



Asante Africa Foundation's Response to COVID-19

"Enriched minds will collectively solve all other problems. Enriched minds come from education and shared knowledge."

Charles Waigi - Kenya Chairman Emeritus

Every decision we make is guided by the long-standing commitment toward the health of our children, families, and communities at the core of our efforts. As the global health community and the world come together to face the COVID-19 pandemic, I am reaching out to let you know how Asante Africa Foundation is responding in these challenging times.

Asante Africa Foundation is closely monitoring global developments on COVID-19 and following recommendations from both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We have begun to follow our risk mitigation plan for such situations, and as the situation evolves, our global leadership team holds daily briefings to swiftly determine the best course of action for our staff, our programs, and our youth.

PEOPLE

Ensuring the health and safety of our staff, partners, and students is always our top priority. We are taking immediate action while also looking to adapt and innovate in response to this new reality.

A few immediate steps we have taken are:

- Ensuring all of our offices are following the relevant national government advice.
- Asking our team to work remotely.
- Postponing all non-essential travel.

Like the world over, each staff member is also taking personal measures to secure food and shelter in place.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

We are utilizing and sharing Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda national guidance information day by day as well as what we can access here in the USA. **Our youth are helping to get the word out within their communities and are a key force to ensure FACTS win out over MYTHS.** (Swahili & English).

- English - [10 things you can do to stay safe at home](#)
- Swahili - [Stop the spread of germs](#)
- Swahili - [What to do when YOU are sick](#)

COMMUNITIES

Enabling the communities to manage their own health and safety is also a critical priority. Currently, schools in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda have been closed, and we have suspended all of Asante Africa's in-school activities. Just like in the USA, we recognize that rural communities will be most harshly hit economically in this wave of the pandemic. We acknowledge that vulnerable children will take the brunt of this hardship, lacking money, access to food, health care, and the much-needed personal supplies typically provided through the school programs we offer. ([Resource-USAID Report on impact on children and education of COVID 19](#))

IMPACT

We are leveraging our network of youth mentors and alumni to help mitigate the crisis. **Our youth have been trained and educated to find opportunity in the midst of chaos, to use the tools and skills they have developed, and lead and guide those around them.**

For years we have been training our young people in critical thinking, creativity, and solving tough problems and while we mobilize, they too are mobilizing. **Our teen youth are mobilizing on social media and mobile phones to get factual information out about health and safety techniques.** Several are issuing ["hand-washing challenges"](#) to teach the younger children how to wash hands. Others are making soap for distribution to the elderly and less fortunate neighbors.

In the very near future, the youth and their communities will need different types of support than in the past; more small seed capital to build out solutions, more personal essential items like soap and sanitary pads, more moral and social support to manage the isolation and depression. We will be there to help provide the support they need.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Over the past decade, I have had the fortune to experience the resilience and creativity of tackling seemingly insurmountable challenges alongside our staff and community leaders, and the children, parents, and educators we partner with.

We recognize this future path will have peaks, valleys, and curves, and we are prepared. We will walk through this challenge side by side, one step at a time and we will come out on the other side stronger, more compassionate, and more globally connected. These are difficult times but through



preparation and partnership, we will continue to strive to make the world a safer and more resilient place through education and usage of that knowledge. This effort is all for the betterment of those we love and serve.

This will not be an easy journey and we need you with us.

Sincerely,



Erna Gras
CEO, Asante Africa Foundation

Other resources available to guide you:

- [Gender Implication of COVID-19 Outbreaks in Development and Humanitarian Setting](#)
- [WHO, Africa Office](#)
- [When should I wash my hands](#)

