

28 August 2021

Dear Yotkom supporters and partners

We are all witnessing many troubles in our world at this time and being confronted daily by distressing images of suffering and pain experienced by our neighbours in the global community. Many people have been moved by compassion and are seeking for effective ways to respond to the big needs in our world.

As one of our Yotkom partners and supporters we recognise the difference you are making, meeting a wide range of needs in Sub-Saharan Africa, a region which is one of the poorest in the world and a place where communities experience very high rates of maternal and child mortality.

By joining hands with us and our growing health team in Kitgum you are powering our vision and impacting one place in our world which has long carried a significant burden of poverty and disease.

At Yotkom we are giving a lot of emphasis in Uganda to developing strong relationships, providing much needed resources and building a high degree of self reliance.

Everyone on our board of management here in Australia continue to work as volunteers and this makes it possible for all donations to be directed to Uganda where we can help people like Mercy.

Mercy's story

Recently our orthopaedic surgeon, Dr Julius, removed a large bone cancer the size of a baseball which was protruding from the lower leg of this young village girl called Mercy.



Unfortunately she required an amputation to adequately remove the tumour but this was skilfully undertaken in our well equipped operating theatre with good anaesthetic and post operative care. Our chaplain, Rev. Concy, met with the family and provided counselling and support.

Mercy has recovered well but still faces many challenges.



We are providing ongoing financial assistance from our Compassion Fund so this young girl can travel 9 hours by road to Kampala for further specialist assessment and chemotherapy. At Yotkom we have a vision to create a centre of excellence in Northern Uganda for trauma and orthopaedic care and to help many more people like Mercy.

Currently we are also in the process of seeking Uganda Government accreditation to provide subsidised HIV/ AIDS and Tuberculosis care to our community. One of our clinical officers, Joan, has also completed a 12 month course in Palliative Care and will help our clinical team build capacity and skills in this neglected area.

Along with renovation of our laboratory and extension of our staff accommodation, one of our construction goals for this year is to build a mortuary for our hospital. Having a refrigerated mortuary would provide help and dignity to grieving families as currently there is no adequate facility to service this rural district of over 300,000 people. In Uganda people who have died are taken back to their villages for burial. The climate is very hot and families sometimes need a few days to raise funds to transport the body, arrange the funeral and allow distant relatives to return to their village. This service is something we take for granted in Australia but is a common and real challenge in Northern Uganda. The nearest refrigerated mortuary to Kitgum where Yotkom is situated is in a regional city 100 km away called Gulu. We estimate the mortuary will cost about \$30,000 AUS.

Once again, thank you for the part you continue playing to generously share with the Acholi community of Northern Uganda . Being a partner with Yotkom means you are making a difference and providing excellent, accessible and compassionate health care to a needy part of our very troubled world.

God bless you

From Andrew and Anne Wright
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