

Ten Years of Family Planning, and the Demand is Still Growing



Nurse Mary administering intermediate term family planning at a family planning outreach.

Ten years ago when we started the first Family Planning Outreach in Buwenda village, next door to Kyabirwa village, I watched in amazement as a crowd of about 50 people, both men and women, gathered to attend the inaugural education session. That day Godfrey, one of our nurses who is still with us today, delivered practical information about conception and contraception, nutrition, and literally how to plan a family. After the education session, both male and female attendees had many questions about family planning and the various methods that were available. It was clear that people were really interested and wanted to participate!

Based on the method we used for our malaria outreach program, we created a lasting family planning educational model, combining access to various contraceptive methods in the field with long-term follow-up every three months. Today, we work in 38 villages regularly with three family planning teams that go out weekly. In 2016, over 4,500 women received intermediate or long-term methods of family planning in these communities. In addition, over 800 more men and women obtained intermediate or permanent methods of family planning at the Allan Stone Community Health Clinic. It is due to the hard work and dedication of the Soft Power Health family planning teams and your ongoing support that we have been able to do this work and to achieve the success that we have. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you so much!

Domestic Violence Counseling – A Year of Surprises and Success!



Florence domestic violence counsellor at work.

Over the years we have seen patients at the clinic who were victims of domestic violence, but had no success in finding places to refer them. Finally, a year ago, our search led us to ADOVIC, the Anti-Domestic Violence Coalition. We began working with a counselor named Florence. She started with once-a-week counseling sessions at the Clinic. The entire Soft Power Health staff was sensitized about domestic violence, as were many patients who were interested, or who needed her help. As the interest in domestic violence counseling grew, we realized how important it was to expand Florence's role to include community work. She began by going out with the Monday family-planning outreach sessions. Because the interest at the outreaches was so positive, Florence asked to return on the following day to make home follow-up visits to those requesting them. Florence now counsels at the Clinic one day a week and spends two days a week in outreach and community counseling. Interestingly, both men and women seek Florence's knowledge and expertise. By early October, Florence had counseled over 700 people, and by the end of 2016 she will have reached nearly 1,000 people.

New Complete Blood Count Machine

Each Year, the clinic keeps getting busier, and this year is proving to be the busiest by quite a large margin. We will treat well over 30,000 patients in 2016, compared to 22,000 patients in 2015. Our lab has had to keep up with this demand as well, so we were extremely grateful to receive the donation of a complete blood count (CBC) machine this past February from Mark and Jane Rose. As we often need more detailed blood work to better diagnose our patients, the machine has proved an extremely valuable resource and saves our patients the time, money, and effort of having to go into town to get the same tests. We are very pleased to offer our patients ever-improving services!



Lab tech Ghandi making good use of the new CBC Machine.



Malaria team Sarah and Portion selling nets after outreach session in Nabakosi village.



Mama Issima and her net nicely hung.

Malaria Education and Prevention – The Road Less Traveled...For Many Years!

Started in 2004 as a purely educational outreach, Soft Power Health's malaria education and prevention outreach is our longest-running program. Despite two mass free mosquito net distribution campaigns, and a third due to begin in January 2017, our malaria program is still in demand. To date, we have sold over 70,000 mosquito nets and educated well over 100,000 people about malaria transmission and correct net use.

While we don't sell as many mosquito nets as we did prior to the Ugandan government's free distributions, we are still selling over 4,000 nets per year and educating nearly 10,000 people a year about malaria prevention and correct mosquito net usage. In addition, we continue to make follow-up visits to net purchasers' homes to evaluate if this intervention is beneficial for communities. We will make nearly 1,000 follow-up visits in 2017. Research has shown that people who purchase nets are 6 times more likely to use them correctly as those who receive them for free and with no education.

As we have seen since the free net distribution campaigns began in 2013, nets are frequently used for purposes other than preventing malaria. However, with the help of Mt. Sinai Global Health students we have been able to establish a baseline of net ownership and correct use within our home sub-county of Budondo. Out of 9 villages surveyed, comprised of 1,816 households consisting of 8,008 people, only 27% of people surveyed sleep under nets and 25% of sleeping spaces had at least one mosquito net hanging properly. 92% of households with a net report sleeping under it the previous night. These results strongly suggest that free nets are not being used properly, especially if 73% of people do not sleep under mosquito nets when enough nets were freely distributed to reach every household. We hope that the government of Uganda will take notice of these results and use them to help implement a true, lasting prevention program for malaria. It's never too late to teach an old dog new tricks!

Dynamic Demo Garden

During 2016, in response to a bad harvest season (i.e., too much rain instead of too little) the DIG garden team came up with a great idea to help the most vulnerable people get through the seasons when there is nothing growing and no food. The idea was to create a large cooperative demonstration garden that grows one staple crop and is tended by all members of the cooperative in that village. In this case, the very motivated members of the garden cooperative cultivated and grew 600 kilograms of maize (a.k.a. corn). The plan was to set aside enough to feed the families that participated in the DIG Demo garden during the non-growing season, and then to sell the surplus and use the money to buy more seeds for this season's new demo garden. The success of this effort has been really impressive and we hope it continues for many seasons to come.



Demo Garden.

Dr. Hannah, Long Term Volunteer at the clinic



Dr Hannah with a patient.

Since August 2016, and until August 2017, we have Dr. Hannah de Silva, a GP from the UK, visiting and volunteering with us at Soft Power Health. With the help of a translator, Dr. Hannah has been seeing patients at the clinic and helping us to improve our clinical care. Dr. Hannah volunteered with us in the past as a medical student, so it's great to have her back for a longer stay and as a practicing medical doctor. Also, Hannah is a kayaker, so she is enjoying the Nile too, while it lasts!

Physical Therapist Stephen Kato Raises the Bar



Physical therapist Stephen Kato.

This year Stephen Kato has really outdone himself! Not only will he have treated over 1,700 patients both in the clinic and through outreach, but he is also responsible for organizing and spearheading our wheelchair distribution program. This year, thanks to Stephen's hard work in conjunction with an impressive team of local help, Soft Power Health managed to collaborate with the Walkabout foundation to do two wheelchair distributions. At these events, 469 wheelchairs were distributed to people in need. Since our model is to help people to help themselves and

to take more responsibility for their own health and healthcare, we ask wheelchair recipients to pay a small fee for the wheelchairs. We have also begun a follow-up program to reinforce education and see how the wheelchairs are used after distribution. None of this would be possible without the commitment and hard work of Stephen and numerous local volunteers.

Unsung Hero of the Nursing Staff – Annet



Annet counsels a couple on nutrition.

Annet worked part time with us for many years, and two years ago joined us full time. She brings to Soft Power Health many years of nursing experience, an ability to take excellent care of patients, and her skills as a superb educator. In both family planning and malnutrition outreaches, Annet has a way of getting and keeping people interested and involved, regardless of their ages or genders. She approaches each day with a quiet enthusiasm and wants her patients and community members to leave the clinic better educated than when they arrived. It is because of people like Annet that Soft Power Health is able to deliver excellent education, prevention, and treatment. Thank you Annet!

Improving Care for Patients Starts with Triage



Triage team of Sandra and Juliana evaluate a new pediatric patient. Photo: Haley Buffman

Earlier this year, we had two pediatric residents from Mt. Sinai's global health program come to volunteer with us. Dr. Genna and Dr. Liz are two of the best doctors I have worked with and give me hope for the future of medicine. With their insight and help, Soft Power Health successfully implemented a triage program for children from 0-5 years old. Since children in that age group have the least ability to advocate for themselves, and are the most vulnerable to dying from what might begin as an uncomplicated illness, we knew we needed to improve our timely care of them. But what, exactly, and how? Enter Dr. Genna and Dr. Liz, and within a couple weeks we had a triage program up and rolling. They not only trained our new triage team of Juliana and Sandra, but also provided continuing medical education for the entire staff! The triage program is going strong and has improved care and saved lives. Thank you Liz and Genna!

Inner City Kids Kayaking + Drought Conditions = Maximum Fun!



Inner City Kids Kayaking Camp 2016.

Despite record drought conditions this summer in the Northeast, we still managed to run our inner city kids kayaking camp for the 13th year. We had the amazing support of the entire Jackson Family and help from the Canadian Great White North in the form of Katie Kowalski and Phil Sheppard. A special mention needs to be made for the Jacksons: EJ, Kristine, Dane, and Emily and Nick Troutman. They have been part of the camp since its inception and without them it would not be possible! As with all kayaking camps, a lot of fun was had alongside lots of learning about everything kayak related: getting in and out of kayaks, paddling forward, backward and in circles, and even learning to roll! Congratulations to all the students of this year's camp. It was fantastic!

What your money buys:

\$.50 pays for one patient's laboratory tests.

\$2.25 pays for the medicines for one patient's visit to the clinic.

\$ 7.50 buys one mosquito to cover an average of three children and prevent life threatening malaria for up to five years!

\$10.50 pays for one patient's visit to the clinic to see a doctor, get lab work done, and receive any necessary medicine.

\$12 per month buys a malnourished patient one full course of treatment with High Energy Milk. This is a life saving intervention.

\$36.50 for a domestic violence counselor's salary for one month.

\$40 per month can help a patient access life saving chemotherapy, or life changing surgery.

\$150 pays for a laboratory assistant's salary for one month.

\$170 pays for a physical therapist's salary for one month.

\$200 pays for a nurse's salary for one month.

\$250 pays for the salary of a full time driver for one month.

\$300 pays for the salary of a nurse practitioner for one month.

\$600 pays for the salary of a medical doctor for one month.

\$1,100 pays for the head malaria outreach educator for one year.

\$ 7,500 pays for the DIG garden program for one year.

\$20,000 will fund the construction of our new building, which will include two consultation rooms and a treatment room and will allow us to meet the demands of treating 30,000 plus patients per year.

On behalf of the 60 Soft Power Health staff members, the 30,000 clinic patients, and the 20,000 people educated and engaged through outreach programs: *Thank you so much for your support!!*

Partner With Us! Two Ways to Give:

Send check payable to: Soft Power Health, 2887 Purchase Street, Purchase, NY 10577, USA
Online at: softpowerhealth.org

Soft Power Health is a registered 501(c)(3) and all contributions are tax deductible. Tax ID # 20-5195776
jessie@softpowerhealth.org | www.softpowerhealth.org



2887 Purchase Street
Purchase, NY 10577