

A new resource to spread the word

We often get asked – ‘So what exactly does B2A do?’ To help spread the word and help our supporters to do the same, we have produced a spangly new leaflet which explains exactly what it is we do. We’ve enclosed one in this newsletter – if you would like more copies, just contact the office or order from the website.



A new look

Like many organisations, the new Royal Mail pricing structure means a change of format for our Newsletter. We hope you like it – if you have any comments or suggestions, please let us know.

Also, if you currently receive the newsletter by post, but would rather have it on email (or vice-versa) just let us know and we will be happy to oblige.

Who are we

Bridge2Aid is.....a small UK registered charity operating dental and community development programmes in North West Tanzania. Our community development programme works with the disabled, disease afflicted and elderly street people of the region – both in Mwanza city and at a disabled care centre, Bukumbi.

Our dental work helps build the capacity of the Tanzanian health care services with dental training. We operate a dental centre in Mwanza which donates its profits to our work and provides free and subsidised treatment to those in need. If you would like to receive the free newsletter regularly, either:

- Contact the office - 01243 771653
- Visit the website - bridge2aid.org
- mark@bridge2aid.org



MUCHS Donation

We were pleased to make another donation to the Muhumbili University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS) in September. A number of boxes of surplus dental materials which could no longer be used in Hope Dental Centre, but which were still of great value to the training school were shipped to Dar es Salaam. A letter from the Dean of the Faculty, Dr Emil Kikwili reads:

“The assistance has come as a rescue for the preclinical training that starts on 25th September 2006. Your contribution to our training is highly appreciated.”

Thank you to all our faithful dental corporate supporters – your donations are not only helping us to run Hope Dental Centre, but also contributing to the training of dentists in Tanzania.



Easter Team ready to go

A team of 18 volunteers are going to experience a very different Easter this year. They will be cleaning, scrubbing and painting whilst getting to know the community at Bukumbi and giving the kids of Bukumbi a fun time with a playscheme in the afternoons.

The approximate cost of refurbishing one community dormitory block, which houses 18 people, will be £3,000. We are starting with the blocks where oldest residents live, so why not pay for one of these wonderful people to have a clean and safe place to sleep? A gift aided donation of £130 is all it takes to cover the cost. We will definitely complete one block at Easter but would love to raise enough money to work on 2. If you would like to fundraise or donate to support our Easter Project please contact us for a fundraising pack. Thank you!

BDTA Bonanza!

Jo and Mark had a fantastic response to Climb Kili at the British Dental Trade Association Showcase in London last month. Our hosts A-dec UK gave us a really good spot on their stand, and as plying us with coffee all day (thanks guys), were able to point people in our direction to find out more about B2A and the Climb Kili event. A huge thank you to Karl, Simon and the A-dec UK team.



Climb Kili – second event!

We had such a big response to Climb Kili at the BDTA event, we have now booked a second climb!

With the September trip now full (known as Climb Kili 2), we already have several people registered for Climb Kili 1, between 23rd August and 2nd September. Registration for Climb Kili 1 will remain open until January, and with the momentum behind the event in the dental trade and our supporters outside dentistry, we are confident that it will also prove a great success.

A second climb will be hugely significant for our fundraising – enabling us to respond far more in Tanzania. If you are interested in Climb Kili 1, either visit the website or call the office for more details.

An Exceptional Practice

Chipping Manor Dental Practice in Gloucestershire has sent no fewer than four of its staff to Tanzania this year to work with us on the DVP. The team raised more than £10,000 in the process, funds which we were able to use to fund the October training!

Phil Loughane, Chipping Manor's principal said: '2006 has seen this amazing link between our small practice and the work of Bridge2Aid to benefit the people of Tanzania. We hope this will continue in the future, and there are already plans for our Practice Manager to work at Bukumbi in April, and a further 2 members of the team joining DVP in 2007. Our links with Bridge2Aid have left us with a very effective, focused and bonded team.'

A big thank you to all at Chipping Manor! A full interview with Phil will appear in 'Dentistry' journal in January, and will be available to read on our website then.



Winter 2006



Bridge2Aid News



Inside this issue

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- Schools work moves a step closer
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www.bridge2aid.org

2 Years On

On 1st November we held a celebration in Mwanza to mark two years since DVP and HDC started. It was fantastic to have Tanzanian dignitaries, friends and colleagues at the event to reflect on what has been a very successful period.

HOPE DENTAL CENTRE MWANZA

When HDC opened, it was heralded as a 'beacon initiative.' Two years on that beacon is shining brightly

and shows that the model of a self funding dental centre in Africa really can succeed.

Last year the centre generated around 70% of B2A's income in Tanzania. These funds are covering all of the basic operational expenditures in Mwanza as well as contributing a significant amount to the dental and community development programmes. HDC's income means that a very high proportion of the funds raised in the UK can go directly into programme expenditure in Tanzania.

We are now reaching the point where we can employ a Tanzanian dentist, and hope to announce that in the next newsletter. We are so grateful for the time and energy of our locums who have covered Ian's leave and other commitments. Next year we also hope to welcome dentists for longer periods to work in the clinic and staff the dental bus which will be touring Mwanza's schools.

DVP

Looking back at the past two years, it is hard to see how the DVP could have been more successful!

Primarily, we have managed to train and equip 22 RCOs to provide an emergency dental service in their communities. This represents over 160,000 people in some very remote areas who now have access

to a safe extraction close to where they live. We've also treated over 3,000 people for free as part of the training programme. It's really encouraging that the official government reports in Magu now point out that the only people arriving at the district hospital for treatment after long journeys from the rural areas are those from places where we haven't yet trained an RCO.

As well as this there are the many volunteers who have given up their time and money to come and work on the DVP. We couldn't do it without them and we owe a great debt of thanks to them all. It has been a great privilege to introduce them to Mwanza and the people of Tanzania. Many have had first time experiences of Africa through the DVP and they have all been almost overwhelmingly positive. A good proportion of our volunteers have returned for a second and even third visit – quite amazing.

The coming year sees us expand the programme into Misungwi District. With interest from larger NGOs already in the pipeline, we hope to extend it further across the region and Lake Zone before long.

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Schools Work Moves a Step Closer

Nothing is simple and straightforward around here! However, despite several delays and attempts to get us to pay import taxes that we didn't have to pay, the Rocky Lane Transit Van has now arrived in Mwanza!

The van finally completed the 4,500 journey via sea and land and arrived with us in early December.

It will now be prepared for use with a number of youth and schools projects, including the beginnings of our Schools Oral Health programme. All being well, we expect it to be in action in January. We are currently preparing a series of culturally

appropriate images and messages to be painted on the side of the van to boost its impact with the children, both when it is parked in the schools and also as it drives in the streets around Mwanza.

Nothing of this kind exists in Tanzania to our knowledge, and we, along with the local health people are very excited about its potential. Thank you to all at Rocky Lane Dental Practice in Manchester!



Team Profile

■ John Simba: Community Development & Administration Assistant

In 1954 having twins was very bad luck, so when John and his twin brother were born his mother took them immediately to the bush and left them to die. Five days later his grandfather miraculously found John still alive, his brother unfortunately was not strong enough to survive. John spent his first six months in a mission hospital, and then went back to live with his family. After finishing school at 15, he did various jobs before joining the army. He was sent to Uganda to assist in the war against Idi Amin, and finally left in 1999 to care for his elderly parents. He has been involved in volunteer work for many years, and now works for Bridge2Aid fulltime – an enthusiastic and vital member of the team.



John Simba

Bukumbi Update

During the last few weeks we have seen some significant activity take place with regards to the work at Bukumbi Care Centre (BCC). At the end of October we held our first 'stakeholders' meeting and gathered together all the significant people involved. This included the District Medical Officer, Regional Welfare Officer, the Regional and District TB and Leprosy Co-ordinators plus 2 members of BCC. The meeting was the first ever to pull all these people together and begin to address the way forward for this community. It was an honest and open meeting and B2A have been asked to hold regular meetings on a smaller scale with the management of BCC.

We have also been carrying out regular health checks with the community and sent 21 people to the local hospital to be seen by a volunteer eye specialist. Many people were treated and given medication and 2 had cataract operations which we hope will make a significant difference to them. A further 4 who require cataract operations will be seen again in the New Year.

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Break-downs a problem

At one point during the past month, the team in Mwanza had the grand total of one bicycle and one motorcycle available to get around! The heat and dust of the city and surrounding areas are a harsh environment for vehicles, and ours have worked hard for many years. They are now starting to show their age! Vehicles are an essential but expensive resource for the team, and we now need to replace each one of our three cars over the next two years - two in 2007 and one in 2008. To do this, we need to raise £10,000 per vehicle. We have already been received a donation of £16,000 towards our 2007 target of £20,000 from Chipping Manor Dental Practice (thanks guys!).

Without reliable vehicles, we can't get to Bukumbi to deliver food & work with the community, we can't visit the rural areas to train clinical officers and we can't do the most basic jobs around town.

If you would like to help us, or would like your school, church or club to help with fundraising for these vital resources, please contact us.

