

**REPORT of AMBROSE MATSIKA,
Public Health Dental Officer, Kyambogo University
for the CRU DENTAL MISSION
held in November 2010 in Eastern Uganda**



INTRODUCTION

Christian Relief Uganda (CRU) is a registered charity operating in Uganda, most especially reaching the needy and vulnerable people in rural areas.

Through its dental department headed by Barbara Koffman, a retired Dental Hygienist, it has reached thousands of ailing Ugandans for the last 5 years.

Barbara comes with a diverse team of volunteers - mainly dentists, dental nurses, hygienists, therapists etc. She is often accompanied by a spiritual mentor, not necessarily from the dental profession.

The recent dental mission took place in Eastern Uganda from 8th to 19th November 2010.

1st week - Ongino Sub County, Kumi district.

2nd week - Mbale district

The areas which we visited in Mbale include:

Oseera primary school - 2 days

Kanapa primary school - 2 days

Kachaboi-1 day



In both districts we found a very high need for dental services. Many patients turned up with retained roots and high-grade attrition. It was alarming to note that not only are they lacking public dental services, but also they rarely access private dental services even when they need them. It was also surprising to see patients travelling up to 50km to the stations where we were working.

PATIENT ATTENDANCE

	OSEERA Primary School				KANAPA Primary School				KACHABOI			
	NO	F %	M %	C %	NO	F %	M %	C %	NO	F %	M %	C %
Day 1	160	80	15	5	208	80	15	5	150	70	20	10
Day 2	193	60	30	10	250	70	20	10	-	-	-	-
Total	353				458				150			

NO=Number of patients treated

F= Percentage of Female patients seen

M=Percentage of Male patients treated

C=Percentage of Children treated

In only the first five days in Kumi we managed to treat at least 961 patients.

OBJECTIVES

1. To carry out Oral health education
2. to screen the population for oral health conditions
3. To relieve pain through extractions, ART and simple fillings.
4. To refer complications

TEAM COMPOSITION

There were 9 UK Volunteers led by Barbara Koffman.

UK Team:

Mukund Patel, Shirley, Mike, Danielle, Heidi, Helen, Jo, Caroline.



Ugandan team included:

Ambrose Matsika, Leonard Avaga, Stephen (driver), Moses, Simon (Interpreter and OHI)

There was also a team of local interpreters as the languages were not easy for the team, even for the Ugandan team.

ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Many people were relieved of pain
2. Oral health education was given
3. Ugandan team benefited from new knowledge and skills from UK team through CPD and lectures.



CHALLENGES

1. High patient turnover
2. Short duration of mission compared to dental needs.
3. Occupational Hazards such as needle stick injuries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the above success stories and shortcomings, I suggest the following:

1. Continuity and sustainability of dental services through periodic outreaches by the local team and monitoring and evaluation of the impact created.
2. Empowerment of local dental professionals through training and exchange programmes. This would entail mentorship, role modelling and professional fellowships.
3. Extension of mission duration if resources permit.
4. As Ugandan team, we should realize the sacrifice made by the UK counterparts to help our local population and therefore we should use wisely any funds donated for the noble cause.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge CRU for organizing the mission.

I appreciate the determination of Barbara Koffman to reach the rural poor folk to relieve dental suffering. I am also grateful to the team for sacrificing time, funds and pleasure to help Ugandans.

All those who have stood with CRU and partnered with the charity through your kind donations are warmly saluted and have made tremendous impact in Uganda. God bless you.