



Fondazione
Dr. Ambrosoli
Memorial Hospital

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KALONGO

NEWS



“You don’t go to Africa for
pity, you go for love”

Father Giuseppe Ambrosoli

DEAR FRIENDS,

Our journey in Kalongo began exactly 25 years ago with the firm will to preserve and continue the work of Father Giuseppe Ambrosoli.

Along the way, there were many challenges, mainly due to the scarcity of available resources and the extremely remote context in which the hospital operates, far from urban centres and the main communication routes, in a very poor region.

Despite this, **many fundamental goals have been achieved in Kalongo in recent years**: the increase in the quality of care provided thanks to the renewal of some departments and the presence of qualified specialists, once absent. And thanks to the opening of new medical services in response to needs that were not listened to. Like women's prevention, neonatal care, and new eye and mental health clinics.

We have improved the living conditions of hospital staff, who face unimaginable challenges every day with limited resources, through the construction of new homes and wage growth. **These goals have been achieved without burdening the weakest with unsustainable hospital rates and guaranteeing staff an adequate salary.**

In many southern hemisphere countries, where there is often a lack of public reference structures, care is inaccessible to those who need it most due to unsustainable tariffs, which force the most defenceless towards a future of suffering and impoverishment from which is impossible to redeem.

Here in Kalongo, a family that cannot pay hospital expenses will always find acceptance and adequate care, unlike many other healthcare realities where the obligation to pay changes the fate of the poorest families, forced to use scarce resources to care and no longer for their children's education.

When needs seem countless to us and solutions distant, **let us remember how many lives are welcomed, attended and saved here in Kalongo every day, how many men and women find dignity in their work and a less uncertain future thanks to the presence of the hospital and the school of obstetrics.**

We must continue prioritising our commitment to ensure no one is left behind. This includes providing the best care for those who cannot afford it and ensuring a dignified future for those who care for the most vulnerable. This effort must not only be maintained today but also strengthened in the years to come.

We continue with our eyes turned to tomorrow, our feet firmly anchored to the ground and the certainty of having you by our side. **Your help remains essential and is even more precious today.**

Thank you for being always by our side and even more numerous!

Giovanna Ambrosoli
Giovanna Ambrosoli



“
Prepare the
future means
**giving
foundation
to the present**”



A TRUE AFRICAN SURGEON

by Dr. Augusto Cosulich

I was a young surgeon coming from the hospital in Padua when I arrived in Kalongo, full of theoretical notions but rather poor in practice, as often happened in those days. Furthermore, and even more importantly, while in Italy my activity took place in a surgery department, in Kalongo I found myself dealing with a myriad of pathologies completely unknown to me (obstetric-gynaecological, urological, orthopaedic, etc.). In situations like these, it is very easy to get overwhelmed if you don't have an anchor of reference, a "mother hen", that is, an expert person who accompanies you, teaches you, and above all does not abandon you when you are in difficulty.

I had the enormous fortune of finding an extraordinary "hen": Giuseppe Ambrosoli.

The two years spent working alongside Giuseppe (it's difficult for me to call him Father Ambrosoli given the close relationship we had established between us) were in many respects the most intense and beautiful of my life, not only for what I learned professionally but also, and perhaps above all, for the lessons of life and ethical and moral discipline that he transmitted to all those around him.

A true African surgeon who knows how to do everything, Giuseppe always got to the point in every situation.

What immediately struck me was precisely his very practical surgical approach which demystified all that aura that was breathed in Italian operating rooms. I remember that in Padua, in the room around the operating bed, there were seven people including the head physician, two assistants, an anaesthetist, and a nurse... in Kalongo Giuseppe did the same operation alone and under local anaesthesia!

The aim of his actions in the operating room was always to save the patient despite difficult working conditions, to say the least.

When Giuseppe fell ill with his kidneys and was forced to stay in Italy for several months for treatment, he kept in constant contact with us and did everything he could to ensure that the hospital never lacked anything. The Italian doctors had allowed him to return to Kalongo on the condition that he remain at rest and limit his work in the operating room as much as possible. Instead, it was a continuous struggle because he didn't want to stay at rest.

I will never be able to forget him. Thank you, Giuseppe, for everything you taught and gave me!



With a gift in your will in favour of the Ambrosoli Foundation, you change the future of those who live in one of the poorest and most forgotten areas of Northern Uganda, contributing to the work of Father Giuseppe.

If you would like more information on bequests contact:

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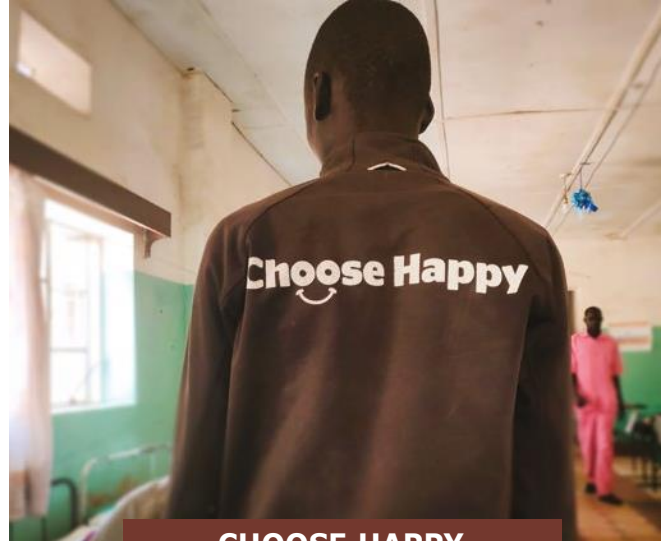
YOU ARE NOT ALONE FOR A TRULY INCLUSIVE HEALTH

Offering inclusive and accessible health services to people with disabilities means having a concrete impact on their quality of life, promoting social integration, and contributing to the progress of the entire country.

Thanks to the support of the Italian Cooperation, together with the Kalongo Hospital, this year we have taken the first important step in the process of promoting the right to health of people with disabilities. The Italian Agency for Development Cooperation



(AICS) has chosen to finance the three-year project *"You are not alone – inclusive health for the prevention and treatment of visual, motor and mental disabilities"* presented by the Ambrosoli Foundation in partnership with CBM Italia.¹



CHOOSE HAPPY

Samuel's story

Simon is a 22-year-old boy. As a child, he was very smart and capable. At 19 he started "hearing" voices, responding to them, speaking to himself a little out of turn, and singing rhyming words. Subsequently, he began to agitate, and squirm, as if he felt trapped, trying to escape from the house.

He was diagnosed with schizophrenia or an unclear form of psychosis. A difficult diagnosis everywhere, particularly in a country like Uganda, where psychiatric pathology is neither known nor accepted.

The most natural reaction to this type of illness is to believe that they are the result of witchcraft, and the most immediate way to deal with it is to contain the patient by tying him up with ropes.

Simon was admitted to Kalongo Hospital in conjunction with the arrival of a new team of nurses trained in the field of psychiatry and was therefore welcomed by qualified personnel, capable of giving a name to his illness, adopting strategies suitable to contain and treat it, and to explain it to family members so that it can be understood.

Thanks to the presence of the new mental health clinic, patients like Simon will finally be able to receive targeted specialist care and return to feeling good in their families and their community.

THE NEW CLINIC OF MENTAL HEALTH



The new mental health clinic with specialized medical personnel has been operating at the Kalongo Hospital since March: a psychiatrist and two psychiatric nurses. Before the start of the project, the hospital did not have anyone qualified for psychiatric assistance.

Northern Uganda was the battlefield of a ferocious civil war that lasted more than 20 years, during which the population suffered unimaginable violence, with dramatic consequences on the prevalence of mental disorders in the region. **The district of Agago, where the Kalongo hospital operates, is the 5th in the country for the number of attempted suicides.** The pandemic has further exacerbated the need for psychiatric care and mental health support.

Between 2019 and 2020 admissions to Kalongo Hospital for attempted suicide increased by 279% compared to the previous year.

To respond to this emergency, strengthen suicide prevention services, and fight the stigma that surrounds mental illnesses and weighs on patients and their families, **the hospital intends to integrate mental health into all basic services,** train health professionals and hire specialized personnel.

The mental health clinic is flanked by a counselling desk to provide concrete support to the families of people with disabilities, who face problems related to poverty, stigma, and lack of adequate support from government institutions that keep the sick away from treatment.

¹CBM Italia is a humanitarian organization engaged in the prevention and treatment of avoidable blindness and disability and the inclusion of people with disabilities in the countries of the South of the world and Italy.

CREATION OF A HEALTH NETWORK IN KENYA, TANZANIA AND UGANDA

The new project funded by AICS and implemented by the Ambrosoli Foundation in partnership with AVSI, the Corti Onlus Foundation, the Federico II University of Naples, the University of Pavia, the Cottolengo Mission Hospital and AMREF Health Africa is underway.

THE NEW EYE CLINIC

There are 3 million people with vision problems in Uganda but, at the moment, there is **only one ophthalmologist for every million people.**

Diseases such as cataracts, trachoma and glaucoma lead to blindness because they go untreated due to lack of adequate eye care services, yet 75% of cases of blindness are preventable and treatable. The Acholi region where the Kalongo hospital operates is among the regions where the incidence of visual impairment records the highest numbers.

In the district of Agago until March 2023, there were no eye services or personnel trained for the treatment and prevention of visual disabilities.

Today, thanks to the project financed by AICS and the collaboration with CBM which boasts solid experience in the implementation of projects focused on visual disabilities, **a primary-level eye clinic is now operational at Kalongo Hospital, presided over by an ophthalmologist** and adequately equipped to offer accessible eye care services and treatment of the main visual pathologies, with particular attention to the most vulnerable such as women, children and people with disabilities.

The initiative, in collaboration with the Ministries of Health of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda and the Global Health Center, was created to improve maternal and child health by increasing the quality of primary health services and supporting local health systems in achieving universal health coverage.



The objective of the program is to network 33 healthcare facilities in the three countries and to help improve the performance and quality of six selected healthcare facilities (2 hospitals in Kenya, 2 in Uganda and 2 in Tanzania) which will not only benefit from the donation of modern medical equipment, from training activities for personnel dedicated to maternal and child health, but also from the sharing of information and best practices.

"We believe that achieving sustainable change requires collaboration between governments, civil society organizations, health professionals and local communities. From the outset, this program was designed in close collaboration with local authorities to strengthen health infrastructure, ensuring that clinics and hospitals are equipped with the necessary facilities and qualified personnel to provide quality maternal care".

Giovanni Grandi, owner of the AICS office in Nairobi

LEAVING TO KALONGO

It is not the path of confident people, of the ones sure of success. It's not made for those who are stuck, for those who don't want to change. **It is the path of those who leave and arrive to leave.**

- *Scout Song*

The volunteer doctors who choose to have an experience in Kalongo represent a precious resource, certainly supporting the clinical activity of the hospital, but not only. With their presence they contribute to strengthening that ideal bridge that unites Italy to Uganda, allowing a continuous exchange of experiences, skills and deep friendship.

A big and sincere thank you to all the volunteers who have crossed and will cross this bridge in the future: **your steps shorten distances, helping us build paths of solidarity.**



I went to Kalongo to honour a promise, a promise I made many years ago to my teenage self, that I would be a doctor and go to Africa. It means truly understanding if and how something good can be done in other contexts, it means discovery.

Chiara Mellino, resident in paediatrics



What struck me was seeing with my own eyes how despite the scarcity of means and resources, the tireless work of the hospital's medical and nursing staff of Kalongo guarantees daily assistance to hundreds of patients who are treated at the best of possibilities.

The scourge of HIV, malaria and tuberculosis will surely not be solved in this century. But the dedication and trust that the staff invest in the mission make the fight against these conditions a priority commitment for each of us. 'To love and serve with joy' is the motto of Kalongo Midwifery School. We try to make it ours too.

Elena Salvador, resident in infectious diseases

Kalongo was a unique experience, my first one in a developing country, seeing the lives of these people up close, with their health problems and their extreme poverty it's something that, in my opinion, we should all do at least once in our lives. It's not the same as watching a documentary or an advertisement on television, you immediately realize the gravity of their physical, mental and social conditions. At first, it hurts a little... then you start to ask yourself: "What can I do for them?"

Micol Maggio Tummiolo, anthropologist



A NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR THE GLOBAL HEALTH

Most patients do not speak English and communicate only in Acholi, the local language. This almost always makes it necessary to seek support from the nursing staff. So, as the days go by, you realize how important it is to learn to express those brief concepts that allow you at least to carry out the objective examination independently. So, you start with little things like "itye nining?" for example, which means "how are you?" in Acholi. For me, it was exciting to see how simply asking "itye nining" brought me closer and closer to the patients and it was also nice to hear them laugh, amused by my pronunciation. Madeleine was the patient with whom I most enjoyed practising the Acholi. When I went to greet her in the ward the evening before returning to Italy, she began a very long monologue in Acholi of which I did not understand a single word, but the general sense was very clear: she asked me not to go, to stay in Kalongo. I cried a lot, like when you leave home.

Martina Merli, resident in dermatology

I discovered how simply dedicating your time can be precious to assist another person. We work in a context where resources are limited or at least significantly reduced compared to what they have always been used to, yet it is precisely the time invested in a visit, in a brief exchange of words in Acholi, that often makes the difference. Spending time here in Kalongo is an experience that I recommend to anyone. Working and living for some time in the shadow of Mount Oret, among these fantastic and kind people is enriching me professionally and humanly. I would tell a future volunteer to get a ticket and go and discover this incredible place.

Stefano Torresan, resident in infectious diseases



We thank the **Bicocca Global Health Center** for the opportunity to work on the global health project, in partnership with other humanitarian organizations, for the training of young doctors of the School of Medicine of the University of Milano-Bicocca, in countries with limited resources such as Uganda.

Prof. Pietro Invernizzi, promoter and spokesperson for the project and Director of the Department of Medicine and Surgery of the University of Milan-Bicocca, underlines the scope of the initiative:

"New training is needed, to build skills that are not only clinical but also social and global and train young people who want to be doctors and not just doctors."

Globalization has meant that no disease can be managed within national borders. Physicians are challenged to address global health concerns; the devastating COVID-19 pandemic is a stark reminder that no community can consider itself immune to public health threats.

At the University of Milano-Bicocca, we are engaging in collaboration with NGOs in the field of global health that can broaden the reach and impact of our institutions, pursue our respective missions, and improve global health outcomes. **Our philosophy is based on a long-term perspective to conceive projects that will give benefits in the years to come.** Along this path, we are delighted to partner with the Ambrosoli Foundation to promote health and well-being in low- and middle-income countries through medical education, clinical care, biomedical research, and community engagement. community. *The health of one affects the health of all. Let us unite in a global effort to build a healthier and more equitable world for all."*

WITH PATIENCE, SENSITIVITY AND TENACITY

"...we begin to glimpse the Mountain of the Wind, which can be recognized very well on the horizon, while the flat savannah opens up towards Karamoja.

The mountain tells everyone that down there in a very poor area, far from the main asphalt roads, there is Giuseppe Ambrosoli's hospital: there is a place of welcome and care, for anyone in need, always.

The humility of the founder seems to have wanted his work to remain far from prying and distracted eyes and to remain at the hidden service of the majority..."

Dr. Filippo Ciantia

Father Giuseppe Ambrosoli was born on July 25, 100 years ago. The doctor of charity, the great doctor, who gave up a comfortable life to dedicate himself to the most fragile and vulnerable. The community's attachment to the figure of Father Giuseppe is strong and alive today more than ever, thanks to the presence of the Dr. Ambrosoli Memorial Hospital, a medical reference point of excellence for the entire region.

Thanks to the presence of an adequately equipped structure, with qualified personnel, the Kalongo Hospital embodies the only hope of cure and survival for tens of thousands of people every year.

Unfortunately, the current economic crisis is hitting the hospital and the community hard, causing serious increases in costs, from the most essential goods to the salaries of hospital staff, which have necessarily increased. And families are even more difficult to deal with "extraordinary" expenses such as medical ones.

This is why it is important to be present on a regular and constant basis. To ensure that the hospital for which Father Giuseppe gave his life moves forward as best as possible, according to the missionary vocation for which he was born: leaving no one behind and ensuring the best care for those who are unable to afford the cost.

Activating a regular donation means:

- To respond to basic needs by providing medicines, instruments and sanitary equipment
- Support preventive and curative treatments, surgical operations and specialist care.
- Support the continuous presence of health personnel trained and motivated to remain in a poor and isolated context such as Kalongo.



ACTIVATE A

REGULAR DONATION

*Your regular help is indispensable
and is truly capable of changing
the lives of*

hundreds of people every day.

*in
favour of the Ambrosoli Foundation, make
a difference for the Kalongo Hospital with
us.*

You can activate a regular donation by credit card, PayPal, bank transfer or ask your bank directly to activate a donation to the Ambrosoli Foundation.

If you need any information or assistance, please contact us at:

- info@fondazioneambrosoli.it
- tel. +39 0236558852





Even a small contribution, if donated regularly,
MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE!



25€

Average cost to the hospital for
**the cure of a child admitted in
the paediatric ward**



30€

Average cost to the hospital for
**the care of a patient admitted
in the medical ward**



35€

Average cost to the hospital for **the
care of a woman in the maternity
and gynecologic ward**



90€

Average cost to the hospital for
**the cure of a patient admitted in the
surgical ward**

SOLIDARITY GIFT LIST

SHARED JOY IS DOUBLE JOY

*Would you like to involve the people
closest to you in a gesture of love?*

On the occasion of your birthday, wedding anniversary or retirement, ask those close to you to transform the gift they had in mind for you into a precious donation to the Kalongo Hospital, the only medical for thousands of people living in one of Uganda's poorest and most forgotten areas.

We will prepare an online fundraising page or a personalized paper letter for you to explain your generous choice and invite your friends to give you this special gift.

You can send the link to the online page or the letter in digital format directly with WhatsApp, or e-mail or deliver your love message for Kalongo in paper format.



**To find out more, visit
our website and look at
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WHAT CAN YOU DO?



DOING GOOD IS
GOOD FOR YOU

DONATE 1€ EVERY TIME YOU USE PAYPAL

Can you imagine what a small action can do if repeated by so many people? An incredible difference!

If you are a PayPal customer, set us as your favourite charity and you can choose to donate €1 to the Ambrosoli Foundation every time you pay with PayPal.



EVEN WITH A SMALL
DONATION YOU
KNOW YOU MADE A
BIG DIFFERENCE

TAX BENEFIT

If you are a taxpayer in the USA, you can make a donation eligible for tax deduction in the USA to the Ambrosoli Foundation using the link on our website:
<https://www.fondazioneambrosoli.it/en/donate-now/>

BANK TRANSFER

C/C Banco Desio:

IT70 I034 4010 9010 0000 0613 200

Swift Code: **BDBDIT22**

C/C Crédit Agricole:

IT48 C062 3010 9200 0004 7564 386

Swift Code: **CRPPIT2P321**

In favour of:

Fondazione Dr. Ambrosoli Onlus

