

Village TEACH

Partner School Profile
St. Joseph Buziranjovu



Overview

St. Joseph Buziranjovu is a Ugandan government-aided primary school founded by the Roman Catholic Church. Situated in the remote village of Buziranjovu in Nakisunga subcounty of Mukono District—16.4 km from Mukono District Headquarters—St. Joseph Buziranjovu faces several challenges to providing high quality education for its students. Notably, a foreign investor has purchased the land where the village is located, displacing many households and families in the school’s catchment area. The school’s remote location also causes challenges for enrollment, tardiness and absenteeism.

Elevate has partnered with St. Joseph Buziranjovu since 2016 to implement our Village TEACH Program, which improves education quality in rural schools by engaging parents and communities to collaboratively design and implement school improvement solutions. In 2019, the community was generous enough to partner with Elevate to pilot and provide feedback on new Program activities we have developed.

Making Progress with Village TEACH

Led by headteacher, Mr. Malaba Francis, St. Joseph Buziranjovu started their school improvement journey by debating and selecting the top 5 issues they believe are preventing the school from providing quality education for their children. They then elected a Village TEACH Team (VTT)—comprised of teachers, parents, administrators and pupils—to lead the development and implementation of Action Plans to solve these challenges.

St. Joseph Buziranjovu Quality Improvement Priorities

1. Shortage of teacher housing
2. A shortage of classrooms
3. Parents not paying school fees on time
4. Difficulty accessing water for use at school
5. Low pupil enrolment

After drafting their Action Plans, the VTT organized a community meeting to share information about the status of the school and generate support for their proposed solutions. In close collaboration with the School Management Committee (SMC), the Team succeeded in convincing parents to contribute cash, materials and labour to construct a new block of classrooms. **This effort will reduce the number of pupils in each classroom, making listening, participating and learning easier.**

In addition to constructing classrooms, the community mobilized enough money to **rent teacher housing** near the school, reducing the travel burden for teachers who live far from school or have extracurricular duties. The SMC and Village TEACH Team also collaboratively ran a door-to-door campaign, urging parents to enroll their children at the school. As a result of this effort, **90 new pupils enrolled** for the 2020 school year, largely in the lower primary classes which are critical years for pupils to gain competence in literacy and numeracy.

Increasing enrolment coupled with new teacher housing provided a foundation for Mr. Malaba to successfully lobby the local government to assign his school **two new teachers** and convince parents and the community to privately contract a third teacher to ensure that the increased pupil numbers are reasonably matched by an increase in teachers.

Because of Village TEACH, St. Joseph Buziranjovu is now a collaborative and thriving school community. Parents have confidence in the school’s capacity and commitment to deliver a decent education to their children, and have a better understanding of how they can support. Teachers are motivated by the community’s support and active engagement, and the SMC has a clear and active role in driving school improvement efforts.