

2007 Holiday Update



# LWALA Community Alliance

*building capacity • building hope*



[www.lwalacommunityalliance.org](http://www.lwalacommunityalliance.org)



*Happy Holidays from Lwala!* It's a great joy to share the ongoing story of Lwala with you in this season of storytelling and reflection. It has been an incredible year in Lwala village, a year of success and challenge, a year of realized dreams. Since the opening of the Ochieng Memorial Lwala Community Health Center, we have treated over 12,000 patients! Thank you, on behalf of the people of Lwala, for helping make this dream a reality! Your support and participation as members of our Kenyan and American communities have been vital to the success in Lwala, and we hope you will continue to serve, to learn, and to grow as our partners in this important work.

## *The Year's Accomplishments*

### *Health*

Since the health center opened on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, people have been streaming in from all over the countryside to receive quality, affordable care, many from as far as a day's walk. Sixty percent of our patients are children under five years old. Of the other 40%, the majority are pregnant mothers and elderly people. We're offering a host of services specific to women and children, including vaccinations, family planning, bed net distribution for malaria prevention, and prenatal care including prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV. We've also held several de-worming clinics at local primary schools.



*Part of the staff, from left: Nurse Olivia, Manager Omondi, Lab Tech Ezekiel, Night Guard Isaiah, Isaiah's wife Monica and their baby girl Olivia Atieno (the first child born at the clinic!), Clinical Officer Peter, Night Guard Richard, Secretary Suzzy*

Our fantastic local staff is leading this effort, from management to housekeeping to clinical care. We currently employ a manager, a clinical officer, two nurses, a nurse's aid, a lab technician, a secretary, two night guards, a housekeeper, and a groundskeeper, and we're actively recruiting!

The staff is ably assisted by the Lwala Village Development Committee (LVDC), a representative group of Lwala villagers that provides community insight and oversight and assists in the day-to-day management of the clinic. The LVDC is a committee of the board of the Lwala Community Alliance (LCA), and includes several members of the LCA board. These two groups work in close partnership to bring together the knowledge and expertise of both communities. Special thanks are due to the executive members of the LVDC; chairperson Oludhe Nyakinye, treasurer Suzzy Endesia, secretary David Odwar, and manager Omondi Ochieng.

We've built some very important partnerships in Kenya this year. We're now working hand in hand with the Kenyan Ministry of Health. In the words of our district minister of health, Dr. Gitau: "You're doing the work of the ministry of health in an area we aren't reaching. We should be supporting you!" We've sent our staff for various trainings through the ministry, and we're now receiving lots of important medicines and supplies from





Nurse Olivia and clinical officer Peter attending to patients

them, including vaccines, family planning materials, and medicines to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV. We've also formed a great partnership with the Tabaka Mission Hospital, which is taking our most serious and emergent cases. They're also putting people on antiretroviral therapy for AIDS as fast as we can send them! These partnerships have allowed us to focus on quality community-based care, and we are beginning to consider applying our model to help other villages implement similar programs in the future.

### *Education*

Our education program continues to flourish. We invested a lot of time this year into improving our systems for selecting and supporting students. As of today we have eighteen children in high school that otherwise would have quit their studies after primary school! This is a tremendous investment in the future of Lwala.

### *Organizational Development*

We've made major leaps forward as an organization this year. We are now a registered 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization called the Lwala Community Alliance (LCA). The unification of American and Kenyan committees into the LCA allows us to build on the strengths of our Kenyan and American constituencies, to maintain the ownership and grassroots insight of the community in Lwala and to improve our management, budgeting and strategic planning with American tools and knowledge. This has been a phenomenal learning process for us all! We are now managing our finances independently of Vanderbilt University, which generously assisted us in this area for over two years, and can accept tax deductible donations directly. Our original U.S. committee members have continued to serve with dedication on the board of the LCA and deserve special mention, including our founders Milton and Fred Ochieng, our president Dr. Bill Young, our vice president Craig Parker, our secretary Susan Pyke, and members Jeremiah Brown, Cathy Chamberlin, David Pyke, Caitlin Reiner, and Sarah Young. We've also welcomed several new board members in the past year, who have brought important expertise in new areas, including our treasurer Tina Swenson and members Freddie Ghesquiere, Danielle Snyder, and Alexa Von Tobel. In August we welcomed Joel Wickre as our executive director. His service in this new role has significantly increased our capacity.



Top row, from left: Craig Parker, Jeremiah Brown PhD, Bill Young MD, Sue Pyke, Dave Pyke PhD MBA, Caitlin Reiner, Cathy Chamberlin, Joel Wickre. Bottom row, from left: Milton Ochieng, Freddie Ghesquiere, Sarah Young, Fred Ochieng. Not pictured: Danielle Snyder, Alexa Von Tobel

### *LWALA Community Alliance ~ Mission*

We are an alliance of communities whose mission is to build the fundamental human capacity of the people of western Kenya to advance their own comprehensive well being, including physical health, educational opportunity, economic freedom, cultural vitality and spiritual growth. We work toward that end by equipping community leaders in Lwala village and the surrounding area to provide community-based health care, tuition assistance and micro-loans.



## *Upcoming Initiatives*

### *Water*

Diarrhea is one of the primary illnesses we see at the clinic, because most people in Lwala suffer from chronic parasitic infections. Rather than just treat this problem again and again, we've decided to attack it at its root: unsafe water. With the support of Blood:Water Mission, we're planning a major community program that will create partnerships with ten villages in the Lwala area to provide clean water, latrines, and hygiene education.

### *HIV/AIDS*

AIDS exerts an enormous toll on health and well being in Lwala. The death of Erastus and Margaret Ochieng from AIDS was the motivation for building the Lwala Clinic, and we are committed to dramatically reducing the burden of AIDS in Lwala. We're currently sending patients with AIDS to the Tabaka Mission Hospital, but the trip is onerous, and a program in Lwala would substantially increase access to care for the entire community. Based on much research and conversation with community groups in Lwala, we are moving toward a program that will integrate medical care, including antiretroviral therapy; in-home follow-up with community members trained as community health workers; voluntary counseling and testing; nutritional support including innovative agricultural training and plowing and fertilizer assistance; and AIDS education through training and empowering community groups, from school children to soccer teams to women's groups to church choirs. Unfortunately, we have nowhere to house this program since we've already maxed out the space in the original clinic building. We're currently providing maternal and child health services in the clinic kitchen! Contingent on funding, we plan to build a new facility to provide space for voluntary HIV testing and counseling, AIDS-specific medical care, training and administration, and our new maternity service.

### *Maternity*

We were planning to wait a few years before implementing maternity services, but the community had other plans! We've had a number of women show up at the clinic in labor, and naturally we've helped them deliver beautiful babies! As the minister of health asked us, we thought rhetorically, "Would you rather these women gave birth in their dirt-floored huts or in the health center with qualified medical assistance?" We've planned a three-step plan for maternity service, beginning with acquiring basic equipment, and ending with a fully developed maternity ward and an outreach program to traditional birth attendants. The middle step is to have a delivery table in the original clinic building's laundry room, another good reason to get to work on a new facility!



*The second baby born at the clinic!*

### *Medical Education*

One challenge we've faced this year has been retention of qualified medical staff. The job market for trained medical personnel is very competitive in Kenya, and Lwala doesn't offer the lifestyle benefits of a big city like Nairobi. We are planning to build on our existing education program by offering a few young people from Lwala the opportunity to pursue medical training in exchange for several years of service at the Lwala clinic. This will be a rare opportunity for young people in Lwala, almost none of whom are able to pursue education past high school, and a great opportunity for the clinic to have a qualified medical staff with strong roots in Lwala.



# Make a Difference!

Lwala benefits from a strong network of friends in the U.S. Blood:Water Mission has provided invaluable ongoing support, and Vanderbilt University has continued to offer vital operational and technical assistance. Dartmouth College remains a nexus of support for us as well. The Real Medicine Foundation has funded the salary of our clinical officer, and we anticipate a growing relationship with them. Our friends in New York City held a fantastic black tie benefit for Lwala in November, and continue to mobilize a great crowd of young people on Wall Street for Lwala. Our many organizational supporters and advisors are listed to the right. And of course our individual donors deserve the biggest thanks of all. You are making a difference! Thank you all!

We are committed to the ongoing pursuit of justice in Lwala. Your continued support is vital to sustaining our existing programs and to rolling out our exciting new initiatives in water, HIV/AIDS, maternity and medical education. Your donation helps provide these necessary services, but it goes beyond that. *Your support goes to empower the community of Lwala - to provide jobs, training, education, and improved health that will make the future brighter for all of Lwala.* Please consider a donation to Lwala as a gift this holiday season! Just send us a donation with a note indicating which of the items below you'd like to give, the name of the recipient, and the address where you'd like the notification sent, and we'll happily send a certificate to show the recipient what's been given in his or her name.

- Test one person for HIV .....\$1
- Provide a bed net to prevent malaria for one child.....\$7
- Provide a kit to improve in-home care for one person with AIDS.....\$15
- Train one traditional birth attendant to identify at-risk mothers and refer them to the clinic.....\$30
- Provide transport for one person to get HIV care for a year.....\$50
- Buy a delivery kit to help the clinic deliver babies safely.....\$100
- Provide clean water and formula to safely feed a baby born to an HIV positive mother for 6 months.....\$180
- Train, equip and send a community health worker to care for people with AIDS in their homes for a year.....\$300
- Send a student to high school for a year.....\$500
- Send a student to nursing school for a year.....\$1,000
- Pay one nurse's salary for a year.....\$3,300
- Drill a clean water well in Lwala.....\$5,000
- Install running water at the clinic.....\$6,500
- Build a staff house to help retain clinical staff.....\$10,000
- Build our new HIV/AIDS and Maternity Building!.....\$35,000

85 Broads \* Judith Aidoo § Uptown Movie Network \* Asia Society of New York \* Berkeley Covenant Church \* Brooks School \* Channel 5, Nashville \* Children Helping Children and the Richmond School \* Colorado High Schools \* Crossroads Academy \* Dannijo Jewels \* Dartmouth College Dickey Center \* Dartmouth College Environmental Studies Department \* Dartmouth College Soccer Program \* Dartmouth College Tucker Foundation \* Sam Edelman Shoes \* Dr. Paul Farmer and Partners in Health \* First Presbyterian Church, Spokane, WA \* Senator Bill Frist and the Frist Foundation \* Grassroots Soccer \* Gratis Internet \* The Holton Foundation \* Kenya Ministry of Health and Rongo District Ministry of Health \* The Langeloth Foundation \* MAC Cosmetics \* Mac Papers \* Bethany McLean of Fortune Magazine \* MEDS (Mission for Essential Drugs and Supplies) \* Miles To Go \* Nacoochee School \* The Navigators \* Jessica Perilla Design \* Rabun Gap High School \* The Ranney School \* Real Medicine Foundation \* Red Bank Regional High School \* Judith Ripka Jewelry \* www.roanneadams.com \* Dr. Jeffrey Sachs and the Millennium Village Project \* St. Camillus Tabaka Mission Hospital \* St. Joseph's College of Nursing \* Systems Plus Computers \* Therapy Systems at Private Edition \* Thetford Academy and Operation Day's Work \* Kristopher Tillery \* TRIM Classic Barber § Legendary Beauty \* Union House Café \* University of New England Tropical Medicine Club \* University School of Nashville \* Upper Valley Lightning Soccer Program \* Vanderbilt AMSA \* Vanderbilt Beta Theta Pi Fraternity \* Vanderbilt Bishop Johnson Black Cultural Center \* Vanderbilt Institute for Global Health \* Vanderbilt International Office \* Vanderbilt Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority \* Vanderbilt Kappa Delta Sorority \* Vanderbilt Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority \* Vanderbilt Office of Active Citizenship and Service \* Vanderbilt Office of Alumni Development \* Vanderbilt Pi Beta Phi Sorority \* Vanderbilt Programming Board \* Vanderbilt REMEDY (Recovered Medical Equipment for the Developing World) \* Vanderbilt Speakers Committee \* Vanderbilt Student Government Association \* Vanderbilt Students for Kenya \* Womenade of the Rockies

Thank You!



*To learn more about Milton and Fred's story, check out the documentary "Sons of Lwala," at [www.hopeforlwala.com](http://www.hopeforlwala.com).*

*Please make donations payable to: Lwala Community Alliance, Inc.*

*and send to: P.O. Box 722, Hanover, NH, 03755.*

*All donations are fully tax deductible.*

*Our EIN is: 26-1303951.*

*Online donations, including recurring donations, will be possible from mid January, when our new website goes live. Check it out at: [www.lwalacommunityalliance.org](http://www.lwalacommunityalliance.org).*

*For more information about Lwala and the work of the Lwala Community Alliance, contact us at [lwalacommunityalliance@gmail.com](mailto:lwalacommunityalliance@gmail.com), or at 510.501.5090.*