

ASCENO

AT HOME WITH

Noella Coursaris Musunka

**This week we chat with the beautiful Noella Coursaris Musunka
- an international model and philanthropist for Africa's youth,
Noella champions the cause of girls' education.**



How are you spending your time as a mother during isolation and how is it affecting your charity?

"I am enjoying spending this time with my children ensuring I make the most of it. I am involving them in day to day jobs around the house and helping them with school work whilst I work as leader of Malaika.

Malaika is a school for 346 girls in the rural village of Kalebuka in the DRC. We also have a community centre where we provide short programs and education for over 5,000 adults and youth. Now it is all closed to help prevent the spread of the virus. This is a big challenge for the community as they didn't see it coming because they don't have electricity so there is no TV or exposure to the news.

My work has changed as I'm not travelling but it is still demanding as we try to work to support the community at this time with hygiene awareness and food supplies. We started a food programme 3 weeks ago and are feeding 60 families per week. We have impacted 1,200 individuals already. We are also getting the ladies who work for our brand, Mama Ya Mapendo, to create some masks for people in the community. We have built and refurbished 20 wells in the area and are using them as an opportunity to teach people about hand washing and ways they can protect themselves from getting Covid-19 (water/soap) is a luxury in rural villages. I see this time as an opportunity to reflect and strategise, both for Malaika and my own life and make some decisions about what's next and what's important."

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We believe in what you are doing. Is there anything we do with our community to help support your charity work right now?

"We are so grateful for the continued support from many incredible brands such as yourselves. People can support us by donating and this will enable our food program to continue and hygiene awareness as well as the sewing of masks. We are hearing stories each day of many folk in the community losing their jobs and so the food we are providing is all they have. Our supporters can also help by following us on social media and sharing our posts to raise awareness of the work we are doing and our current fundraisers."

Donation page: <http://malaika.org/donate/>

What are you doing for yourself right now?

"Exercise is an important part of my routine at the moment. It always has been but can end up taking a bit of a back seat due to my usually busy schedule of engagements and modelling campaigns. I have an exercise bike and ensure I use it regularly. I will also take some time to pamper myself with a soothing bath, some beauty treatments, and then putting on some comfortable ASCENO silk pyjamas to help relax and re-energise ready for the next busy day."

