

Happy New Year to you all.

Welcome



I hope that you achieved everything you wished for in 2015 and have greater plans for this coming year. I know we certainly feel that way here at KCDC. Looking back over the past year has made us all realize how much we have achieved in our first year of operation. We have worked with 187 children and 20 adults with disabilities, as well as assessing a further 150 children who did not qualify for therapy, and are on waiting lists for speech, hearing and vision clinics or were referred on to other medical centres for further management.

We have identified that nearly 50% of the children that we see have cerebral palsy or developmental delay, related to problems during pregnancy and birth, but all children and their families are working hard together and showing significant improvements.

We also realized that of the 128 children of school going age, only 69 (54%) are in school, and of the 59 not in school only 10 have a disability too severe to allow them to enrol.

The other 49 children are excluded from school due to lack of school fees, the schools reluctance to accept a child with a disability and mobility limitations. KCDC will be looking to hire a special needs trained teacher this year to work with schools and individual students, both in school and out, to improve the access to education for all children.

Volunteers

In October 2015 we had 2 volunteers join the team for a few weeks, Canadian speech therapist Ashley Perry and Zimbabwean grant writer Morrisen Mamutse. Ashley had been travelling around the world since January 2015 but decided to take a pause and unpack for a few weeks in Fort Portal. She spent 5 weeks working with many of the children on the waiting list or currently receiving other rehab, as well as training all the KCDC staff in assessing and working with children with a range of communication difficulties. We tried to convince her to stay longer but she had more of the world to explore and headed off to South America.

Morrisen had been working for an organisation in Eastern Uganda when he saw our advert for a grant writer and programme developer and so he decided to finish out his time in Uganda with 2 months in the west. He worked hard to research, write and submit a number of grant applications and funding opportunities on our behalf. Morrisen has now returned to the UK where he was living but hopes to return to Uganda in 2016.

End of year party

We held our end of year party on the 11th December, and we were so fortunate with the weather, as the rainy season stopped 2 days earlier and the sun finally came out again. We invited all the children we have worked with





throughout the year to attend, along with a parent or caregiver. 95 children attended with at least 1 parent, and some siblings as well, in total more than 300 people. We had a couple of local artists working with the children to encourage their creativity, music and dancing, football and gifts for everyone.

One of the biggest joys for us was that for some parents it was the first time that they realized they weren't alone, that there were many more families who have a child with a disability, experiencing similar struggles and challenges, and for many of these children it was the first time they had been to a party, and certainly the first one where they

were the guest of honor. On the back of this we will be working to create parent support networks, which will allow parents to share knowledge and experiences with others, and reduce the feeling of isolation within their communities.

Coming Up next

We are really excited going into 2016 and all the plans that we have for the year. To start with we have a British speech therapist coming for 4 months, she arrives next week. This will really change the lives of so many children who can't communicate with their families and friends. We have also employed a Ugandan nurse to work alongside the speech therapist as a community health worker to help with language and cultural considerations and to ensure continuity of care and sustainability once the placement is completed. The addition of a nurse will also strengthen the team as a whole, and will provide much needed monitoring of all children with malnutrition and epilepsy, with better liaising between healthcare providers and families.

We will also be looking to employ a special needs trained teacher to work with the school-age children, both in school and out, to improve access to education and to support the teachers in adapting to each child's educational needs. If you know of anyone who may be interested in coming out, short or long term, to set this programme up please pass on our information!!

The 5th Kyancinga Triathlon and 1st Running the Rift Marathon will be held during 2016 and KCDC will be the official benefitting charity of both events and will host special disability sports events during each weekend. If you are considering a trip to Uganda and are feeling inspired to enter the marathon (there is a $\frac{1}{2}$ marathon and 10k option as well) holiday packages are available. For more information on Running the Rift Marathon you can follow the website link here:

<http://www.runningtheriftmarathon.com>

<https://web.facebook.com/RunningTheRiftMarathon>

Accomplish Children's Trust

Accomplish Children's Trust is a UK charity that was initially set up to support 2 organisations working with children with disabilities in Kasese District, Western Uganda. We are very grateful for their support of our 2 Ugandan therapists, David and Patrick as well as making a donation towards the toys and gifts at our end of year party. We are also looking forward to welcoming some of the Accomplish Trustees to KCDC in March this year.

If you would like to know more about the work of Accomplish you can see their website www.accomplishtrust.org.uk

Handing out toys and gifts, thanks to Accomplish



Getting Involved

You can get involved by sharing this newsletter with your family, friends and colleagues to let them know about the great work we are doing. If you are planning a fundraising event then please consider KCDC as a beneficiary.

As the demand for our services increases, we need additional funding for a long term speech therapist, a special needs trained teacher and another community health worker to join our team. We are also looking for funding and sponsorship for continuing therapy treatment and equipment for our children and expanding our programmes to reach more in need.

You can make a donation via PayPal on our website www.kyanningacdc.org or contact us directly to discuss these partnership opportunities at info@kyanningacdc.org. Thank you so much to everyone who has donated to KCDC over the past year. You have helped us make such a difference to so many children's lives.

There is so much more that I could tell you about so keep up with the latest KCDC news by following us at www.facebook.com/kyanningacdc.

