

Genieri Collections - Newsletter No.19 – July.2020

A COVID 19 update from the Gambia.



This tragic situation has surely got a long way to go, and things are looking worse for our Gambian friends. Whilst the Village community has yet suffered no illness, and is remaining locked down the whole country's numbers have started to go in entirely the wrong direction. Reported case numbers appear to be doubling in about 7 days.



Infection in The Gambia had remained really well controlled in recent months, and with a morbidity rate slowly creeping up to just 2.4 deaths/million they compared well with the best in the world. In two days this has all changed, with the death rate rising to 3.3 deaths/million, and more worrying the infection rate is accelerating sharply. Sadly, it may just be a matter of time.



As we said earlier Senegal (12 deaths/million) is just a stone's throw away, indeed the Senegal border is just over 6km from the local town, but these Villagers are acutely aware of the potential for contagion, and all borders remain closed, including their airspace.

Perhaps their success to date also hinges on their deep understanding that medicine costs money, and they've got none. The situation is brutal in its simplicity, and can be summarised as "pay or suffer/die".

Everyone in the village knew someone who has died because they couldn't afford even the simplest of medical care. We personally knew three, two of them youngsters.

On the upside, we've delivered 3,080 Kg. of rice (or equivalent, eg. cooking oil, onions, salt and sugar) to these people who are in such dire need, and we've still got money to keep helping them for some time to come.

It's making a lot of difference, particularly to those in most need, as the Alkalo is continuing to manage internal distribution.

About another 1000kg. will be delivered in about 10 days.



This is all happening in parallel with normal feeding of the Day Care Centre children, where they're always guaranteed a good lunch, come what may.



Also, some people are getting out of the village to the local town SOMA, about 10km. away, to work and bring back a little money.

It's unclear whether this is approved movement, or driven by desperation, it's good news in a sense, but it's worrisome at the same time.



Pressure on supplies may be slowly easing, and we'll monitor the situation via local contacts to keep you up to speed.

A warm comment from the village.

“Jimmy thank you so much, we can't pay you, but we pray God bless you and your entire people over there.”

These assistance has come on time when we are all stranded and things are very difficult in the Gambia and more especially in up country, kiang and surrounding. We pray God guide you all the time. Thank you once more again for your kind gesture”.

Jim, Sophie and Bob