

The Measure of Giving

Freely you have received, freely give.

~ Matthew 10:8

“You cannot kindle a fire in any other heart until it is burning in your own.”

~ Anonymous

LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE...*Brandi Denmark, one of our Mission 2005 Team Members, reports what she saw during our visit to a hospital in Kumi and the trip's impact on her.***M**Y TIME IN Uganda was life changing to say the least. I had never been on a mission trip before and I am very glad that I went. I have to

admit that I had a hard time the first week. I was homesick and it took several days before I was able to get in touch with my family to let them know that I was okay and to see how they were doing. I did not feel adequately prepared for what I met in Uganda as a result it was a very trying time for me, but the Lord is faithful and He blessed me in the end in ways I could not have imagined.

I am so very thankful for the time I spent in Uganda. To have the opportunity to touch one person's life is more than anyone could ask for. The children that I

provided nursing care for were just the most amazing children I have ever met. Some of them had wounds that were very infected and I had to clean them and peel away dead tissue and most of the children never even asked for pain medicine while I worked, even though I had plenty of it available.

While we were in Kumi, I had an opportunity to visit the government run hospital with other team members. I had been able to bring along some supplies from the hospital where I work and we donated them to the hospital. The conditions at the facility were terrible. The hospital had been built in 1969 and looked as though it had never been maintained. Although the buildings themselves were in good shape and clean, the equipment and the supplies were antiquated and insufficient to say the least. We met with the Chief Medical Officer, who last year was the only doctor for the entire hospital. This year, he told us, they were blessed to have four doctors on staff. The rest of the hospital staff consisted of 15 nurses, 15 nurse's aides, 16 midwives, 6 clinical officers - the equivalent to our physician's assistants, one lab tech and one pharmacist. This hospital serves up to 200 patients daily.

When we entered the hospital, we toured the emergency and admission areas. The emergency department does not open until 5 p.m. because the hospital is short staffed. People waited in the waiting room for hours to be seen (much like our hospitals here). The pharmacy consisted of one small room with nearly empty shelves and the laboratory was not much better.



As we continued through the hospital grounds we passed through several wards dedicated to specific specialties such as pediatric, maternity and adult care. We were able to speak to one mother who had delivered only a few hours before we arrived. There are no such things as IVs, pain medication, fetal monitoring or epidurals there. Hand written posters on the walls instructed the nurses and staff about the danger signs in labor and post partum.

Our next stop was the operating theater. As an OR nurse, I was appalled at the condition of the operating room. In the U.S. you cannot enter an OR without changing into hospital scrubs, covering your hair with a hat, your shoes with shoe covers and wearing a mask. To enter this OR all I had to do was change my shoes. The equipment in the theater itself was so outdated I could not have operated it if my life depended on it. Windows that opened to the outside and a lack of a ventilation system were just two of the things I noticed that can contribute to infection. The sterilization area was a tiny room off the main OR with sterilizers so old I almost did not recognize them for what they were. The hospital had only the one main operating room and one minor procedure room. There is only one anesthetist for the hospital.

At the end of the visit, I presented the Chief Medical Officer with the supplies we had brought. The staff was very appreciative and I pray that God will enable us to establish some type of partnership with the hospital to help them. On the ride back, I thought of all the times I had complained at work about things not working right, or running out of one thing or another. I made a commitment right then that I would never complain again about conditions at my hospital. At least I know that my patients won't die from a lack of simple supplies or medications. At least I know that my patients won't have to suffer pain during a procedure because we have no anesthesia.

I was also very humbled by the spirit of the people we worked with. Here in the U.S., we have every luxury and conveniences imaginable, yet sometimes our prayer life is lacking or our commitment to our church or community is waning. These people, who have almost nothing, had the most powerful faith and love for God I have ever seen. I was truly blessed by them. I look forward to returning to Uganda on another mission trip.

Impacting Africa... one Child at a time!

AIDS is still ravaging Africa, pray for the Church to awaken to action and show the love of Jesus to those affected, especially orphans. For many years ACF Missions, Inc. has been providing a Christian response to the problem of AIDS in Uganda through our program, Uganda Hope. Please let us know if you would like to help. You can impact Africa, one child at a time!

“We can give without loving, but we cannot love without giving.”

- Alexander. Duff