

Jo Magatti – A LIFE OF SERVICE



L to R Dr. Sam Mbulaiteye, Dr. Nestory Masalu, Hon. Wenje (MP), Capt. Josiah Magatti and assistant to MP, in EMBLEM Bugando office

Josiah Ogada Magatti (1952-2014), who served as Study Coordinator for EMBLEM Tanzania, passed away in March. In this issue, we share a few examples to focus light on his local leadership, which may inspire others.

He served in the Tanzania military for 14 years, including the critical time when dictator Idi Amin was ousted from neighboring Uganda. He emerged from the military with superior administrative, logistical and management skills. As part of the demobilization exercise, to return former combatants to civilian life, he pursued a master's program in Agricultural Development in Germany before returning to his home area to work as an agriculturalist, local

church Diocesan Secretary, Shirati Hospital administrator, and an educationist by starting kindergarten for preschoolers. His work as hospital administrator roused his interest in two neglected diseases, Burkitt Lymphoma and leprosy, for which he became a tireless advocate.

In 2005, working with others, they founded the Shirati Health, Education, and Development (SHED) Foundation to promote humanitarian development in Tanzania. He and close colleague, Dr. Esther Kawira, were approached to collaborate on the EMBLEM Study and lead the Tanzanian component of the study. A quick learner and man of action, Jo oversaw the submission and successful application for ethical research clearance from the National Institute of Medical Research (NIMR) in Dar es Salaam, coordinated importation of laboratory equipment to upgrade EMBLEM labs, hired study staff, and launched region wide efforts for spotting potential BL patients, facilitating diagnosis and inviting participation in EMBLEM.

Service to others was the hallmark of Magatti's life, manifested in military, community, church, and larger humanitarian and research arenas. His memory will inspire those of us who knew him for the rest of our lives.



Captain Magatti in EMBLEM Office at Shirati



SHED Foundation Directors (L to R) Josiah Kawira, Rev. Manaen, Dr. Esther Kawira and Capt. Josiah Magatti

Dr. Esther Kawira, Editor

EMBLEM UGANDA

Currently, EMBLEM numbers stand at 487 (309 males, 178 females) screened and spotted and 255 (160 males, 95 females) eligible and enrolled.

Emblem Uganda will begin enrolling cases from Kiryandongo and Masindi situated in the North Central area. This was as a result of an ever increasing number of cases coming from these areas. This new addition will greatly improve case enrollment numbers.

EMBLEM KENYA

Kenya spotted 20 (13 males and 7 females) suspected BL cases of which 9 (8 males, 1 female) were enrolled in the study. Cumulative totals as of end of March is 330 (210 males and 120 females) spotted and 122 (87 males and 35 females) enrolled. Case spotting and enrollment has been decreasing in the Nyanza Province, but increasing in Western Province.

At Homa Bay, the EMBLEM team will now work closely with Dr. Odundo to strengthen case spotting, diagnosis and treatment. This close collaboration paves the way for Dr. Odundo to be supported to attend a hands-on clinical orientation in BL diagnosis, staging and treatment in Uganda to improve his expertise.

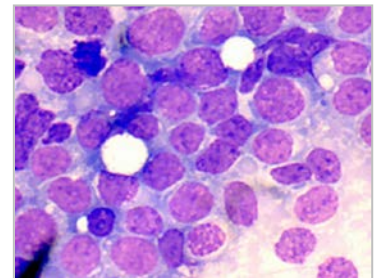
EMBLEM TANZANIA

A total of 345 cases (195 males and 150 females) have been spotted from which 74 cases (44 males, 30 females) have been enrolled in the study.

Both EMBLEM Tanzania sites, Shirati and Bugando, were visited by study monitors along with the Senior Study Administrator from Uganda. Study monitors ensure that procedures are implemented at the sites in accordance with the study protocol so as to reach study goals. Monitors noted tremendous improvement in study document management and appreciated efforts of the team since their last visit.

EMBLEM GOALS

One of the major goals of EMBLEM is to obtain high-quality tissue that can be used to study and discover genetic mutations that cause the cancer to start and progress. These studies are being led by the NCI Office of Cancer Genomics. In April, EMBLEM provided the first 12 samples to this effort. The remaining tissues will be provided in June. Discoveries from these studies may shed light on new treatments for BL and could be relevant for children in East Africa.



Representative BL tumor tissue imprint stained with Giemsa

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