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New visit to Masanga Hospital.

On the first day of February two members of the AFOM board – Peter Bo Jørgensen and Else Iversen – will leave for a trip to Sierra Leone. Partly to inspect progress, partly to perform some operations. They will be accompanied by four young volunteers: Nunu Lund, Martin Kjær Andersen, Rasmus Dahlin and Morten Jess.

The two board members, who are both doctors, will stay for about two weeks to have discussions with local partners, and to perform a number of hernia operations.

The four volunteers will stay for 3 months (Nunu and Martin) and 6 months (Rasmus and Morten) at the Masanga Hospital. We have worked committedly to equip them for the tasks awaiting them, and

have agreed on the specific goals for their stay.

Nunu will assist with the practical tasks of setting up a children's ward.

Martin, who is a trained carpenter, will assist in the Masanga carpentry shop, and will examine the possibilities of making it into a profit making enterprise for the Hospital.

Rasmus will work on establishing a system for safe disposal of the garbage and medical waste, and attempt to improve the quality of the drinking water.

Morten will work on the Hospital's logistics, management and registry. He will try to include two weeks of practical training at a hospital run by the Dutch section



of Médecins Sans Frontières in the same region.

The four volunteers will themselves pay for their travel to and from Sierra Leone, but will get their local board and lodgings free. They will also be allowed one free trip to Free-town by car each month; any other travel will come out of their own pockets.

Martin's hunt for tools.

"Martin Kjær Andersen, our volunteer carpenter, have managed to collect hand tools valued at about 10.000 DKK through a lot of phone calls and a lot of patience from his connections in the building industry. Martin leaves on February 1st for Sierra Leone, where he will be one of four young volunteers working at the Masanga Hospital, and he is looking forward to delivering all the tools himself.

It will be very exciting to get down there and see how different their work as carpenters is in relation to my work at home. Here – for an instance – we just call the lumber yard and they will

deliver lumber to us at any place. In Masanga, we first have to fell the trees and then make it into planks and boards," says Martin.

Martin has received a long list of tools that are needed at the Masanga Hospital's carpentry shop from its foreman George Fawundo. Based on the list, he has contacted various suppliers for donations.

Carl Rass has sponsored tools for 2000 DKK and also thrown in a number of samples, which they have collected. They were very helpful and their interest in our project was heart-warming. Two other companies Rebo, A/S and Carl F, A/S have



generously donated hand tools, and thereby finished off the list.



Powerful accent on treatment of children.

28,3% af børnene dør før de bliver 5 år.

In Sierra Leone infant mortality is almost 100 times greater than what it is in Denmark – 28.3 % of children die before they are 5 years old. Diarrhoea from infected drinking water, measles and malaria are some of the major causes of childhood deaths. The Government of Sierra Leone has

started a programme "Child Survival Campaign" to combat child mortality. The Masanga Hospital has been appointed by the Government as a centre for a local campaign against malaria and measles. In consequence we have distributed about 1000 insecticide-treated bed nets for children to combat malaria,



Der kommer ganske mange mødre med spædbørn på Masanga hospitalet

Prevention of HIV/AIDS.

HIV/AIDS is not yet a major problem in Sierra Leone, but the number of infected people is rising. According to the Danish Council of Missions Abroad, it is not the lack of information on how you get HIV/AIDS that is the problem. Young people are very well aware, that abstinence until marriage and the use of condoms are essential to avoid the contagion, but unfortunately few are able to live up to these rules.

One of the major problems is stigmatization. Infected people are often excluded from the community, and counselling should therefore focus on the fact, that you do not need to fear infection by living and working beside those who suffer.

AFOM is negotiating an agreement with the Government that would allow us to perform tests and treatment of HIV/AIDS at the Masanga Hospital. We would also like to partici-

pate in preventative measures, to keep down the number of infected.

We expect to have an agreement with the Government some time around the end of January 2007, as to the extent of our involvement.



More and more patients.

The Hospital had 1223 patients in December 2006. It is somewhat fewer than in the previous two months, a fact that can be explained by the many holidays in December. Apart from this, there is a trend of a continuous increase in the

number of patients – October 1604, November 1895 patients.

More and more people are now aware that the Masanga Hospital has reopened.



New container on the way

We have gotten the green light from Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke (People to People) to exploit their transport account, so that we can send off yet another full container to the Masanga Hospital. If all goes well, it will reach Masanga around February 1st.



Extra container with medicines.

On the 7th of February an extra container will arrive in the port of Freetown. It contains primarily medicines and hospital equipment. It is nurse Bodil Lund, a member of the AFOM

board, who has been instrumental in collecting both the medicines and the financial backing for this important shipment.

Masanga exposition at Høje Taastrup City Hall

In the period 12th March to 23rd March there will be an exposition at the Høje Taastrup City Hall of photographs from AFOM's trip to Masanga during February.

Now we start the children's ward

It has long been one of our wishes to start a children's ward at the Masanga Hospital. After long preparations, we hope to open it on February 12th 2007 for some 40 to 50 children. It will allow us to admit children for observation for several ailments, and to administer treatment for less complicated

childhood diseases. It is our intention that Community Health Officer Alice Fortune will be in charge of the ward, and that she in the first three months will be assisted by our Danish volunteer Nunu Lund.

A Dutch physician, who previously worked for Médecins Sans Frontières, has indicated his interest in joining the staff. It will cost us about 10,000 DKK per month to employ him, and we are now working very hard to find the finances needed to employ a skilled physician at our new children's ward.



Basic education in nursing.

In March of 2007 we expect to start a program of local basic training in health care. This education is primarily directed towards training 10 to 20 people who are or will be employed in the children's ward. They will be trained in basic hygiene, dressing

of wounds, first aid and cleansing of wounds.

In all of Sierra Leone there are but 200 trained nurses. The Government provides no formalized training of nurses or nurses helpers.



**Annual General Meeting.
Famous artist reveals painting for Masanga.
Collect garbage for Masanga.**

Read more on our website www.masanga.dk

RED.: Knud Anker Iversen, Bent Borresen, Nunu Lund, Peter Bo Jørgensen, Lene Gall (Lay out)