

Adi – A Mission Hospital Without Water

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Adi is located in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of Congo in the triangle where Uganda, Southern Sudan and the DR Congo meet. The small town is about one hour east of Koboko, Uganda and 20 km south of Southern Sudan, where a bloody civil war is raging. Again and again, aid organisations bring injured people from the war zone to the hospital in Adi. The missionary hospital has 152 beds and is often overcrowded because of refugees from Southern Sudan.

The population in Adi and its surroundings lives from agriculture and is very poor. Many have to get by on less than one US dollar per day. That is why most patients are so poor that they cannot pay the bill for treatment. Sometimes people pay in kind, like chickens or goats, but this does not pay for medicines, salaries or water supply. Everyone who comes and needs help gets it anyway. That is why the hospital is dependent on outside help.

About ten years ago, a British aid organisation had built a water supply for the hospital, consisting of a diesel-powered centrifugal pump and a 1 km long PVC main water pipe. After about three and a half years, the centrifugal pump was repeatedly defective and could not be repaired. The PVC pipe was also dilapidated and leaking in many places. The management of the mission hospital asked the Congolese government and local and international organisations for a new pump, but received no reply or refusal in each case.

Therefore, the hospital staff had no choice but to carry about 5,000 to 10,000 litres of water, i.e. about 250 to 500 canisters, about half a kilometre and 50 metres uphill from the spring to the hospital.

IWFA has therefore rebuilt, repaired and expanded the water supply of the hospital step by step over the last four years - as the finances allowed. Now it works around the clock. It consists of a new centrifugal pump with an overhauled diesel engine and a solar pump with solar system. The solar pump works fully automatically during the day. This saves a lot of money, because only little diesel is needed. In the rainy season and at night the centrifugal pump can be used.



The water is pumped through a new, very resistant HDPE main pipe, which is only 700m long, to the elevated tank. The supply lines to the hospital were rebuilt to reduce pressure losses. For the first time, the hospital has also received wash basins. In the examination and treatment rooms a powerful jet of water now comes out of the tap.

Now the hospital staff can go back to their actual work instead of carrying water as well. Nursing staff can wash their hands before each visit and care.

The mission hospital is the only hospital within a radius of 300 to 400 km in the Congo that has running water in its rooms.

Questions for discussion:

- Running water is a matter of course for us. What does it mean for a hospital to get by without it?



- How was attention paid during the conversion to sustainable solutions and low running costs?
- What difference does this make for patients and staff?