



BISHOP MASEREKA CHRISTIAN FOUNDATION (US)

A ministry serving HIV/AIDS patients and orphaned children of Kasese district of western Uganda.

NEWSLETTER FOR JULY-AUGUST 2008

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Warm Christian Greetings to all,

Please share this newsletter with your friends and families. Always refer people to our website, www.bmcf.org.

If you or your church or organization gets news of the activities of Bishop Masereka Christian Foundation (BMCF), please let us know.

Message from the Editorial Committee

The Staff of BMCF look at the children of the world as innocent, vulnerable and dependant. Children are also curious, active and full of hope. Their time should be one of joy, peace, playing, learning and growing. Their future should be shaped in harmony and cooperation. Their lives should mature as they broaden their perspectives, and gain new experiences. The new BMCF logo has great symbolism for investing in children and protecting them well. Children are the future of every Country, and every religious institution.

One of the major purposes of BMCF work is to comprehensively care for the HIV/AIDS orphaned children and to provide health services.

The BMCF realized that since the HIV/AIDS pandemic started, the Country of Uganda has lost about one million people and this has contributed significantly to an estimated 2.3 million orphans.

Approximately 14 percent of children in Uganda less than 18 years of age are orphans. Many of the orphaned children are forced to live on the streets or under exploitative conditions of labour and sexual abuse. Many live in child headed house holds where they have to provide for their needs and support their young siblings. Some of these children are infected with HIV either through mother to child transmission or through defilement. All this calls for BMCF interventions to support and care for the innocent young children.

In this edition we also share with our readers the latest developments taking place at BMCF such as the recent celebration of our 7 years of ministry in Midwestern Uganda. The celebrations were marked by a historical event of laying the foundation stone for our new medical centre building, please, refer to page 4.

Please, continue supporting the efforts of BMCF work. Special thanks from James Mwiruwabo the Editorial Committee Chairman to all our readers.

In case of an inquiry about BMCF newsletter, or programs in general, please, use the addresses indicated on the left hand-side column to contact the Editorial Team.

We thank you for being a good audience.
God bless you

Bishop Masereka Medical Centre



The Bishop Masereka Medical Centre (BMMC) was established in August 2005, with the vision of providing quality medical services to People living with HIV/AIDS and for treating all kinds of ailments in the community. The Clinic has developed a reputation of being the cleanest in the town and having the best staff. Currently the Clinic is a level 3 clinic but the scope of ailments it handles ranges from uncomplicated malaria to complex illnesses like Idiopathic Thrombocytopenia. Since the beginning of the year, over 2000 patients have gone through the Clinic.

Among the patients we have had in the recent past is our very own Medical Assistant, Josiah Bwambale, who has been unwell for the last 3 months, showing symptoms of reducing amounts of blood in the body. He has been seen by a physician hematologist (doctor who specializes in the diseases affecting the blood) and they did a few laboratory tests. Josiah was told that the bone marrow could be the one not functioning well but the physician was planning to carry out more tests. While still at BMMC, Josiah developed a very bad case of malaria and went into a comatose state. By the grace of God the medical team of the Bishop Masereka Medical Centre was able to resuscitate him. He however remains very weak and needs a lot of prayers. Bishop Masereka prayed and laid hands on him (see the above picture). We have been facing many challenges at BMMC this month. A few days ago we

received a set of twins born to a very young mother with no source of livelihood, and no support from the father of the twins, (see the picture on the right hand side. Kato is sitting at the left hand side in the photo, and Isingoma is sitting at the right side in the photo). The younger of the twins, Kato came with cough and labored breathing. Kato needs a chest X-ray but Teopista the mother can barely afford the ten thousand shillings for the chest X-ray. She is also not sure of how she is going to pay the medical bill on discharge. The medical services remain expensive to mothers like Teopista despite the fact that the BMMC offers subsidized prices. At the beginning of this year, the team heading the Bishop Masereka Medical Centre made a resolution reiterating the urgent need for acquiring better laboratory equipment and imaging diagnostic apparatus to make it possible for the physician to be able to help people like this set of twins and Josiah. The current laboratory can only do the basics in laboratory tests.



We trust that through prayer, support from BMCF friends, and the hard work of the BMMC staff, we shall be able to acquire a hematology analyzer, biochemistry analyzer, an ELISA machine, an ultrasound scan, and an X-ray machine.

(By Dr. Daniel Sambili, Medical Officer)

BMCF HIV Work

Today the young people are the AIDS generation. They have never known a world with out HIV. Millions of young people have already died due complications caused by the disease, yet the HIV/AIDS epidemic among the youth remains largely invisible to adults and to young people themselves. Stopping HIV/AIDS requires comprehensive strategies that focus on the youth and the adults.

Of the 60 million people world wide who have been infected with HIV in the past 20 years, about half of these become infected between the ages of 15 and 24. To day nearly 12 million young people are living with HIV/AIDS world wide. Young women are several times likely than young men to be infected with HIV.

In nearly 20 African countries 5% or more of women ages 15 to 24 are infected.

Much statistics underscore the urgent need to address HIV/AIDS among the youth.

The table below shows the number of young people below 24 years of age tested for HIV/AIDS between January and July 2008, (From BMCF Medical Clinic database).

Month	Total No. Tested	Negatives		Positives	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
January	72	18	51	0	03
February	99	26	66	01	06
March	102	35	58	0	09
April	96	28	65	0	03
May	69	20	42	02	05
June	279	116	161	01	01
July	92	28	54	0	10
Total	809	271	497	04	37



Note: the table above shows 37 young women tested HIV positive out of 809 tested during the period which is 5% while young men are 1% of the total tested.

BMCF has a strategy of reaching out to the young people as away of addressing the HIV/AIDS scourge. Parents and other family members can help prevent HIV/AIDS among

the young people.

There is need for young people to understand some facts about HIV/AIDS epidemic in order to get them involved in the prevention programs. On the left hand side(above) is a BMCF Counselor talking to the youth about HIV prevention, care for the infected and the importance of testing for the virus.

The following questions are regularly put forward during the HIV outreach meetings with young people by BMCF team. The answers can help inform the young people about HIV/AIDS and encourage some healthy behavior changes:

1. What is HIV/AIDS?
2. How do you become infected
3. Can I become infected with HIV if I have oral or anal sex, but not vaginal sex?
4. Can I get HIV through casual contact with infected people?
5. Can you tell by looking at someone if they have HIV/AIDS?
6. Is there any vaccine that can protect me from HIV?

7. Is there a way that is 100% effective in protecting my self against HIV/AIDS?
8. Is there any cure for HIV/AIDS?
9. Do condoms protect against HIV/AIDS infection?
10. How can I be sure that I do not have HIV?

(By James Mwiruwabo James, Clinical Officer)

BMCF Foundation Day Celebrations:

The BMCF, Seven years of un-interrupted ministry in Kasese

The 13th July 2008 was a grand day for the BMCF and the whole community of Kasese. The Bishop Masereka Christian foundation has been in existence for full seven years! What started as a simple thought between Bishop Zebedee Masereka and his wife Stella Masereka has grown into a vibrant ministry reaching thousands of lives with the love of Christ. The day was colorful and full of fun. The guest of honor Bishop Duncan Montgomery Gray III arrived in Uganda on 11th August and was welcomed by friends of the BMCF from Kampala at Entebbe International Airport. The following day he visited the source of river Nile in Jinja and the Uganda martyrs shrine. On the evening of the 12th August, the BMCF staff, members of BOD and the organizing committee for the Foundation day joined the guest of honor, Bishop Duncan Gray, Rev. Ndishabani, Bishop Masereka and Mama Stella at a sumptuous dinner served in honor of Bishop Duncan Gray.

Then the long awaited day finally came. The day kicked off with a very big thanks giving service at St. Paul Cathedral which was filled up to capacity. The members of Uganda Parliament for Bukonzo West, Dr. Crispus Kiyonga (Minister of Defense in Uganda Government) and Hon. Joseph Maate Kirereya, MP for Bughendera, Bungibugyo District, were in attendance. Bishop Gray(in a red cassock on the left side of the photo) laid the foundation stone for the new BMCF Clinic with great jubilation marked by songs from Kasese High school choir.



The students of Kamaiba primary school sang the US, Ugandan and the new BMCF anthems Present at the laying of the Foundation Stone was the Minister of Defence, Hon. Dr. Kiyonga(in a dark blue suit and tie on the right hand side of the photo), the Hon. Joseph Maate, Bishop Jackson Nzerebende, Retired Bishop Zebedee Masereka, and the Rev. Canon Julius Kithaghenda(in a grey suit on the left hand side of the photo), the District Chairman, the Mayor of Kasese Town Council, Mr. Cosmus Byaruhanga and many other invited dignitaries from the region. The Guest of Honor praised Bishop Masereka and the community of Kasese for the important initiative intended to provide high quality health service delivery. In the picture on the right hand side are different dignitaries during the laying of the foundation stone. The first building out of the four buildings planned for the Clinic will be named Bishop Duncan Gray Building.

The Guest of Honour, Bishop Gray also commissioned the newly re-designed website of BMCF by thanking God for the marvels of technology, and described the website as an extremely important tool in the development of any organization and thankful for the privilege of being asked to commission the site. The Five Year Strategic Plan for Bishop Masereka Christian Foundation was launched by the Host, the Hon. Dr. Kiyonga, who thanked Bishop Masereka very much for the great spirit of dedication and the zeal for development. Dr. Kiyonga described the document as an important milestone and a great road-map for the organization, and praised Bishop Masereka for being a great visionary in the community of Kasese, referring to the several projects, like health centers, modern agricultural

practices,

Clean water, village roads, and schools that Bishop Masereka initiated while he was still Bishop of the Diocese of South Rwenzori.

The Hon. Joseph Maate launched five newly composed community education songs, ordered and facilitated by BMCF. Hon Maate said education of children was extremely important for the community and the Country. The songs were appealing to the community to help and support orphaned children, and to help prevent the spread of HIV. The five songs were composed on request of BMCF by a celebrated and highly talented musician in Kasese called, Joash Ntalibara.

(By Dr. Daniel & Alex)

BMCF VISITORS:

In the month of July we hosted a number of visitors from the US and Africa. Apart from Bishop Duncan Gray of Mississippi and Rev.Dr. William Ndishabandi, we were also blessed with the visit of three Americans and two Ugandans in mid July. These visitors also picked much interest in the work of the medical Clinic and visited the new construction site for the Clinic. They held meetings with BMCF HIV clients, visited Kamaiba Primary School and talked to the students and the teachers. They promised to work with the organization in order to achieve its objectives.



In the picture on the right hand side are visitors talking to pupils of Kamaiba primary school.

(By Alex)

My Stories

Education our way

Education, education, education
Many people struggle to get you.
Many have suffered in your name.
It is a pity for those who neglect you,
Those who have not had chance to have you,
It is pity, pity, pity, pity!!!!
Parents, guardians let the children go school.
Boys and girls alike!
Look around, it is the girl child suffering,
School drop out, early marriage, child labour!
She is the house-girl, house wife!
Yet the In – charge!
The mother, educator, planner, medicator, administrator
For the family
And yet not educated!
Who are the culprits?
Parents,
For the love of bride price!
Guardians,
Their nugu!
Government,
For their poor policies!

Civil society,
For their selfishness!
The Bishop Masereka Foundation has started,
With the orphans and vulnerable children,
Boys and girls alike
Let the parents, guardians, government, civil society
Join the BMCF
In fighting this CANCER
Illiteracy!!!
(By Leebu Auganatiuous, Nursing Officer)

CLOSING PRAYER

Merciful God,
We remember before you all, who are sick this day, and especially all persons with HIV and AIDS infections. Give them courage to live with the disease. Help them to face and overcome their fears. Be with them when they are alone or rejected. Comfort them when they are discouraged. And touch them with your healing Spirit that they may find and possess eternal life, and make us Instruments of your love and care for the needy. Now and forever. Amen.