



Members of the Mudassir Husain family show off some of the wheelchairs that were donated to physically handicapped children. COURTESY PHOTO

Driven by the desire to help out the needy

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Racheal Kanyonyozi is a Senior Six student at Lugoba High School in Lugoba village, Wakiso District.

For six years Kanyonyozi and other students have been drawing water from a rusty borehole at the corner of their dormitory until recently its inability to sufficiently serve them notwithstanding. "Sometimes it (borehole) would breakdown and our only source of water would be the communal well," she says.

"On days when there would be water at the borehole, it would be stinky and dirty. It would be almost brown and sometimes drenched with rock particles," Kanyonyozi adds.

This has been the story for Kanyonyozi and some 200 girls who risk their lives to draw water from a community well three kilometres away from their school thus exposing them to possible abuse.

"The well has many rowdy people, especially boda boda men who use it to wash their motorcycles. Some speak vulgar words before us and even ask for sexual favours," Kanyonyozi, who is about 17 years old

However, as fate would have it, the school chanced on an opportunity after the Mudassir Husain family, which visited Uganda on August 25 donated an 8,000 liter capacity water tank from which the students now draw water.

"Even if I do not fetch water in the evening before going to bed, I am sure of waking up to clean water from the tank," Kanyonyozi says.

Similarly, Amos Mwesigwa, a physically handicapped student at the Kampala School for the Physically Handicapped in Mengo, can move about easily because of the [Mudassir]

About the Mudassir family

Named after his father Mudassir says when their father left Uganda in 1972 back to England, he always told them about Uganda, specifically Kalisizo, in Masaka District where he was born and raised.

Their father's wish, according to family members had been to travel back to Uganda to meet and support Kalisizo, where he stayed for years to assist needy communities.

family, which donated to him a wheel chair. "The one [wheel chair] I had had no resting area for my feet. It would often breakdown and I would miss school," he says, showing off the flexibility of his new wheelchair.

The wheelchair, Mwesigwa says, is more flexible as he can ride himself around and will "only need someone to help me push it where I cannot push it on my own".

The story of Kanyonyozi and Mwesigwa is just part of the larger group of people that have been assisted out of destitute situation by the Mudassir family.

Mudassir Husain, who was born in 1972 in Kalisizo in Masaka District fled Uganda during the president Amin. However, according to the family, his love for Uganda never died until he passed on about a year ago.

According to the young Mudassir, one of the sons, their father had always talked about Uganda and his wish to comeback to assist the needy. However, he died before fulfilling this dream.

"We had to fulfil it on his behalf and when

we can come to Uganda via thought of ways in which we could assist and zeroing in on clean water because it is an essential in life," he says.

The Mudassir family, which stays in England returned to the country purposely to conduct charity work, a key dream that Mudassir Husain had lived with.

The family, assisted by Bharat Manek, a family friend and principal of Lohana Schools in Kamwokya, was connected to Hope Nankunda Mwijuka, the executive director of Raising Teenagers Uganda, who identified needy communities that need assistance.

Nankunda, has been in the business of childcare for about five years and she understands that children draw satisfaction from feeling loved.

"They [children] do not need so much. They just need love and the Mudassir family has partly demonstrated this," she says.

Therefore, she says, there is need to give attention to young children especially those that are abandoned by their parents early in life.

During the five-day visit the family donated two hospital beds to Hospice Uganda in Makindye, three wheelchairs to Kampala School for the Physically Handicapped, foodstuff to the HIV unit of Kawala Health Centre in Kasubi, school bags, foodstuff and clothes to children of Good Shepherd Orphanage in Kisenyi.

Other donations included textbooks to Kololo Senior Secondary School where Husain Mudassir studied and solar lamps and sanitary towels to school girls in



Mwesigwa and Nankunda show off one of the donated wheelchair.



Girls of Lugoba High School draw water from the donated tank.