

MILK AS A SIGN OF LOVE AND CARE FOR OLDER PERSONS



"The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members" Mahatma Gandhi

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Introduction and background

Older persons constitute one of the most vulnerable groups in Uganda. 85% of older persons in rural areas live in chronic poverty and over 67% of people above 60 have at least some form of disability according to UNICEF 2017¹ poor nutrition is one of the key challenges that older persons face. Studies on nutritional status of older persons in Uganda reveal that 68% of elderly women were undernourished compared with 32.4% of men².

Old age poverty is rampant in Uganda, and 85% of older persons in rural areas live in chronic poverty. Evidence reveals that only 7.1% of older persons have access to pension³, and the biggest number of older persons survive on handouts/donations of food, cash or material items from their children, relatives and 'good Samaritans'.

Old age disabilities worsen their situation by greatly limiting their access to the basic necessities of life.

The COVID-19 Pandemic greatly undermined everyone's survival but worsened the situation of older persons much more. When businesses closed and people's incomes were affected, everyone gives priority to their immediate family and the rest of the dependents were likely to suffer more.

In commemoration of the International Day for Older persons of 1st October 2020, Fresh Dairy in partnership with Synergy Elderly care extended support to older persons in the five villages of Bulenga, Bulaga, Kireka-Bbira, Nakuwadde and Nakabugo in wakiso sub-county, Wakiso District with 150 cartons/boxes of milk.

1

<https://www.unicef.org/uganda/media/1726/file/The%20case%20for%20the%20senior%20citizens%20grant.pdf>

² <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15661479/>

3

https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/unpd_ws201607_uganda_presentation_eajiambo.pdf



A team of volunteers including SEC staff and Village Health Team volunteers distributed the milk in the homes of older persons over a period of 3 days from 30th October to 2nd November 2020. Older persons in the said villages received the milk amidst jubilation and delight. Dancing and singing characterized the process.

“Otuta ntwagala naye sisobola kufuna lukumi lwabuli lunaku ku tugula. Nga neyanzizza nyo!” Nassuna Maria, 76 years

English translation: *“I love the milk. But I can hardly get 1000 shs every day to buy it. I am so grateful!” Nassuna Maria, 76 years*

No	Village	No of boxes
1	Bulaga	30
2	Kireka-Biira	25
3	Bulaga	25
4	Nakuwadde	25
5	Nakabugo	20
6	VHT members	25
	Total	150

For elderly people, the milk from Fresh Dairy meant much more than nutrition. It was a sign of love and care and an important reminder that amidst the COVID-19 pandemic where every home, individual and business is affected, there are people that still do care for the 'lowest' in society.



Challenges and next steps

A key challenge but not unusual, was the relentless needs of older persons especially regarding their feeding as well as medical care. As they received the milk, some of them had not had a

meal for that day and the milk was a great relief from immediate hunger.

There is therefore need to continue with direct nutritional and material needs for the elderly as the country strives to establish long term care plans for the elderly. Synergy Elderly care is on constant look out for individuals and companies that are willing to bless elderly people in any part of the country. Your support will do exactly what it is meant to do.

About Synergy Elderly Care (SEC)

Synergy Elderly care is a non-profit, non-Governmental organization, registered by the registrar of companies, in the year 2017, and with the National Registration Bureau in 2018 with registration number 2533.

The aim of Synergy Elderly Care is to work with the elderly people in Uganda and support them to age gracefully and successfully, while not compromising their traditional, and social-cultural values. We aim at supporting families in taking care of their aged parents and

grandparents, and work to minimize and eliminate all sorts of discrimination and abuse of the elderly in Uganda.

Our Mission.

Our mission is to build a community of resilient senior citizens with ability to pass on knowledge and wisdom to the next Generation.

Our Vision

A society where older persons age with dignity, enjoying spiritual, economic and social wellbeing in their respective communities.

Our Philosophy: “Old is gold”

Special thanks

Our special thanks extended to Fresh Dairy Company that found it important to give a hand to our senior citizens in Wakiso.

May your sales grow enormously and your trade be expanded. ***Blessed shall you be in the city and blessed shall you be in the field.*** Deuteronomy 28:3-6

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