down the long-held myths and societal stigma around adoption because the best interest of the child is the best interest of the society, nation, and world at large. All of these achievements were possible because the operating license was renewed after almost two years of waiting.

Adoption Process



Better Homes for the Vulnerable



Wazee project beneficiaries with Buckner Kenya's ECD (white coat) and Buckner Kenya's DOP (yellow blazer)

Better housing is considered a necessity, for most people, across the globe, with the constitution of Kenya granting everyone the right to accessible, adequate housing, with a reasonable standard of sanitation. However, this is not the case in the lives of many people, especially those that live from hand to mouth.

One-fifth of the population still lacks a decent place they call home, hence Buckner Kenya's intervention. A large population of Kenyans are exposed to diseases such as malaria, respiratory infections, and parasitic jiggers since they reside in informal settlements.

The Wazee project at Seed of Hope aims at ensuring that strong and healthy families exist. The project has so far seen three families acquire a clean, conducive place; they call home.

Broad smiles filled the faces of two lucky Family Coaching clients after Buckner Kenya's Executive Country Director presented each one of them a two-bedroomed house, with an inbuilt kitchen and

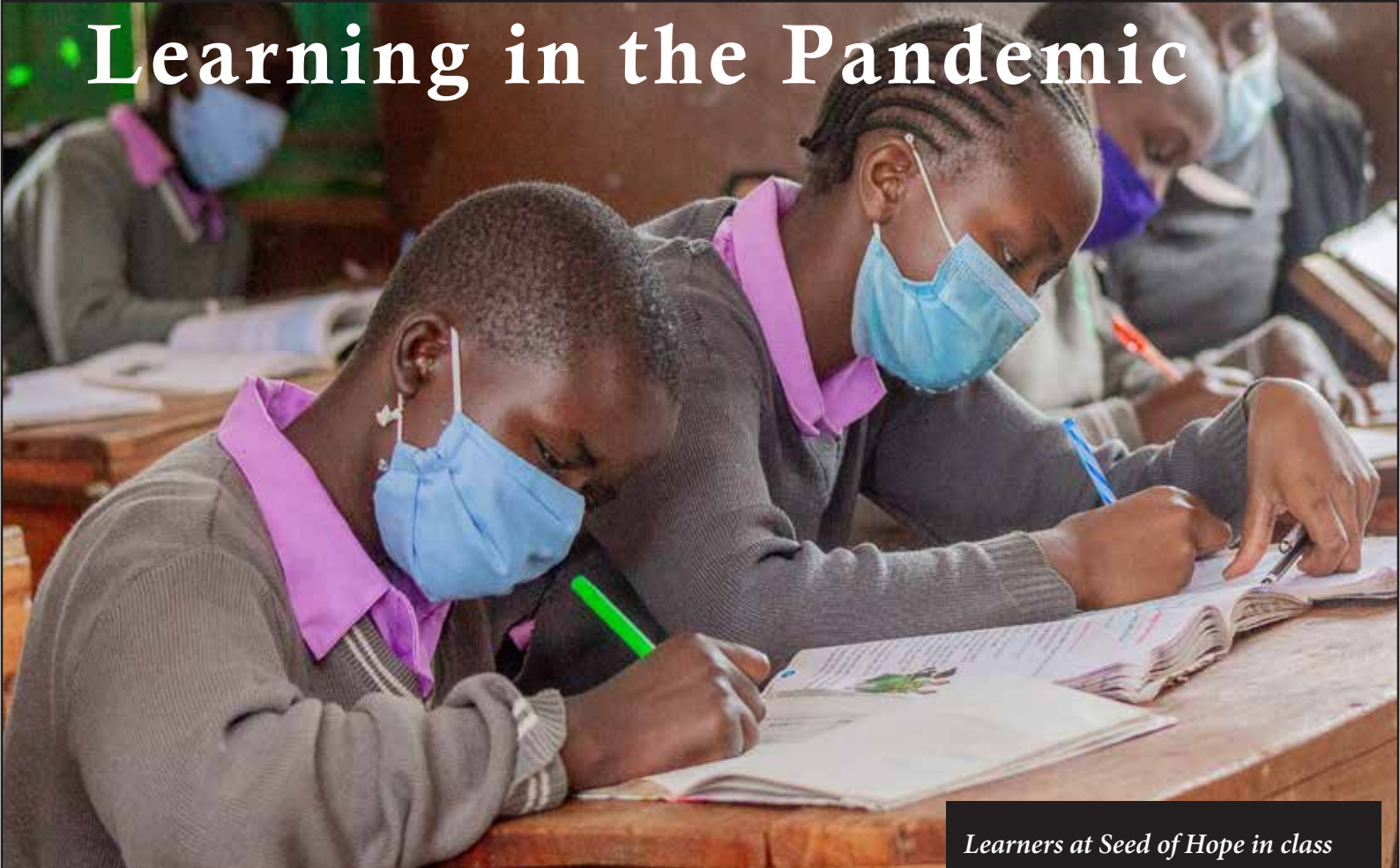
a spacious living room, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

The two lived in dilapidated, mud-thatched houses, in the outskirts of Kitale town. Their homes were characterized by improper ventilation and inadequate space to sleep or even have a chat with their friends and family.

"Buckner Kenya supports vulnerable people in the community, such as orphans, widows, the elderly, and people living with a disability, by providing them with conducive places they can comfortably call home. We encourage the families that have received houses to practice small-scale farming, and even rear chicken, to have a dignified livelihood," said Masindano.

"We are very grateful to Buckner Kenya for providing us with safe, conducive homes. We now have a place where we can comfortably stay with our families; we can practice small-scale farming and eat fresh food. Our lives have been transformed," said one of the beneficiaries.

Learning in the Pandemic



Learners at Seed of Hope in class

The reopening of schools for grade four and class eight learners revealed hope at the end of the tunnel for most learners, after staying home from March, following the sudden closure of schools by the government, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Learners from Buckner Kenya schools were more than eager to resume classes, with most of them visiting the school before the actual opening to assess the situation at the school.

Teachers were quick to ensure that all COVID-19 protocols set by the Ministry of Education are adhered to. More hand washing points were installed and the number of learners occupying a class was reduced by half, for them to observe social distancing. However, the learners had already adjusted to the new normal since teachers at various Buckner Kenya schools were conducting classes virtually.

This, however, was tough for most learners, especially those from vulnerable families, whose parents cannot afford smart mobile phones leave alone a basic phone and or afford daily data “Almost all of our learners lack the capacity needed for online learning since most household members lack phones, laptops, and electricity to enable them to live stream, therefore, finding a balance between learning and safety has been a challenge,” said a teacher at Hope Buckner

Community School in Bungoma.

Learners also found it hard to consult their teachers, especially on the topics that they did not understand, or points that they missed out on during class time, due to poor signal and other unavoidable circumstances.

13-year-old Praxidis Wambaya, a class eight pupil at Hope Buckner Community School in Bungoma, is happy to have reported back to school after a long wait.

“When the schools closed, we were told to re-view what we had learned and study at home, but I found most topics difficult to understand without a teacher. I also didn’t have time to read as I had to help my parents on the farm all day. Now that we are back and preparing for the national exams, I hope we will get through. I am excited because we now have our teachers around and we can consult them any day, any time,” said Praxidis

All class eight learners have now placed their best foot forward as they wait to sit for their Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in March 2021.

Virtual Learning Made Fun and Easy



Buckner Kenya echoes sentiments of former South African President, Nelson Mandela, that “Education is the only weapon that can be used to transform the world,” Just as the Not-for-profit organization looks forward to transforming lives and building strong families, the education sector has been made fun and easy, despite the COVID-19 pandemic that led to the closure of schools in the country, in March 2020.

Thousands of pupils schooling in the various Buckner schools at Hope Buckner Community School in Bungoma, Mudoma ECDE in Busia, Baptist Preparatory School in Nairobi, Seed of Hope Academy in Kitale, and Reynolds Community school in Cherangany have received equal access to learning materials, through various social media platforms.

The learners, interacted freely with their teachers, through text messages, phone calls and videos shared on WhatsApp. The fact that most people living in these areas live below the poverty line leaves many learners in limbo, especially those whose parents cannot afford smartphones, however, Buckner Kenya encouraged the practice of sharing gadgets, to ensure that all learners gain access to learning materials as well as submit assignments online.

“All our learners have gone through virtual training, during this pandemic, to ensure that most of them are up to date, as well as reduce chances of engaging in misconduct. They received assignments through social media platforms and interacted with their teachers online. A move that has enabled us to cover the better part of our syllabus.” Said Henry, headteacher at Hope Buckner Community School in Bungoma.

The grade eight learners in all the schools sat for Buckner Kenya schools’ exams, with most of the learners posting excellent results in Mathematics, English, Kiswahili, Science, and Social Studies. Buckner Kenya provides access to quality affordable education, to most children from vulnerable families across the country.

Embracing Out-of-Class Activities During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Buckner Kenya encouraged its learners to embrace out-of-class activities, initially regarded as unsupervised activities without specific learning objectives, that prepared them for real-life challenges such as time- management, independent learning, and self-efficacy. The learners can practice farming, cooking, and crocheting, beadwork, during their free time, to prevent them from indulging in deviant behavior.



Ken, a teacher at Seed of Hope Academy in Kitale, encouraged learners to shift their focus to deal with the new situation and open up to acquiring new skills, to nature talents. The Learners can practice several educational activities at home, with the help of their parents, guardians, or siblings.

Ways that children can learn while at home include;

1. Generating a workable study timetable:- Learners should create a one or two-hour daily timetable to guide them as they study independently. The schedule should include all subjects and topics that they intend to cover. A question a day keeps them on their toes.



2. Undertaking experiments at home. Several topics covered in the science subject have experiments that can efficiently be conducted at home. Some of the most straightforward tests highlighted in the question include germination, types of plants, and parts of a flower.

3. Practicing writing. Learning can get creative by writing short stories on different experiences, both good or bad. The stories can be based on topics as simple as; Myself, My worst day, my pet or even, my family. Writing helps sharpen their skills and enhances their imagination and creativity.

Above all, parents should educate their children on COVID-19 prevention measures.



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Business Unusual

The announcement of COVID-19 as a global pandemic was more destructive than we ever imagined. As a matter of fact, we all thought it would be a one-week or one-month affair and things would get back to normal. But how wrong we were!

When the COVID-19 disease was first reported in China in December 2019, we felt that this was far from us and therefore none of our businesses. Indeed as the saying goes “when the west sneezes, Africa catches a cold”. We came to this realization when we started experiencing a scarcity of imported commodities, cancellation of scheduled mission teams, flights, conferences, and government travel ban advisory. Frequent updates on COVID-19 symptoms and preventive measures by WHO made things scarier.

Hell broke loose when the first COVID-19 positive case was reported in the Western region of Kenya. The citizenry was not prepared for this and the closest they came to terminologies like quarantine was during foot and mouth disease outbreaks. Furthermore, we wondered what kind of flu/cold-like symptoms would warrant us to stay home; it was common for us to go about our business when we have colds and flu yet the protocols in place were more stringent.

As it would turn out ultimately, Buckner Kenya was no exemption from the effect of COVID-19. Buke Group’s business venture dwindled from nine confirmed mission travel teams to zero as the prospective business opportunities were canceled one after the other. All business units, schools, clinics as well as technical centers were abruptly shut down as per government directives.

Hotels, factories closed down, social events like weddings, churches, and other social gatherings were banned, and basically, the country’s economy was brought to a complete halt. This was worsened by cessation of movement and extended curfew hours across the country. Consequently, the citizens lost their daily livelihoods as those who were employed had to take pay cuts, working from home paralyzed the transport system.

Suddenly, there was an overwhelming need for face masks, sanitizers, detergents, and disinfectants which were scarce and not affordable. This presented an opportunity to capacity build our clients to empower them with skills that can sustain them as well as keep themselves safe from the pandemic as

they went about their business.

The instructors at the tailoring units were taught how to make reusable masks for donation as well as for sale. The FHC clients embraced this initiative and ventured into making the same at different programs and selling them too.

In addition gallons of detergents and tons of disinfectants were made to give FHC clients the opportunity to make money from the sale of the products which were and still on demand hence enabling them to earn a decent livelihood as Buckner continued to empower and shine hope to the vulnerable families as evidenced by one of the FHC clients

Regina Mutunge, a 48 years old mother of six benefited from the skills offered at the program. She is a housewife who solemnly depended on her husband for the provision of basic needs, apart from hawking second-hand clothes.

Cessation of movement and the introduction of curfew hours and other stringent measures to curb the spread of COVID-19 threw her family in a state of a quagmire, wondering what to do next since the breadwinner could not trade freely.

Buckner Nairobi Family Hope Centre untapped her strength in tailoring and taught her how to make facemasks. The hobby turned business earned her Kshs. 100 in a day and Kshs. 800 on a good day. She would as well hawk hand washing soap and alcohol-based sanitizers to sustain her needs during the pandemic.

“I am grateful to Buckner for seeing me through the pandemic. The skills came in handy as I would easily fend for my family and keep up with my regular medication, during the tough time,” said Regina

Caption; Regina on the side running her business

**Story By
Fridah Aura,
Senior Manager
Business Initiative and
Empowerment**



The Power of Shoes in Transforming Lives



Street urchins in Nairobi receive shoes from Buckner Kenya

Buckner Shoes for Orphan Souls thrives on the mantra that the gift of shoes can be the first step in a transformational journey. Buckner Kenya echoes this sentiment by providing new shoes to thousands of vulnerable children and families in different parts of the country. More than 400 street families from Nairobi, Kenya, received shoes from Buckner Kenya, courtesy of Buckner Shoes for Orphan Souls.

The children, most of whom are aged below 18 years, have spent the better part of their lives in the streets, owing to tough living conditions experienced in different homes. Majority of the children ended up in the streets after they were rejected by their caregivers/guardians, due to financial hardship, some were driven away by family issues such as violence, while others were orphaned.

A huge percentage of street children are attracted to deviants behavior and the freedom to dic-

tate their lives, as it is in the street; while others are not willing to attend school and abide by the set regulations.

“I left home six months ago after I was forced to attend school, something that I did not like. I am one person who does not like living under rules and regulations. I love having a free life, however, life in the streets has not been as smooth as I expected. I sleep outside in the cold, I wear torn clothes, and spend most of the day hungry. I am however grateful to Buckner Kenya for offering me a new pair of shoes, this has given me hope that someone cares for me,” said a street child.

Shoes shine hope in the lives of many children as well as keep them healthy since they are protected from infections such as jiggers.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



BUCKNER CHERANGANY FAMILY HOPE CENTRE (REYNOLDS)



BUCKNER BUNGOMA FHC







TEAM BUCKNER BUSIA FHC



BUCKNER NAIROBI FAMILY HOPE CENTRE (BCC)





ACADEMIC TERMS CALENDAR for 2020,2021, 2022 and 2023

Table 1: Academic Year 2020/2021

	Opening	Closing	Duration
Term 2	04 /01/2021	19/03/2021	11 Weeks
Holiday	20/03/2021	09/05/2021	7 Weeks
Term 3	10/05/2021	16/07/2021	10 Weeks
Half Term Break	03/06/2021	07/06/2021	3 Days
Holiday	17/07/2021	25/07/2021	1 Week

Table 2: Academic Year 2021/2022

	Opening	Closing	Duration
Term 1	26 /07/2021	01/10/2021	10 Weeks
Half Term Break	26/08 /2021	29/0/2021	3 Days
Holiday	02/10/2021	10 /10/2021	1 Week
Term 2	11/10/2021	23 /12/2021	11 Weeks
Christmas/Holiday Break	24/12/2021	02 /01/2022	10 Days
Term 3	03/01/2022	04 /03/2022	9 Weeks
KCPE Exams	07/03/2022	10 /03/2022	4 Days

Table 3: Academic Year 2022

	Opening	Closing	Duration
Term 1	25/04/2022	01/07/2022	10 Weeks
Half Term Break	26/05 /2022	29/05/2022	3 Days
Holiday	02/07/2022	10 /07/2022	1 Week
Term 2	11/07/2022	16 /09/2022	10 Weeks
Half Term Break	11 /08/2022	14/08/2022	3 Days
Holiday	17/09/2022	25/09/2022	1 Week
Term 3	26/09/2022	25/ 11/2022	9 Weeks
KCPE	28/11/2022	01/12/2022	4 Days

Table 4: Academic Year 2023

	Opening	Closing	Duration
Term 1	23/01/2023	21/04/2023	13 Weeks
Half Term Break	23/03/2023	26/03/2023	3 Days
Holiday	22 /04/2023	07/05/2023	2 Weeks
Term 2	08/05/2023	11/08/2023	13 Weeks
Half Term Break	29/06/2023	02/07/2023	3 Days
Holiday	12/08/2023	27/08/2023	2 Weeks
Term 3	28/08/2023	03/11/2023	10 Weeks
KCPE	06/11/2023	09/11/2023	4 Days



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Telephone:+254-733-713-001 / +254- 710-287-302