

Latest News June 2009

June has been an exciting month at Bwindi Community Hospital. Power has finally arrived, and although it will eventually be fueled by a hydroelectric system, that project has yet to be completed so generators currently power the Hospital. We have 60 large batteries that are charged by the generators during the day and then power the Hospital at night. The arrival of power at Bwindi Community Hospital means that we will be able to keep newborns warm at night, our midwives will not have to deliver babies by the light of lanterns, and our doctors will not have to stitch up wounds using headlamps.



Moving one of the generators

At the beginning of June Bwindi Community Hospital opened its' first satellite clinic, a health centre II in Byumba, about 20 kilometres from Bwindi. The health centre has been opened in order to provide much needed services to the local population in this incredibly isolated area, including the Batwa community. Byumba will focus on providing antenatal care, increasing access to family planning, and immunisations, as well as providing basic treatment. Urgent or complex problems will be referred to us at the Hospital.

During May, Bwindi Community Hospital welcomed its' newest team member- a brand new Toyota Landcruiser ambulance for our HIV outreach team, modified to be able to navigate the rough local terrain. We can now take HIV testing and treatment services out into the villages of this remote area instead of waiting for people to walk for a day or more to get to Bwindi Community Hospital in order to receive care.



The HIV team with its' new ambulance

Our family planning team is currently running a two-week long workshop for our village health promoters, (volunteers trained by BCH to serve their local villages) during which VHP's are being taught how to give birth control injections. Uganda has the second highest birth rate in the world at 7 children per women, and making family planning easily accessible to those who want it is an important step in reducing the birth rate.

We are continuing to work on our Child Health Access Project (CHAP). We are in the process of registering every child under the age of five living in the community we serve, who will then have access to free health care at Bwindi Community Hospital. This project will improve access to care as well as allowing us to collect excellent data on children in the area.

We have also partnered with Micro-Care insurance. We are registering every household in the Kayonza and Mpungu sub-counties, and through our partnership with Micro-Care we will be able to offer health insurance to all people over the age of five years in the two sub-counties we serve at a cost of 6,000 Ugandan shillings (\$3 USD) per person per year. Many people still don't come to the Hospital for fear that they won't be able to pay, and we hope that the insurance programme will help us to further achieve part of the Vision of the Hospital: 'excellent health services accessible to all'.

Bwindi Community Hospital continues to grow in order to meet the increasing needs of the local population, and during May and June we welcomed seven new members of staff to BCH, and four new members of staff to Byumba health clinic. We perform 2-3 Caesarean sections a week, delivered 86 babies in the month of May, and our outpatient department is now seeing over 2,000 patients each month.

Internet Café: The tent Internet cafe is open for community members and visitors to use from 2-6pm everyday. Please ask to speak to Elly, the manger of our Internet Café, if you need more information.