

THE NEW BORN BABY INCUBATORS PROJECT US\$ 48,400

The Rotary Club of Kampala North and its partners are proposing an Incubators Project for 12 strategic referral hospitals in Uganda to be implemented in the 2008/9 Rotary year.

The Problem

The Uganda Demographic Survey and Health Survey 2006 puts infant mortality at 76 out of every 1,000 births i.e. one in every 13 babies does not live to its 1st birth day. The first month of life is associated with the highest risk to survival. The neonatal mortality rate is 29 for every 1,000 i.e. 1 in every 34 babies dies in the first month of life. Generally, 39%¹ of neonatal deaths are caused by premature birth. Low birth weight underlies 40-80% of new born deaths and low birth weight babies who survive have increased risk of developing diseases and mental disabilities. Neonatal mortality and morbidity is a general problem due to the appalling state of incubation facilities even in the major hospitals. The RCKN is proposing this project as a major intervention in the health sector to ensure child survival in line with the Rotary theme of "make dreams real" for 2008/9.

State of Incubation Facilities in Selected Hospitals

*Naggalama Hospital*² is a mission hospital located in the heart of a rural peasant population of over 188,000 people in Nakifuma sub-county (about 30 Kms from Kampala). The hospital was started by Mother Kevin of the Little Sisters of St. Francis. The hospital serves as a referral hospital for the area and has 3 improvised wooden closets that serve as incubators. The baby nursery is heated with bulbs and often mothers are encouraged to use the Kangaroo method. The hospital receives 20 to 30 cases of premature births from its catchment area and referrals from neighboring sub-counties.

*Mutolere Hospital*³ is located in the valleys of Muhabura Mountain and was started in 1957 by the Franciscan Sisters from Holland. Mutolere Hospital is the only referral hospital for the entire Kisoro District with over 450,000 people and the border population of DRC and Rwanda. Mutolere Hospital has no functional incubators but uses rudimentary methods such as warm bulbs and the 'Kangaroo method' to attend to the 5 cases per month, on average, reported to the hospital.

Kawolo Hospital⁴, funded by Government, was founded in 1969 and serves as a referral hospital for the District of Mukono, and the Lake Victoria islands. The hospital has improvised 2-cabin wooden closets, each heated by an electric bulb in a lower cabin. Temperatures are controlled manually and resort to the kangaroo method when power goes off. The hospital receives about 10 pre-mature cases per month but the numbers are higher because some cases are not brought to the hospital due to the poor facilities.

Kamuli Mission Hospital was founded in 1914 by Mother Kevin of the Little Sisters of St. Francis. The hospital has no functional incubators after the 3 incubators donated by a German Doctor broke down in 1999. It serves as a referral hospital for 5 Districts with a population of over 500,000 people. The hospital has a maternity ward of 36 beds and receives 10 pre-mature cases on average per month. Rudimentary methods such as the kangaroo method and warm clothes are used to handle pre-mature cases. The hospital facilities are also used to train nurses and midwives at its nursing school which was started in 1950.

¹ Road Map for Accelerating the Reduction of Maternal and Neonatal Mortality and Morbidity in Uganda, by the Ministry of Health;

² Facts Provided by Dr. Kenneth Kigoonya, Resident Doctor, Naggalama Hospital (+256782659120);

³ As summarized by Mr. Mayunga Pontius, Administrator of Mutolere Hospital (0772421557);

⁴ Facts from Physical visit and phone interview with Dr. Joshua. Kiberu, in-charge – Maternity wing;

Virika Mission Hospital⁵, located in Fort Portal, was started in 1911 by the White Sisters (Our Lady of Africa Sisters). The hospital is preferred in the area for its quality of service compared to Buhinga, the Government hospital. Hence, Virika receives a lot of referrals from the 5 Districts, with a population of over 500,000 people, it serves. Virika hospital does not have a nursery for new born babies and has never had a single incubator. Virika handles 500 – 1000 births in the busy months and records about 5 premature cases per month, on average. Premature cases are handled through use of the kangaroo method and use of aluminum foil lined with cotton wool.

The above is a common story for hospitals in Ugandan including those in the main urban centers.

Project Objective:

To provide 60 Neonatal Nursing Incubators to 12 strategic referral hospitals in Uganda, under a pilot project to be scaled up upon successful implementation.

Project Beneficiaries

The project will be implemented in the following 12 Hospitals: Kamuli, Rubaga, Mengo, Kibuli, Nkozi, Naggalama, Mutolere, Virika, Kawolo, Nkokonjeru, Namalembe and Kayunga Hospitals. This project will benefit about 6,000 neonatal patients annually, and upon successful implementation, be replicated to cover the whole country. Rotary can make dreams real by improving children survival through provision of these baby incubators.

Items to be Supplied under the Project

Incubators, under warranty, from reputable international supplier with local representation. The equipment shall have the following characteristics:

1. Customized to suit conditions of erratic power supply;
2. Provide for manual supply of oxygen for hospitals with no automatic oxygen supply;
3. Easy to use and maintain.

Implementing Partner

Joint Medical Stores, local agents of the manufacturer that will provide the following:

1. Handle logistics for clearing, storage;
2. Assemble and pre-install equipment before delivery to the hospitals;
3. Train hospital staff on use and quick maintenance routines;
4. Service equipment, as part of existing service contracts with the respective hospitals.

Primary Host Club

The Rotary Club of Kampala North

Funding

Planned funding is as follows: RC of Kampala North will contribute US\$ 500, DDF 500; funding gap of US\$ 48,400

Budget

Purchase of 60 infant Incubators	US\$ 44,900
Local logistics	500
Publicity (English and local languages)	<u>3,000</u>
Total	48,400

⁵ Facts provided by Dr. Carol Omare (0772915620), in-charge, Maternity Ward