

## **Report: PONT Mbale medics/engineer trip 18<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2005**

### **Aims**

- To assess progress with mosquito net and goat projects
- To review funding and spending within 3 NGO organisations on the projects
- To progress plans for establishing recognised and certifiable training for health workers to the level of CBHW (Community Based Health Worker)
- To explore possible links between secondary care workers in RGH and Mbale hospital
- To assess need for and suitability of redundant IT equipment for donation from UK
- To explore possibilities for involvement in water projects
- To strengthen partnership links and encourage our partners

### **Team**

Engineer – Howard Smith (water, IT, - and de facto equipment repair man)

Hospital Doctor – Eryl Hicks, Radiologist, RGH (hospital links)

Geoff Lloyd – GP (Project development)

Cath Taylor – GP (Team leader)

Carl Venn - GP (Survey, development household health record)

Sally Venn – GP and Public Health (survey, data collection)

Neil James – GP (survey, mapping)

David Metson – GP

Jane Metson – Teacher

David and Jane learned of the partnership through an article in “Doctor” magazine and were able to link into the medical and schools projects.

### **Reflection**

Although we began with a detailed plan at the outset, inevitably things changed as the week progressed to accommodate new fact-finding opportunities such as the visit to Bungokho Rural Development Centre. Several planned meetings with officials were scrapped as they were unavailable, but we very quickly managed to fill any free time!

Village visits were very helpful and informative. We were not able to make all the visits planned, and some villages were very disappointed. We are very sorry for this, and hope we can visit them as a matter of priority next time. We are grateful to our partners for restricting the number of planned visits, which allowed more in-depth discussion and learning about the villages for us.

The review of the survey data did not take place as it has been mislaid, but we still hope to retrieve it and analyse the data.

The composition of the small visiting team made us flexible. It was especially helpful to work with the NGO managers and to discuss at length the strengths and difficulties encountered in the pilot projects. Each member made a specific contribution and we achieved significant progress over the week. I believe we have a growing understanding of one another throughout the partnership, and that these bonds of friendship will continue to strengthen as we continue working together, be it face-to-face or working at a distance. As we begin to see some early fruits of the partnership, we return to Pontypridd enthused and confident that we can inspire others in our town to make a real difference in partnering the dedicated people who serve the poor in the Mbale district.

The venue for the Symposium on the Friday with the volunteer health workers was ideal – we had plenty of room, a comfortable central venue in St Austin's Hall, and great food. It was our great privilege and joy to meet with so many dedicated volunteers and present copies of "Where there is no Doctor" to these friends. We hope the Symposium will be a regular occasional event providing encouragement and opportunities for learning and sharing for all of us.

We are especially grateful to Apollo Mwenyi and all those who worked so hard to make our brief visit so fruitful.

We're already looking forward to next year's trip – let's keep talking and sharing our hopes and dreams.

## Agreed plans

As agreed with leadership and managers of SAO, UWCM and FDNC 26<sup>th</sup> November 2005

- 1) Funding of approximately £10,000 over next 3 months, of which:
- 2) Centralised admin budget approx. £1000.
- 3) Centralised purchasing of goats and nets, working to achieve best Value for Money 3 equal shares of £3,000 to each of SAO, FDNC and UWCM, of which roughly £1,000 each for nets, goats and survey/training projects.  
Possible variable funding next round depending on performance.
- 4) Nets – purchase treated nets as better quality (and therefore potential life of the net) offers better Value for Money (also nets are currently cheaper than projected)
- 5) Goats – to decide between managers of NGOs best strategy for goat distribution and care.  
Bungokho Rural Development Centre project – each NGO to send a representative for 1 day's training on goats to be taken from central administration budget.
- 6) Survey – new form. More work to be done by Mbale partners (managers/trainers) on improving draft form for household information collection / record card and refine in collaboration with PONT (Carl) by email. Start with the household registration document as soon as possible. To continue using current document to collect information until new simplified version is ready.
- 7) Training – SAO to train all CHPs (Community Health promoters) as this is a basic level of training certified and recognised by the District Director of Health Services (DDHS). Full training takes one year. NGOs will need to clarify what training already done by volunteers will count towards the CHP qualification to avoid unnecessary duplication of training.  
Funding for volunteers from UWCM and FDNC to be paid from their allocated training allowance to SAO to meet the costs of training.  
Salem can provide CBHW training – economy of scale if we can identify 50 workers for a 4 week training course. We would like to fund this as soon as practicably possible – ie when sufficient numbers of CHPs are certified and ready to progress to CBHW level.  
(The government also offers a 2 day course training certified CHPs as drug distributors of the Homapak Malaria treatment packs. The course is free but subsistence and travel would be required).
- 8) Teachers trip. There has been some political protest in Kampala recently but no apparent trouble travelling to or in Mbale or increased risk above that inherent in travelling to a developing country. The teachers visit is planned for February, a month before the elections in Uganda. Worth watching the news from Uganda. (eg Daily Monitor [www.monitor.co.ug](http://www.monitor.co.ug))
- 9) Jenga – a new NGO in the district, serving the communities to the East of Mbale towards the escarpment which forms the dramatic backdrop to the town. They are primarily working on rehabilitating water supplies to local communities, but are also interested in community health promotion. Possibility of joining the partnership at later date? – not for at least a year. Partners to consider the idea and implications.
- 10) Manafwa – Mbale district is now subdivided into Mbale district (Pop 375,000) and Manafwa district (400,000) Our partners are still working in both districts, so we are still partnered with the whole area.
- 11) Jackson – a local Mbale radio reporter – possibility of coming to work with a Youth camp in Pontypridd – known to Pastor Apollo. Need to clarify feasibility, Child Protection issues (PONT).
- 12) Container to transport reconditioned equipment (eg IT, hospital equipment, etc)  
? Rotary ?Workaid ?Interact – Sam, Howard, Robbie to investigate further especially feasibility of organising from Uganda to minimise costs.