The COVID-19 pandemic with its subsequent measures to control the massive spread of the virus affected many Ugandan workers both in the formal and informal sector. This tremendously led to a slow down in their social and economic abilities.

The IUF Uganda affiliates however stood in the gap to support the workers, their families and communities in all ways possible. Through this we sensitized them on the wide spread of COVID-19, how to stay safe during the period of pandemic without physically meeting them. Putting into consideration that there was a lockdown and movement was limited; the only way to reach out to the members without physically meeting them was through massive use of social media platforms and press media including print and televised messages.

With due respect, we appreciate the effort of the NPCC members who tirelessly and closely worked together to ensure that workers stay safe amidst this challenging situation but most importantly secure their jobs at all cost.

IUF Uganda wrote messages about COVID-19, how it is acquired, spread, treated and can be avoided. These messages were designed in form of flyers, translated in seven local languages and disseminated to the members and communities. This was purposely intended to ensure that members appreciate the situation against all odds and endeavour to stay safe.

In the same spirit, Union leaders negotiated favourably with employers to ensure that workers retain their jobs and remunerations are made within the possible percentages to help sustain the employees during the lock down period. To this effect memorandums of understanding were signed with different companies mostly in the hospitality sector which was most hit. For example M.O.Us were signed with Serena hotel Kampala, Sheraton Hotel and Silver Springs Hotel.

Video clips were recorded in English and local languages which are commonly used to teach members how to make home made masks which are cost effective and easily accessible. These were disseminated to the members to ensure that their safety is guaranteed at all times.

With the reported increase in domestic and gender based violence, the NPCC members worked closely with security personnel and the press to air out messages on television encouraging members to speak out and report any cases of violence, seek support from the security organs and the union leaders and also provide mechanisms of protecting our members from being affected by domestic violence.

Some of the essential workers of Banyankole Co-operative Union Ltd on job during Covid19 period.

Social/physical distancing and proper washing of hands at workplaces have been observed and adhered to. It was observed that workers who were of lower hierarchies and out sourced; they are now considered as essential workers because they are taking care of the company premises during the absence of the employees in the higher positions.

The community also have appreciated our efforts.

In CONCLUSION.....

Despite the challenging circumstances posed by the pandemic of COVID-19, NPCC members have been positive and acted with a lot of vigour to support the members. Great appreciation to IUF and U2U for the technical and financial support. We hope that the new normal after COVID 19 will find us all safe.