



| 2.7 Our Life in Kisoga.

Description:

Our campaign in Kisoga has been a success from every point of view. We worked hard and very well, we bonded closely with the local team, the volunteers formed a highly cohesive and supportive group, and we were treated exceptionally well in meeting our basic needs for lodging, meals, and daily support.

The trip to Kisoga, with Qatar Airways and a stopover in Doha, is a long journey. There are some other shorter connections, but they are worse due to the arrival time in Entebbe. QA allows two 23kg suitcases per person, which was very useful in our case. It is worth noting here the need to rethink how we transport medical supplies. In this regard, there are some important considerations:

1. It is highly advisable to stop using soft raffia bags. They are becoming increasingly problematic at airports. At the very least, they should have some rigidity in their walls, and it is a good idea to wrap them in film to prevent them from opening.

2. All medical supplies must carry the necessary documentation. In our case, the material was itemized with its origin, cost, and expiration date, and had been authorized by the relevant Ugandan agency and accepted by the Hospital as a donation. For the medication, the list was also stamped by the AEMPS, and likewise accepted by the Hospital as a donation. On arrival at customs in Entebbe, ALL the bags of material were inspected, especially expiration dates, and all documents were cross-checked.

3. Regarding the FCA material that makes the round trip, mainly the surgical instruments and electrosurgical generators, it is necessary to complete the IATA carnet procedures at the Chamber of Commerce, to avoid problems upon arrival in Spain. Our material was inspected on arrival in Madrid. We managed to get the generators through, but they did not allow in some leftover medication (mainly thyroid hormone and oral calcium) because we lacked the corresponding customs permit. It was not enough to show the origin and donation permit from the AEMPS. As a lesson learned, the best approach regarding medication is to have the origin very thoroughly documented for entry into the destination country, and not bring any leftover medication back to Spain.

Beyond the constant adventures that customs controls bring on all our campaigns, our life in Uganda was simple. From Entebbe to Kisoga is about a two-hour trip, depending on traffic, by road in a very comfortable bus that we, the volunteers, paid for.

Our accommodation, Lux Resort Kisoga, was outstanding. A quiet place, 5 minutes from the hospital, with double and single rooms to suit each volunteer, and breakfast and dinner service provided by a wonderful kitchen team. The rooms have a bathroom with a reasonably effective hot-cold water system via an electric heater. There is no air conditioning (in our case it was not necessary given the time of year, but it is important to keep in mind). The food was of great quality, and the staff in charge of the service were always ready to make our lives easy, whether when we left in the morning, with great breakfasts, or when we came back tired at night, with varied dinners. During the workday at the hospital, they also brought food to us during the half hour we stopped to eat. Regarding the price, it is important to negotiate a rate with them that reflects our work there for that community. We managed to get a discount compared to their usual rates.

Dr. Mukalazi was always attentive to us. He picked us up personally in the mornings and took us back to the hotel at the end of the day. He paid very close attention to every detail of the campaign's organization, a key part of why everything went so well. This is also work that the undersigned campaign coordinator and he began several months earlier, during which time he did everything necessary to successfully carry out this first FCA campaign in Kisoga.

Workdays at the hospital started around 8:30 a.m. and ended around 9:00 p.m., once all the work scheduled for each day had been completed. We divided ourselves among 3 operating