GAMBIAN ASSOCIATION
IN GENEVA
ASSOCIATION DES
GAMBIENS DE GENÈVE

Tel: +41 76 251 59 44
Email: gambiaassociationgeneva@outlook.com
Address: Quai Ernest Ansermet 40, Geneva, Switzerland, 1205

GAMBIAN ASSOCIATION IN GENEVA (GAG) HOSPITAL BEDS PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

Gambian Association in Geneva (GAG) was established in 2004 to unite Gambians and friends of The Gambia to foster unity. The association's growth started looking after members' well-being and concerns for the greater good, such as giving loads to members in need of financial support, giving support during naming ceremonies of members of the association, repatriation of deceased persons to the Gambia and organizing get-togethers for families of the association to foster unity amongst members.

The Association started humanitarian services in the past years to support underprivileged 25 children in terms of paying their school fees and collaborating with other Gambian associations in Switzerland through the leadership of the Gambia Swiss Congress to support vulnerable families during the COVID-19 period and the 2021 windstorm that affected many households in The Gambia. All the activities are carried out thanks to monthly members' contributions.



This time the Association thought it important to contribute to the health sector of The Gambia by seeking hospital materials, particularly hospital beds that can be used in the Health Center of The Gambia.

Mr. Sanusi Jaiteh, a member of GAG, who works with Fribourg Hospital was contacted by the hospital authorities to see whether he could receive disposable hospital beds. Upon his agreement to receive the beds in consultation with GAG to be donated to the Gambia. The association members volunteer whenever they are called to travel to Fribourg to load the beds and other materials into the container. Gambians Association Geneva shipped a 40-foot container on 14 December 2024 with the following hospital materials.

- 56 hospital beds,
- 11 consultation beds,
- 8 wheelchairs,
- 17 mattresses,
- 10 stools, and
- 270 cartoons of syringes and surgical clips.

The container arrived in the Gambia on 24 January 2024 and was clear on 7 February 2024. The delay was due to a duty waiver request sent to the finance ministry from the Ministry of Health.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim and objectives of the hospital beds are to offer comfort, functionality, and independence to patients, thus playing a pivotal role in hastening the recovery processes.

IMPORTANT OF THE PROJECT

The importance of the project is the need for hospital beds in the Gambia, considering the fact that some of the health centers in the Gambia are seriously lacking hospital beds, where sometimes patients share a bed. Therefore, getting these beds in the Gambia will significantly play a part in addressing the hospital beds issue in some of the health centers.

FINANCIAL EXPECTATION

BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR HEALTH CENTER MATERIALS			
ACTIVITIES			COST
CONTAINER			
Container renting 20-foot for a month			231CHF
Container padlock			45CHF
Container Deposit (Refundable after the return of the container)			462CHF
CAR RENT			
First car rental for a day (In case of transportation)			170CHF
Deposit for car renter (Refundable after the return of the car)			300CHF
SHIPPING OF THE CONTAINER TO THE GAMBIA			
Shipping cost 40-foot Container			5000CHF
GRAND TOTAL			6208 CHF
TOTAL DEPOSIT REFUND			762 CHF
ACTUAL EXPENDITURE TOTAL IN SWITZERLAND			5446 CHF
CONTAINER CLEARANCE AGENT IN THE GAMBIA			
Agent Fees			D57,000
Duty exemption form			D15,000
Gambia Revenue Authority			D8,846
Maersk (For 6 days delayed at port, a day 40 USD)			D16,625
PURCHASING 39 HOSPITAL BED MATTRESSES			
Hospital beds mattresses			D97,500
Taxi for mattresses transportation (Only to New Yundum)			D1,320
HANDOVER CEREMONY FOR HOSPITAL BED			
Water	Small battles	D140x5	D700
Can Drinks	4 Crakes	D 700X4	D2,800
Snacks	45 Bowls	D120x45	D5,400
T-Shirts	45 Pcs	D200x45	D9,000
Transport Refund for Media Houses 3 Media houses			D4,000
Pa System			D1,500
Banners	2	2X1000	D2,000
Taxi snacks Transportation			D300
TOTAL			D221,991

DISTRIBUTION OF THE BED TO THE HOSPITAL



The GAG did set up a four-member task force known as the hospital beds committee to lead the project by suggesting ideas and then forwarding the ideas to the general body for approval. The task force committee also incorporated some members who went to the Gambia for holidays to help smooth the processes in the Gambia since they were on the ground at that pointing time.

The committee drafted a document with questions to help identify the hospitals to be donated. After the questions are answered, one of the committee members who was in the Gambia goes to the hospital(s) to fact-finding the answers provided before deciding. The committee's decision is based on the following elements, capacity needed, the number of admitted patients per day, what type of patients are admitted (maternity, surgical, Medical, pediatric, Isolation accident, and Emergency), the maintenance of the beds and whether they can buy beds on their own or have contact to help to secure beds. The answers informed the decision of the committee.

Since there were 17 mattresses shipped to the Gambia, 39 beds were without mattresses from the 56 beds shipped. Hence, the Gambian Association in Geneva bought 39 mattresses in the Gambia amounting to D97,500 making so that all the shipped beds are with mattresses.

BENEFICIARIES OF THE HOSPITAL BEDS

NAME OF HOSPITAL	REGION IN THE GAMBIA	N0. OF BEDS	RECIPIENT NAME
NEW YUMDUM	Region 2	15	Fatou Ceesay
JABANG HOSPITAL	Region 2	04	Sulayman Cham
YOROBAWOL HOSPITAL	Region 6	05	Awa Fatty
GAMBISARA	Region 6	03	Husen Touray Mahanera
GAMBIA NATIONAL ARMY	Region 2	14	Conl. M. Sonko
SUTUKOBA	Region 5	03	Baka Jatta
KANIFINING HOSPITAL	Region 2	10	Basirou Drammeh
BADIBU ILLIASSA	Region 4	02	Saikou Leigh

COLLABORATORS

Permanent Mission of the Republic of The Gambia to the United Nations Office, The Gambia Swiss Congress, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Defence, and Ministry of Finance. All these institutions contribute significantly to helping with duty waiver, transportation of beds to hospitals, and fuel for transportation.

GAMBIA GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION

GAG Secretary General Wrote a letter requesting a duty waiver via the Embassy in Geneva to Banjul, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Foreign Affairs Ministry wrote a covered letter to support GAG's request for a duty waiver to the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Health also wrote a letter to support GAD’s request to the Ministry of Finance for approval of the duty waiver. Finally, the duty waiver was granted on 05 February 2024 by the Ministry of Finance as a government intervention. We appreciate all the efforts of the stakeholders in the realization of the project more so our Embassy in Geneva especially Baturu Camara for her unweaving consideration.

CLEARER OF THE CONTAINER AND STORAGE OF THE BED BEFORE DISTRIBUTION IN THE GAMBIA

On 7 February 2024, the container was cleared from the port and transported to the store given by one of our association members Mr. Fafo Drammeh before distribution to the respected hospital. Thanks to the Gambia National Army through the leadership of Rohey Bittage and Dr. Musa Kah for organizing men in uniform (The army) to offload the beds to the store through the coordination of Mr. Baladeh and Mr. Drammeh all members of the association.





HANDING OVER BED CEREMONY

The handing over ceremony was held on 07 March 2024 at New Yundum health center, 15 hospital beds, 5 consultation beds, 8 wheelchairs, 5 stools, and boxes of syringes and surgical clips were delivered to New Yundum Health Center which has a target population of 48,312. The ceremony was graced by Madam Rohey Bittaye Permanent Secretary Ministry of Defense, Dr. Bittaye Director of Health Services, Mr. Musa Camara the Regional Director of Health Service, Honorable Muhammed Kanteh National Assemble Member for Busumbala, VDC President, elders of the community and four members of GAG, Bobakar Danso GAG Secretary General, Fafo Drammeh, Sanusi Jaiteh and Ousman Jammeh and all the beneficiaries of the hospital beds.

The ceremony was covered by Gambia Radio and Television Services (GRTS), Paradise TV, and Star TV.
The guest speaker madam Rohey Bittaye Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence thanked the Gambian Association in Geneva for an excellent initiative in complementing the government of the Gambia by donating hospital beds and emphasized that this kind of project is commendable. She went further to encourage GAG to continue such a humanitarian project because it would complement government efforts. The director of diaspora Madam Ndumbeh Saho from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that the noble initiative is valuable to the Gambia, and the people of Yundum and is in line with national development plans. The officer in Charge (OIC) at New Yundum Health stated that the hospital beds donated came at the right time when it is highly needed, and its importance cannot be overemphasized. For more information about the ceremony do visit GAG's Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61550213431380

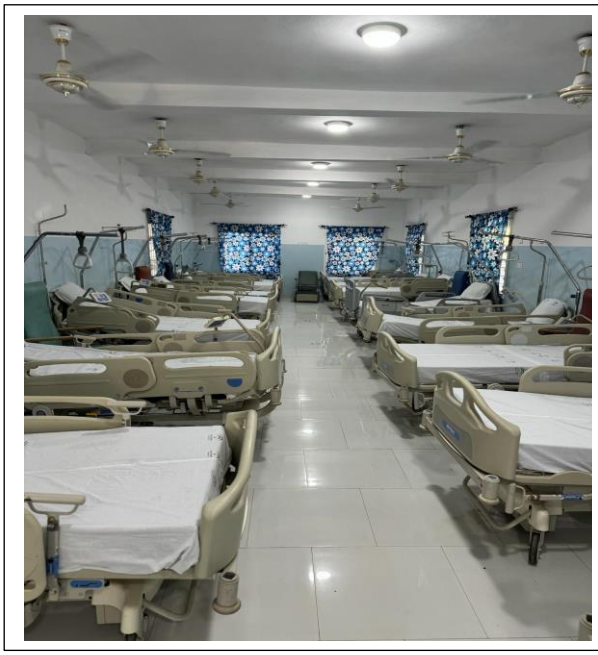




NAMING OF THE WARD

Ministry Health has named a ward after the Gambians Association in Geneva at New Yundum Health Center as a gesture for donating hospital beds, saddle seats, and other materials. The naming of the ward is a sign of partnership between GAG and New Yundum and encourage such efforts for others to emulate.





CONSTRAINT

Some of the constraints are as follows.

1. Delay in getting the duty waiver from the Gambia government as a result the association ended up paying Maersk shipping company for 6 days delayed at the port each day costing 40USD amounting to D16,625.
2. Untimely communication from the Ministry of Health to Finance concerning the duty waiver leading to frustrating follow-up by committee members.
3. The army asking GAG to buy fuel and put it into 20-liter gallons was never part of the deal and the accountability for such a transaction was problematic.
4. One of the hospital saddle seats got lost during the transportation process and we don't know how.
5. Untimely communication from some stakeholders and need the commitment to follow all the time else the project might have a setback.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Container should be addressed to the Ministry of Health because of the following reasons. It will avoid the issue of the Tin Certificate, and the address of the receiver, and finally it will help in fastening the custom entries.
2. There should be active men who are willing to go the extra mile to see that the work is done, and logistics need arranged and to be provided to them to ease work.
3. The beneficiary's hospitals should be identified earlier, and their contact details attached to the duty waiver form as recipients will be interviewed by the duty waiver committee to determine approval.
4. The clearing agent should be identified earlier and once a clearing agent is identified and trusted he should be allowed to work without being put under pressure to avoid misunderstanding.
5. The Directorate of the Diaspora unit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should be involved/informed in every stage of the process.

Hospital committee members

Mr. Sanusi Jaiteh
Mr. Baboucarr Ceesay
Mr. Bobacar Danso
Mr. Sampierre M. Gomez: Committee Chairman

COHORTED MEMBERS

Mr. Fafo Drammeh
Mr. Bakary Dibba
Mr. Abdoulie Baldeh
Mr. Ousman Jammeh



PHOTO GALLERY



THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
REGIONAL HEALTH DIRECTORATE
WESTERN 1 HEALTH REGION, KANIFING
WEST COAST REGION TEL: 3665673/2263207

REF: RHD/WHR1/020/2024 7th March 2024

The President
Gambian Association in Geneva
Switzerland

Dear Sir

RE: APPRECIATION OF MEDICAL ITEM SUPPORT TO HEALTH FACILITIES IN WESTERN 1 HEALTH REGION

I write to your esteemed office extending my thanks and appreciation for such laudable initiative and support to Ministry of Health by donating **hospital beds** to Public Health facilities in the region through the Regional Health Directorate in a much cherished ceremony on **Thursday 7th March 2024**.

While looking forward to your usual patriotic cooperation, understanding and support to the Ministry of Health as part of efforts for complementing government efforts in attaining Universal Health Coverage and Sustainable Development Goal for health, I remain:

Yours faithfully

Musa Camara – Regional Director of Health Services

Cc: Permanent Secretary MOH
Director of Health Services
Director of Nursing
Director of National Pharmaceutical Services
RHD File
P/File.

REGIONAL HEALTH DIRECTORATE WESTERN 1 DESPATCHED





