

# Bridge2Aid News



Restoring smiles

•  
Changing lives

January 2005

## Hope Dental Centre Opens

After several months of planning, hard work, delays and frustration (thank you Tanzanian customs!), Hope Dental Centre opened on 1st October 2004. The centre is located in the centre of town, within the business complex of New Mwanza Hotel.

The centre comprises a main surgery and a second unit based in a training room which will be used on a regular basis to train clinical officers in basic dentistry, and dentists in advanced techniques.

Using equipment supplied by both Dentaaid and donations from the UK dental industry, the centre is the best-equipped dental facility in Tanzania.

This level of equipping enables Ian to do two things. Firstly, he is able to offer the same standard of care and treatment services as would be found in the UK. Secondly, he is able to train Tanzanian dentists to a very high standard, using high quality equipment.

Two months in, the clinic is already busy. Ian is open three days a week, with the other days spent developing training programmes alongside the Regional Dental Officer, and fulfilling his contracts at two of the mines in the area. Over the next month, the training centre will be finished and some of the more advanced equipment installed in time for the official opening ceremony on 18th February. We hope to have a number of government officials and VIPs at the ceremony – pictures in the next issue of B2Anews.



## Skydive in 2005!

Jumping out of a perfectly good aeroplane isn't everyone's idea of a good time, but if the thought of hurtling towards the ground from 10,000ft appeals, we have something for you!

On Sat June 4th, we will be holding a mass skydive to raise funds for Bridge2Aid. The jump is a buddy jump, where you freefall attached to an instructor. The jump will take place at an airfield near Salisbury. We have places for 20 people to jump on the same day, and hope to raise over £5,000 to fund our dental and social care programme in Tanzania.

To take part, you need to weigh less than 15 stone, and raise at least £350. We've already got several people signed up to take part, and will give you lots of support and ideas in raising your sponsorship, so why not sign up? Contact details can be found on the back page.



The first consignment of equipment arrives from the UK



The waiting room takes shape.



The centre needed extensive refurbishment



Signs go up - the obligatory Coca-Cola sign close by

# Maskini programme moving on



With the dental programmes continuing to take shape, our social care work will step up a gear in the coming year. The work includes the Maskini in town and in the rural setting of Bukumbe Maskini Village.

## Mwanza Town

The Maskini, which means 'poor' are the rejected community living on the streets, many of them coping with severe disabilities as a result of leprosy and other diseases.

After a recent meeting that Andie and Jo Topley had with the Regional Welfare Officer in Mwanza, it became clear that the Government provide no support for the Maskini community within the town. There are a small number of organisations that provide some support to the youth and street kids, but we have identified a huge gap in the provision for the older population and also the families, where there is currently no support at all.

These two groups will be the focus for our work within Mwanza town. Current estimates put the number of Maskini adults and children at 200. The first stage of our plan is to carry out a situational analysis within this community with the support of the Social Welfare office through a questionnaire. This has been designed to establish the demographic situation as well as identify the direct needs of the community. The results from this will then be used to help focus our work and help in planning future projects and support for this community. These projects may range from simply the provision of blankets to providing a day centre, depending on the information gathered from the questionnaire.

The social welfare department and a team of Tanzanians co-ordinated by one of our local friends, who has extensive experience with the Maskini, will carry out the questioning on our behalf.

## Bukumbe Camp

The camp at Bukumbe is the other Maskini community that we are now looking at, to see if there are opportunities to provide more support for the future.

Bukumbe is a village 40 km outside of Mwanza. The Maskini camp was built there in 1980 to 'cleanse' the town as a joint project by the Government and a Dutch Aid programme. It was originally thought that the Maskini would stay at Bukumbe, but as time has passed they have needed to return to the town for work, in the form of begging, because it was the place they knew best. Bukumbe is now mainly a transient community with only a few people staying there all of the time, and the others travelling to and from Mwanza.

Bukumbe currently has 372 resident adults, plus children, and is at full capacity. The Social Welfare department have a regular commitment to Bukumbe which is meant to provide all their basic needs and medical care. Every 3 months £1500 is spent to provide this whole community with their 'basic needs'. This is never enough and after about 6 weeks the supplies have run out. The basic supplies have also had to be adjusted and the norm is to provide only staple food such as flour, rice and beans, they are often unable to provide salt, sugar, cooking oil or soap.



There is a small day care facility



at Bukumbe for the pre-school children, which is currently in a terrible state, providing no incentive for the children to attend. We are in the process of establishing if it is going to be possible to refurbish the Day Care Centre and improve the environment for the children. Children of primary school age (up to 14) can attend the village school. There are no fees as it is a government school but the children have to provide their own uniform and books. Support for uniforms and books was withdrawn by the government in 2002 as funds had run out.

In discussions with the Regional Welfare Officer 4 areas of need were identified as priorities: Sewage system and sanitation (this is currently not functioning and people are therefore at an increased risk of disease and ill health); provision of food and basic supplies; day care and education; youth training.

These are 4 huge areas and we don't claim to be able to solve them all. But, with future consultation with Bukumbe Camp and the RWO, we are keen to build some partnerships and support in measurable ways. The most important focus being on sustainability and not quick fixes. So over the coming months and years B2A hope to be able to contribute to the lives of the people within the Bukumbe community.

# First DVP a great success

The first ever Dental Volunteer Programme (DVP) visit in Mwanza Tanzania took place from 26th October – 5th November and was a huge success.

The programme was a joint project between Dentaid and B2A and focused on providing training for 4 clinical officers within rural communities.

Two dentists, Dr Neeta Patel from London and Dr Penny Holmes from Manchester along with Debby Russell, a Dental Nurse from Salisbury, volunteered to take part in the programme and spent 10 days in Tanzania working alongside Ian Wilson and the District Dental Officer.

Day 1 was an early start, following a late arrival, introductions and dinner the night before! The team headed off to Nassa, a village about 1 ½ hours outside of Mwanza. They were accompanied by Ian Wilson (B2A) and Mark Topley (Dentaid).



Set-up time at Nassa

The very basic facilities that awaited them became their surgery for the next 2 days. On their arrival many people were waiting for them as they had heard the dentists were in town!

As the work began they were joined by the 4 clinical officers who started an intensive programme of training, the aim being for them to develop their skills to ensure sustainability for the future. 63 people were seen during the 2 days and a total of 74 teeth extracted!

Day 3 gave the team a change of scene as they were carrying out dental screening at Isamilo School, the team saw 278 children aged between 3 – 16 years. Then it was off on Safari for a well earned rest!



They returned to Mwanza and on day 6 started early again with a 2 hour drive to Kabila, a very rural village. They met the clinical officers here and continued training with them for the next 3 days. The clinical officers showed real signs of progress and by the end were safely injecting and extracting teeth.



The road to Kabila

On the last day at Kabila, word had spread that the Drs were in town and the team arrived to find over 130 people waiting to be seen! Unfortunately this was not going to be possible but they worked hard and saw 52 people that day, as well as training the officers.

Over the 3 days at Kabila 112 people were seen and a total of 128 teeth extracted! But the biggest success was seeing the clinical officer's progress with their skills and abilities; this was as important to the team as it meant that when they left the clinical officers could

continue some of the work and provide the rural communities with a level of basic but safe dentistry.

The programme was a huge success and warmly received by the regional and district dental officers, who had seen the team at work and were very grateful for the time the volunteers had given up to support the local community.



Ian's 40th birthday mid-DVP!

The volunteers and the programme organisers from B2A and Dentaid thoroughly enjoyed the experience of the first ever DVP and as one dentist said at the end of the programme:

'I felt that this experience reminded me of why I became a dentist - basic help, fulfilment of needs and relieving pain.'

The DVP will now operate three times a year with teams of 8. We'll also be developing other training to complement it. If you are interested in volunteering please contact the office.



## Thanks Bob!

On 26th September 2004, Bob Sheard – a friend of Bridge2Aid, joined over 47,000 other runners to run The Great North Run – running 13 miles from the centre of Newcastle, across the Tyne Bridge, to South Shields, and raising an amazing £450 for the ongoing work of Bridge2Aid!

A big thankyou to Bob for his support and putting his body on the line!

If this inspires you, and you'd like to raise some money for Bridge2Aid contact the office for a Fundraising pack, which is crammed full of ideas!

Don't forget the Skydive on June 4th! Contact the office for more information.

# www.bridge2aid.org

Have you visited the Bridge2Aid website recently?

It is a great way of keeping up to date with all the developments out in Tanzania.

You can find out what is happening at Hope Dental Centre, how our work with the Maskini Street Community is developing, view the latest pictures from Tanzania and get details of how you can join our Dental Volunteer Programme and visit Mwanza.

The website has an up to date list of up and coming Bridge2Aid events and also all sorts of suggestions for ways in which you can help raise funds to continue the work of Bridge2Aid.

## What can you do?

We are so grateful for the gifts we receive here at Bridge2Aid and we are careful to ensure that your donations reach the people who need it. Ian & Andie's salary is entirely funded by Hope Dental Centre, which means that whatever you give in the UK goes directly to the work of B2A. Even small amounts make a big difference:

Your gift of **£5** pays for a member of the street community to receive emergency dental care, treatment and medicine.

Your gift of **£10** enables Bridge2Aid to provide high quality dental treatment for 50 people in the rural villages.

Your gift of **£20** pays for diesel for the tooth camp vehicle to visit the rural villages and provide dental care once a month.

Your gift of **£50** buys enough maize and flour to feed the street community living at Bukumbe for a week.

How much can you help? For details of how to make a regular donation to the work of Bridge2Aid contact our office or complete the enclosed form.

## Elective Student Visit

In August we hosted three dental students from the University of Bristol in the UK. They were exposed to a variety of different clinical environments, from rural clinics to mining communities to local government hospitals. While they were with us they carried out elective research projects and were all awarded top grades for their projects in Tanzania.

We hope to host up to four students from the UK each year, thereby broadening their experience of dentistry in various cultures.



## We have our own Webshop!

And the great thing is you can continue to buy all the things you usually buy online – cds, books, insurance, groceries .

**And** you can continue to buy them from the places you usually buy them from - CDWow, Amazon, Norwich Union, Iceland.

**But** the great thing is by doing your online shopping via our Webshop at [www.buy.at/bridge2aid](http://www.buy.at/bridge2aid) there are over 80 companies who will give a percentage of the money you spend to Bridge2Aid!

So, add [www.buy.at/bridge2aid](http://www.buy.at/bridge2aid) to your favourites and every time you go shopping online, do it through our webshop and help raise funds to raise a smile or two in Tanzania!

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Bridge2Aid • PO Box 58 • Chichester • West Sussex • PO19 8AL

+44 (0) 1243 771653

[www.bridge2aid.org](http://www.bridge2aid.org) • [enquiries@bridge2aid.org](mailto:enquiries@bridge2aid.org)