



Volunteers from Newtraid.org to Support Uganda Hospital Redevelopment

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Atatur hospital serves a rural community in Eastern Uganda. Because of financial difficulties, vandalism and the insurgency, the buildings equipment and services are inoperable or in a bad state of repair. A visit to the hospital by a volunteer in 2006 resulted in a proposal to make use of volunteers with professional skills and experience to support a charitable organisation in a redevelopment programme to improve the hospital infrastructure, clinical services buildings and equipment, patient facilities and staff accommodation.

PR9.NET February 12, 2007 - Southampton UK - The hospital was built in the late 1960's / early 1970's by the Government of Uganda and serves a scattered, predominantly rural population of some 400,000 people within Kumi district in Eastern Uganda. It functions as a district referral hospital covering the whole spectrum of clinical conditions. The main factors of morbidity and mortality include malaria, diarrhoea, respiratory tract infections, HIV / AIDS and road traffic accidents. It also plays a major role in community, primary care and health prevention services with a very comprehensive range of services.

The hospital buildings and equipment have not been upgraded since they were built more than 35 years ago and present many real challenges in practicing medicine. Power supplies are limited and unreliable, the sewage and waste disposal systems are broken down, there is no clean water supply and many of the facilities on wards and in other areas such as laboratories are unusable. Staff residences are very dilapidated, overcrowded, and in poor condition due to vandalism and the effects of the insurgency with no power supplies, WCs, and running water supply.

Despite the difficult conditions and lack of facilities the dedicated hospital staff continue to serve large number of people who would otherwise have great difficulties in accessing healthcare.

Following a visit to the hospital by Dr Richard Priestley in October 2006 it has been agreed that Newtraid volunteers are to work with the Pearl of Africa Foundation to provide technical and management support to selected areas of redevelopment of the hospital to bring the greatest immediate benefit to patients and staff. As far as is practical, any such developments in services will be sourced locally within Uganda and project-managed locally within an appropriate form of local accountability. They are of a very practical nature and should bring clear and immediate benefits. Details of the project proposals and action plan can be found on the www.newtraid.org website

Actions are aimed at impacting very positively on these areas

Infrastructure

- Provision of sustainable and affordable power supplies.
- Renovation of the waste disposal and sewage system.
- Provision of clean water supplies
- Renovation of wash hand basins, WCs, bathrooms and kitchens for the wards and clinics
- Establishment of a new post of building / maintenance technician to help keep equipment and services in running order

Clinical services

- Replacement of non-operable equipment including an X-ray machine, operating theatre lights, anaesthetic equipment, sterilizers
- Provision of new equipment including ultrasound, operating theatre table, pathology laboratory equipment
- Expansion of the range of drugs and medication available
- Development of new clinical services including an Eye clinic and associated outreach services

Patient services

- Provision of 100 + mattresses with covers, mosquito nets and cooking equipment, dining utensils etc. for inpatients
- Provision of a new ambulance

Staff facilities

- Renovation of staff accommodation to improve recruitment and provide for visiting staff, including power supplies, WCs, and new staff quarters
- Improve access to staff training and education both on site and access to local and national programmes by means of Continuing Professional Development. Staff should be able to update their skills by having access to books and journals, and by creating links with other facilities.
- Availability of computing facilities with Internet access.

Newtraid already has some core members of the team but would welcome others, Dr Richard Priestley a Newtraid volunteer and health professional says:-

"This is an exciting project for Newtraid and will provide an opportunity for Volunteers to join a programme which will bring huge benefits in Health care to a deprived rural population. We would welcome all skills but particularly ...Logistics, sourcing of equipment, healthcare professionals ... All colleagues would be part of a team determined to make a real difference ."

Mr Jim Opolot, Chief Executive of Pearl of Africa Foundation added:-

"The project seeks volunteers/organisations who will support medical staff professional development, source medical equipment, improve the hospital environment and quality of staff housing and involve the local communities in all aspects of health education, promotion of basic hygiene and respond to HIV/AIDS".

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About Pearl of Africa Foundation

Pearl of Africa Foundation founded in 2002, is a humanitarian and community development organization working with the poorest African communities in the United Kingdom and Africa. Its purpose is the relief of poverty, sickness and advancement of education, in particular children and young people. Our activities include advocating for educational rights and entitlements, skills training, production and dissemination of information resources, providing local relief during emergencies, supporting long-term development efforts that aim to improve the socio-economic well being of individuals, families and communities and promoting the participation of Africans in the economic and social development of their countries. More information at www.pearlofafricafoundation.org

About newtraid.org

Newtraid.org is a virtual organisation which provides "A Meeting Place for Volunteer Consultants and Clients"
Newtraid has a group of skilled and experienced volunteer consultants who freely give their knowledge and time to worthwhile causes and projects and provide support to any individual or organisation who has ideas that will benefit their local community and cannot afford commercial consultancy.

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