



**THE SITUATION**

As of 5/20/2020:

Uganda reports 260 cases of COVID-19 and no deaths. The nationwide lockdown is slated to begin easing on June 2.

Nigeria reports 6,401 total cases of COVID-19 and 200 deaths. Nigeria’s less stringent measures mean that individual states have greater responsibility to deal with the pandemic. The country is now in the midst of the first phase of lockdown easing.

Lockdowns in both countries have created unintended issues for their sizable refugee and internally displaced persons (IDP) populations, most significantly hunger. At Imvepi Refugee Settlement in Uganda, some families are reporting that children are getting just one meal a day. ChildVoice caseworkers have also documented at least five cases of attempted suicide due to hunger-related issues. Water boreholes in Nigeria’s Malkohi camps have failed as well.

**ACTIONS**

Due to stringent lockdown measures, almost all ChildVoice staff in Uganda—both at the Lukome Center and Imvepi refugee Settlement -- have been forced to remain in contact with their students remotely. At Imvepi, just one staffer has been able to get around and provide on-site support to date. (See sidebar.)

Meanwhile, our Nigeria staff have had more freedom to visit the IDP camps at Malkohi. We have just purchased a new vehicle for the team, which will make delivering emergency relief supplies to girls in the Malkohi camps much easier. They are also looking into fixing the failed boreholes while continuing to plan COVID-related hygiene awareness sessions for IDP camp residents.

**NEEDS**

In both Uganda and Nigeria, the adolescent girls we work with – and their children – continue to struggle with a worsening food supply situation. Our field teams are responding by delivering food and other needed supplies, but food shortage is expected to continue to remain a problem for some time. To help provide ongoing food relief, please visit [childvoice.org/foodassistance](http://childvoice.org/foodassistance).



**FROM THE FIELD**

For several weeks, while ChildVoice staff at Imvepi Refugee Settlement in Uganda have been working to procure food and other supplies, Child Protection Officer Alex Mundele has been the only one getting around Imvepi during the pandemic lockdown, due to current government restrictions.

It’s a heavy load on one person, but one he feels is a calling. Because girls can’t come to Empowerment Centers currently, he’s been allowed to use his motorcycle to check in with staff working remotely, follow up with the young women we serve to address their needs, and transport vital food supplies to their families that are scattered throughout the settlement.

Transporting supplies is no easy task for Alex. “I tie food onto the motorbike,” he explained. “I can tie four bags of corn flour, beans, oil, and other items. It’s a heavy package, and with the nature of the road being not all that fine, and it being rainy and so on, I have to move slowly. If I tie four bags of corn flour to the bike, that’s 100 kg (220 lb).”

Thankfully, Alex will soon be joined by two other staffers in delivering food supplies. The help can’t come too soon. As Alex said: “At the end of the day, I just feel weary and totally exhausted.”