

Their staple diet is mielle meals (ground maize). Over time, the children begin to suffer from malnutrition caused by the lack of protein in their diet, and the subsequent fluid retention develops into swollen abdomen.

These children reminded Hsu of his time as a resident physician in South Africa. One day during community service, a children who had been reduced to skins and bones. During his early morning shift, a nurse came rushing to him, “that child stopped breathing!” Everyone rushed to help.

When the attending physician arrived, he simply said, “There’s no

need.” “Why,” Hsu asked, clearly puzzled. The attending physician replied, “he starved to death.”

The reply overwhelmed Hsu with grief. As much as he love children, he walked away from pediatrics and never looked back. “We have failed them...” Hsu said. Even now, Hsu still gets teary-eyed when thinking about it.

“If there’s something I can do, I am willing to contribute what little strength I have to help the place that nurtured me,” Hsu said. Growing up in Africa, Hsu Hung Ta would never miss the opportunity to overturn the lives of his fellow Africans.

Chinese Medicine Clinic under the Mango Tree

Dr. Cheng I-Che

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By Chang Li-Yun

Traditional Chinese Medicine is a strange concept to people in the African regions. How would the patients react when they see long needles sticking into their bodies?

Chinese Medicine doctor Cheng I-Che had some tricks in his sleeves. At the beginning the student translators standing next to the patients turned out to

be the most fearful. They kept asking Dr. Cheng: “Should we explain something to the patient first?” Dr. Cheng had already considered this point. Fear of pain is not only limited to the African people. Even in a civilized country where acupuncture treatment is well-understood, people are still frightened. Therefore, his method is to count “one-two-three” with the patients to



Clinical experience under a mango tree makes Dr. Cheng I-Che nostalgic. He wishes the best to the Mozambique people and hope to garner more genuine support for the region.

prepare them before quickly sticking the needle ...

Dr. Cheng said: “I have performed acupuncture on nearly two hundred people in the four free clinical events. I have not had one patient pass out due to fear or reaction of the needle.” Of course, the experiences from the free clinic at Sri Lanka were also valuable.

Sri Lanka and Mozambique in East Africa are both non-English speaking countries so he must rely on translators, mostly students from local colleges or medical universities. When they saw patient walking in with discomfort but leaving with a huge smile on their face, they couldn't help but ask the doctor: “How to work this needle?”

The last day of free clinic was held at the “Home of Tzu Chi” in Mozambique in a mango orchard. “In the old days, it was brighter to conduct medical examination outdoors instead of indoors!”

Dr. Cheng felt that conducting his medical examination under the mango trees provided a sense of spiritual satisfaction. It reminded him the story of Dong Feng, one of the three famous doctors from the Eastern Han Dynasty. Dong never charged for his service, he only asked patients to plant five apricot trees next to his house. Later when the apricot trees turned into an orchard, Dong built straw sheds to store the harvested apricots. People who needed apricots could barter with grains. A good harvest with apricots means the same for grains. So his storage of apricots turned into grains. Dong in turn used the grains to help those in need. This was the origin of the Chinese idiom “Apricot orchard springs warmth”.

Dr. Cheng hoped that in his next visit, he not only could see the mango forest becoming an “Apricot Orchard” but also bearing more power for good affinity.

