

When I first visited Bwindi Community Hospital, I was overwhelmed and impressed by its efficiency and organization for such a young hospital in the middle of a remote rain forest with no electricity. One thing, however, did puzzle me. After touring the entire facility, nowhere had I seen a laundry room, an essential component of any hospital. When I inquired, I was told in fact that there wasn't one. No laundry room in a hospital? How on earth did one ensure that bed linens and towels and scrubs were effectively cleaned?

I was then told that it was the local villagers who washed all of the blankets and sheets on the lawn, by hand, and in cold water. I could not accept this, and consequently decided to contribute funding in order to create a proper hospital laundry room. My money bought washing machines and driers, a pressing table to iron and fold the linens, as well as a constructed storage space for the freshly washed items. A spacious area was appropriated for this new facility and I made sure to donate enough to tile and paint the room, so as to create a clean atmosphere for the new laundry room.

Convinced that my project was complete, I then learned that there was not sufficient power to generate the appliances. Thanks to other donors a new generating plant has now been built.

I am very proud of the ways in which my contribution has made a difference to the cleanliness and the quality of the Hospital, especially now that the Hospital has a fully functioning operating room, thanks to the generous contribution of fellow donors.

Of course the Hospital's functions are many as it also strives to educate a people with one of the highest birth rates in Africa. When I first visited the hospital, I was encouraged to assist in the Hospital's family planning program that strove to reduce the country's average birth rate of 7 children per mother. When we started, only 100 women a month were coming to Bwindi for birth control. Now the number is 500 and rising! We have 40 villagers trained in giving contraceptive injections and we are even starting to change some of the attitudes of the men. I am greatly encouraged by the positive results that my contributions have enabled, and I feel no hesitation about continuing to provide assistance to the Bwindi Community Hospital in the future. It is an extremely deserving cause.