

Double joy as Busolwe gets beds, mattresses

Challenges. The hospital has been plagued with problems of broken beds, torn mattresses, no power and no running water, broken sewerage system, and dilapidated structures for the past 10 years.

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BUTALEJA. It is double happiness for patients at Busolwe Hospital after World Vision, a non-government organisation, donated more than 100 mattresses, 85 modern delivery beds, and two infant incubators to the health facility.

Only last week, Betway Uganda, a sports betting company, donated 20 more mattresses to the facility with Butaleja District Woman MP Milly Mugeni donating some more.

The triple donation follows a series of stories published by *Daily Monitor* about the appalling state of the hospital which had some of its patients sleeping on broken beds without mattresses while other patients were lying on bare floor.

Ms Betty Mugeni, one of the patients, who was admitted to the hospital on Wednesday, said they were excited.

"We are extremely happy. We are going to enjoy a new experience, where a patient is treated with dignity in a conducive environment," Ms Mugeni said.

Busolwe, a modern hospital, which was constructed in 1970 under the Milton Obote I regime, has been plagued with problems of broken beds, torn mattresses, no power and no running water, broken sewerage system, and dilapidated structures for the past 10 years. It also has no functional oxygen cylinders, no infant warmers, and lacks an X-ray machine.

“ We have shared the mattresses and beds with other health centres because they also face the same problem.”

MR RICHARD WAYA, BUTALEJA DISTRICT COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

But Mr Richard Muhumuza of World Vision said their donation was meant to ensure delivery of quality health service to the people.

"We donated mattresses, modern beds and two infant incubators worth Shs270m in order to ensure provision of quality health service in this hospital," Mr Muhumuza said.

Mr Muhumuza the project coordinator of Butaleja District Maternal New-born and Childbirth Project at World Vision, said the equipment will improve medical workers condition, healthcare of children and mothers.

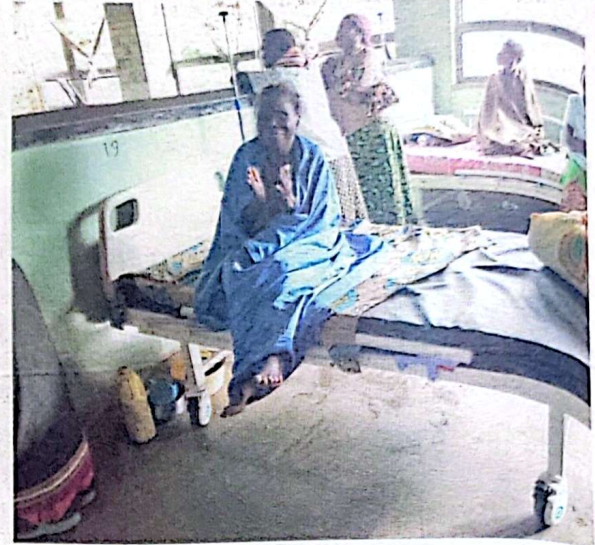
The hospital medical Superintendent, Dr David Okanya, who received the items, said the hospital had only 2 delivery beds.

"We have been facing serious challenges but we are happy that a problem was brought to light by *Daily Monitor* and we have got help," said.

"We have also been getting a lot of premature babies, and we have been referring them to Mbale



Before. Butaleja District officials inspect old beds and mattresses in one of the wards in Busolwe Hospital last month. PHOTOS BY YAHUDU KITUNZI



After. Patients at Busolwe Hospital enjoy new beds donated by World Vision organisation on Wednesday.



Donation. World Vision officials hand over mattresses, beds and incubators to Butaleja leaders at Busolwe Hospital on Wednesday.



Reaching out. A team from MTN Uganda which donated beds, mattresses and mosquito nets at Busolwe Hospital yesterday.

because they also face the same problem," Mr Waya said.

He warned the hospital management against misuse of the new mattresses and beds.

The Butaleja Resident District Commissioner, Mr Richard Gulume, said government was grateful for the positive gesture.

"As government, we are grateful for the donation and we appeal to other NGOs to do the same," Mr Gulume said.

The chief administrative officer Mr Moses Echat, earlier had earlier told *Daily Monitor* that the hospital would soon be overhauled with funding from the Uganda-Spanish debt swap valued at Shs24 billion.

"In one year, the hospital will be shining. Shs24 billion is not little money," Mr Echat said, adding that the current challenges will soon be history.

OTHER INTERVENTIONS

Earlier, the residents had also launched a Shs12m fundraising drive to help buy delivery beds and mattresses to re-equip the hospital.

Under their umbrella body Nanghira Development Association in partnership with other groups, the residents had issued public appeals to residents and wishers to help re-equip the health facility. By last week, they had collected Shs4 million in cash and another Shs5.2 million in pledges.

World Vision Uganda seeks to address causes and effects of poverty through development, relief and advocacy and operates in more than 50 districts, with 53 are development programmes.

Regional Referral Hospital. Now, we will no longer refer them," Dr Okanya said.

He said the hospital management would now train midwives on handling the new infant incubators.

Ms Sarah Guloba, one of the hospital's board members, said the residents have been abusing them over failure to equip the hospital.

Thankful

Busolwe hospital in Butaleja serves a population of more than 40,000 patients from several neighbouring districts.

The Butaleja District Council chairperson, Mr Richard Waya, said the number of mattresses and beds donated were so many that the district leadership was forced to distribute some to other health centres in the district.

"We have shared the mattresses and beds with other health centres