



Fondazione
Dr. Ambrosoli
Memorial Hospital

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"We just have to
stay here to share
and to **help as
many people as
possible.**"

Father Giuseppe Ambrosoli

DEAR FRIENDS,

As you can imagine, the past few months have been very demanding for us. Kalongo hospital has been suddenly involved in the Covid-19 emergency. We immediately had to face the operational difficulties caused by the emergency. The blockade of transports and shipping delayed the delivery of medical materials and devices, necessary to face not only a possible Covid-19 epidemic, but above all the many daily emergencies, such as pneumonia, airborne infectious diseases and certainly malaria, which is affecting once again the little ones.

In Uganda, the positive cases of Covid-19 are constantly growing, even if they are much less compared to other countries. By the 2nd of September 3,037 confirmed infections and 32 deceased were registered. But the side effects of the emergency are what really scare us.

In recent months in Kalongo the number of hospitalizations dropped dramatically. Due to the restrictive measures imposed by the government which made it difficult to reach the hospital, and to the fear of the population to contract the virus, the cases arriving at the hospital are serious and often fatal.

Children, mothers, entire communities have remained isolated, without medical treatment or healthcare, without the possibility of recovery. That is what the numbers show: in January 2020 the number of the babies born safely in Kalongo was 316 against the 147 in April. Also in January pediatrics welcomed 565 children, while in April only 228 of them. Now the numbers are slowly growing, **but what about all those babies born without assisted delivery and those affected by malaria who could not reach the hospital?**

There is no answer for these questions, which afflict us but that push us to find new ways **to continue staying close to the local community, involving and supporting it.** Because the side effects of coronavirus don't fall back "only" on the health: the education of the children is going to fail, the small subsistence activities are disappearing, and the economy of the country is withdrawing. And the consequence of all this is the worsening of poverty and inequalities and the deterioration of the health of individuals and families, in a dramatic vicious circle.

Precisely for this reason, **to guarantee basic healthcare to the most needy, the hospital has intensified its actions on the area.** The healthcare professionals have worked hard to bring vaccines to the new born in the villages, to examine pregnant women and children, to monitor malnutrition and respiratory difficulties, to take HIV tests, to organize sanitation educational activities. And at this time they can't count on doctors and trainees from Italy or on trainees of the obstetrics school which will remain closed until December.

Guaranteeing the right to health cannot be postponed to better times, but supporting the hospital with resolution requires a very significant use of resources. Thank you sincerely, because with your support we were able to bring to the hospital oxygen concentrators, pulse oximeters, infrared thermometers, surgical masks, visors and antibacterial fabric, which will allow better care for the most fragile patients. **There is still so much to do! Your help is important.**

Be proud of it, as we are to have you by our side.

Giovanna Ambrosoli
President

"Africa is a land of challenges that come one after another without interruption and that push us not to give up, certain that we are doing the right thing. That is what Father Giuseppe taught us to believe and to do".

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A POSTPONED APPOINTMENT

On November 29, 2019 the Holy See communicated the recognition, by Pope Francis, of the miracle that Father Giuseppe Ambrosoli's intervention had produced.

The 22nd of November, 2020 should have been the day of the celebration for his beatification in Kalongo, but the coronavirus emergency has postponed the ceremony to the next year.

We are waiting to know the new date to party together!



A MAN WITH A CAPITAL "M"

"I am a doctor and have been lucky enough to work in Kalongo from February '83 to April '85. I met Father Giuseppe after about two months that I have started to work in Uganda, because when I arrived he was in Italy undergoing some treatment. Even before knowing him in person, the fame surrounding his figure had made me write that on some of my notes: "Father Ambrosoli will arrive tomorrow. I expect to meet a "Man" ". I wrote "Man" with a capital "M" and my expectations were right. I remember with emotion the evening of his arrival in Kalongo, with all the people crowding in front of the mission to greet him and the bells ringing in celebration! In fact everyone loved him, not only in Kalongo, but throughout Uganda; in any corner of the country I went, it was enough that I said: "I come from Kalongo" to hear them asking me: "And how is Father Ambrosoli?" or to hear them saying: "I met Father Ambrosoli", with a badly concealed pinch of pride, and any problem was solved. About his personality, very rich in human and professional qualities, I remember in particular two aspects. The first aspect that struck me was his authority, completely free from any form of authoritarianism, I mean the fact of being a constant reference point for any problem of the entire community, was it human or technical, which came from his spiritual level and not from the official role of manager of the hospital. The second aspect, the most representative one and the one from which, in my humble opinion, all his other qualities came, was his humility. He was sincerely and deeply humble, and in the relationship with him it was clear that he never placed himself before others, but whatever he did, he experienced it as a service which arose from his inner wealth.

I have only positive memories of Father Giuseppe: meekness, dedication, generosity, concern for everyone's needs, attachment to prayer, which was never lacking in his day. I conclude with the hope that the Lord blesses the efforts of all the people working so that his radiant figure becomes for the universal Church an example of Christian virtues, as well as he was for those who had the honor and the luck to know him during his earthly life.

*Dr. Tito Squillaci
June 23, 1999*

In 2018 the pediatrician Dr. Squillaci returned to Dr. Ambrosoli Memorial Hospital, with his wife Nunziella, to fulfill the dream he had been cultivated for over thirty years to work again in Kalongo in the footsteps of Father Giuseppe. Dr. Squillaci has made a fundamental contribution, both professional and human, to the reorganization of pediatrics and neonatology and to the training of the ward personnel.

THE RETURN OF MALARIA

In Uganda, as in many sub-Saharan African countries, the rainy season has begun and it certainly is a blessing for the poorest people who can return to work in the fields ensuring the sustenance of their family, but it also marks the return of malaria.

Since the rains started again, the cases of malaria are increasing. At the end of July, malaria represented 60% of hospitalizations. The most affected are once again the small children that together with malaria often develop other symptoms: breathing difficulties, cerebral malaria and severe anemia. Which means they need blood transfusions. But at Kalongo hospital, there is not always blood for everyone, as the surgeon Dr. Carmen Orlotti explains:

*"The rain has returned and brought back malaria, and very serious anemias as well. The search for blood touches the limits of obsession. Several times a day I check the number of blood sacks available in the laboratory. Opening that fridge always makes me so anxious. The number of sacks is never enough. Often in these weeks some colleagues in Italy commented on the difficulty to choose who to earmark the only free ventilator. We are not used to choosing. **But here the need to choose is constant, because resources are limited and patients are many.**"*

We continue to do our best so that everyone have what is necessary, but many times, unwillingly, we can't do it."

The nearest blood bank is located in Gulu which is 200 km from Kalongo. In recent months not even the governmental blood bank managed to collect blood donations, fundamental to proceed with transfusions, for this reason even when it was possible to reach Gulu, the healthcare professionals often returned empty-handed.

Sometimes an attempt is made to collect blood donations directly in the hospital, but it's not easy, because it involves a significant use of resources both for the blood sample and for the related tests; essential to ensure that the blood is safe for transfusions to babies, pregnant mothers and pregnant women.

To make matters worse, the fear of taking Covid-19 has removed from the hospital potential donors who no longer came to donate.

"It is a constant challenge. The toll of the deceased continues to rise, mostly among children under 5 years of age." says Dr. Okot, hospital manager "At the beginning of the year we moved a 3-year-old child at our partner hospital, the Lacor Hospital in Gulu, for a blood transfusion. The therapeutic information meant only this: blood transfusion. In Kalongo we could have looked after him, but we didn't have a chance to find the right blood for this baby. But when he came to Lacor Hospital, it turned out that they didn't have blood there either. From there the child was moved to another hospital and the cost of transfers and care has become so high that parents could no longer afford it and wanted to take him home. We decided to take care of this baby and we asked



them to bring him back to Kalongo, we would have looked after him, finding somehow a donor available to save his life. At the end we succeeded, we saved him, but there are so many children that we are unable to save, because sometimes hospital resources are very limited. Children die. And as doctors, our hands are tied, we can't do anything. This is why the role of the Foundation is truly fundamental and it cannot fail. We are grateful to those in Italy which never stopped supporting the Foundation regularly even today in this difficult time, allowing us to fight to save the greatest number of children, even when the hopes seem few and the difficulties are many. We never give up."



MALARIA, UNA SFIDA A DIFESA DEI PIÙ FRAGILI

The World Health Organisation (WHO) published in the World Malaria Report 2019 figures related to malaria in the world in 2018.

228 mln

number of **estimated cases** globally

93% of cases (213 millions)

and **94%** of deaths **occurred in WHO African region.**

405.000

Estimated number of **deaths**

67% are children **below 5 years of age (272.000)**

85% of deaths due to malaria **is concentrated in 19 Paesi** of Sub-Saharan Africa and in India.

6 Countries account for **more than half of malaria cases of the world**: Nigeria (25%), Democratic Republic of Congo (12%), **Uganda (5%)** and Ivory Coast, Mozambique and Niger (4% each).

Malaria is an acute feverish illness.

When not treated within 24 hours, malaria *P. falciparum* can turn into a severe illness, often leading to death. **People at higher risk** of contracting malaria are:



newborns and children under 5 because they have not developed any immunity yet



pregnant women for specific immunity conditions due to their status



HIV / AIDS patients with weak immunity system



**Fondazione
Dr. Ambrosoli**
Memorial Hospital

THE PRICELESS VALUE OF A PERIODIC DONATION TO AMBROSOLI FOUNDATION

Like Father Giuseppe Ambrosoli, we wish for **Kalongo hospital the best possible future**, in which mothers can be supported before, during and after delivery with no interruption, in a safe place with adequate hygienic conditions; where the youngest patients can finally find a child-size place, where they can stay until they fully recover.

A fully equipped hospital, able to offer specialized medical assistance, that is accessible to everyone, to fight malaria, tuberculosis, pneumonia, HIV, Covid-19. A hospital always able to treat, with no dramatic interruptions due to lack of financial resources or qualified human resources.

This is not a dream: it is our mission and we can make it real only with the persons who support us with perseverance and trust.

There are many challenges, especially during this particular time, but we do not want to give up!

For this reason we ask you today to chose a periodic donation.

Thanks to your periodic donation we can schedule more effectively the actions in support of medical and educational activities of Kalongo hospital and of the midwifery school, ensuring that they are carried out regularly, always, even during medical emergencies or economic crisis.



“Not everybody can do great things, but everyone can do small things with great love.”

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

YOUR PERIODIC DONATION ALLOWS US TO:



Plan our actions
On the long term with efficiency and greater serenity



Ensure continuity of services as for instance the antenatal care to future mothers, assisted deliveries, premature baby care, programmes to fight malnutrition, malaria treatment, surgical and orthopaedic interventions, assistance to patients with pneumonia, tuberculosis, HIV.



Take action promptly in case of health emergencies as happened during Covid-19



Reduce administrative costs



YOU CAN ACTIVATE ALLOWS YOU TO:



Distribute your donation over time with no burden on your budget with a single important donation



Skip long lines
At the bank



Tick your solidarity agenda

HOW TO DO IT?

You can activate your periodic donation by choosing the amount and frequency that suit you best on our website page **DONATENOW** with credit card

<https://sostieni.fondazioneambrosoli.it>

You can call us at any time to edit your choice on frequency, amount of your donation, or account details or credit card details and, obviously, you can ask to your bank or to us the immediate suspension of the periodic donation.

Thanks to your periodic donation, no matter if small or big, you will allow doctors, midwives and students of Midwifery School in Kalongo to work at their best, every day, for the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable people.

THANK YOU SO MUCH

A LITTLE MOUSE IN FRONT OF THE MOUNTAIN

Letter from Kalongo

Dear friends, I would like to write to you more often. Tell you about how in recent months the rain has recalled many people to the fields. And about how the landscape has become a palette with all the shades of green dotted here and there with magnificent sunflowers. But time never seems to be enough...

They called me yesterday from the maternity ward, the midwife on duty received a young mom moved here from a near government hospital. I immediately go to the ward. The young woman in her first pregnancy is unconscious, she is breathing with difficulty.



Before being moved here in Kalongo, she had been undergone caesarean section after two days of labor in a small Health Center (rural health center). The wound is infected, the pressure low. She has all the signs of a very serious puerperal sepsis. We hurry to assist the woman, we do not have intensive care but we can still do something. We understand however, that it is too late to have any hope of saving her. I call her husband aside, let him tell the events. I tell him what I fear, which is that the young wife now has little chance of surviving. Two hours after the young mom passes away.

I often feel like a little mouse facing the mountain. But looking at that mountain that overlooks us and that makes the landscape of Kalongo so beautiful, I can say that here in the hospital we are all proud of the successes that, despite all the difficulties, we achieve. And when we fail, we know that we have done our duty as doctors and nurses as best we could.

And so we remain a fortress in a disheartening health landscape, safe harbor where many poor people still know they can find a hope of treatment. **To ensure this is our daily commitment, comforted from your vicinity.**

Dr Carmen Orlotti,
surgeon at Dr. Ambrosoli Memorial Hospital



A TRUE FRIEND

"Friendship is not a fleeting and temporary relationship, but a stable, solid, faithful one. It is a relationship of affection that makes us feel tight"

Pope Francis



Ms Enrica Olgiati with resolution and generosity has been supporting for longtime our commitments for the hospital and the school of obstetrics, of which Enrica is one of our most passionate ambassadors.

Enrica, what motivates you to support regularly a reality that is so distant from us, when there is so much need of help in Italy too??

The strong desire to contribute, as I can, to help people which have less chance than me, and not for their fault.

On what is based your trust in our work?

I have been lucky enough to meet people I respect very much, that worked with you in Kalongo, such as Dr. Torcicoda, who worked with father Egidio in Kalongo. I am really convinced that you are doing well, bringing the help they need, in the right way and with the right spirit.

What do you wish for the future of the hospital and of the students of the midwifery school?

I really hope that the hospital will have, even in the future, what it needs to carry out all its important activities and, above all, which can become a training center for the African personnel. I am convinced that the local personnel, in turn, will be able to educate more and more people, making communities aware of how to behave in a correct way for the protection of their health, without upset their local traditions. I consider myself really lucky to have the opportunity to give my contribution too.



GOOD NEWS FROM PEDIATRICS

In March 2020, the second phase of the works planned for the renovation

of the pediatric ward began, concerning above all the isolation ward - which mainly welcomes children suffering from tuberculosis and other infectious diseases – and the ward lavatories, which are essential for guaranteeing health and hygiene standards for young patients, their guardians and ward personnel.

Despite the difficulties caused by the restrictive measures imposed by the Ugandan government to contain the pandemic, the company has managed to carry out the work as far as possible. There have been some delays, due mainly to the difficulty in finding the necessary equipment for the continuation of the works. Most of the equipment used is only available in the capital Kampala, which is unreachable during the long period of private traffic blockade imposed by the Ugandan government, or is imported from abroad and in this period difficult to find due to serious logistical difficulties created internationally by the pandemic.

The project involves the complete renovation of the most deteriorated area of the ward, with the construction of four independent rooms, each of them with a kitchen and bathroom for exclusive use. This will allow us to welcome young patients in a place that is finally suitable for their needs and where we can offer them proper care and healing.

A big thank you to Mission Bambini Foundation and to all those who contributed to the realization of the project for the pediatrics renewal.



HAPPYENING STORIES SPECIAL THANKS TO...

To you, friends and supporters of the Foundation who, despite the pandemic in Italy, you have continued to support us in recent months responding promptly to our call for Covid-19 in Uganda. Thanks to your support we have purchased and delivered to the hospital equipment and devices, necessary to face the coronavirus emergency and above all to offer better treatment for the most fragile patients.

Oxygen concentrators are giving life expectancy to premature babies with respiratory failure and to children suffering from pneumonia.

Pulse-oximeters ensure a careful and constant monitoring of the level of oxygenation of patients and a prompt intervention in case of criticality. Protective equipment allow the medical personnel to take care in complete safety of patients with contagious diseases such as Covid-19, tuberculosis and many other diseases that afflict the region.

A special thanks to...



CEI (Italian Episcopal Conference) for the important contribution to the COVID-19 emergency thanks to the 8x100 funds of the Italian Catholic Church.



Azione Cattolica strongly bound to Father Giuseppe Ambrosoli who was a member of it, which spontaneously and with great generosity contributed to support the Ambrosoli Foundation in favour of Kalongo Hospital.



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**WE NEED YOU.
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PERIODIC DONATION
IN FAVOUR OF
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You will help us donate the best possible future to Kalongo hospital

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