# ROTARY MALARIA FIGHT AND SUPPORT TO THE DISADVANTAGED ELDERLY



#### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

#### Introduction

Rotary Club of Kampala Kawempe and Rotary Club of Christiana USA in partnership with St. Kizito health center III carried out a malaria fight outreach amongst the elderly people in the slum communities of Kawempe in Kampala district in Uganda.

With malaria being the highest killer disease in Uganda, killing five children every day, an earlier assessment shows that the second vulnerable group after the children is that of the elderly who are struggling with weak immunities and poverty and very many living with orphans or abandoned grandchildren.

As Rotary in partnership with St. Kizito health center Bwaise took the initiative to avail a mosquito net, medicine, treatment and some basic needs like soap and paraffin to light the houses/homes in support to the elderly.

We (Rotary) partner with local health centers for easy follow up of beneficiaries after the outreaches and the health centers have been very helpful in providing medical checkup, vehicles to transport the disadvantaged and making medical prescriptions for malaria treatments and other health challenges.



With a target of 250 homes of elderly people, in a three day program we have been involved in visiting the elderly people in their homes to assess and to deliver the nets and other items, ferrying them for medical to the health center for treatment. The first two days involved door to door visits and distributions while the third day we organized a medical camp in which we offered free malaria and other health treatment, the third involved transporting the disadvantaged to and from the health center, offering medical support, luncheon, and sensitization and distribution of nets and other basics like soap, medicine.

A team of 18 people in 3 groups composed of Rotarians, Rotaractors, local leaders and health workers, visited elderly peoples in their homes to offer them a word of encouragements and a small package to show them that amidst their old age trail they are not alone, we always think about them and pray for them as we invite them to come the third day for free treatment.

It's hard to visit the venerable and you go empty handed since most of the elderly in slums are struggling to survive with children and grandchildren who seem to be a burden to them. This outreach was kind of unique that we also included food staff in reaching out to the grandparents and elderly.

The elderly were given package of items which included 2 kilograms of sugar, one bar of soap and two kilograms of rice, this was received after treatment or delivered at home.

Expression of happiness was witnessed while carrying out this activity and some elders went emotional and cried tears of joy. It was warm bathing seeing how such a small package could make elders so happy.

Besides food, the mere fact of showing up in their houses made them happy and appreciated the thought about them. Some went ahead to confess to us their struggles thinking we could bring them some help in future

This activity was a very successful. Most of the elderly got a package of sugar, soap and rice though we were overwhelmed by the attendance that some who came to the facility didn't get the package but 80% received and where very happy.











## Lunch

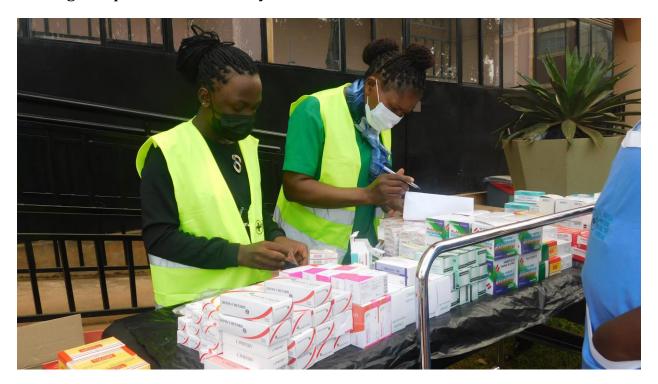
All grandparents and elderly who attended where given lunch plus a soft drink during while at the health center. Lunch was of great help since the

target groups were so fragile and so old to be worked on with empty stomachs. A total of 250 people were served lunch at the health center.

#### Medical team

We had a team of 10 medical workers and 5 Rotary medical Volunteers who were working tireless to ensure that the elderly didn't stay long in the quench. Of these 4 were medical clinical officers, two laboratory attendant, two dispensing nurses and two nurses for blood pressure. On top of the medical workers we had 20 volunteers which included 11 Rotarians (these helped to gather the elderly in their different sub-parishes and also to give support to those who couldn't walk well while getting treatment), 5 Rotaractors who helped to direct them to their seats and also serve them food and drinks, the rest where good Samaritans who still helped during the outreach.

Of the medical workers, we were blessed to work with two internship students from Rotaract club of Mulago who are pursuing certificate in midwife from Nsambye Hospital. Surely they were of great help as one helped in dispensing drugs and the other one helped with screening the blood pressure of the grandparents and elderly.



## Medical services offered and treatment.

We offered medical services which included mainly malaria checkup and treatment plus blood pressure screening and treatment, Blood sugar screening and treatment, joint pain treatment, wounds dressings and treatment and a few cases of flu and cough treatment. All grandparents who were diagnosed with the above treatment received drugs.

In attendance was a senior Rotarian, Mrs. Musoke Maria Gorreti, being a senior midwife in training she was very resourceful to the outreach offering health education to the elderly. She emphasized eating fruits every day. This helped a lot to keep those who were waiting to be calm because she engaged them in health education.



## **Transportation**

Unlike the previous outreaches where very few people where picked from the homes, in this outreach many people/elderly where picked from different homes and local areas chairmen's offices actually we were forced to use two cars, the health center ambulance couldn't manage to bring all people in time, so we hired a drone car/ van to help us transport them up to the facility in time and taking them back after receiving treatment since most of them are fragile sitting for a long time is hurting and painful. Though it was costly especially since the fuel prices have really gone high, it eased the process and

they all got treatment in time







## Comparison of the first to our other Rotary outreaches ever

Unlike other outreaches, where we treated all people across the communities of Kawempe, cleaned and gave nets to everyone, the elderly outreach was only focusing on grandparents and elderly

Since we were treating a certain section of people elderly we focused only on challenges which are common in old age unlike the other Rotary outreach which focused on all challenges of all age groups.

This outreach was very organized and calm people were sitting in their chairs waiting to be called according to their numbers achieving our first come first serve criteria unlike our other Rotary outreaches where beneficiaries outnumber the protocols of our organization.

Losing patience and complaints of hunger was so common in this outreach we can't imagine if we never prepared food for them this forced the organizing committee to serve food at 12:00pm just to reach out to the elderly who were really desperate for food however after that we resumed normally and in the calm environment.

## **Experiences**

In our communities of Kawempe slums, their many Elderly who are living a miserable life besides being old, they are hand and leg crippled due to many diseases which are incurable especially stork due to high blood pressure, crippled legs due to diabetes and accidents. Some are lying down without even a mosquito net over them, which make them vulnerable to malaria, with no any hope of getting up its so devastating watching them so helpless.

In our view setting up a physiotherapy outreach with the local centers could be a great way to offer hope to such elderly people, the establishment of this clinic could help them come and do exercises to regain the nerve system and regular visit to have someone to talk too.

### **Achievements**

Visiting them in their homes was a very great experience and very impactful. In their homes they shared their pain and struggle and we managed to talk to them and give them hope that we care about their health and always pray for them.

The program has helped us to not only to reduce malaria cases but also pass on information to the community on how to fight malaria, we have also inspired and encouraged the community to always mind and take care of the elderly people in our communities.

This has also given us a chance to work together with different partners like the health workers, Rotaract, local leaders, community, and other people.

Other than a chance to serve, we have also been able to build a good image of Rotary in the community.

After month time, Rotary and the health centers will carry out evaluations and assessment based on the number of cases that arise from the areas the project has served, the local leaders who happily guide and support us, Members of the Rotaract Kawempe, The management and health workers of St. kizito

## Code of thanks

We send immense applauds to backbone sponsors of this outreach, **Rotary club of Christiana USA** for without their answer to this slums call, this malaria fight and support outreach could have not been able to happen. We appreciate your kind hearts that you were able to step out to offer hope to such vulnerable and underprivileged people.

Special thanks also go to local leaders who identified the need to reach out to the grandparents and elderly in our communities. This steered the outreach very smoothly.

Code of thanks also goes to our own members of the Rotaray Club of Kampala Kawempe lead the one and only Rotarian Nsamba Henry and Rotaract Kawempe, for the dedication and commitment in the assessment, visits and implementation was really unbelievable all the way in this outreach. Their contribution to the success of this outreach was vivid.

To the clinic management committee, words can't express how blessed we are to have such selfless hard working people. You contributed highly for this impactful outreach to the elderly in slums of Bwaise.

The dedication and commitment showed by St. Kizito Health center staff was a great contributor to the success of this outreach. Thank you so much the clinic staff for all your efforts and professionalism portrayed during this outreach.

While winding up the code of thanks list, the good Samaritans and other volunteers from the community crowned this outreach's success. You moved house to house informing elders and their care takers about this outreach as if that was not enough you gathered them together to the local area offices and helped to carry them by ambulance up to the health center, your hard work paved way for the success of this outreach.

## **Conclusion**

When we started to plan this elderly malaria fight outreach, it was late and yet we needed to register success to the surprise the outreach was very successful. Many grandparents and elderly where given hope both health wise and spiritually.

**Attached** are some of the photos of homes visited, while distributing nets and medicine, food and a list of beneficiaries who received support at the health center.



