

International Medical Foundation is an affiliate of the International Medical Group with offices based in Kisugu – Namuwongo. IMF recently received a grant of **US\$ 399,273** (three hundred ninety nine million two hundred seventy three thousand shillings) over 24 months from the Civil Society Fund of the Uganda Aids Commission. This grant will enable IMF to implement a HIV & AIDS prevention and treatment project (The Touch Namuwongo Project) in Makindye Division of Kampala. This project will contribute to the **National Strategic Plan** objectives: **(1)** to reduce the transmission of sexually transmitted Infections including HIV and **(2)** to mitigate the impact of HIV and AIDS on individual, families and the community.

The Touch Namuwongo project will be launched with a large outreach health fair at the International Hospital Kampala in Namuwongo on Saturday 14th June 2008. It is hoped that this health fair would reach about 500 people. This event will bring together various public and private organizations namely: Uganda Aids Commission, Health Initiatives for the Private Sector - HIPS, Aids Information Centre - AIC, International Medical Foundation – IMF, International hospital Kampala - IHK, Uganda Health Marketing Group – UHMG, Pulse and Artfully Aware. with one goal of reaching out to the residents of Namuwongo and the greater Makindye division offering health education, Voluntary Counselling and Testing and referral for Antiretroviral Therapy.

The Touch Namuwongo Project has been developed to extend the scope and coverage of education, prevention and treatment services to People Living with HIV/AIDS in underprivileged communities of Makindye division in Kampala beginning with Bukasa, Wabigalo and Kisugu parishes, and subsequently to evaluate the model used for roll out in the high-need other parishes of Makindye and nationally in other needy districts in Uganda. The project aims at reaching about 4,850 people within the first year; offering HIV and AIDS prevention interventions and Anti Retroviral Therapy as well as management of Sexually Transmitted Infections.

The mechanism for achieving the goal is to use the International Hospital Kampala (IHK) as the base for a clinic from which outreach services will be extended. IMF was considered uniquely placed to deliver this project because we have significant experience of working within the target area, and of delivering community-based HIV/AIDS services in this area, and in other locations in Uganda. Through our sister organisation, the IHK, we have access to top-quality medical facilities and highly trained clinical staff with ten years experience of delivering high-quality medical services. This association provides us with a sustainable infrastructure.

Basing community outreach and free HIV services within the hospital is very much part of the strategic plan of International Hospital Kampala, and as such IMF is able to benefit from and contribute to the hospital's infrastructure through this venture. Having developed inpatient facilities providing complex care to those who really need it but are unable to pay through our Hope Ward and our cancer care services we are keen to strengthen the links with our local community. Through the health outreach we will be able to provide counselling and testing, health education and management of symptomatic sexually transmitted infections to vulnerable groups in the local community. Crucially we will also be able to demonstrate to these groups that they can access services at the hospital. Once we have these groups utilising the hospital as their local healthcare facility, then the scope for expanding services through our charitable side is enormous. Clients seen at our clinic will access the Hope Ward at highly subsidised rates if they need inpatient care, and if the need is great, we will look into funding dedicated HIV services.