

# Uganda Childbirth Injury Fund

## Newsletter December 2020

A charity to cure by surgery women made incontinent through complications in childbirth and other surgical procedures. Browse our website: [ucif.co.uk](http://ucif.co.uk)

Registered UK Charity No 1099135

Our first trip this year took us to Kitovu in January. Ishbel, Mhairi, Ian Asiiimwe, Cathrine, Michael Breen, Moses Balaraine and local doctors, Lucian and Florence made up the team. It was a very busy two-week camp with 97 patients treated in total including 30 fistula and two complex diversion procedures. Collaborative operating with our Ugandan colleagues was educational and productive for all. There were also two visiting American surgeons contributing to the surgical expertise available.

Ishbel and Annet Mweisga from Kamuli Mission Hospital were a vital part of the nursing team looking after an understandably very busy ward.

Kitovu Hospital is still managing to support more complex surgical procedures with onsite after care from Dr Lucian and Dr Florence and continues to be an important fistula centre for education and training in Uganda. This is a resource which needs ongoing support as funding remains challenging. Ishbel made good progress with research for her nursing manual of fistula care and we look forward to its publication later this year.



Our 2nd camp of the year was in March, taking us back to Kamuli. Ishbel, Mhairi, Ian Asiimwe, Christine, Kate, Sarah Atike and Moses Balaraine, were joined by local doctors Dr Bonny, Dr James, Dr Margaret and anaesthetist Ellen. Visitors – Yas Maeda and Alice Bradley, made up the team.

This was a very important camp for establishing more formal training of Ugandan junior surgeons. The team were delighted to be joined by Sarah Akite who is currently working in Kyangwali Refugee Camp near Hoima and is very passionate to become a fistula expert. We have made arrangements to work with her again in Hoima and other camps. There were also three doctors working in Kamuli Hospital who were part of the camp, including Dr Bonny who has attended two previous camps and

hopes to develop his fistula surgical skills. Our visiting colorectal surgeon, Dr Maeda, was most attentive in teaching all the junior doctors basic surgical skills, including knot tying and took



them through 4th degree tears. Nurse anaesthetist Ellen did an incredible job of safely looking after 51 patients and multiple surgeons.

We were most pleased to have a previous patient from the March 2019 camp return to the hospital in time to have a safe, planned caesarean section, as advised at discharge following her repair.

For the nursing staff it was a very busy camp, with a high proportion of fistula patients to nurse and a number of complex cases with grafts requiring skilled post-operative nursing care. Annet's experience in Kitovu in January was beneficial to this particular group of patients and was shared with the rest of the team. All the nurses in the ward and theatre worked long hours during the camp which was greatly appreciated.

Our partner NGO, Uganda Village Project, was involved as ever with mobilisation, meal provision, teaching and sewing and knitting reintegration projects. All patients were given new sets of underwear from UK donors which pleased them greatly.



As a charity we could never have predicted the effect covid 19 would have. Collaborative working with our Ugandan colleagues has always been our focus, and this year bore the fruit of this collaboration as between October and November Ian Asimwe and his colleagues ran three very successful fistula camps in Kamuli, Mubende and Homa. These were funded by UCIF.



In Ian's words, Uganda child-birth injury fund (UCIF) is one of the leading organizations that have played a tremendous role in bringing new hope and life to fistula mothers through mobilization of fistula clients, repair of fistula patients, training of fistula surgeons and to this has added training of nurses having realized the great role nurses play

in the recovery of the fistula clients.

And finally it was with great excitement that Mhairi just last week won the Global citizenship award from the 2020 Scottish healthcare award, on behalf of UCIF. A real honour which we all are humbled to accept. We are all really aware that without your ongoing support none of this would be possible , we are sincerely thankful

Wishing you all a happy Christmas and lovely New Year. Brian , Mhairi , Kate , Ishbel , Brenda, Sarah and Christine



Global Citizenship Award, Scottish Health Award 2020

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