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Dear friends,

I want to let you know how **you are already helping us in our COVID-19 emergency relief efforts** and give you an opportunity to save more lives. Amid this pandemic, some of us are inconvenienced, while others are suffering immensely. I know this is not an easy time for anyone. I often remind myself that **whatever challenges we currently face, they are exponentially greater for the most vulnerable among us**. This is especially true for families impacted by disabilities in low-income countries.

SCHOOL CLOSURES = INCREASED VULNERABILITY

On March 15, the Kenyan government closed all institutions in the nation and we watched as **children with disabilities were forced to leave supportive special needs schools for impoverished, ill-equipped homes**. In the past, even brief school closures have caused our children to suffer under the care of families who lack the resources and ability to adequately provide for them at home. Some have suffered seizures due to noncompliance with their medications. Others have died from treatable infections, like malaria or typhoid. **Too many have come back to school abused, malnourished, or with muscle contractures or infected bedsores because they were left in one position for days on end.**

COVID-19 = CHILDREN AT RISK AND IN POVERTY

In addition to the increased risk of home-based care, many of the children we support have disabilities that put them at a **higher risk of becoming infected with COVID-19**. If these children become ill, there are only 2 hospitals in their county of 1.35 million people. Families impacted by disabilities are also not getting accurate information about COVID-19 and how to care for their disabled children. Most of our families live on less than \$2 a day but mandated COVID-19 quarantines have **left most unemployed** and therefore unable to earn even this small amount to buy food, medicine, and supplies.

YOUR SUPPORT = 150 TRAINED COMMUNITY LEADERS TO ADDRESS THESE NEEDS

Fortunately, **supporters like you have equipped Kupenda to train hundreds of pastors, traditional healers, government leaders, and families impacted by disabilities as community disability advocates**. Because of you, these leaders, who once believed children with disabilities were cursed, are now saving and improving their lives. Since our staff is too small to reach the 1,500 children in need across Kilifi County's 35 wards, **we are mobilizing these leaders to act on our behalf**.



"Together with the hundreds of community leaders we work with, we can make sure we distribute food and medicines for those who need it, copies of disability and referral guides to the thousands of families, as well as sharing useful information on how to stay safe from the COVID-19."

—Leonard Mbonani (Kenya Director and co-founder) in the office, which has become a food distribution center



Mwanahawa Jote Nyae (occupational therapist) and Charo Kalu (driver) heading into the rural areas to deliver much-needed food, medicine, and hand wash to families in need.



"Thank you for this gift and may you come again."

—Brian Ushindi, student with muscular dystrophy



Remembering Janet

Janet Daniel had cerebral palsy and could not walk or speak. Her single mother struggled to earn enough money to care for Janet and her sisters by selling potatoes. Eventually, Janet's grandmother took over her care. Kupenda helped her grandmother access nutritious food and weekly therapy for Janet. Janet's grandmother loved her and did all she could to care for her. Unfortunately, feeding Janet was difficult because her disability made it challenging for her to chew and swallow. One day, Janet started choking and her grandmother did not know how to help her. The child passed away. She was just 6 years old.

Kupenda supports hundreds of children, like Janet, who have been sent home from school to loving families who simply do not have the income or skills to keep them safe. We need emergency funding to develop resources and activate community leaders to train these families quickly and effectively, so we do not lose even one more child during this pandemic.

OUR SOLUTION = EMERGENCY FOOD, MEDICINE, AND SAFETY INFORMATION

Already, after just 3 weeks, **these leaders have been able to deliver food, medicine, income support, and sanitation supplies to 200 of our most vulnerable families.** In addition, we have developed detailed guidelines to help families provide better care for their children and to **prevent COVID-19 transmission.** Our staff and leaders are disseminating these guidelines to families through phone calls, WhatsApp, and text messages. We've also partnered with a local doctor who agreed to send health professionals to the homes of families in need of medical care.

Your support has enabled us to do this and reveals how much more we can do, with your help. Please consider joining us in bringing hope to the most vulnerable by **providing just \$80 to feed a family for a month.** Thank you for what you have already done to help these children and for considering additional support during this critical time. You are saving lives!

With much love and gratitude,

Cynthia Bauer

Cynthia Bauer,
Kupenda for the Children,
Executive Director and Co-Founder

P.S. Under the new U.S. CARES Act, taxpayers can now take a deduction for up to \$300 in charitable contributions if they don't itemize on their 2020 tax form. For those who do itemize, 100% of your donation will be tax deductible.



"Parents with happy faces were left with their mouths wide open because of these early morning blessings."

—Leonard Mbonani, Kenya Director and co-founder



"You have shown compassion on me. Your actions depict love like the name of your organization."

—Parents of Gladys, a student with cerebral palsy