

Real Medicine Foundation Fulfills the Health Care Needs of Turkana

In 2009, [Real Medicine Foundation](#) (RMF) began a long-term partnership with local organizations in Northwestern Kenya to support the only clinic in Lodwar, Turkana's capital, with a population of almost 50,000. Lodwar is located 1,000 km from the capital city, Nairobi, and is an arid area characterized by scarcity and poor infrastructure such as a lack of quality roads, electricity and other social amenities.

RMF expanded medical outreach programs and mobile clinics, as well as food and water aid where needed. Now entering its seventh year of this program, RMF is continuing to provide much needed health care and mobile outreach to communities not traditionally served by the health care system in Kenya. RMF's medical and outreach services also include public health education, vaccinations against childhood diseases, and for expectant mothers, and school health programs. These services are now available to a population of more than 250,000 people in some of the most remote regions of Turkana, including Nabuin, the Kerio Region, including Lokori, and Lodwar Town.

The nomadic nature of the Turkana tribe causes the population of the villages to migrate approximately every four months and to be a new group of villagers about every four months. Therefore, RMF is providing services to more than the estimated population of people living in each village at one time. Every month, an average of 1,300 patients is seen by the mobile clinic teams, and about 1,000 patients is seen at the permanent clinic in Lodwar. When RMF's founder and CEO, Dr. Martina Fuchs, visited Turkana's drought region in September 2009, she realized that many seriously-ill patients needed advanced care at a secondary and/or tertiary referral hospital, and the only functioning government referral hospital in the Turkana region, Lodwar County and Referral Hospital (LCRH), which was formerly Lodwar District Hospital, was undersupplied and in poor repair. The hospital serves a population of more than 1,000,000, including Turkana and other Northwestern Kenyan residents, as well as people from the neighboring countries of Uganda and South Sudan.

In early 2011, RMF started repairing and upgrading the infrastructure of LCRH's entire inpatient unit and providing each department with the emergency medical equipment and supplies necessary for a fully functional hospital, including oxygen concentrators, nebulizers, suction machines, oxygen flow meters, laryngoscopes, glucometers/strips, and a sterilizer. Basic equipment such as medicine trolleys, dirty linen carriers, and digital thermometers were procured for the entire hospital and many of the items provided by RMF were firsts for the hospital.

In addition to equipment, RMF's operational support has been including regular supplies of medicines and emergency medication, non-pharmaceutical supplies, and advanced training for staff. In less than a year, as a result of RMF's work, the Nursing Council of Kenya approved LCRH as a 'Training Institution,' an internship center for clinical and medical officers, and a county referral hospital. Additionally, the hospital was recognized as the best pediatric facility in the area.

Since RMF first began partnering with the hospital in 2011, a trend of high and increasing numbers of patients with very low mortality rates has been maintained, from 77,286 in 2013 to 128,256 in 2015, of which 47,304 were pediatric patients. RMF continues to be regularly honored by the Kenyan Ministry of Health for its contributions to the hospital and the organization continues to play a significant part in the transformation of the quality of healthcare provided and the renewed hope and energy of staff and patients. As a result, LCRH is now on its way to becoming a 'Center of Excellence'.

About Real Medicine Foundation

[Real Medicine Foundation](#) (RMF) is a U.S. based non-profit public charity headquartered in Los Angeles, with branches in the UK and Germany, and offices and partners all over the world. RMF provides humanitarian support and development to people living in disaster and poverty-stricken areas, focusing on the person as a whole by providing medical/physical, emotional, social, and economic support. RMF's vision is to move beyond traditional humanitarian aid programs by creating long-term solutions to health care and poverty related issues, implementing sustainable models and leveraging existing resources through partnerships with local governments, health systems, and local staff. RMF has worked in 21 countries on 4 continents, with currently 48 active programs, including disaster relief, health systems strengthening, maternal and child health, malnutrition treatment, health education outreach, psycho trauma support, and economic/livelihood programs, using innovative approaches such as mHealth solutions and institutionalization of Respectful Maternity Care practices. RMF is in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and in PVO Status with USAID, and is Operational Partner with UNFPA in South Sudan and Nepal, and Implementing Partner with UNHCR in Uganda, with UNICEF in Pakistan, and with UNICEF and WFP in South Sudan.

