

# Soft Power Health Annual Report 2019

## THIS YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS:



Julius, Sarah, and Dan explain malaria transmission during an outreach  
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2019 was a remarkable year for Soft Power Health, and we remain extremely grateful for the ongoing support that makes all our work possible. 37,895 patients were treated at the Allan Stone Community Health Clinic. 956 patients were referred to other centers for surgeries and advanced therapies. Through outreach programs for malaria, family planning, malnutrition, domestic violence and organic gardening, we reached over 15,000 people this year. Soft Power Health's education, prevention and treatment work directly impacts over 50,000 people per year. This positive work extends far and wide because of all the support we

receive from everyone who believes in our work. Thank you very much, we really appreciate it! In fact, just saying thank you hardly seems adequate when you see the impact in person!

Here are some of the highlights of 2019:

- In October, Soft Power Health hosted doctors from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine who were doing a course in tropical medicine. This group had a special interest in NGO medicine and came to volunteer with us for 1 week and to rotate through all of our programs to see how our education, prevention and treatment model works. These doctors represented a diverse group from the UK, Australia, and all over Africa. Their interest and enthusiasm for our work was a wonderful gift to us and their questions sparked many interesting discussions about how and why we do things. All of this helps us deliver better services and care for the communities where we work! We hope to work with the London School again in the future!
- Not surprisingly, the completion of Isimba dam in November 2018 created a massive reservoir of essentially flat water that allowed the existing anopheles mosquito breeding population to greatly increase their activity and numbers. This, coupled with an extra-heavy rainy season, led to a great increase in the number of malaria cases that were seen and treated at the Clinic in the same patient population. Malaria went from being the 8<sup>th</sup> most commonly treated disease in 2018 to being the 4<sup>th</sup> most commonly treated disease in 2019. Soft Power Health's malaria education and prevention team remained busy throughout the year and the demand for mosquito nets increased right alongside the rates of malaria. We sold 2,764 nets in 2019 necessitating the purchase of a new container of mosquito nets.
- A chance meeting with Viktoria and Stephan Schmidheiny in a remote valley in Switzerland was nothing short of a miracle! Viktoria and Stephan are long-time philanthropists, and both founded and run the Switzerland-based Avina Foundation ([www.Avina-Stiftung.ch](http://www.Avina-Stiftung.ch)). As soon as they heard

about Soft Power Health's work, they became overnight supporters, and have since been providing excellent ideas about how to help attract more long-term donors. The world of miracles never ceases to amaze. Thank you Viktoria and Stephan, and the Avina Foundation, for partnering with us and supporting our work!

- Dr. Stella completed her residency in cardiology in February 2019 and has been coming to see patients at the Clinic on a regular basis since then. As hypertension is the most common disease we see and treat at the Clinic, having her specialist help in this area is invaluable. Her skills and knowledge allow us to deliver better care to our patients. In 2019, Soft Power Health hired a new country manager. Kirsten Bunkeddeko joined us full time in January 2019 and has been a stellar addition to our team since then! Also joining our staff in January 2019 was Mercy, a trained accountant and amazing football player. Mercy improved record keeping and efficiency at the Clinic enormously!



Dr. Stella does an EKG for a new patient

- Master photographer and documentarian, Eli Reichman, completed his third trip to Uganda in March 2019 to finish gathering the breadth and scope of Soft Power Health's work in order to create our new website. If you have not seen the new website, please visit it at [www.softpowerhealth.org](http://www.softpowerhealth.org). Eli does dynamite work. Thank you for making us look so good, Eli!
- The Mirja Sachs Foundation provided a very helpful grant to allow the expansion and refurbishment of our physical therapy space. Now our three therapists, Stephen Kato, Rachel and Flavia, can work side by side with enough space to treat patients at the same time, instead of taking turns. This allows more patients to be treated in a day and better quality work to be done. This makes a huge difference as the physical therapy team is treating well over 3,000 patients per year. The new space in the refurbished former storage room has allowed for more tools such as parallel bars, wall bars, and standing frames to be utilized. Thank you Mirja Sachs Foundation for this very helpful donation! Our patients and staff greatly appreciate it.

- Long-term supporter of Soft Power Health, the Segal Family Foundation, introduced us to the Waterloo Foundation, which supports education and prevention work for malnutrition. Thanks to the wonderful grant-writing talents of Kirsten Bunkeddeko, Soft Power Health secured a grant from Waterloo Foundation to support our malnutrition education and outreach program. Thank you Waterloo Foundation!



Dr. Charles doing what he does best  
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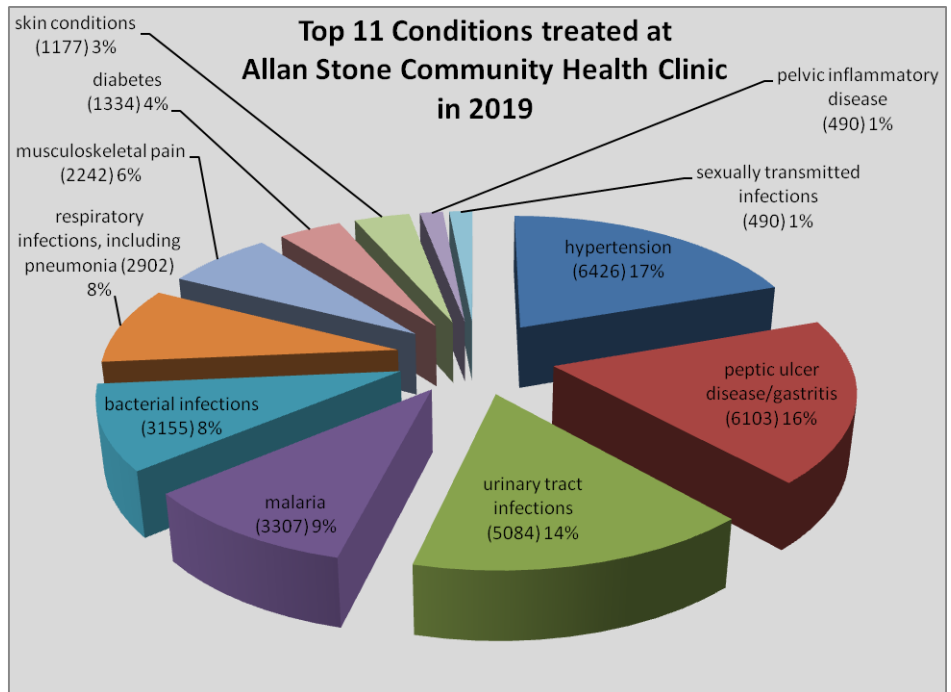
- In order to keep pace with the cost of living and expenses in Uganda, and because we had not raised Clinic fees in several years, Soft Power Health raised its Clinic fee to 15,000 UGX (approximately \$4.00 USD.) For \$4.00, each patient receives a consultation with a doctor, all on-site laboratory work, and any medications they may need. Although this is a real cost for most Ugandans, it is also affordable for almost everyone as well. In

this way, we can continue to generate income and have the essential value for service that is necessary to make the work we do sustainable. Because we are substantially cheaper than the government health centers (which are supposed to be free) we remain incredibly busy, with our services in high demand.

- The Kyabirwa Surgical Center opened its doors right down the road from us in October 2019. Since opening, they have successfully operated on a number of Soft Power Health’s patients who would have otherwise had to travel long distances to receive the care they needed. We expect that, with continued affordable prices and high quality surgeons working next door, we will be able to refer more and more patients there. This has already benefitted our patients who need surgery enormously, and will continue to do so.
- Dr. Heather Demirci, functional manual physical therapist and miracle worker, came to train our physical therapists and to help improve the care we can deliver at the Clinic and in outreach. Dr. Heather not only worked one-on-one with each physiotherapist, but she held a continuing education medical course for all staff. She treated a number of them too! Dr. Heather’s information and training was so well received that everyone has been asking when she is coming back. We hope it will be soon! Thank you very much Dr. Heather!

**ALLAN STONE COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINIC – Dr. Charles, Clinic Director**

In 2019, the Clinic treated 37,985 patients and referred another 956 patients on for other more advanced medical services. The top 11 diseases we treated at the Clinic were, in descending order: hypertension (6426) 17%; peptic ulcer disease/gastritis (6103) 16%; urinary tract infections (5084) 14%; malaria (3307) 9%; bacterial infections (3155) 8%; respiratory tract infections, including pneumonia (2902) 8%; musculoskeletal pain (2242) 6%; diabetes (1331) 4%; skin conditions (1177) 3%; sexually transmitted infections (490) 1%; and pelvic inflammatory disease (490) 1%.



**MOTHER AND CHILD WELLNESS CENTER – All Nurses plus Esther and Irene**

In 2019, we administered 954 rounds of vaccinations at the Mother and Child Wellness Center and in outreach. Of these vaccines, 66% were administered during family planning outreaches and 44% were administered at the Clinic during our Friday Vaccination Days. These vaccinations decrease morbidity and mortality for those who receive them.



Irene shows patients and families how to make High Energy Milk  
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Another intervention we offer at the Wellness Center is high energy milk (HEM) for malnourished and severely malnourished infants, children, and adults. This year, we provided 1,804 courses of HEM to 511 severely malnourished patients, mostly children. Of the patients receiving HEM, 23% have cerebral palsy, which means that their underlying health condition will impact their ability to recover and get better. However, 77%, or 395, severely malnourished kids who had no underlying conditions improved their health with the HEM intervention. On average, patients received 3 courses of HEM before their severe acute malnutrition status improved enough for the treatment to be discontinued. In 2019, 6,280 pediatric patients were screened and their

malnutrition status assessed. Thus, Soft Power Health treated 8% percent of triaged patients for severe malnutrition, improving and/or saving each of those lives.

The Mother and Child Wellness Center also offers family planning on every day the Clinic is open. At the Clinic, we offer all methods of family planning, from short-term to long-term. In 2019, 16% of the total family planning occurred at the Mother and Child Wellness Center. The other 84% occurred in the field through our outreaches in 38 villages throughout Jinja district and neighboring Kayunga district. Over the course of the year, we provided services to 5,021 women, specifically 824 people received family planning in the form of birth control pills, injectable Depo-Provera, IUDs or long-term implants at the Mother and Child Wellness Center, and 4,197 received the same methods through the family planning education and implementation outreach programs. 11% of the people receiving these services were new patients, and 89% were returning. Not only do these numbers show that the women in our area are making good, and consistent, use of this important health-promoting service, they also demonstrate how impressive the family planning teams are at procuring supplies and getting the education and services out to the communities during a time when family planning supplies are in short supply in Uganda!

### **PHYSICAL THERAPY – Stephen Kato and Flavia**

In 2019, 3,368 patients were seen and treated, often multiple times, between the Clinic (in the newly refurbished physical therapy rooms) and in outreach. 57 patients are seen on a regular basis in outreach. During 2019, 2% of patients were new and 98% were returning. The most common conditions seen and treated by the physical therapists were, in descending order: 1) lower back pain 2) lower limb pain 3) cerebral palsy sequelae.

This year, Stephen Kato, Flavia and Rachel received a week-long intensive with Dr. Heather Demirci, a functional manual trained physical therapist who came all the way from California to work with our team. The physical therapists and their patients are also enjoying more space and an improved environment, including more PT tools, in their newly redone space. A huge thank you to the Mirja Sachs Foundation for supporting a grant to make this possible!



The refurbished physio room being put to good use

### **DENTAL SERVICES – Dr. Paul**

In 2019 Dr. Paul treated 438 patients and referred 35 (8%) for more advanced procedures elsewhere. As in the past, the most common problems he treated were periodontal disease (41%), tooth extractions (29%), dental abscesses (5%), fillings (5%), and dry socket (4%). On a weekly basis throughout the year, Dr. Paul continues to provide dental education about teeth brushing and dental hygiene to many people

while they wait to be seen at the Clinic—and not only his dental patients! Most of the Clinic patients have little knowledge of, and limited access to, dental care; however, through these education sessions, Dr. Paul can reach close to 100 people at a time, so gradually, but steadily, the word is getting out.

### **MALNUTRITION EDUCATION OUTREACH & FOLLOW UP – Nurses James, Annet, Margaret, and local educator Naigaga**

1,652 families were reached and assisted with malnutrition education, follow up visits, and interventions in 2019. The malnutrition education team reached 46 villages throughout Jinja, Mayuge, Kayunga, and Iganga districts. 3,645 doses of Albendazole were administered to treat people infected with hookworm, which is a significant contributor to anemia in Uganda (malaria is the major contributor to anemia!) In addition, 2,211 doses of Vitamin A were given to children in need, and 16,380 doses of prenatal vitamins were provided to women in need during the outreach and follow up sessions. This essential education and prevention is helping more families than ever, especially those in severe poverty with limited access to health education and basic treatment. Vitamin Angels continues to donate Albendazole, Vitamin A, and prenatal vitamins to support these vulnerable and in-need populations. Thank you Vitamin Angels!



Deworming in action!

### **MALARIA EDUCATION & PREVENTION PROGRAM – Sarah Itanda and the Team!**

In 2019, the malaria education and prevention team visited 71 villages in 4 districts to provide malaria education and to sell subsidized mosquito nets to 2,236 people. 176 follow up visits were made to net purchasers' homes to ensure that the nets were being used correctly and that there had been successful knowledge transfer about malaria's cause and prevention. This year, 2,764 mosquito nets were sold, as demand has increased. In fact, demand grew so much this year that we had to order a new container of mosquito nets! With the new Isimba Dam reservoir, and a rainy 2019, rates of malaria seen at the Clinic and in our area have doubled! Overall, 2019 was a busy year for our malaria team. Thank you Sarah and the team for reaching so many people!

### **FAMILY PLANNING EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAM – All of the Nurses!**



Administration of family planning methods at an outreach  
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In 2019, between the Clinic, the Mother and Child Wellness Center, and our ongoing quarterly outreaches in 38 villages, Soft Power Health provided intermediate, long-term, or permanent methods of family planning to 5,021 women. 4,197 of those women received family planning in the field through the ongoing community outreach programs. Birth control pills, injections of Depo-Provera, and the placement of birth control implants are available during outreach programs. This year, we distributed a total of 12,745 male condoms between the Clinic and outreach, the vast majority being in outreach.

Only 5% of women who requested family planning had positive pregnancy tests, so 95% of women who wanted family planning received it! 2% of women who received family planning needed additional counseling about side effects. As 14 years of experience with family planning shows, the vast majority of women are very happy and feel well on family planning!

In addition, 20,170 doses of Albendazole were distributed to children during the 2019 family planning outreaches. As mentioned above, this deworming specifically treats hookworm, a cause and contributor to anemia as well as malnutrition, decreased cognitive development, and plain old fatigue!

### **ANTI -DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM – Florence and nurse Annet**

Domestic Violence counseling is a service that we added to our programming in 2016. In 2019, Florence, our domestic violence counselor, worked with 957 people on issues of domestic violence. Florence counsels at Soft Power Health 1 day per week and accompanies the family planning outreach 1 day per week, as well as making follow up visits and visiting people at home 2 days per week. As in past years, the most common issues people face are: emotional violence, economic violence, sexual violence, and child abuse. The need for this outreach continues to grow in the communities we see and treat. Thank you Florence for being a powerful and positive advocate for so many!

### **DIG – Organic Gardening Outreach Program – Patrick, Paul, Livingstone, Jennifer, Simon, Peter, and Loy**

The Development in Gardening (DIG) organic gardening program continues to flourish in our home garden at the Clinic, as well as with families who have severely malnourished children and in communities where malnutrition is an ongoing problem. The Clinic home garden serves as a demonstration garden to help show patients and interested community members how to create an organic home garden and to help educate people about what constitutes a nutritious meal.



DIG gardener and nutrition specialist, Loy, hard at work  
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A very important part of the work Soft Power Health does is identifying those families most in need and helping them get the education necessary to create and maintain productive and healthy gardens. These gardens then become both a food supply and a source of income generation for the families. In 2019, the DIG team of gardeners, headed by Patrick, nurtured 85 gardens in 19 community villages.

***Thank you to everyone who helps makes Soft Power Health's work possible. We really appreciate your support. It makes a huge difference!***