Sanyu Babies' Home

Quarterly Newsletter - Issue 62 | January - March 2024



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LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN



We thank GOD again for HIS protection and providence to Sanyu Babies' Home (SBH) and for sustaining the Home. We also thank all systems that support the Home – both local and international in terms of incomes, productivity, business, jobs, and support from churches and schools. Donations are vital to ensure that we can continue operating the Home on a daily basis, especially with the increasing cost of living, there is a difficulty of paying salaries, paying for food, medical bills, and cost of transport.

We are greatly indebted to the Global Endeavours, and the mission board of Bloomfield Baptist Church for sponsoring Barbara's (Director of SBH) visit to Canada. Barbara has traveled to Canada to visit Sanyu supporters, with the aim to raise continued awareness of the ongoing needs of Sanyu Babies' Home and the challenges currently faced by our children in Uganda. This has given her the opportunity to speak at local churches in Atlantic and Central Canada as well as at local schools.

We are grateful for the Adoption Awareness Conference 2024 that took place in Kampala. We noted with appreciation that many of participants in this Conference - potentially, had great capacity to help in sourcing funds for the development of SBH, if they sought to do so.

We continue to reaffirm our need for sponsors to our proposed development projects - the extension building and the solar project. We maintain that development requires colossal sums of money, required in a very short spell of time. SBH has no big donor funding body or agency to help with this problem.

SBH development programme is a two-pronged approach concentrating on: The Namirembe Site, with the first objective to extend the present SBH site at Namirembe so that it can receive more babies as the need is growing. But this said, Namirembe should become only the headquarters and children reception area, SBH should have off-shore places to absorb a bigger number of abandoned/orphaned children. In this vein, for Lutissi Offshore Development elsewhere, SBH has already acquired land for the future expansion of the Home. A tentative phased development programme has been drawn up. What is required are funds to kick-start the development.

We thank: Emily Cheer and Joy of Learning; the supporters for Sanyu's solar power project; and all the assorted volunteers that came to SBH during the last quarter. I would especially like to pay tribute to the team of volunteers from St Andrews Church Cullompton, England. The team shared their experiences, lessons, joys, and diversity of what was found in SBH from expectations; and appreciated that despite their tumultuous beginnings, SBH children "radiated an infectious sense of curiosity and optimism, reminding one of the innate human capacity to overcome adversity".

We welcome the new social worker, named Kakooza Matia.

We pray that GOD blesses you in your giving. THANK YOU.

Dr. Stephen Kituuka – Board Chairman

LETTER FROM **THE DIRECTOR**



It is with great joy and gratitude that we present to you our 62nd issue of the newsletter. The past three months have been filled with many activities which we are excited to share through this newsletter and hope you will enjoy reading up to the very end. We are so thankful to you for your partnership with Sanyu Babies' Home which takes us a very long way as we strive to provide Christ-like love to babies and children deprived of parental love; and reintegrating them into the community through reuniting them with their families, fostering or adoption.

I am deeply indebted to the Global Endeavours, the mission board of Bloomfield Baptist Church for sponsoring my visit to Canada where I am currently visiting the Sanyu supporters to raise continued awareness of the ongoing needs of Sanyu Babies' Home and the challenges currently faced by our children in Uganda. I have had the opportunity to speak at local churches in Atlantic and Central Canada as well as local schools; and I wish to thank each church and school that has hosted me.

On 7th March 2024, we successfully held the first Adoption Awareness Conference in Uganda at **Africana Hotel** in Kampala. It was an event dedicated to shedding light on the journey of adoption in Uganda and its profound impact on the lives of children and families, the theme was **"Bringing Hope to a Generation through Adoption,"**.

I am particularly encouraged by the participation of adoptive parents and children who bravely shared their testimonies, shedding light on the transformative power of adoption in their lives. As their stories serve as a powerful reminder of the profound impact that adoption can have on individuals, families and communities, I must also acknowledge and recognise God's sovereignty over, and concern for the orphaned. Psalms 68:5-6 CEB reminds us "Our God, from your sacred home you take care of orphans and protect the widows. You find families for those who are lonely. You set prisoners free and let them prosper..." We believe the Children in Childcare Institutions receive this freedom, happiness and opportunity to prosper when they are found homes.

Furthermore, I am heartened by the government's interest and involvement in the subject matter, recognizing the importance of creating supportive policies and frameworks that prioritise the well-being of children and promote adoption as a viable option for family care.

As we celebrate this milestone, let us reaffirm our commitment to advocating for the rights of children and creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for adoption in Uganda. Together, we can continue to ensure that every child has the opportunity to grow up in a loving and nurturing family.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to all who contributed to the success of the Adoption Awareness

Conference 2024, and I look forward to our continued collaboration in advancing the cause of adoption and child welfare in Uganda.

As you will read later in this newsletter, we were blessed to have many volunteers (both national and international) and interns serving with us these past three months and I cannot thank them enough for giving their time, energy and talents which allow us to continue serving the babies in our care.

We are grateful to God for the many children He enables us to reunite with their living family members. We thank Emily Cheer and Joy of Learning; through this charity we are able to have many of the reunited children and their siblings go to school as you will read on page 21.

In our previous newsletter, we told you about the proposed solar energy system project which will; Reduce dependency on expensive fossil fuels, firewood, charcoal, and external sources of electricity; Improve working conditions for kitchen staff replacing the need for cooking with firewood and charcoal; Provide a sustainable long-term source of electrical power; Provide Electricity for more efficient cooking methods and equipment to reduce cooking times freeing up resources for other needs; and Reduce overall operating costs helping to ensure a high standard of infant care well into the future.

HOW WILL THE ELECTRICITY BE USED?

1) **Cooking** - *This project will provide the electricity and funds to purchase and operate electric pressure cookers to help feed 50 babies and 40 staff members.*
2) **Medical Care** - *Sanyu operates various essential medical equipment requiring electric power such as the phototherapy and baby warmer machine, autoclave machine, the CBC machine, respiratory equipment and medicine refrigerators.*
3) **Laundry and Sanitation** - *Sanyu's high standard of care requires consistent and continual use of washingmachines, and the production of hot water for bathing babies, cleaning and sterilization.*
4) **Lighting** - *Baby care does not stop when the sun goes down, Sanyu requires reliable lighting systems to ensure the safety of babies and staff throughout the night.*
5) **Security** - *Child safety is a top priority and electricity is used for CCTV video surveillance, security lighting, and electric fencing to protect the babies from dangers outside of Sanyu.*
6) **Administration** - *Sanyu strives to safely and efficiently reintegrate children back into the community which requires electricity to operate computers, and administration offices.*
7) **Education** - *To give children the best opportunity to succeed, Sanyu provides early childhood education within a classroom environment and requires electricity for lighting and the production of educational materials.*

How you can help:

Sanyu's solar power project has an overall cost of **UGX 353,000,000/=** which includes the supply and installation of 115 - 300 watt solar panels, battery storage, electric cooking equipment and a 5000L solar thermal water heater.

Half of the funding has already been secured through grants and work has begun but **UGX 177,000,000/=** is required to complete this project.

Please join us to power the future of young lives and consider contributing financially to this project. Any amount great or small will help Sanyu continue to provide essential care to the abandoned children, reduce the operating expenses and allow this vital ministry to be more sustainable into the future. **This project is not out of this World, but will make a world of Difference.**

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. (Galatians 6:9)

Barbara Nankya Mutagubya,
Director- Sanyu Babies' Home



Hellos and GOODBYES

The past three months have been very busy with changes involving 17 children. Each time we receive a child, our Social Work department does their best to perform a thorough investigation to try and discover where the baby came from and if possible, to reunite the baby with their family. Since our last newsletter, we have welcomed the following babies:



Jonathan Mwesigwa (1 week)

arrived on 15th January 2024. He was found abandoned by an unknown person at Stop Shopper's Plaza near Seroma Hardware, Nakasero. The case was reported to Nakasero Police Post who later referred the child to Central Police Station. Thereafter the child was referred to Sanyu Babies' Home for care and protection.



Collins Atwine (1 month)

arrived on 24th January 2024. He was found abandoned by an unknown lady at a shop in Namayiba Bus Terminal. The case was reported to Old Kampala Police Station. Thereafter the child was referred to Sanyu Babies' Home for care and protection.

#HELLOS



Lucas Twinomujuni (1 week) arrived on 22nd January 2024. He was found deserted by an unknown lady at the waiting area in Link Bus Terminal. The case was reported to Old Kampala Police Station. Thereafter the child was referred to Sanyu Babies' Home for care and protection.

Emmanuel K. Musinguzi (2 years & 6 months) arrived on 7th February 2024. He was found abandoned by an unknown person in Nyeibengo A, Nyeibengo Parish, Ruhumuro Subcounty, Bushenyi District. The case was reported to Bushenyi Police Station and later the child was referred to Sanyu Babies' Home for care and protection.





Nelson Mubeezi (11 months) arrived on 10th February 2024. He was abandoned by his mother in Kiwunya Zone 7 in Nakulabye Parish near the Catholic Church. The case was reported to Nankulabye Police Station and later the child was referred to Sanyu Babies' Home for care and protection.

Blessing Asante (2 weeks) arrived on 27th February 2024. She was rescued from her abusive biological mother in Kabowa. The case was reported to Kabowa Police Station where the mother was detained. Later the child was referred to Sanyu Babies' Home for temporary custody as investigations for other family members are carried out.





Ben Talemwa (4 days) arrived on 27th February 2024. He was abandoned by an unknown lady inside the taxi van going to Mubende in New Taxi Park. The case was reported to Old Kampala Police Station. Later the child was referred to Sanyu Babies' Home for care and protection as investigations are done.

#HELLOS



Tom Ofoyorwoth (5 months) arrived on 12th March 2024. He was rescued from his abusive mother who intended to harm the baby. The case was reported to Kalerwe Police Station. Thereafter the child was referred to Sanyu Babies' Home for care and protection.

George William Kyamagero (8 days) arrived on 27th March 2024. He was found abandoned around Ssekaziga building along Nakivubo Road. The baby was taken to Nakivubo Police Post and the case was later reported to Central Police Station. Thereafter the child was referred to Sanyu Babies' Home for care and protection as investigations are carried out.



#GOODBYES

RE-UNITED CHILDREN

1. Owen Kuteesa *(19th February 2024)*
2. David Kisakyamukama *(22nd February 2024)*
3. Aaron Mugabi *(22nd February 2024)*
4. Jemimah Alitwala *(22nd February 2024)*
5. Esther Kirabo *(24th February 2024)*

FOSTERED CHILDREN

1. Micah John Bosco Buyinza *(12th January 2024)*
2. Andrew Tusubira *(19th January 2024)*
3. Blessing Nakanwagi *(1st March 2024)*

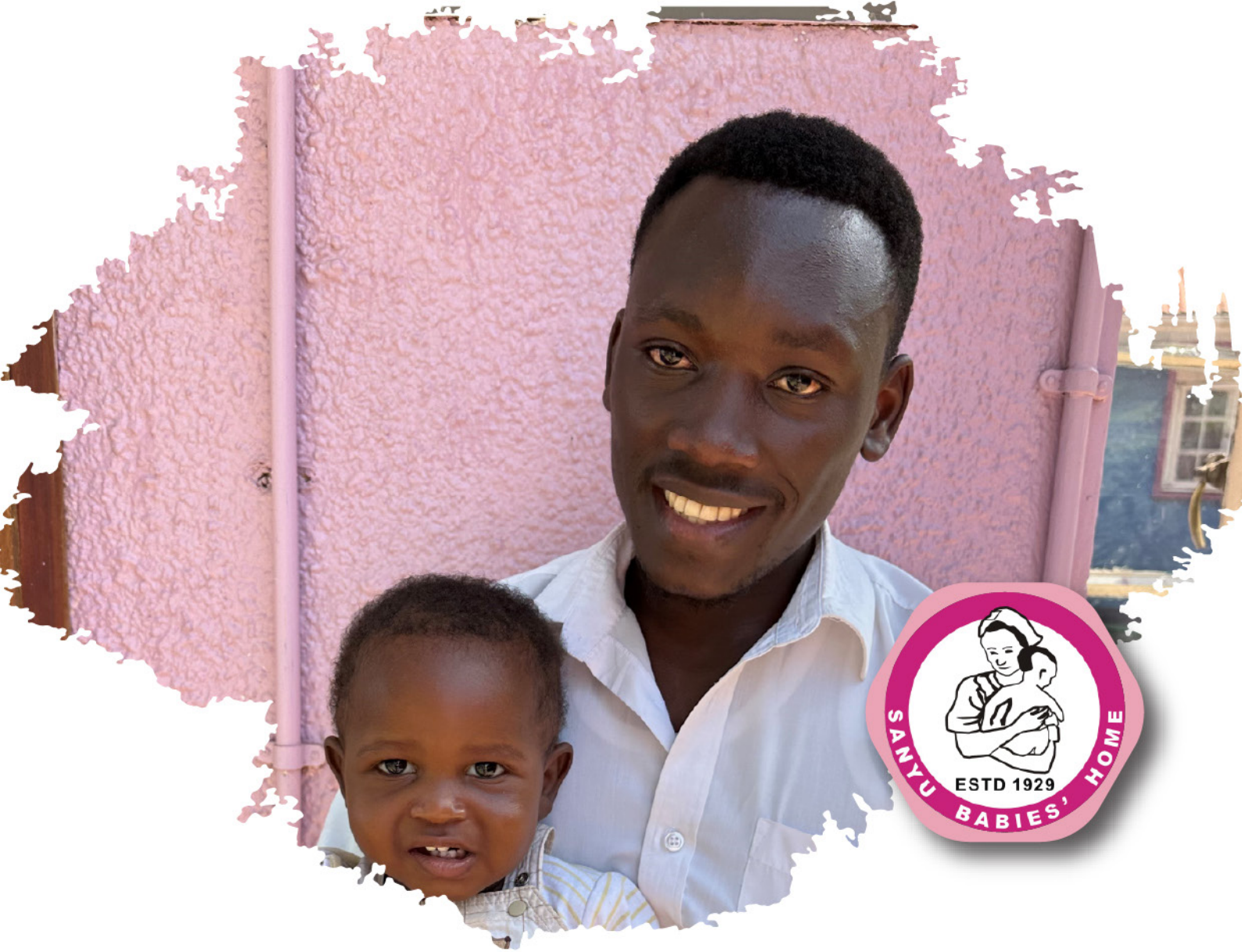


Jemimah and Aaron **REUNITED**



CONGRATULATIONS MAMA CISSY!

We would like to send a big congratulations to Mama Cissy and her husband Stephen Kamusiime on the birth of their beautiful little girl, Flourish Ampiire Mugagga on the 17th January 2024. We hope she brings you great joy and we can't wait to watch her grow up with her big sisters Faith and Favour!



Meet our New Social Worker

What's your name ?

My name is Kakooza Matia.

How long have you been working at Sanyu Babies' Home?

I started at Sanyu on March 1st, so I am now making one month. But also, I did my internship here, it was 2022, I spent three months here doing the internship. So, Sanyu is not a new place to me.

What inspired you to apply for this job ?

As I was here doing my internship, I would see the way children were suffering, those children who were abandoned. And all along I wanted to work with children, because I love children. The course I did, I chose because of that reason. When I was studying, I was majoring in Child Protection. I just love children.

What is your favourite thing about working at Sanyu so far?

It's a cool environment, first of all, everyone is friendly and you can interact with anyone. People are not looking at you because you are new, people here are very friendly. The place is very nice!



A Mission Trip To Sanyu

This January we were blessed to have a Mission team from St Andrews Church in Cullompton, England, come and serve with us for 10 days. Here is what they had to say about their trip...

"This has been my 6th stay at Sanyu so it's safe to say that I love it here. It has been such a privilege and joy to take 6 friends from our church with me and introduce them to this wonderful place. Rekindling friendships among the staff and practising my Luganda phrases has been so much fun. I'm already planning a trip with my family next year. I very much recommend visiting and volunteering and sharing the joy with others."

Lucy Hobbs

"Sanyu is such a special place of joy and, to me, the devotions in the mornings are its heartbeat. A place where staff from all over the compound meet with the children to worship God as one body. Vibrant and fun worship, dancing children, swaying mamas, cheeky boys trying to slide off their chairs to dance on the tables; a time of joy and grace.

One morning, our team each read a verse from the Bible with a two minute explanation, expertly translated by Barbara. It took courage but was a huge privilege to contribute in a small way to this lovely community.

I would highly recommend attending these times, if you get a chance to visit Sanyu; they are another glorious sign of the presence and love of Jesus in this special place."

Nikki Edwards

"It was such a pleasure and privilege to be part of this amazing team and to witness first hand this organisation that is so close to Lucy's heart. We all got stuck in helping at various times of the day and night and I was able to use my skills reinforcing the teeth cleaning skills...although it was great to see that the Mamas already did a great job with this! I was inspired by the love, patience and grace shown by the Mamas. The little ones are showered with such love and care and experience God's overwhelming love every day."

Amelia Jerreat

ASK

"I really enjoyed helping out at Sanyu Babies' Home in Uganda. It was a memorable and unforgettable experience in which I learnt so much. Thank you all for being so kind and welcoming. It was fantastic to see everyone's faith in God and that you were all so joyful. I loved the devotionals and that you sang your hearts out to the Lord. It was one of my favourite parts. What an honour it was to be part of this journey with you all. May the good and faithful Lord bless you and keep you."

Ann-Marie E Nowell

"I felt so fortunate to be able to spend time at Sanyu Babies' Home. The staff were so welcoming and their love for the children shone through all the time. The children were so happy and it was also wonderful to be able to support the staff in other activities such as cooking and laundry, truly getting to grips with all the jobs that the wonderful team does to make everything run so smoothly!"

Sarah Stuchbery

"This was my first trip to Uganda following a 22-year calling from God to go, and from the moment I stepped off the plane all of my senses came alive; the fragrant African air with its warm breeze was inviting and a familiar sense of God's presence was tangible.
Being met off the plane by two members of the Sanyu team brought a welcomed sense of comfort and safety. When we arrived there was food that had been prepared and throughout our stay the hospitality was outstanding, nothing was too much trouble and we certainly never went hungry!
We were welcomed with both love and joy by all the staff and of course the precious children! There are many areas to help serve, all of which offer various duties and spaces to spend time. Therefore, finding a balance between serving and resting is an easy transition.

Sanyu is a place that brings around unexpected bonds, a place that humbles one's heart and a place that expands our hearts to love more deeply. Sanyu is a sacred place that is built upon the foundations of Christ's Love and gives profound insight into what it truly means to serve God with compassion, diligence and joy.

Since leaving Sanyu I can honestly say that a part of my heart remains there and one special boy will be forever in my prayers - needless to say, I shall be returning with my family in the very near future."

Kat Parker





A

"I have loved my time at Sanyu and for anybody thinking of volunteering I can say only one thing...do it! You will not regret it. Before you come, I'm sure you'll have expectations; I know I did. Will I miss them when I go home? What will I be doing? I imagined mostly feeding babies and changing them. Word to the wise – your aprons are a Godsend for both of these activities!
But there is way more to do than just feeding babies and changing them, from helping in the classroom, the kitchen, the laundry, bath time, cleaning, painting and upkeep of the babies' home.
But let me share with you something I did not expect: how much the mamas and all the staff impact your time there. All the staff are so welcoming and the love that each one of them shows for the children is so clear. Seeing each of them interact with the children in such a pure and genuine manner, and the respect they have for each other and yourself, they really welcome you and make you feel a valued member of the team. As you work with them whilst washing dishes or helping them to make the beds, the conversations you start up, all the stories and jokes you share with each other; you can find people halfway around the world have similar family issues or hopes to the future as yourself. You will be thinking about your time together, or their newborn baby, or how they are getting on with their education outside of Sanyu, long after you return.
You think you will miss the children and they are so happy and adorable so it's hard not to, but I did not expect how much I would miss the Sanyu team. Both them and the children are in my prayers and I thank them all for making my time there so special."

Amy Broadway

MY EXPERIENCE AT SANYU



My serviced based learning experience was unlike anything I have ever experienced, and in this case that is a good thing. Initially I was not particularly excited for any type of work experience, because at that time 8 hours was far too long a period to be working. But to my surprise, while I was working at Sanyu the time passed by so fast and what I thought would be a long and repetitive experience came to an end in the blink of an eye. It left me wondering where the time had gone, because that is what a place as lifechanging as Sanyu does.

Entering Sanyu for the first time was like stepping into a whole new universe, one brimming with both heartache and hope. The building itself exuded warmth and welcome, but it was the children who truly stole my heart from the moment I laid eyes on them. Their smiles, though often tinged with past struggles, held a glimmer of resilience and innocence that touched me deeply.

In the beginning, I found myself grappling with a whirlwind of emotions – from overwhelming compassion to a profound sense of helplessness in the face of their stories. Each child had a unique tale of loss and hardship, yet they all shared an unyielding spirit that refused to be dampened by their circumstances.

During my first week in Sanyu I was assigned the class with the children between 1 and 2 years (Peace Class). Even though they are not the easiest age group to supervise and teach, they captured my heart nonetheless and helped me open up to the experience. In the later weeks I alternated between three classes, Joy, Faith, and Peace class which I had mentioned above, and with all these classes I had hardships but also learnt so many lessons, not only from the children but also the teachers I was aiding.

Before I officially started applying for work, so many people said "The work at Sanyu is a lot, you may not like it there" and although this may have made me a bit hesitant to work there, I am glad I pushed past the stereotypes and went to ask to volunteer because the experiences I have had at Sanyu are unmatched. For example, the children's swimming trip, which was a day I had been looking forward to and had not been dissatisfied with; the outdoor activities with the children, some of which were washing cars with them; watching them race in motorcycles; and recently I went back for the sports day which was a pleasant surprise because I did not expect to have as much fun as I did that day. Another thing I loved about Sanyu was the sense of community, everyone was friendly and welcoming which was a breath of fresh air. The relationship I built with other volunteers excluding the ones I knew from school was important because it made work easier because I had people to talk to and laugh with whenever.

In the short time that I worked at Sanyu, I learned more about love, compassion, and resilience than I ever thought possible. The children taught me invaluable lessons about strength in adversity and the importance of cherishing every moment, no matter how fleeting.

Overall working at Sanyu Babies' Home has been such a positive and fulfilling experiencing from my supervisor, the staff, the other volunteers and most importantly the children, and any opportunity I get to do it again I will take without thinking twice.

Nabacwa Sarah Alexandria





Learning about **TRANSPORT**

During the month of February, Faith Class was learning about transportation. They learnt about the different types of transport and different examples of transportation. They did many different activities to learn about transportation. The children were able to wash Director Barbara's car; they had a lot of fun while learning about the different features of the car. They often came to the fence by the guesthouse to watch the traffic go by. This was perfect for them to be able to see the transportation instead of just learning about it in the classroom. Another activity they did was racing and then washing the toy boda bodas (motorcycles). They had so much fun doing this and they all took their jobs seriously when washing the bodas. Learning about transportation and doing activities are very good for the children because they aren't able to leave the home very often. So, it is essential that they learn about the basics to everyday life like transportation, so when they leave they have the knowledge that other children their age have. When the children do get to leave Sanyu, for example to go on swimming trips, they are able to point out the things they learn in class. They often shout with excitement at the different things that go past and the teachers often use this to show the children what they learn in class.



On 7th March, the first Adoption Awareness Conference was held at Hotel Africana. It was organised by a group of foster parents, following on from a meeting for foster parents that took place at Sanyu in April 2023. The conference was a full day event and over 200 people attended. A testament to the success of the event is that even in the last panel of the day after lunch, the room was still full of people! The day was broken into different topics addressed by different panels, and there was lots of opportunity to ask questions and to network.

The conference was officially opened by the MC – Mr Mondo Kyateeka, the Assistant Commissioner for Youth Affairs, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, with the opening prayer being said by Pastor Patrick Byekwaso, the Manager of Children in Families and Church Partnerships Programmes, CRANE. Mr Andrew Rugasira, the Chairman of the Organising Committee concluded the opening ceremony by welcoming all attendees to the event. There were then talks by the keynote speaker Mr Damon Wamara, Executive Director of Uganda Child Rights NGO Network (UCRNN) and the Guest of Honour, Justice John Eudes Keitirima, Head of the Family Division of the High Court who represented Hon. Justice Flavia Zeija, Principal Judge High Court of Uganda.

After a break for tea/coffee, the panels began. The first session was titled "Adoption in Uganda, Shared Perspectives & Experiences". The panel was chaired by Ms. Caroline Bankusha, a Child Protection Expert and the speakers on the panel were Ms. Christine Tumuhairwe (National Alternative Care Panel), Mr. Jared Scheppman (Ekisa Ministries) and Mrs. Barbara Nankya Mutagubya (Director of Sanyu Babies' Home). Each speaker spoke a little about their background and then proceeded to answer a number of questions posed to them by the Chair.

The practicalities and logistics of adoption were discussed, and advice was given regarding specific queries voiced by members of the audience. There was a chance for all of the different homes and institutions that were represented at the Conference to stand up and introduce themselves to the audience. This was really beneficial as people got to know that there are other registered homes that have children that are waiting for adoptive families, as well as the well-known homes like Sanyu Babies' Home and Nsambya Babies' Home. Questions could have kept coming to this panel for hours, but it was soon time to stop for lunch. Everyone enjoyed a big buffet of Ugandan foods and a refreshing drink outside before heading back to the Conference Room for Session 2.

...the conference was a really good opportunity for conversations to be had openly, rather than the subject being treated as a taboo...

Session 2 was titled "Early Childhood Development". The panel was chaired by Mr Mondo Kyateela and the speakers were Dr. Priscilla Davey (Child Psychologist from Nairobi, Kenya) and Dr. Annette Kirabira (Executive Director of Rahab Uganda). This session featured a short presentation from both speakers and then an opportunity for questions and discussions. One of the key subjects was the question of "Do I tell my child that they are adopted?", how this should be done, and when. This was a really interesting question as it is one that many adoptive parents ask themselves. The answer was quite simple "yes!!". There is no right answer about exactly how or when it is done, but both Dr. Priscilla Davey and Dr. Annette Kirabira stressed the importance of telling your child they are adopted. Some audience members had concerns relating to this topic, and they were given advice and support on how they could deal with those problems.

After a short break, Session 3 began which was titled "Celebrating Adoption – Testimonials". The panel was chaired by Hon. Sheila Kawamara-Mishambi (Adoptive Parent) and the speakers were Pr. Mark Mukisa and Melissa Mukisa (Adoptive Parent and Child), Mr. Andrew Rugasira and Jonathan Rugasira (Adoptive Parent and Child) and Ms. Zaina Nakubulwa (KCCA Probation and Social Welfare Officer). We were so privileged to hear Melissa and Jonathan and their parents talk about being adopted and their stories were an inspiration to all. Both talked about the moment that it was disclosed to them that they were adopted, and what being adopted means to them. Jonathan was not able to be at the Conference in person but had recorded a video that was played for everyone to watch. As per the other sessions, questions were asked to all speakers who were able to respond and give their viewpoint and any advice as appropriate.

The closing session was focused on "Key Takeaways and Policy Recommendations". It was chaired by Damon Wamara and the speakers were Mr. Franco Tollea (Assistant Commissioner for Children Affairs, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development) and Rev. Prof. Dr. Samuel Abimelech Luboga, Chairman of Education Services Commission and Clergy of Namirembe Diocese. This session focused on 'what next' and what could come out of this conference. Something that had been highlighted numerous times was the difficulties and costs involved with proceeding to adoption court and finalising adoption, rather than just fostering a child. It was discussed how some of these difficulties could be alleviated and advice was given on how best to go about the process. All main points discussed during the day were brought together and summarised as the Conference came to a close.

The Adoption Awareness Conference was a huge success, and we are so grateful to all those who were involved with the organisation of the event, and also to those who attended the event. Lots of networking took place, and many adoptive parents and prospective parents were able to raise concerns and ask questions which they might not be able to ask elsewhere. There is still a stigma surrounding adoption in Uganda, and the conference was a really good opportunity for conversations to be had openly, rather than the subject being treated as a taboo which people are afraid to talk about. We are sure that this event is only the beginning and look forward to the Adoption Awareness Conference being an annual event – watch this space!



Sanyu, you have My Heart

In March of this year, I travelled to Sanyu Babies' Home from the UK for the very first time. A place I've heard so much about, and yet never experienced in person...until now! And what an experience it was.

My sister, Emily Cheer, is a long-term Sanyu volunteer, and has been visiting and volunteering for the last 9 years. She even lived in Uganda for 2 and a half years at one stage, calling the Sanyu Guesthouse 'home' during the Covid Lockdown months. For my entire adult life, Sanyu has been omnipresent yet distant, but I have been so grateful to it – the home, the staff, the children – for looking after my sister for all this time.



I have been a 'virtual volunteer' for almost all of those 9 years. I have proof-read and checked almost every newsletter article, as well as all of the information curated by and for volunteers, giving them guidance and suggestions of how to make the most out of their time there. I had seen countless photos and videos of Sanyu – of the children and home, but also everyday life at the guesthouse as a volunteer – and seen it (and heard it!!) on numerous Zoom calls and WhatsApp voice notes. I knew so much before I even landed in Uganda, and yet everything was so bright and colourful, and different; I knew nothing, really.

Being at a place in real life after seeing it and hearing about it continuously for nearly a decade is completely surreal. Everyone knew who I was; every Mama knew my name, and that my long-awaited visit with my big sister had finally come true. Knowing how a place works (like the day's structures, the different types of Mamas, and the different school classes) in theory and then trying to transfer that knowledge into a physical real-time thing can be a challenge, even though everyone was so warm and welcoming towards me, and made me feel at home straight away. There was so much new, and always so much to learn, but there were always so many people at hand to show me what to do and how to do it.

I definitely didn't manage to learn everyone's names by the time I left (oops!), but I learnt so much more. Sanyu is a special place. It is a home built on, and by, love. Life doesn't have to be busy, or complicated, to be important and cherished; simplicity is key.

I may have only been there for a month this time, but I will be back...Sanyu, you have my heart.



Volunteering has no Age limit– Meet Isabella!

Tell me a bit about yourself.

My name is Isabella, I'm ten years old and I am in Primary 5. I go to Namirembe Infant School. I have three brothers. They all go to Kings College Budo.

What is your favourite part about volunteering?

I get to help others.

What is something that you would like to do when you grow up?

I would like to be a designer.

How long have you been volunteering here?

About 4 weeks.

What do you look forward to the most each day when coming to volunteer?

I get excited to meet new people, I make new friends and I make a connection with children.

How did you hear about Sanyu Babies Home?

My dad introduced it to me and my brothers. We went to Christine's office and we filled out some forms.

What do you like about Sanyu?

The children - I love them and I care for them. I like the mamas, they help each other.



SPONSOR
A CHILD

SPONSOR A CHILD

Sanyu takes care of up to 50 babies and toddlers who have been abandoned, orphaned or abused. When children arrive at Sanyu they are often in very poor states of health, sometimes malnourished and they need a lot of love and care. One of the ways you can help these children is by sponsoring a child. When you sponsor a child at Sanyu you commit to partnering with us by making a monthly donation of $15/60,000 UGX. That monthly donation ensures that Sanyu is able to take care of every child's essential daily needs. Sanyu is run almost entirely on donations, many of which are one-off, so having a regular monthly donation means that Sanyu can reliably provide for our children day in, day out. It means that food can be bought, bills can be paid, medical needs met, and loving staff can be given salaries for their work.

When you sponsor a child at Sanyu, you are partnered with one specific child. Each quarter you receive an update on your specific child and find out about what they have been doing. You really get to know your sponsored child and lots of photos are included too.

Your monthly donation of $15 or 60,000 UGX helps up to 50 babies and toddlers under the care of Sanyu to have hope, to be loved, to be nourished and to go home to their forever family when the time is right.

If you would like more information, please contact Director Barbara on sanyubabhome1@gmail.com or 0788162147. Thank you in advance for the difference you will be making to the lives of the Sanyu Babies.



International WOMEN'S DAY

International Women's Day is celebrated on 8th March and is a public holiday in Uganda. It has been celebrated for over a century, as it was first marked in 1911. International Women's Day is such an important day so we can celebrate women's successes, and with a mostly female work force at Sanyu, this seems even more relevant.

I first visited Sanyu Babies' Home in April 2015 and have volunteered (not continuously!) ever since. I have seen firsthand how incredibly hard all of the Sanyu staff work, but right now I would like to talk about the women. There are 33 women who work at Sanyu Babies' Home in a variety of roles. Lots of these women are mothers and even grandmothers to biological children, and yet they also take on the role of a mother to all of the children at Sanyu. Throughout my years volunteering at Sanyu, I have met so many wonderful women who have inspired me, cared for me, and helped me grow into the person I am today. Each day, these women pour their heart and soul into looking after the Sanyu babies, and although many of their tasks may seem mundane to an outsider, there is so much that should be celebrated.

Each time a child reaches the stage of being toilet trained, it is something to celebrate, and is something that has happened due to the hard work of the women at Sanyu Babies' Home.

If a child needs to be admitted to hospital, they are provided with around-the-clock care and love throughout their time there, and they have people fighting for them to get better. Sometimes this means a home mother spends 6 weeks away from her biological child, as she will not leave the Sanyu baby that is so desperately sick in hospital. This dedication is something to celebrate and is shown in abundance by the women at Sanyu Babies' Home.

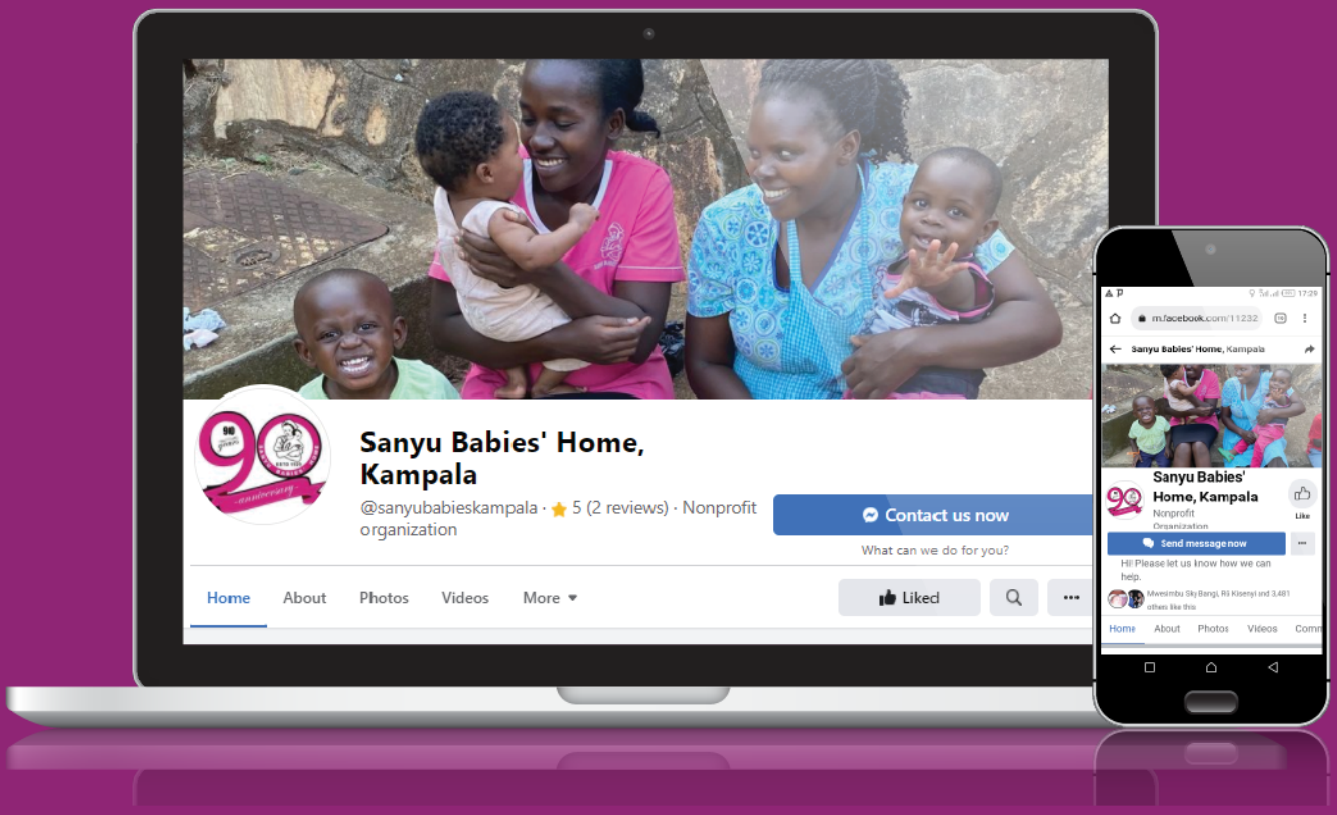
Every time a child learns to sit, crawl, walk and talk, it is something to celebrate, and again happens due to the loving and nurturing environment that the women at Sanyu Babies' Home provide for the Sanyu babies.

When a malnourished child becomes healthy after arrival at Sanyu Babies' Home, it is something to celebrate. The balanced and nutritious meals that are put together by the women of Sanyu enable this change.

When a child is ready to leave Sanyu to find their forever family, either through reunification or through fostering, it is definitely something to celebrate! Not just because the child has found their family, but because they have reached the point where they are able to leave the Sanyu family. They are healthy enough; they have recovered from whatever illness or malnutrition they might have had when they arrived; and they have been able to do some healing from the traumatic circumstances that may have brought them to Sanyu. All due to the love shown to them by the women of Sanyu Babies' Home.

I could talk about each of the women who work at Sanyu Babies' Home individually and highlight all of their successes and actions that should be celebrated, but this article would be much too long, and I would constantly be remembering things I have missed for months to come. The women at Sanyu truly do change lives; they work hard, they are dedicated, they provide a loving and nurturing environment, and they are mothers to all at Sanyu for however long each child needs it. They should be celebrated daily, for each and everything they do. It takes a special type of person to work at Sanyu Babies' Home, and the women who work at Sanyu Babies' Home are certainly that.

Emily Cheer (long-term volunteer)



CONNECT WITH SANYU BABIES' HOME ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Make sure you are following us on social media to keep up to date on our news between newsletters

@sanyubabieskampala

@HomeSanyu

@sanyubabieshome

www.sanyubabies.com

Volunteering in Sanyu Babies' Home: A Transformative Experience

Nestled in the heart of Kampala, Uganda, Sanyu Babies' Home stands as a beacon of hope for the most vulnerable members of society—abandoned, orphaned, and neglected infants and toddlers. Stepping into this haven of care and compassion, I embarked on a journey that would profoundly impact my perspective on life.

My first encounter with Sanyu Babies' Home was a mixture of emotions—sadness for the circumstances that led these children here, yet uplifted by the warmth and love that enveloped the atmosphere. As a volunteer, I was determined to contribute in any way possible to make a positive difference in the lives of these precious souls.

Working at Sanyu Babies' Home was such an exciting and wonderful experience; the environment was full of love and very good hospitality from the children and the beautiful staff. They really took good care of us and endeavoured to teach us so many new skills about how to treat the babies and children. Each day at Sanyu brought new challenges and rewards. From feeding and bathing the infants to playing with the toddlers, every task was an opportunity to create connections and spread joy.

One of the most poignant moments during my time at Sanyu was witnessing the resilience and strength displayed by these children. Despite their tumultuous beginnings, they radiated an infectious sense of curiosity and optimism, reminding me of the innate human capacity to overcome adversity.

Despite their tumultuous beginnings, they radiated an infectious sense of curiosity and optimism...

Beyond the tangible impact of my volunteer work, the experience at Sanyu instilled within me a profound sense of gratitude and humility. It made me realize the privilege of my own circumstances and the responsibility to use my voice and resources to advocate for those in need.

In conclusion, volunteering at Sanyu Babies' Home was not just an act of service but a transformative journey of self-discovery and compassion. It taught me that true fulfillment lies in giving of oneself wholeheartedly and in embracing the inherent dignity and worth of every individual, especially the most vulnerable among us.

Ssozi Joseline

FROM SANYU TO SCHOOL



Benjamin and Brenda Baby Class (Reunited May 2021)



Jeremiah, Baby Class (Reunited September 2021)



Nuulu (formally Elianah), Primary 1 (Reunited October 2019)

You may sometimes wonder about how the children are doing who have left Sanyu to be reunited with their biological relatives. The answer may well be that they are settled and fully integrated into the family, they are loved and they are happy, but they are not attending school. Why? Because school fees and school requirements are expensive, and are just not affordable for many families of the reunited children. Children belong in families, and they deserve an education. However, these things don't always go hand in hand.

My name is Emily Cheer, I first volunteered at Sanyu Babies' Home in 2015 and have met hundreds of children who have lived at Sanyu, some for 4 days and some for 4 years. I have always asked the social workers how are they doing, and the answer was always the same: 'they are loved and doing well, but not in school'. That led me to try and set up a charity to enable these children to get to school; and so, Joy of Learning was born.

Joy of Learning's primary aim is to enable the reunited children of Sanyu Babies' Home and their siblings to attend school by finding Educational Sponsors who make a monthly donation that covers their school fees and requirements. As well as enabling children to attend school, Joy of Learning makes sure the basic needs of each family are met by providing essential food, hygiene and medical support.
So far, Joy of Learning has enabled 38 children to attend school, and we hope that number will continue to grow and grow. Seeing children who were once sent home due to a lack of pencil, talk animatedly about how much they love school now, truly is rewarding. Our list of children needing an Educational Sponsor is steadily growing, as is the list of families who have been referred to us that we are yet to partner with. If you are interested in becoming an Educational Sponsor or are able to make a general donation to help us provide essential support to the families we work with, please get in touch with us on ***joyoflearningug@outlook.com*** or visit our website ***www.joyoflearningug.com***. We are on both Facebook and Instagram where you can find us using ***@joyoflearningug*** and we also have a bi-monthly newsletter, so please get in touch if you would like to be added to our mailing list.

Children belong in families, and we are delighted to be able to work with families that have so much love for their children. We exist to build the bridge 'from Sanyu to School' and are so grateful to anyone who helps us achieve that in any way, shape or form. Here are some children that we have successfully got 'from Sanyu to School' – I wonder if you recognise any of them...





My Experience while working at Sanyu

Wow wow wow!!

If you asked me at the start of my service based learning if I was excited to work at Sanyu, the answer would be no. I had the image of "Sanyu is a hard place to work in because they have a lot of activities, and you will barely have rest". It's actually true because you not only work with the children but do manual labour as well so yes, the activities are more than other places might seem to offer.

Anyway, back to my experience, Sanyu has been an eye-opening place for me. I really got to learn something extraordinary and beyond what I expected. It has really been an amazing place for me.

I was given work in different classes. Faith class which is for the older children (can walk, talk and are learning how to read and write), Peace class for the middle ages (those that are learning how to walk) and Joy class for the young ones that are learning how to sit and walk.

As much as these children are given the same treatment, they are individually different and unique right from the way they think and act. My personal favourite class to work in was the Peace class, although they were still the most annoying to handle. Children in this class would cry simply because someone else was crying or they wanted a toy that someone else was using, and for me this was how I learnt to be a tough teacher because if you did not assert dominance then you would end up losing your mind!!

So, I had a simple technique, I would always shout "who is crying for nothing" in an angry voice, and there and then you would see those that were literally crying for nothing keeping quiet, and fingers were pointed to them from those that weren't crying. Through that experience, I learnt that however tough the world might seem to be, you can't keep crying and hoping things will be handed over to you on a spoon or wait for others to ease the path of us. Instead, be the tough one and assertive one. To me, I saw the world as Peace class because we are given opportunities (toys) but only the ones that are ready to grab them immediately as they are poured on the ground and not let go, will surely have a chance to play with them, and it shall be known to the rest instead of waiting and crying for someone else to get them for us.

Biggest lesson of them all, as cliche as it might be, is to be grateful for everything however small because the children at Sanyu are appreciative of the little things given to them. But in the world I live in, where I get to choose what I want and when I want it, the least I can do is appreciate and know that someone out there has no choice, but they are very happy to receive similar things year in year out.

I have also learnt to be respectful to everyone because there are different classes of people that come to Sanyu be it the donors, helpers, mamas, and workers. We are all humans regardless of our positions. I feel like this is something that is overlooked because most people fail to show the simplest form of human nature, which is a greeting, good morning, good afternoon, simply because they think "I am bigger than this person" or "this person owes me nothing so why greet them", or the most common one "I am older than them why greet them?"

I have seen it happen and surely would not want to be that kind of person if I ever grow to become a respected person in society, because if you cannot practise the simplest form of respect, then what is your worth in society?

So, to answer the question, was I excited to work at Sanyu? And would I do it again? Yes, if given a chance.

Keansel Nabulime Nanteza

SANYU SPORTS DAY MARCH 2024











VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES at Sanyu Babies' Home

We offer a number of ongoing opportunities for those individuals who wish to volunteer and serve alongside us at Sanyu Babies' Home. We are able to accept both national and international volunteers who are fully vaccinated against Covid-19. We welcome day volunteers as well as volunteers who will live on-site and spend a longer period of time with us. Sanyu Babies' Home has an on-site guesthouse which provides our volunteers with a comfortable bed, good food and a safe place to stay. You are also just a few steps away from the babies' home. The guesthouse welcomes volunteers who have travelled from afar as well as local volunteers who wish to spend a night or two with us. Please look at our website to find out more information - *www.sanyubabies.com*.





DONATIONS NEEDED

01 CONSUMABLES

Sanyu Babies' Home relies almost entirely on the generosity and support of friends like you. Over the years, we have received many donations which have been enormously valuable to the home and especially the children. We thank you for all your love and support. However, we are always in need of contributions to keep the home running. Our wish list is endless and includes some of the following:

- ***Baby formula milk(0-6months)***
- ***Feeding bottles***
- ***Pampers/disposable nappies in various sizes from newborn to toddlers' pull ups***
- ***Baby wipes***
- ***Baby rocking chairs/soother chairs for the classroom***
- ***Food – rice, milk, sugar, eggs, fresh fruits, vegetables, matooke, potatoes (sweet and Irish), fish, meat, peanut butter, blue band, ground nuts, etc...***
- ***Disposable gloves***
- ***Milton Sterilizing tablets or other brand sterilizing tablets.***
- ***Cleaning products – i.e. Detergent, bleach, washing up liquid/soap, washing detergent, stationery for administration work and classroom***
- ***Activities, toys, books, arts and crafts suitable for nursery class.***
- ***Children's toothbrushes and children's toothpaste***
- ***Children's shoes – Croc style (rubber type flip flops)***

02 ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROJECT

Institutional Solar Power Generating and Electric Cooking system.

- The total project cost is ***UGX 353 million***
- Have secured a grant of ***UGX 176 MILLION***
- Looking for funding of ***UGX. 177 million***

03 SBH EXTENSION PROJECT

This SBH extension project will cost *USD 3,090,264.95* and it will enable us to start generatinng an income of our own



HOW TO DONATE

- **Cash or Cheques**
- **Mobile Money**
- **Post Items**
- **WorldRemit** *(See page 29)*
- **Western Union** *(See page 28)*

(Check benefitiary bank details below)

You can do international transfers via the following bank details, by cash and or written out cheques to Beneficiary Bank Details:

BANKERS	Standard Chartered Bank Uganda Ltd 5 Speke Road, Kampala, P.O. Box 7111	Stanbic Bank, Uganda Ltd City Branch, Kampala Road
A/C Name	SANYU BABIES' HOME	SANYU BABIES' HOME
A/C Number	0102010619500 (UGX) 8702010619500 (USD)	9030005856247 (UGX)
Sort / Swift Code	08:02:47 / SCBLUGKA	31008 / SBICUGKX

You can also send money using Mobile Money Transfer:

1. ***MTN MOBILE MONEY**, dial: ***165*4*4#**, enter merchant code: **Sanyubabies**, enter your reference, enter amount, enter your pin and then send.*
2. ***AIRTEL MONEY,** dial: ***185*9#**, enter merchant ID-**1120469**, enter amount, enter payment reference, enter PIN and send*

You can post items to: **P.O. Box 14162, Kampala, Uganda**

Please ensure you let the Director know if you send any donations so we can be looking out for them. Send us an email: sanyubabhome1@gmail.com or call: +256 414 274 032 / +256 788 162 147 / +256 705 681 603

WESTERN UNION

moving money for better

Western Union is a reliable international money transfer service that operates in over 200 countries worldwide.

Important information: *Please note that Sanyu Babies' Home are only able to accept cash pick-up. Western Union do not currently allow individuals to transfer money to a business account.*

Transfer Guide

1) Create an account for free.
2) Select receiver's country (uganda).
3) Input the amount of money you wish to transfer. This can be input in the 'Send Amount' box (this will be in your local currency) or the 'Receiver Gets' box (amount will be in Uganda Shillings).
4) Select 'Cash' as the recipients preferred collection method. Select how you wish to pay i.e. credit/debt card or bank transfer. Select continue.
5) Then add the receivers information...

First Name- Barbara Mutagubya Last Name- Nankya

Email address- sanyubabhome1@gmail.com

****Barbara is the Director of Sanyu and is able to collect the money and deposit it in Sanyu's bank account.***

6) Select your payment method and follow the on-screen instructions.
7) Please send a brief email to Sanyu stating your full name, how much you have transferred and what the money is for (this is helpful for our accounts department and also alerts us that we have money to collect)!

Helpful Information...

- The transfer cost for cash pick-up is £2.90/$1.90/1.90€ per transaction.
- Western Union accepts Visa, Mastercard and Discover Credit Cards.
- Payments can be tracked in the 'History' section of your account.
- Once a recipient has been paid all the details are saved for future use.

WorldRemit

WorldRemit is a secure, fast and reliable way to transfer money internationally while avoiding the high fees of bank-to-bank money transfers.

Transfer Guide

1) Create an account for free.
2) Select your country (e.g UK/USA/Ireland) in the 'You Send' box and Uganda in the 'They Get' box (select Uganda with UGX next to it).
3) Input the amount of money you wish to transfer. This can be input in the 'You Send' box (this will be in your local currency) or the 'They Get' box (amount will be in Ugandan Shillings).
4) Select bank transfer as delivery method. Select any UGX account at any branch and press continue. Then enter the following details...

First Name - Sanyu Babies Last Name - Home City - Kampala
Phone number - 0788162147 Email Address - sanyubabhome1@gmail.com
Bank Name - Stanbic Bank Branch Name - Metro Branch
Account Number - 9030005856247
Reference - In the reference section please include your surname and the reason for sending (e.g. Jones - Sponsorship Fees / Smith - Truck Appeal Donation)
Reason for sending - Select what is most relevant to you

5) Press Continue and enter your own details.
6) Select payment method and follow the on-screen instructions.
   N.B. All options have been tried and tested and we have no issue with any of them!

Helpful Information...

- The transfer cost is £0.99/$0.99/€0.99 per transaction (regardless of the transaction amount or method).
- WorldRemit accepts Visa, Mastercard, Maestro and Apple Pay.
- Promo code 'FREE' removes the transaction fee on first transactions
- Promo Code 'MT21Q301' also removes transaction fees (it's less reliable but still worth a try)!
- £1450/$1950 is the maximum amount that can be transferred at once (this fluctuates slightly depending on the daily exchange rate).
- Payments can be tracked in the 'My Transactions' section of your account.
- Once a recipient has been paid all the details are saved for future use.

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DONORS *This Quarter*

Every gift that is given to Sanyu is so appreciated and we want to thank everyone who has given to the children of Sanyu. The donors listed have given in cash and also in kind (formula, food, clothes, toys etc.) We know that it is the heart of the giver, not the size of the donation. Thank you so much for your kind hearts!

This list is for Jan- Mar 2024.



Entity **DONORS**

Corporate Companies, Businesses, Clubs and Associations

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Abararira Finance Limited
Acclaim Africa Limited
Becoming a New Generation (BANG)
Better Life Pharmacy Both Ends Believing
CRANE
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Euro Stars BMS Ltd
Green Label Services Limited
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Inclusive Markets for Energy Efficiency in Uganda -IMEU
International Needs Uganda
Jonakee Holdings Ltd
Kahuli Foundation
Kalerwe Market Women's Group
Lions Club of Entebbe & Entebbe Road
Magezi Arts Exhibition Center
Max Imports & Exports
Meevolsoft Limited
Mercury Computers Limited
Mmaks Advocates
Netherlands Development Organization -SNV
Pil Uganda Limited
Rotary Club of Namasuba
Royal Exprexionz
Sherey Punjab (U) Ltd
Shinning Charms Foundation
Soaring Eagles
Soft Care SMC Uganda Limited
UCRNN
UK Online Giving Foundation (World bank Uganda staff)
Vancopharm
Wina Classic Uganda Limited

Schools and Education Institutions

Acorns International School
Aston Fields School -UK
Azarel Academy
Educare Junior School
GeSam Kindergarten Lugujja
Ge-Sar Preschool Lungujja
Haddies International School
Harry Tots Preschool
Kisaasi College School
Morlands School UK
North Green Education Center
Quality Nursery & Primary School Kyengera
Senior 4 Students Class
2023-Kings College Buddo
Shalom Nursery & Day Care School
Simeka Junior School

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House of Clergy Namirembe Diocese
Kasubi Parish COU
K. Garden Grove Catholic Community
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Morning Glory Service – St Paul's Cathedral Namirembe
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St James Church Kikaaya
St Mary, Ashby St Mary
Sts Peter & Paul, Bergh Apton
St Peter, Bramerton
St Andrew, Claxton
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St Mary's, Yelverton
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Uganda Martyrs Church of Uganda Busega

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