



Cover Story

2019 Mozambique Medical Outreach



In mid March, 2019, Intense Tropical Cyclone Idai devastated Eastern Africa twice. Heavy downpour caused massive flooding in Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Mozambique, in particular the coastal region of Sofala Province in Mozambique, where homes were swept away as well as heavy casualties. Taiwan Tzu Chi volunteers flew to these African countries to meet up with limited number of local volunteers to assess the damage, distribute relief goods, and planned to hold a large free clinic in Mozambique in May.



By Chang Li-Yun & Chang Mei-Ling

Sister Denise Tsai (Chinese name Dai-Lin Tsai), who had been settling in Mozambique after her marriage, was the first Tzu Chi commissioner in the region. Denise and her husband Dino Foi were the ones who accompanied Tzu Chi volunteers from around the world. She had not had the chance to speak so much Mandarin and Taiwanese dialect, she said. She was moved by the fact that global Tzu Chi volunteers came over to support her in Mozambique and to inspire local volunteers.

The medical outreach team consisted of 52 Tzu Chi volunteers from the U.S., Australia, Hong Kong, and Taiwan,

among them were Supt. Lin Shinn-Zong of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, Supt. Lai Ning-Sheng of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital, Supt. Chao You-Chen of Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital, and Supt. Chien Sou-Hsin of Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital, as well as doctors from various disciplines, TIMA nurses, pharmacists, and volunteers.

May 16~17

Since Africa is so far away, there are fewer seats on connecting flights. That was why the medical outreach team from Taiwan departed on May 16 and May 17 respectively to Mozambique.

The free clinic and the distribution were held simultaneously. Local school children are thrilled with the new school bags the Tzu Chi volunteers brought for them.





Dr. Yeh Tian-Hao, who arrived early to survey and plan for the free clinic, led a three-person team into the village for home visits and the promotion of the free clinic.

Brother Liao Ming-Chuan in charge of general affairs said, “Today we packed dentistry equipments, toothbrushes, dental chairs, air compressors, chords and wires, and clothes and charms for the Buddha bathing ceremony, a total of 11 boxes, 230 kg in weight, for the team members to carry with. The other 26 members will carry other medical equipments, so each individual is paired with one to two boxes of supplies.” Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital prepared all 10 boxes of medical equipments and two boxes of supplies for this outreach, including surgical instruments, health education materials for gynecology and Traditional Chinese Medicine, scissors, gauzes, cottons, syringes, and thermometers, as well as stationeries including 6,000 plus pencils and 1,000 pencil sharpeners, waiting to be delivered to Africa with love and care.



On May 17, 2019, the home visit to Lamego came to an end at nightfall, the volunteers hold the light for Dr. Yeh Tian-Hao (right) and Dr. Alice Lu (Middle) to dress the wound of a child.





Tzu Chi held its first large-scale free clinic in Mozambique. On May 18, the advance team begins setting up the venue with local volunteers.

May 18

Local volunteer Manuel from Beira assisted the outreach team with translation. He was educated in Mozambique, and later attended university in Zimbabwe, studying two years of English. Prior to becoming a volunteer, he worked at an international organization in charge of gardening. He lost his job when the company decided to move back. His father and friends were the victims of Cyclone Idai. His own home was damaged. That was why when Tzu Chi arrived at Beira, he decided to wear

the vest and join the rank of volunteers.

“I decided to become a volunteer because a lot of Mozambicans lost their lives during Cyclone Idai, as well as tremendous damage to properties. When Sister Denise came, she told us, people should love and help each other. We are grateful that Tzu Chi came to distribute goods and construction kits, and stationaries and school bags for children,” Manuel said. His two brothers and sisters also became volunteers soon after. “I told myself, I must join Tzu Chi no matter what, because Tzu Chi helped us so so much,” he said adamantly.

Making Every Minute Count

Dr. Yeh Tian-Hao of TIMA Kaohsiung, Taiwan, arrived at Beira on May 12, while ahead of others, to survey the site for the free clinic, make necessary preparations, and paid home visits to local communities with pediatrician Lin Yu-Ying and Nurse Yeh Hsin-Yi to hold health education, as well as documenting potential cases for the medical team soon to arrive.

While rehearsing for the Buddha bathing ceremony, Dr. Yeh led a team of three to Lamego, Beira for home visits. Primary school teacher Jose wearing white with black dots was asked to become the team's Portuguese translator. Because it was a Saturday, everywhere



In the tent area, Supt. Chien Sou-Hsin (left) and Supt. Lin Shinn-Zong examine a gentleman with leg swelling.

the team went, curious children followed and in growing numbers.

Seeing doctors at her door step, the lady took her children outside. Her five-month old girl had malnutrition, runny nose, and few coughs, which appeared to be a cold. Another one-year-old child with few lumps of toothpastes on the head, which according to the team's preliminary diagnosis was folliculitis. Dr. Lin asked the translator to inform them to pay attention to cleanliness. However, with water shortage and recent flood, whether these people could manage remained a concern.

There was another six-year old girl who had cracked soles for three years, which led to bleeding at the heels. Watching the girl's exposed bulging belly, Dr. Lin couldn't help it but to poke gently at the exposed belly with her long finger. Umbilical hernia was the initial diagnosis. "Where are her family," she asked with a sigh.

Nurse Yeh came from Australia. During the home visit, she remembered her experience over a decade ago while studying in the Tzu Chi College of Nursing (now Tzu Chi College of Science and Technology) to the community behind Jing Si Abode. She saw a child with feet injury without treatment or shoes. During the morning assembly on the very next day, she spoke on behalf of the students and said in tears, "How can there be children so poor in Hualien?" She vowed to study nursing thoroughly.



Now living in Australia, which is a wealthy nation, she used her vacation to serve in Africa, which means a whole lot more to her than an actual vacation.

The Pain and Grief under the Tents

The bulk of the medical team, consisting of 26 members, arrived around 3pm, and began a home visit to a tent area in the proximity of the hotel they were staying at. After entering, they saw

a Mozambican with his legs covered in pityriasis alba. Supt. Chao You-Chen and Supt. Chien Sou-Hsin crouched down to do a simply examination, and arranged time for another visit.

As the team walked to another tent, Supt. Chien saw a man with swollen legs. Supt. Lin Shinn-Zong crouched down and pinched the man's legs, and concluded: "judging from his eyes this is not edema, so it should not be a kidney problem. It is most likely due to poor blood circulation from lack of walking, or parasites



On the afternoon of May 18, 2019, the outreach team begins its home visit in the tent area shortly after its arrival in Beira, and local children greet them with joy. This is a first for the superintendents from Hualien, Dalin, Taipei, and Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital to assemble on the same international disaster relief mission.

After dinner on May 18, the members start to organize the medical supplies needed for the following day.



disrupting the lymphatic flow, causing the swell.” Supt. Lin asked the man to take a few steps, which the man managed, so he decided to record the case so he could come back with instruments for further examination.

Around evening, Stephen Huang, Director of Tzu Chi Global Affair, four superintendents, two Tzu Chi University representatives, and Monica Inroga, Dean of Faculty of Health Sciences, Catholic University of Mozambique (UCM), had a brief meeting in the hotel meeting room, exchanging ideas on future collaboration. Of the 31 million people in Mozambique, only 489 were doctors. Dean Monica mentioned that their school trains an average of 32 doctors annually, but only 10 at most went on to practice medicine.

In terms of medicine, drugs that would pose immediate danger if discontinued,

such as antibiotics, painkillers, diabetes drugs, high blood pressure meds, and asthma pumps, would be acquired locally. Supplies brought from Taiwan were primarily surgical instruments and Traditional Chinese Medicines (TCM). TCM medicines were prescribed by Vice Supt. Ho Tsung-Jung of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital, which included over 9,000 acupuncture needles and medicines.

This free clinic included services such as surgery, general medicine, pediatrics, dentistry, gynecology, and TCM. There were 6 surgeons and 4 TCM practitioners, where Dr. Wu Sen was proficient in western medical and TCM practices. All the doctors utilized the break after dinner to sort and arrange their medical kits for the free clinic the following day, as well as learning the procedure and traffic flow of both the Buddha bathing ceremony and the free clinic.



**May 19
ESG de Tica (Tica Middle School),
Sofala Province**

Budda Bathing Ceremony and Free Clinic Started

In the first ever Buddha bathing ceremony in Mozambique, local flowers and fruits were utilized for original decoration. The four superintendents from Taiwan Tzu Chi Hospitals led the local volunteers and sang the song “Buddha on the Vulture Peak”; “Bow at Buddha’s feet”, and “Receive the flower” signified the spread of Buddhism to Africa, just like after cyclone Idai numbers of barrage lakes formed on grasslands and low-lying areas, and astoundingly lotus flowers began to bloom from these muddy lakes.

The Buddha bathing ceremony came to an end in the sound of prayers, and the first day of the free clinic in Tica Middle School officially started. Most people here never had the chance to see a doctor ever, so a long line stood in front of every clinic.

TCM - from Frowns to Smiles

In these parts of Africa where healthcare resources were rare and scarce, most people had never seen a doctor before, not to mention TCM and acupuncture from the East. These long and mystical needles soon demonstrated its efficacy: a 9-year-old boy could not lift his left arm high, and his mother, who was volunteering at the free clinic, brought him to Dr. Ho Tsung-Jung, Vice Supt. of

On May 19, in Tica Middle School in Nhamatanda, the Tzu Chi medical volunteer team officially launches the first free clinic after the Buddha bathing ceremony.





The local residents are desperate for medical attention, resulting in a constant flow of people waiting at all the clinics.



After Vice Supt. Ho Tsung-Jung of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital reset the child's dislocated arm and performed acupuncture therapy, the child is able to lift her arm up high.



On the afternoon of May 19 on a home visit to Tica village, Dr. Chiu Shao-Chun (middle) performs acupuncture therapy on an elderly gentleman while surrounded by children.



Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital. The boy, in fact, dislocated his left arm, however without access to doctors, he didn't even realize what happened. After few needles in the boy's elbow, shoulder and arm, he could raise his arm again. He burst into smile, wiping away the frown on his mother's face.

Acupuncture to Mozambicans was a mystical practice. Tome Jose, the administrator of Nhamatanda, was troubled by lower back pain. After acupuncture by Vice Supt. Ho, the pain was relieved almost immediately. Dir. Stephen Huang encouraged the administrator to bring his whole family for TCM treatment. The administrator was surprisingly thrilled and brought his mother soon after. He promised to invite more doctors to screen for disease severity, so that women, children, elderlies, and critical patients could be attended first. "I hope we can send people from Nhamatanda to Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital to learn TCM," the administrator said.

Medical Students Translate Dozen Dialects

In response to having a dozen dialects in Mozambique, there were students of medical and public health departments from three schools in the free clinic assisting with translation during patient intake. Brother Kao Ching-Yao explained that the moment the request for



Before the free clinic begins, Pharmacist Johnson Kao from Australia goes over precautions to be taken with students assisting with translation.



Supt. Chao You-Chen (left) screened a female student with high fever with malaria rapid diagnostic test (RDT), and immediately administers antimalarial medication when the test comes back positive. Dr. Lai Ning-Sheng (right) says that this is his first encounter with malaria patient after four decades of medical practice.

youth volunteer translators for the medical outreach in Mozambique by Tzu Chi got out, over 110 college students applied almost immediately. After evaluation, there would be a rotation of 50 students daily to assist with translation.

Water contamination and health

issues after the flood led to the spread of infectious diseases. A dying female patient was escorted to Supt. Chao's clinic, where rapid screening for malaria tested positive. Supt. Chao advised immediate administration of anti-malaria medicine. A medical student serving as translator explained that they are familiar with anti-malaria medicine, however these patients cannot afford these medicine or to see a doctor. The free clinic was of tremendous help, but a temporary one nonetheless. Supt. Lai who came to help added that most of these infectious diseases were eradicated in Taiwan, and patients were hard to find. This was the first in his 40-years of medical career to witness the onset of malaria. Supt. Chao prescribed antipyretics and anti-malaria medications for the patient to take home, and wished her a speedy recovery.

Afternoon Home Visits into Medically Deprived Area

Number of attendees dwindled passed noon. Around 3pm, the doctors divided into three teams and began home visits to Lamego Village for the residents who were incapable of attending.

General surgeon Chang Chun-Ming of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital had numerous experiences in medical outreach, such as the Philippines and Nepal. He discovered that the repellence of HIV in Mozambique, coupled with poor health conditions and



Dr. Chang Chun-Ming feels disappointed by the fact that he cannot fully utilize his surgical expertise despite seeing so many patients during home visit that require surgery.



Supt. Chien Sou-Hsin (left) of Taichung Tzu Chi Hospital and Dr. Yeh Tian-Hao (middle) of TIMA are treating the people of Mozambique.

severe damage to the operating rooms in local hospitals, and therefore did not arrange any surgical treatment for the outreach. He visited four patients who, for some unknown reason, became bedridden after Cyclone Idai, some developed polyps in the chest and back, some had protruding spine, and even hygroma in the neck region. Dr. Chang felt despairingly powerless. "No wonder 53





Prior to the free clinic on May 20, the team went into Lamego village for a visit. Marta, a local volunteer, says that in this “home” lives a mother and her son, and her husband passed away in the flood, leaving them in a predicament.

years ago (in 1966) when Master Cheng Yen realized how interconnected poverty and illness were, she vowed to build hospitals—there are so many diseases that can only be addressed in a hospital,” he said.

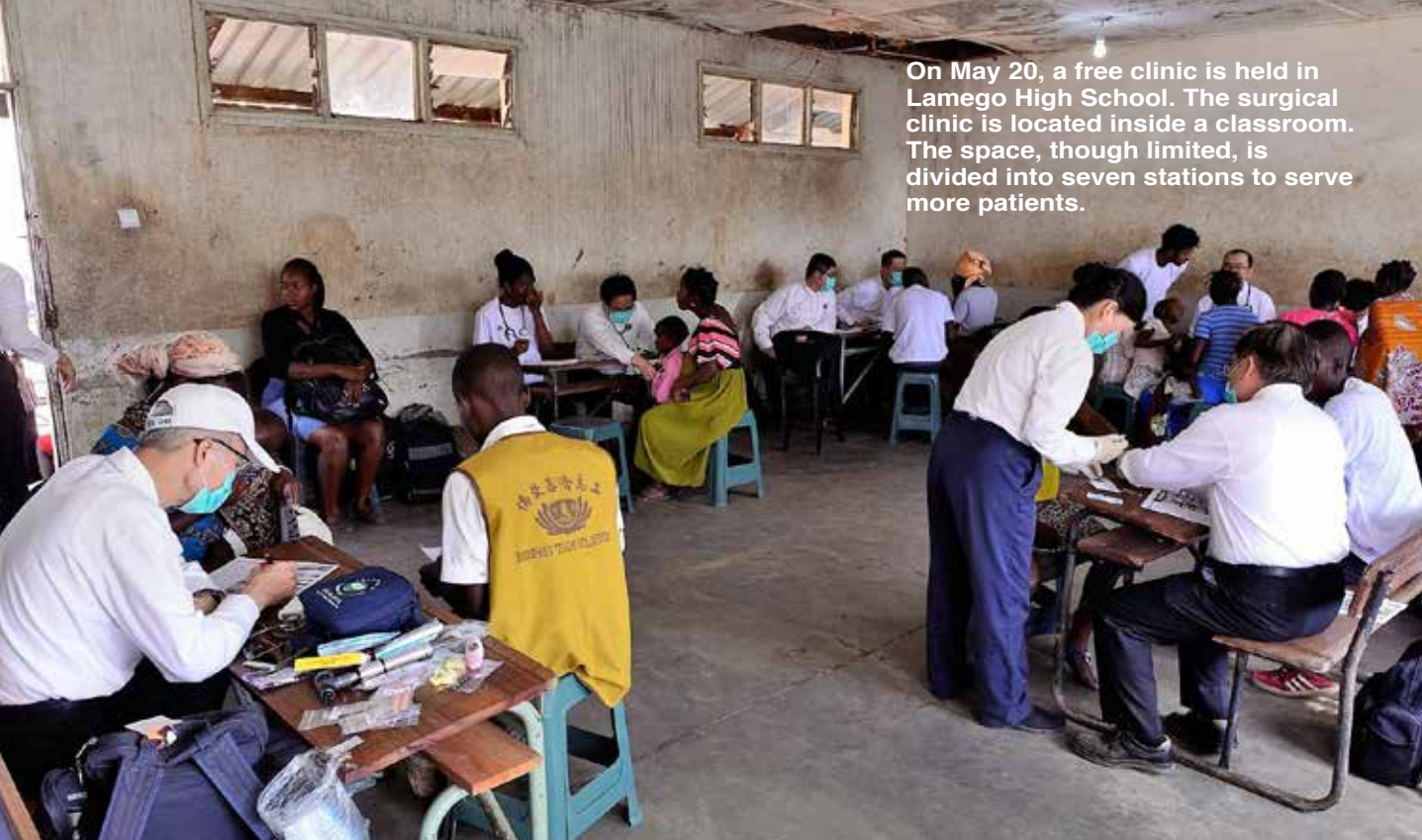
On the other hand, Supt. Lin Shinn-Rong, Da Ai TV Director-general Susan Yeh, and Sister Denise Tsai took the main road from Mozambique to Zimbabwe and read a small village in Lamego, characterized by thatched and mud-brick houses. Seeing the arrival of the Tzu Chi volunteers, the village children followed the team while singing the kid song, “She’ll be Coming Round the Mountain”. Along the way, the team encountered a woman with leg injury. Supt. Lin treated her wound with an ointment. Some children who were smart immediately revealed their injuries and asked for some ointment as well. Supt. Chao, as compassionate



On May 20, at the free clinic in Lamego, TIMA pharmacist Wang Chih-Ming (right) and Chen Hung-Yen (left) are in charge of dispensing prescriptions. The clinic was overcrowded the day before, leaving them no time for lunch.

as he was, was sorrowed by the fact that he had nothing to share. He saw children running around in the wild barefooted, it was inevitable for them to be bruised or injured, so he gave away the only

On May 20, a free clinic is held in Lamego High School. The surgical clinic is located inside a classroom. The space, though limited, is divided into seven stations to serve more patients.



ointments and cotton swabs he had on him. The children were so thrilled as if they just received sweets.

**May 20
Lamego Middle School,
Sofala Province**

**Poverty, Displacement,
and Homelessness**

The team surveyed Lamego, one of the heavily affected areas, prior to the free clinic. Most homes in the village were visibly new—built with new bricks. Old homes were reduced to sands by the flood. Fortunate families could rebuild with mud bricks, the unfortunate ones had to live in tents, enduring high heat and humidity. The Mozambican government wished its people to return home as soon as possible, however majority could not, because their hometown were in low

lying areas and remained underwater. The government offered every resident a piece of land 20m² to 30m² in size to rebuild, but multiple family members coupled with polygamy made rebuilding a challenge.

Marta, a local volunteer, introduced the medical team to a pile of dirt covered by a piece of torn mosquito net. “This was someone’s home,” she said chokingly. “In 2000, my home, like this one, was overran by flood. I lived on a tree for four days!” She was left with nothing and survived, that was why she insisted on showing the team the pain of the locals.

**Toothbrush Training
Is Better Than Sweets**

On the second day of the free clinic, with the experience from day one, the local volunteers rearranged the patient flow at Lamego Middle School before



the medical team arrived by setting up the tables and chairs as guidance; and women, children, elderly, and critical patients were prioritized during registration.

Overlooking the site, at every designated location and every checkpoint were local volunteers in vest guiding the line, keeping the scene organized. The overcrowding on the first day was no more.

Dr. Kenneth Liao from TIMA U.S. stressed the importance of oral health education for the villagers. “Instead of giving them sweets, we should teach them how to brush their teeth,” Dr. Liao said. He instructed the local volunteers to deliver health education in the waiting area, and brought 500 toothbrushes for adults and children respectively as gifts. Perhaps through the word of mouth, the number of dental patients increased today.

There were plenty of patients waiting for tooth extraction. Dir. Hsia Yi-Jan of Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital treated one patient after another, “Although the local dentists have graduated for five years, but maybe because lacking in experience, the angle at which they held the instruments were uncorrected, which delayed the speed of tooth extraction.” On the first day the local dentists kept on asking for help, which shortened Dir. Hsia’s time for his patients. “Today if (the local dentists) have patients who need tooth extraction,



Pediatrician Lin Yu-Ying of TIMA Taiwan screened many children with malaria that require immediate treatment.

I simply ask the patients to come over to speed things up, so we don’t have to turn away patients like yesterday because we simply ran out of time,” he said.

Supt. Chao You-Chen was in charge of general medicine, and was very busy as well. His first patient was a male with breast size of a female. “This is an endocrine disorder that needs further testing. It is a complex disease,” he explained.

Lin Yu-Ying was a pediatrician, and her husband Lin Jung-Wei was a physician with his own pediatric clinic in Hemei, Changhua, mid Taiwan, since two decades ago. In 2013 Lin Yu-Ying became a certified Tzu Chi commissioner. With her husband’s support, she participated in the free clinic in Jordan and Nepal. This was her first free clinic in Africa. Outside the pediatric clinic

children lined up one after another, most of them had a fever reaching 39 degrees. She screened a dozen of children with a malaria rapid diagnostic test (RDT) and came back positive. Malaria is an infectious disease that require immediate administration of antimalarial medication.

In the afternoon, a distribution of construction kits and agricultural inputs was held for a temporary white tent area of 160 families. The local volunteers unloaded and arranged the relief goods of 14 items, including aluminum pots, water buckets, saws, nails, wires, knives, hammers, pliers, hoes, and spades, six bags of seeds including corn, and 10 kg of pinto beans, mielie meals, and white rice.

May 21 Catholic University of Mozambique, Sofala Province

Dr. Monica Inroga, Dean of Faculty of Health Sciences,

On the third day, the team visited the Faculty of Health Sciences, Catholic University of Mozambique, starting the last free clinic in Sofala Province, a region heavily affected by the flood.

Preparation is essential for free clinic. Dentist Alice Lu from Australia, fluent in English, and pharmacist Johnson Kao were in charge of preparation. These two young people were responsible for contacting translators, free clinic documentations and administrative work,

At the free clinic at Catholic University of Mozambique on May 21, on the left is the dental clinic, where all the nurses, dental assistants and volunteers are in full protective gear.



as well as the patient flow chart that changes from day to day.

In addition to general medical services, volunteers from South Africa, Australia, and Taiwan were placed in charge of general affairs that ranged from pipeline configuration, appliance transportation, to something as small as a pin. Although the team members came from different countries, they performed their duties and contributed their expertise in order to overcome the harsh African environment and accomplish the mission.

Integrative Approach of Western Medicine and TCM

The venue for the last day was significantly better than Tica Middle School and Lamego High School. With the exception of TCM and gynecology, dentistry and general and surgical pediatrics were placed at a corridor. By the time the preparation team arrived around 7am, a long queue awaited them at the scene.

A mother with a two-year old girl came to Pediatrician Lin Yu-Ying and explained, “my girl can’t lift her right arm, can’t hold a fist, and her right leg is wobbling.” Dr. Lin specialized in the rapid screening of malaria, so she referred them to the general pediatrics. Because the child was still young, it was hard to identify symptoms of stunted growth, besides the general pediatrics lack the



At the free clinic at Catholic University of Mozambique on May 21, Orthopedist Yeh Kuang-Ting of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital carefully examines the severity of a child’s eye infection.



Local Mozambican nurses and medical students comes to assist with the free clinic, feeling rewarded.

resources for early rehabilitation and growth hormone administration, all they could do was to prescribe some vitamins for the child.

A volunteer took the pair to TCM



This is the last day of the free clinic in Beira, and the dental clinic is still crowded.

clinic, where Vice Supt. Ho Tsung-Jung was in charge. He adjusted the girl's elbow, and inserted one needle in the child's Qiuxu point and another on her hand. Miraculously the child could lift her arm up naturally, and visibly capable of hold a bag of pencils effortlessly. Vice Supt. Ho diagnosed a dislocated elbow, most likely occurred at birth. To make sure her daughter would be fine, the mother took the girl for an X-ray and showed Vice Supt. Ho the photograph. She listened with joy and relief as he pointed to the photo and explained via the translator that her daughter's joint was in good condition.

There was an elderly gentleman who mistaken the free clinic as yesterday and waited in vain. He came again as early as 4am. He told Dr. Cheng I-Che, "Headache, and small toe as well!" Dr. Cheng performed acupuncture on him for 15 minutes, effectively relieving both pain. A smile emerged on his tight face. "I will bring my whole family back for acupuncture after noon," he told the

volunteers.

Dr. Chiu Shao-Chun who specialized in TCM acupuncture was the first graduates of Tzu Chi University School of Post-Baccalaureate Chinese Medicine. Graduated only two years ago, he saw cases of mobility impairment and hemiplegia caused by stroke, and injuries caused by automobile accidents, in Taiwan's aged society, and that encouraged him to further his career in TCM traumatology.

Today Dr. Chiu realized that his patients tend to request for medication or more medical supplies than required, a phenomenon he did not observe among the villagers of Tica and Lamego in the previous two free clinics. As a first-timer of international medical outreach, Dr. Chiu saw a nation of poverty on the fringes of the world, which gave him insight into one of Master Cheng Yen's aphorisms—one must look into suffering and recognize blessing.

Orthopedist Yeh Kuang-Ting of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital discovered





Denise Kenneth Liao (right) of TIMA U.S. recommended the founding of TIMA Mozambique to overturn the lives of local medical professionals.

that majority of the visiting flood victims, just like in Nepal, suffered from PTSD—migraines, eye pain, sleeplessness, body aches and frequent night terrors—and poor basic wound care due to limited medical resources. “At the free clinic we must listen to our patients speaking their physical and mental discomforts. At the same time, I saw the simplicity and innocence in these villagers. I will take a comprehensive approach to the needs of these flood victims, not limited to the perspective of orthopedics,” he said.

Local Male Nurse Volunteer Wanting to Join TIMA

Since every clinic was overwhelmed with patients, the pharmacy grew busy as well. By noon, a male nurse from Catholic University of Mozambique brought with him six medical students who were about to graduate the following year to assist at the pharmacy. Pharmacist Wang Chih-Ming of TIMA Tainan never misses an

opportunity to share his knowledge and expertise.

Having the opportunity to acquire the knowledge of clinical medication from this group of overseas doctors was extremely beneficial to these students. “The medications you prescribed are great! Especially after the flood, infectious diseases are everywhere, the antibiotics you prescribed are the best! It can prevent a lot of diseases,” a student Roboso claimed. He was grateful to see foreigners loving their country the way they did. Helping out at the pharmacy greatly expanded his pharmaceutical knowledge, which was beneficial in gaining clinical experience!

The male nurse Julião said, “So many people, so many children died because of Cyclone Idai. You come all the way from Taiwan and helped so much, it is very important to Mozambique, to Beira. Our students can learn so much by coming here. I hope Mozambique and Taiwan can seek further collaboration.” He also hoped to join TIMA one day.

The dental clinic was crowded as usual, even the university employees came to line up. They came mostly because of doctor shortage in Mozambique, which exacerbated after the natural calamity. Although dentists and assistants ached from standing all day, no one complained. All they did was murmuring, “So many people! There is no end!” Such simple words carried the compassion and

urgency of these medical practitioners, as the team would be departing the following day, and the chance of these folks seeing dentists are slim.

May 22 General Medicine of Great Love

The three-day free clinic in Sofala, Mozambique, a province heavily affected by Cyclone India, finally came to an end, benefiting over 3,000 people. On the early morning on May 22, the team used the time to hold an online meeting with the abode in Taiwan, sharing their thoughts with Master Cheng Yen on the outreach.

Dir. Hsia Yi-Jan said that the number of dental patients grew daily over the three-day period. Most of them were seeing a dentist for the first time in their lives. The dental team was so occupied that they did not have for breaks. Dental assistant Huang Feng-Chiao said,



When Dir. Hsia Yi-Jan reported to Master Cheng Yen his experience of the free clinic during an online meeting with the abode on May 22, he could not hold back the tears.



The Mozambican folks come to the Home of Tzu Chi and sit patiently under the trees for a rare opportunity of medical attention.

“They’ve waited their whole lives to see a dentist. We are busy only for few hours. We must hang on!” Upon hearing those words, Dir. Hsia burst into tears. Those words were the strength that held the team together after they reached their limits.

Dr. Kenneth Liao of TIMA U.S. mentioned how five local dentists, graduated for almost seven years, spent the past two years working in hospitals without pay, because the government hospitals claimed to have no funding. They continued working nevertheless, like volunteers, honing their skills. There are countless doctors, dentists, nurses, accountants, and engineers graduated only to be unemployed and had to live off their parents, these dentists explained. Although they were not paid for their work, but at least they could work, they said. These dentists never missed a day during the three-day free clinic. Unwilling to watch them suffer, the doctors tend to add one to two additional treatments,



as result the free clinic could not end on time. What a waste of precious talents, Dr. Liao lamented. He recommended the founding of a local TIMA chapter, copying the Mexican model, to train local volunteers with expertise and turn their lives around.

Master Cheng Yen encourages her disciples to spread Buddhism actively than passively, “Because you are self-motivated, not assigned. Self-motivation is true cultivation.” Master wants her disciples to respect each and every religion, but also utilize opportunities and inspire love in others, practice Buddhism in daily affairs, and return to the consciousness of enlightenment. At last, Master praised the contribution of these doctors in Africa as the “General Medicine of Great Love”.

Heaven as Roof, Earth as Floor

After the online meeting, the team headed for the airport at 9:30am, ready to leave Beira by take an hour long flight to the Capital Maputo, and heading towards a local Tzu Chi chapter, or what Mozambican Tzu Chi volunteers call “The Home of Tzu Chi”, to prepare for the Buddha bathing ceremony and the large-scale free clinic the following day.

The team arrived at the Home of Tzu Chi around 5pm. The loud singing came from afar, as the Mozambican Tzu Chi family sang and dance, “Tzu Chi, one

family, thank you Master Cheng Yen for giving us a home.” They sang and danced from the gate to inside the campus. Sister Denise Tsai rooted Tzu Chi in Mozambique, motivating local volunteers with love from help themselves to helping others, and overtime a few seeds grew



Dr. Wu Sen, 77-years-old, proficient in Western and Traditional Chinese Medicine, spent the first three days in pediatrics, and back to TCM clinic during the last free clinic.



Urologist Cheng Wen-Hsuan of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital is examining patients at the Home of Tzu Chi.

The fourth free clinic on May 23 was held in the Home of Tzu Chi in Mahotas on the outskirts of Maputo. The crowd seeking medical attention await orderly under the mango tree.



into a forest of volunteers. Brother Stephen Huang first introduced the origin of the Home of Tzu Chi, and Sister Tsai showed everyone around the fruit and vegetable garden. There were over a 100 mango trees in the fruit garden, coupled with lemon and citrus; and in the vegetable garden were cabbage, beet, lettuce and more. The effort of these volunteers were apparent.

May 23

The Clinic under Mango Tree in Maputo

On May 23, the outreach team departed at dawn, heading to Mahotas

on the outskirts of Maputo, the Home of Tzu Chi, where the last free clinic would be held.

The team arrived at 7am, by then the patients had around surrounded the compound. The advance team began setting up the site for the Buddha bathing ceremony and the free clinic. Most attendees for the ceremony were local volunteers. They had multiple roles while working in the heavily affected areas for over a month, and they continued working in preparation for the ceremony and the free clinic after returning to the Home of Tzu Chi.

Insects chirping and birds tweeting as gentle breeze blows, the perfect



symphony of nature. The clinics of pediatrics surgery and medicine and the clinic of TCM opened their services under mango trees; the gynecology was in a iron sheet house for privacy concerns; and the dentistry was inside a square tent. The pharmacy was set up under the mango trees as well, adjacent to the kitchen volunteers preparing simple meals for lunch.

The line was at least two to three times longer than expected. The pediatric clinic no longer divides into surgery and medicine, even Supt. Chao started taking ophthalmology and traumatology patients. "His knee hurts, but he can walk with a walking stick, so it's not acute inflammation. I'll give him a patch to relief his pain. This is a common pain among elderlies. Master is wise, she called us the General Medicine of Great Love, and today we become a free general medicine clinic," he said.

Dr. Wu Sen, who served at the pediatric clinic for the past three days, moved to acupuncture for the day. "I am back to my profession! I applied as a TCM practitioner in the first place," Dr. Wu Sen said. At the age of 77, he served at the outpatient clinic of Suzhou Tzu Chi Clinic. Wu Sen, who had three episodes of myocardial infarction, was most concerned that Master Cheng Yen would prohibit him from attending international disaster relief.

Chen Mei-Hui, in charge of logistics

for TIMA Central Taiwan, moved the acupuncture to assist with needle extraction and comforting patients. Although it was her first time on an international medical outreach, Chen Mei-Hui handled with ease. She majored in public health administration, and because her family had its own clinic, she was familiar with most medications. Furthermore, she and her husband Dr. Hung Chi-Fen held monthly free clinics for immigrant labors at Nantou Immigration Agency, so she was no stranger to the procedures. Since there were only two pharmacists in the pharmacy, Chen Mei-Hui, aside from assisting with patient intake, would assist Dr. Lin You-Ying's clinic and the pharmacy, dispensing common medications like cough drops,



Local volunteer Victoria spent the past two months in the disaster areas on disaster relief, and worked non-stop on May 23, coupled with the fact that she already had a heart condition, she passed out near the end of the free clinic following a spike in blood pressure. After the treatment of Dr. Cheng I-Che, she finally wakes up, and her blood pressure returned to normal.

Statistics on the number of visits by department in Tzu Chi Mozambique free clinic in 2019

Date/Location	Traditional Chinese Medicine	Dentistry	Pediatrics	Surgery	Internal Medicine	Gynecology	Sent to Urgent Treatment	Total man-times Serviced
2019.05.19 Tica village	72	140	66	224	172	84	1	759
2019.05.20 Lamego village	133	210	210	581	301	95	0	1,530
2019.05.21 Beira City	94	275	212	365	190	162	0	1,298
2019.05.23 Maputo	187	175	45	490	353	114	0	1,364
Grand Total	486	800	533	1,660	1,016	455	1	4,951

antipyretics, eye ointment, and antibiotics directly from the pediatrics, which kept the patients from waiting too long, and reduced the workload of the pharmacists.

Close to three hectares of Tzu Chi campus was overwhelmed with people. In the morning alone, there were a little over 3,000 people, four times the expected number, which was around 600 people. “We only had one day to promote. Through words of mouth, neighbors to neighbors, this many people came. I told them to wait patiently!” The local volunteers also prepared lunch for the folks waiting in line, but there simply weren’t enough food for all these people. A local volunteer Victoria said, “Master

Cheng Yen already taught us. When there are lot of people, add a little more water, and there will be enough for everyone!”

“A grain of rice sees countless suns and moons. In a pot, the landscape of Nature is reflected.” The Home of Tzu Chi in Mozambique, much like the abode in its early days, became a makeshift kitchen. This strength of love, congregated by resolve, can undoubtedly recruit from volunteers in the near future; together with the strength of global Tzu Chi volunteers, with love and kindness as tools, the destroyed homes and schools can be rebuilt, and the fate of the dark continent where poverty and disease intertwined can be overturned.

