



Vincent vs. the Energizer Bunny

Dear Friend,

Problem One

“Not a chance,” Joseph, our driver, informed us. “We can’t do the video call without Vincent and we are not allowed to pick him up.” It looked like we had to cancel our video call with the care team. Vincent, our ministry coordinator, has no internet at home and lives 8 miles from the office. The Ugandan government, out of an abundance of concern about COVID-19, has issued a prohibition against traveling in any vehicle or on a boda-boda (motorcycle).

Vincent has a cell phone and is able to receive email, so I sent him a note suggesting that we choose another date — a few weeks down the road. His reply landed in my Inbox with spunk: “Tomorrow’s video call will proceed. Don’t worry about a thing. I will be there!”

Solution



If Energizer Batteries knew about Vincent, they would have chosen him as their marketing icon and mascot instead of the silly pink rabbit that wears sunglasses and striped flip-flops. Vincent got up long before the first rooster crowed, started walking in the dark, and arrived at

the office in time for our 8:00 a.m. video call. “How did you get there?” I asked him. “I walked. There was no way for me not to walk. Don’t worry, I do it happily!”

(Personally, I love walking for hours through the forest to conquer a peak or arrive at a waterfall, but I can’t imagine walking 16 miles, round trip, to be on a video call.)

Other team members had arrived to be on the video call. My colleague, Steve, and I talked with the team about ways Ourganda might continue our mission of saving and extending lives at a time when the government won’t allow our mobile clinics to visit the villages. Our office in town is open all day, every day, to help those who can get there on foot, but precious few can do so.



That Led to Problem Two

“Government and private hospitals and clinics are handicapped,” the team explained, “because doctors, nurses, and other workers have no way to get to the facilities where they work. Many of them live too far away to walk, so many of the hospitals and clinics are severely understaffed.”

“Why doesn’t the District Health Office send vehicles to pick them up?” we asked.

“They would like to,” our team answered, “but they don’t own vehicles, and if they did they couldn’t afford to fill them with petrol.”

Solution

Vincent had a brainstorm. “How about if we offer to transport health care workers in the Ourganda van?” he suggested. “Can we do that?”

“Of course we can!”

As soon as our video call was over, Vincent and Oscar walked to the District Health Office in Bundibugyo Town and laid the suggestion on the table. The powers-that-be pounced like a starving crocodile and immediately approved the plan.



Starting Saturday,

April 4, the Ourganda mobile clinic was repurposed as a transportation service for doctors, nurses, midwives, and other workers who need to get to the hospital. Ten caregivers were given a round trip ride in the Ourganda van the first day and the number grew from there. The District Health Officer has now requested that our second Ourganda vehicle join the effort.

And how cool is this: The Ourganda team has purchased a ton of food and water so that every person who rides in the Ourganda van receives a small cake and a bottle of water as a ‘thank you’ gift for his or her service to the community. (Check out the photo of Nurse Sarah appreciating her water and cake!)

I cannot even express how proud we are of our ministry coordinator and the rest of our team!

On Thursday evening, Vincent walked 8 miles back to his home.

On Friday morning, he retraced his steps and walked another 16 miles to treat patients at our office and to meet in person with

the District Health Office as they worked out the final arrangements. Starting last Saturday, Vincent has been able to ride in the Ourganda van as part of the new program!



COVID-19 has changed Ourganda’s rhythm and the way we extend and save lives, but it has also opened new doors of influence. If you are a praying person, please pray for our team and for our many sisters and brothers in Uganda. Pray also that God will use this unexpected opportunity to bless more people than we could have imagined.



Ron Gladden
Ourganda Director

P.S. Thank you!



One Time Projects	Total Cost	Raised	Needed
Project CURE	\$35,000	\$2,500	\$32,500
Ourganda Campus	\$45,000	\$25,951	\$19,049
Water Project	\$20,741	\$6,840	\$13,901

Ongoing Projects	Cost	Needed
Kits (Birthing)	\$15 each	hundreds
Kits (Hygiene, Kids)	\$10 each	hundreds
Water Filters	\$42 each	hundreds
Urgent Medical Surgeries	\$1,000 average per person	