

# Co-Production Radio Uganda/Deutsche Welle

How does population growth impact on debt relief ?

## Producers:

Richard Baguma Tinkasimire, Radio Uganda  
Ludger Schadomsky, Deutsche Welle Radio

**MUSIK:** Call off the debt (UB40)      **40 sec**

**ATMO1** Daniel Kavuma: „My name is D.K., I am 43 years old, and I would like to introduce you to my family: ..wife & 7 kids....      **2'13**

**MUSIK:** Call off the debt (UB40)      **establish: 15 sec**

*Call off the debt*, sings British rock band UB40. The band is just one of a number of well-known artists who are campaigning for the relief of debt owed by developing countries. But what exactly is debt?

*According to The Hutchinson Encyclopedia*, DEBT is

(VOICE) „something that is owed by a person, organisation or country, usually money, goods or services. Debt usually occurs as a result of borrowing“.

In the next thirty minutes, we want to look at population growth in Uganda and how it impacts on debt relief. We, that is - ..(VOICE) RICHARD BAGUMA TINKASIMIRE, ..(VOICE) ..and LUDGER SCHADOMSKY, and this program is a co-production of Radio Uganda and Deutsche Welle Radio, Germany's International Broadcaster.

## **ATMO Street Kampala**

Uganda is the smallest of the East African countries with a population of over 22 million and an average income of 240 US dollars per person per year. It is a so-called „highly indebted poor country“. In 1998, Uganda owed banks and Western countries 3.6 billion US dollars. That means that every child, woman and man owed over 170 US dollars. There was no way the poor country was going to be able to pay back this debt.

After vigorous campaigns by activists all over the world, the rich industrialised countries in the West decided to forgive poor and highly indebted countries - like Uganda - a part of their debts. However, there were strings attached to the debt relief: the beneficiary countries had to pledge that they would allocate the money to fight poverty and generally improve the living conditions of their people.

What do ordinary Ugandans themselves think about this debt relief? Let us hear some of them:

## **Vox pop 2'14**

So, generally, Ugandans seem to agree that debt relief is a good thing – as long as the money is put to good use.

Four years down the line, we want to see for ourselves: are people benefitting from debt relief? And how does high population growth impact on the debt relief: is the money freed by debt relief gobbled up by the ever growing number of mouths that have to be fed?

We thought that rather than talking to big people we go and look at the household level. So we accompanied a Ugandan family for two weeks. Richard was able to link us up with the Kavuma family. They are pretty much what you would consider your average Ugandan family: they live in a rural setting, the father has a job in the city, and they have 7 children. That's the national average. For two weeks, we paid visits to their house where we ate Matoke and nyama, the staple food of Uganda, and met the Kavuma children at school and their work places.

**ATMO 8: Daniel garden** (shows us around his property, pigs, vegetables..)

The first day we arrive at the Kavuma house, Daniel Kavuma takes us on a tour of his property. The Kavuma family lives on a small plot in a village called Lungala, about 40 kilometres west of the capital Kampala. 6 days a week, Daniel works as a night watchman. Residents pay him 5000 Ugandan Shillings – about 3 US dollars - per night for looking after their cars. Daniel is also a volunteer community policing officer. He doesn't get paid, but sometimes residents will give him a loaf of bread or some little money in appreciation of his work.

Every Thursday, Daniel takes the Matatu – the Taxibus - to Lungala where he spends the day with his family.

**ATMO A8: Daniel garden**

Daniel is visibly proud of his shamba - or garden: there are mango and avocado trees, sugar cane and bananas, and the source of the local staple, Matoke. Pigs, goats, sheep and rabbits supplement the household. The nearby forests provide the material for the superb baskets and mats which Daniels wife makes in order to supplement the family income. The vegetables, fruits and animals allow Daniel to feed his family without having to spend money to buy food items.

**CLIP DANIEL A8:**

„No, no, myself, I don't have to buy those vegetables, I have got them (here). I have enough food to feed my children. Even ten people I can manage to feed them.“

Uganda is a fertile country located in the tropics along the equator.

**ATMO RAIN**

Now, in the rainy season, there is heavy downpour every other day, painting the country in different shades of green. While in many parts of Africa exhausted soils make farming

impossible, it is said that all a Ugandan need to do is sit beneath a mango tree and wait for the fruit to drop. Moreover, Lake Victoria, which Uganda shares with its neighbours Tanzania and Kenya, provides rich protein in form of fish, and allows hundreds of small lakeside communities to eke out a living from fishing.

But Uganda's natural resources are a mixed blessing: While it allows people to be largely self-sufficient, it also encourages families to have more children. At 7 children per woman, Uganda's birth rate is one of the highest in the world. If the population continues to grow at the present rate, it is expected to double within 23 years. So, if Ugandans are to benefit from debt relief and reduce poverty, families have to start reducing the number of their children, says Dr. Jotham Musinguzi of the Population Secretariat.

**CLIP Jotham Musinguzi (2:40)                      2'00**

Our own people need to know that there is no way to get rid of this poverty if you have large and unmanageable family sizes ... you find you are getting this relief, but the population growth which is so rapid is going to undermine whatever you are doing. And all these concepts – poverty eradication in itself, is going to be fundamentally undermined by rapid population growth like we have currently, and we need to do something about it.

But „doing something about it“ , that is, persuading Ugandans to reduce the number of their children, is not an easy task in a country where children are regarded as a social security net, and where neighbours compete for the highest number of children. Large tracks of land in Uganda are still not utilised, and at 22 million people, there is still plenty of space for children - or so the reasoning goes. Even the president is said to be in favour of large families, encouraging his countrymen to reproduce.

So when Western countries offered Uganda the cancellation of some of its debts, they insisted that the government should implement its poverty eradication plan where education was a focal point: School enrollment was low, and illiteracy high. So, the government introduced UPE, or *Universal Primary Education*. It provides for 4 children of each family to attend primary school free of charge, and is funded by debt relief money.

The results of the education drive have been overwhelming – quite literally so: In the year 2000, about 6.5 million children were enrolled in primary schools across the country – against only less than 3 million a few years earlier.

We want to see for ourselves what UPE has done – or has failed to do – to help Ugandans improve their lot. We visit Denis, the 11 year old son of the Kavuma family, at Kibuuka Memorial Primary School in Tembale village.

### **ATMO: Song**

When we arrive, the children are chanting a song about Africans who were taken to the Americas: Slavery is the subject of this morning's history class.

The children are dressed in green school uniforms. „No pain – no gain“ read the emblems on the blazers. Up to five children are squeezed behind one wooden desk, textbooks are shared as there are not enough to go around.

### **CLIP Dpt HM:**

We share textbooks. We put one text book on each desk. So, they normally sit four or five... Ok, let us look at your books, textbooks, exercise books, put them on the desk.

### **CLIP1 RICHARD (IN SITU):**

„This is a P5 class, that means they are about three years to high school. An average of five students share one textbook, a mathematics textbook for example, is shared by four or five students. This desk here is about 1.5 meters long is shared by 3 or 4. Even some of the exercise books are being shared between subjects – an exercise book can have subjects shared by three or more. I also see that some of them are sharing exercise books from one bag to two or three students. The other thing is they are lacking mathematical sets, the basic tools for mathematics studies.

TEACHER: Who has a set ? Arms up. A full set....So you can see, they are not many.

RICHARD: Must be about 30 %. So 70% don't have these mathematical sets.

We ask the deputy headmaster about the effects the introduction of Universal Primary education has brought to his school:

### **CLIP Dpt.HM „**

The number of pupils has increased very much. Last year, they had 600. That was in 2001. Now, in 2002, they are approaching 1600.

Teachers, they are still few. ..whereby a teacher has now to teach many. In times of marking, it becomes a trouble. They are very many. Again, you find, when they sit in large numbers, they don't all learn. Some hide behind their friends, they don't even talk. By the time you come to marking at the end of the term, you will find, many are left behind. That are the problems we face here.

**R:**You say teachers have huge classes. Marking, examining, giving attention to the pupils is a problem. Does that therefore affect or lower the level of education ?

**T:** Definitely, it lowers. Because if you talk about teaching, actual teaching, you have to be able to reach every child. But here, since they are many, sometimes you find that you cannot move from the front to the back. So they just do their things there.

Under the new UPE program, parents are required to provide lunch for their children. The president himself has appeared on television, urging Ugandans to ensure that their children don't go hungry.

But as villagers struggle to eke out a living, few if any can afford the 5500 Ushillings asked by the school in meal contributions.

As a result, the school empties at lunch break when pupils rush home for their first meal. As most live far away, they regularly skip afternoon classes:

### **CLIP deputy headmaster ...**

„The number is big in the morning when you make the call. But during lunch time when they look for eatings, they don't come back.

We leave Mr.Ssenonga and go looking for Denis.

## **ATMO SOCCER**

Eventually, we find him on the football pitch.

Denis is shy to talk to us. Although he has been studying English for 3years, he is clearly uncomfortable with the language, and prefers to speak Luganda, his mother tongue.

## **CLIP DENIS (LUGANDA)voice over?**

Denis tells us that every morning, he walks for about an hour to reach here.

Lunch is a bowl of porridge.

The classes have become so big that they now have „A“ and „B“ streams.

In three years, Denis will leave primary school.

When we ask what he wants to do for a job when he is grown up, Denis doesn't have to think twice:

## **ATMO DENIS („Daktari“)**

„I want to be a doctor“, he says. Why a doctor ? That's where the money is“, says Denis with a grin.

Denis may be lucky, and go on to secondary school, if his father can afford the school fees. But the large majority will be forced to drop out, as their parents won't be able to pay.

Like many others in Uganda,two of the Kavuma children have dropped out of primary school. Kavuma`s daughter 17year old Juliet is into tailoring, while her brother 15year Gerald is training to become a motor mechanic.

## **ATMO Car workshop**

On our way back to the village, we meet Gerald beating away at a car wreck. His father pays 150.000 Ugandan Shillings for his training.

Back at Lungala trading centre. We pay a visit to Juliet. We find her in a small mud hut where she is busy sewing.

## **ATMO SEWING MACHINE**

### **CLIP GIRL:**

„My father gave me this machine because it brings money in in very few time.

D: I was keeping some money. But I don't know or how

long. Now this girl is dependent on this machine. I don't buy anything for her.

She has bought a bed, a mattress, a blanket from this.She (can afford to) buy her shoes, dresses from this machine, so she doesn't ask me anything. That's why I think this is helpful.

Juliet says she makes about 10.000 Shillings in one and a half weeks. That's enough to buy clothes and pay the school fees for her youngest brother.

Like Juliet and Gerald, many youths need to be equipped with skills so they can earn a living. However this can only be achieved with assistance from different agencies. One such agency working in Uganda is the GTZ-the German Agency for Technical Cooperation.

### **ATMO GTZ project**

Program coordinator Wolfgang Jessen told us the focus of the agency's skills development project.

### **CLIP Jessen**

Let's find out from Johnson, one of the participants, how the program is going to help him acquire marketable skills:

### **CLIP GTZ beneficiary - Johnson**

When such youths acquire income generating skills, they can easily plan and provide for their families.

### **ATMO song from FPAU**

We leave Lungala trading centre and head for the Kavuma house. When we arrive, little Kenneth has taken a bad turn. He is Daniel's grandson from his eldest daughter. From what we gather, she has run off to Kampala where she recently gave birth to a baby boy – Kenneth – who now lives with her parents. Daniel told us that his daughter avoids meeting him on the rare occasions when she comes and visits her family.

### **ATMO CRYING**

Kenneth's belly is swollen, and his hair has a brownish colour, indicating poor nutrition. We decide to take him to the local health clinic at Mpigi for a check-up.

The provision of primary health care and family planning services is the second pillar of Uganda's fight for poverty alleviation. Hospitals across the country have been equipped with additional resources, like delivery beds, vaccine storage equipment, essential drugs, protective wear for nurses and doctors.

### **ATMO SHOP**

But resources are clearly still limited:

Before we enter the clinic, Daniel buys an exercise book at a small shop outside the hospital. The clinic does not have the resources to provide stationary, so patients are asked to buy their own books to keep a record.

## **ATMO FAMILY PLANNING UNIT**

We take the Kavumas to the family planning unit.

Earlier, Daniel had told us that he sends his wife to the clinic for advice on contraceptives. Now he admits that neither of them had ever spoken to a trained family planning nurse.

Harriet Kalemba is a professional nurse and midwife, and in charge of the family planning unit at Mpigi hospital.

### **CLIP MIDWIFE:Ugclin01**

Here, at Mpigi health centre, we offer services of family planning. Mainly we provide the injection ward? method, we provide the pill?, we provide condoms, we provide health education to our clients, counselling and many other (services).

The walls of the room are adorned with colourful posters. One depicts a man who helps his wife carrying fire wood. „Ugandan men - support your wives“, the poster reads. Others call on women to access modern family planning methods.

Despite the fact that the slogans are in both English and the local Luganda language, the message is slow in reaching the people.

Misconceptions about family planning, and gender-specific taboos remain high, says Harriet Kalemba:

### **CLIP MIDWIFE:Ugclin01**

The husband might think: Oh, now I am old, I can no longer produce...and maybe, those nes, who don't come, some think if you give them an injection they will stop delivering for the rest of their lives. Others thnk if you take the pill you may get ?? abnormalities, so they still have these misconceptions....Women may prefer to come but their husbands don't allow. So some come secretly, they don't want their husbands to know. After some time, the husbands get to learn of it that my wife is practising something, and then some of them come and blame the wife..some are against family planning.

### **CLIP DANIEL**

Myself, I have never come here. But according to her experience, I think what she has told us is the real thing.... that is our ignorance That's through our ignorance. Because we don't know. Most men don't know about family planning, they do not know.

And then, the Kavumas sit down for their first-ever family planning session with Sister Kalemba

It turns out that the Kavumas are using condoms as a means of family planning. That's a surprise. Who brought up the idea ?

### **CLIP DANIEL 9:28**

I decided by myself to start family planning because I saw that the children I have are enough for me. So that's why I decided to use family planning and not produce more children.

**CLIP WIFE 7:52 f.**

Giraida confirms that Daniel then approached her and together, they decided to use condoms as their means of family planning.

But now there is a problem.

**ATMO WIFE TALKING TO NURSE:**

Giraida has been experiencing abdominal pain, and she thinks it's because of the condom. She agrees to come back soon for an examination.

Both Daniel and his wife agree that they don't want any more children.

**CLIP WIFE 11:20**

No, that's enough, she says. I don't want any more children.

**CLIP DANIEL**

Seven children – that's enough for me. Here in our country-if we have children, we expect some of them to die. So if you have seven children, and two die, or let's say three, then you remain with four. That's because I wanted that number. Because I am not sure that they all grow up. (12:23) When I am old, out of these children one or two can help me.

**ATMO: RADIO CLIP:**

With radio ads like this one, the ministry of health and various advocacy groups are trying to sensitise the population on family planning issues.

But Jotham Musinguzi of the Population Secretariat says much more has to be done to get the message across, particularly in the rural areas where most Ugandans live. But all too often, efforts are hampered by inadequate resources. Cars are few, and villages far in between. Even a loudspeaker is sometimes hard to get by, and often, there is no money for petrol.

Musinguzi says the other problem is some community leaders, who command considerable authority but undermine family planning efforts by encouraging villagers to have large families.

**CLIP Musinguzi:**

„ They will tell people that there is enough land...“

**ATMO AD FAMILY PLANNING**



As campaigners work hard to get word out that something has to be done about the rapid population growth, more and more Ugandans subscribe to the notion of family planning. All agree that male peer educators have to be brought on board. After all, it's still the men who decide whether or not family planning is exercised.

Daniel Kavuma, for one, has become an enthusiastic campaigner for family planning issues. He has pledged to return to the clinic for further counselling. He even wants to go and lecture his friends in the local beerhall where he goes for a cup of the strong banana beer.

### **CLIP KAVUMA ugclin01**

Now, as we have known this, we are going to start to teach our friends in the villages the advantages of (this) family planning. Now we are going to start that work. We are going to work hand-in-hand with these people here. I can tell them on such and such day I was at Mpigi health centre, this is what I got from there, how do you see it, how can we do that. So we start conversing from here, and we can even say: Let us call one day, Mr. Chairman, and call that person to help us. He agrees. So we will teach our men in the villages this thing family planning.

With the involvement of ordinary couples like Kavuma and his wife in family planning activities, one can hope that Ugandans will see the sense in having small families. But even with few children, it remains to be seen whether the money freed under the debt relief program will indeed benefit ordinary Ugandans, or will end up in the pockets of corrupt government officials. What is clear, though, is that highly indebted poor countries like Uganda still need debt relief and that more of the saved resources should go to family planning.

### **VOXPOP (2)**

#### **MUSIC UNDER: Call off the debt, UB 40**

And that's where we come to the end of this program, you have been listening to a Co-Production of *Radio Uganda* and *Deutsche Welle*, German International Radio where we looked at *Population growth and debt relief in Uganda*. But before we go .....

L: Richard, tell me: how many children would you like to have ?

R: .....

That's it, from us, ..V1..Ludger Schadomsky...and V2 .Richard Baguma Tinkasimire.

#### **MUSIC: Call off the debt, UB 40**