



Med25 Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2010

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Questions? Contact Executive
Director Rebecca Okelo at:
rebecca@med25.org

ABOUT MED25:

Med25 works at the community level to actualize the basic human right of all individuals for access to competent, culturally appropriate, and affordable health care to improve the health, welfare, and social justice of people everywhere. In accordance with Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Med25 provides basic health care to those most in need, most at risk, and who have suffered the most as a result of historical neglect.

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our website:
www.med25.org

Malaria: What it is and Why it Effects so Many

Malaria is the number one killer of children under the age of five. Responsible for 20% of all deaths, malaria takes the lives of approximately 34,000 Kenyan children annually, 70% of Kenya's population lives in an area where malaria is transmitted daily. It is the leading cause for morbidity and mortality for all individuals living in Kenya, and is responsible for 30% for all outpatient visits and 19% of all hospitalizations. Every year, an estimated 6,000 pregnant women develop malaria related anemia, causing 4,000 infants to be born with anemia and low birth rate, leading to other complications. Mbita is surrounded by Lake Victoria, the country's endemic area where malaria infection rates are the highest.

Except those who have travelled internationally in the past, many Americans have never been exposed the heartbreak and devastation caused by this disease. Malaria is a mosquito-born infectious disease. The malaria parasite hides in the liver and multiplies within red blood cells. The infected person begins to develop symptoms such as headaches, fevers, body aches, and other symptoms similar to that of a seasonal flu.

Mosquitoes breed in standing water, such as Lake Victoria or puddles found during raining season (causing the highest infection rates annually). While many international travelers take anti-malaria drugs to significantly decrease the likelihood of being infected, there currently is no long-term prophylaxis or vaccination for those living in endemic areas. However, there are ways that individuals can help decrease their exposure to the malaria parasite: 1) by

sleeping under mosquito nets treated with insecticide (specifically pregnant women and children under 5— those most commonly infected), 2) regularly applying mosquito repellent or spraying insecticides in the house, and 3) draining standing water where mosquitoes lay their eggs.

The unfortunate reality is that many individuals in the Mbita community continue to die from Malaria, even though it is a treatable disease.

In my five years of working in Africa, I have been diagnosed and treated for Malaria twice: once being diagnosed and treated in the United States which resulted in \$5,000 of out-of-pocket expenses after my insurance company covered preliminary expenses, and the second time this past June in Kenya at the Med25 Clinic, which cost \$0.50 (yes, 50 cents).

Through our partnership with the Kenyan Ministry of Health, Med25 is able to provide all patients with free malaria treatment— a 3 day course of medications which kill the malaria parasite in the body. Every patient treated for malaria at our facility also receives a follow-up from one of our community Health Workers, or CHWs. The CHW visits patients in their home and provides follow up education on how the patient can protect themselves and their families from future malaria infections. This is just one of the ways that we try to make a difference in the Mbita community.

**The above statistics are from the CDC. For more information on Malaria in Kenya, visit www.cdc.gov and click on Global Activities— Kenya.*

Meet the Staff: Judith Ochieng, CHW

All of our Community Health Workers (CHWs) go above and beyond everyday to serve their communities, Judith Ochieng, a Med25 CHW, is key to our outreach work in Mbita. In a culture where women do not usually take on leadership roles, Judith is a role model and has the utmost respect from her community and its elders. This summer, on the last day of the Med25 soccer tournament, the final game was approaching but we had run out of clean drinking water. In a hot, dry climate there is always a water shortage, and as a health-care facility that enforces quality, we would not serve lake water. We needed clean, pure drinking water but didn't know where to get it. Judith came to the rescue! Judith rounded up a few women to walk to her village home (about six



Judith Ochieng
Community Health Worker

blocks) to access her family's rain water they had been collecting. They carried buckets of water on their heads and served her family's water supply to all of the players and the community. Clean water is a scarce commodity in Mbita, especially approaching the dry season. People do everything to conserve what little clean water they have access to. But not Judith. Judith opens up her personal resources, her time, and her energy, to serve her community. Nearly everyday Judith personally walks a patient from her community to our clinic, just to make sure that they are safe and they receive the healthcare they need. She is a wonderful woman with a warm heart, and a spirit of giving unlike anyone you have ever met.

To contribute to Judith's salary, visit our website.



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JOIN MED25 FAMILY AND FRIENDS AT THIS YEAR'S FUNDRAISER!

Saturday October 2nd
6pm-10pm

At

Ouch My Eye Art
Gallery

1022 1st Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98134

\$35 Advance, \$40 at
the door

0-10 years old Free

11-18 \$20 at door

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Mbita Clinic By The Numbers

Every month we will try to provide our supporters with the "Mbita Clinic By the Numbers". We know actions are louder than words, and it is important that people can visually see the impact that the Med25 Clinic is making in the Mbita community.

PATIENTS TREATED	COMBINED APRIL- JUNE	JULY 2010	AUGUST 2010
Total Number of Patients	1318	506	534
Patients Under the age of 5	395	165	184
Patients Over the age of 5	923	341	350
Patients Immunized	136	109	159
Most Common Ailment- Under 5 (no. of patients treated)	Malaria (179)	Malaria (112)	Malaria (130)
2nd Most Common Ailment- Under 5 (no. of patients treated)	Respiratory Illness (112)	Respiratory Illness (28)	Respiratory Illness (36)
Most Common Ailment- Over 5 (no. of patients treated)	Malaria (373)	Malaria (201)	Malaria (217)
2nd Most Common Ailment- Over 5 (no. of patients treated)	Respiratory Illness (193)	UTIs (28)	Respiratory Illness (78)

Med25 Silent Auction: Sign Up Today!

On Saturday, October 2nd, Med25 International will hold their Annual Fundraiser and Silent Auction at the Ouch My Eye Art Gallery in downtown Seattle. The focus for this year's fundraiser is the Mbita Clinic staff salaries. While salaries are not glamorous, they are vital to our success in Kenya. As you have learned through our newsletters, our staff members are dedicated to the Med25 mission and ensuring the people of Mbita have access to the same quality health care as other parts of the world. Med25 spends about \$45,000 a year to cover the salaries for our 22 Kenyan employees.

The Med25 Silent Auction will include two separate auctions, ensuring you won't go away empty handed! Some of the fabulous auction items include: 2 Front row Seahawks Tickets, professional golf course photos of local courses, Seattle U basketball jerseys and courtside seats, Starbucks gift baskets, signed Sounders apparel, Framed African Artwork, Yoga classes, donated hours by Dimensions Inc. Architect, Pacific Northwest Ballet tickets, African Sculptures, African jewelry, FIFA Helly Hansen jackets, Isabelle Fiore Handbag, Whale watching on the Victoria Clipper, and much much more!

Please RSVP prior to October 2nd to receive \$5 off your ticket price! RSVP to Rebecca Okelo or Alyssa Perry at Rebecca@med25.org or perryal@seattleu.edu.