



Rotary Global Grants



Ministry of Health

GG2127364

Project Name: Vital Signs Equipment for Uganda

Project Description:

Country: Uganda

Location: Five Rural Government Districts

Total Budget: \$91,500

Area of Focus: Disease prevention and treatment

Activity Type: Health: Disease

Summary: Providing vital signs equipment to **125** rural hospitals/clinics treating **902,880** patients (**\$0.10/patient**)

Rancho Santa Fe Rotary Club, along with several other US clubs, is teaming up with Kampala Naguru Rotary and several other Uganda clubs to provide vital signs equipment and training to **5** local government Districts in Uganda that together operate **125+** public rural health centers treating **902,880** patients per year. The Ministry of Health (MOH) has invested heavily in healthcare infrastructure, with **3,150** facilities in a country the size of Oregon, but its budget does not include vital signs equipment that has been part of the standard of care in the West for decades. Patient exit interviews show that **98%** of patients rate MOH facilities highly on staff knowledge and competence, but **70%** found them unacceptable in the availability of medical equipment and **69%** in the availability of the drugs that the clinicians are prescribing. Another survey indicates that only **3%** of patients are currently having vital signs taken, which means that many preventable diseases are going undiagnosed. For example, the survey shows that **25%** of Ugandan adults who had their blood pressure taken were diagnosed with hypertension, a serious but easily treatable disease.

This Rotary Club consortium will be partnering with Bulamu Healthcare International, a US non-profit and Ugandan NGO regulated by the government's NGO Board, that was founded in 2016 to provide primary medical care to the rural poor in Uganda. Bulamu has developed cost-effective models in partnering with local government Districts to provide Western medical diagnosis and treatment without charge to impoverished rural residents. Using its "Core Team" of **75** licensed Ugandan clinicians, Bulamu provided healthcare to **64,792** patients in 2020 through its **Clinical Support Team (CST)** program at an average cost of **\$4** per patient and performed **1,087** surgeries through its **Surgery Intensive (SI)** program for a cost of **\$104** per patient. The **Bulamu Health Center Excellence (HCE) Program** is a modern hospital/clinic management system, piloted in 2019-20, that will be installed at **149** MOH facilities in **6** Districts by August 2021. Bulamu plans to extend the CST, SI, and HCE programs to **6** new Districts and **132** health centers between Sept 2021 and June 2022 but needs a partner to donate the equipment and help train the local staffs. On average, the donated "kits" cost **\$760** per facility, including training. They include digital and infrared thermometers, stethoscopes, weighing scales, height rods, blood pressure monitors, glucometers, glucose strips, pulse oximeters, batteries, and PPE.

For this Rotary project, the local government Districts will be selected in cooperation with the Uganda Clubs, depending on need and where their members can most easily provide volunteer support. Club members will be involved in meeting with the local councils and district health teams, assisting in vital signs/triage training, and helping with other HCE programs in MCH and IT data entry, depending on their skills. Doctors could also volunteer in treat patients and perform surgeries. Rotary will be helping extend Bulamu's health systems strengthening programs that have already proven their effectiveness. Eighteen months after the pilot HCE-installation at **27** public health units in Sheema District, **97%** of patients said they would recommend those facilities to family and friends. In answering 5 questions about their care, patients' overall satisfaction improved to **94%** from **59%** in a similar survey conducted before HCE installation.

Project Contact Persons

Primary Host Contact

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International Host Contact

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Project Status

Pledged: \$91,500 for the 2021-22 Rotary Year

This covers the total cost of a 10-month program to supply vital signs equipment and training at **125** public health centers that currently lack these devices that are essential to proper medical care. This equipment will be used to treat an estimated **902,880** patients per year at a cost of **\$0.10 per patient**, with continued equipment use thereafter.

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