



Dr. Hancke quickly examines patients who are brought to the clinic in their own vehicles. The clinic "doctor bag" or "pharmacy" sits on the ground. Photo by Jill Johnson.

opportunities to witness health staff, volunteers or patients (not always easy with such busy clinics)."

Training Health Volunteers

While the doctors consult with the few medical staff at these remote clinics, they are also taking time to train health volunteers called *Assistants de Santé*. The volunteers identify those patients in each village who are too sick to make it to the clinic. In such cases, the doctor makes a home call. Every two weeks the volunteers receive training on basics such as nutrition, hygiene, and diarrhea prevention. They then pass this information on by visiting families in their villages or by holding town hall type meetings.

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Praises

The results of the first phase of the expansion are encouraging. Within an 11-week period 1,311 patients were treated, the most common cases consisting of malaria, respiratory problems (Tuberculosis), viral infections, skin problems, abdominal pain, injuries, epilepsy, and HIV.

"MAF is important for our project," says Dr. Hancke. "they are the main reason we can work in these remote areas. Besides that, they are a great help in transporting the more complicated patients."

Over one six month period MAF flew 17 critical medical patients to the larger hospital in Nampula. These included the man with the tumor growing over his eye and the young girl with the enlarged neck. The man became a "limping flyer" and has been receiving monthly chemo treatments for what was determined to be a slow growing cancer, and his tumor has been steadily shrinking. And the young girl? She was successfully operated on by two specialized surgeons and returned home by MAF plane.

Praise God for these people who are being helped, and the many others who have seen God's love in action through the doctors of the *Assistants* program. And thank you for your prayers and support that have made these "home calls" possible.



People waiting their turn to see the doctor (see photo in the background). Photo by Jill Johnson.

House Calls in the Bush

A mobile doctor program expands its reach to bring more relief in Mozambique

A mother and her four-year-old daughter walk several hours through the bush to reach the small medical clinic. Each carries a tiny infant. The twin babies are sick, likely with malaria, and the clinic is their only hope of treatment.

A man arrives at the clinic with a large, hideous growth that hangs over his right eye, blocking his vision. One father brings his nine-year-old daughter who has massive swelling in her neck. These have all come looking for help in rural Mozambique, and MAF and the *Assistants* doctors are answering that call.

It was April of 2009 when MAF saw its vision for a mobile doctor program become a reality. The first *Assistants* doctors started treating patients in the countryside along the

coast of the Nampula province: Dr. Peter de Lijster—a Dutch doctor known as "Dr. Pin,"—and a Brazilian dentist, Dr. Ilda de Carvalho.

By the summer of 2010, MAF and the doctor team were already hoping and praying for more doctors to join them. Last year, the arrival of Dr. Hancke Dekker allowed *Assistants* to expand its ministry to the mountainous region west of Nampula. Along with her specialization in tropical diseases, she brings a fresh perspective to the team.

MAF transports the team to the Garré airstrip on Thursday mornings—about an hour and 15-minute flight—and from there they take a Land Rover to visit the local hospital and four remote clinics throughout the week. On Friday afternoon an MAF plane returns to pick them

up. The doctor rotate between the two areas every other week.

Dr. Pin describes some of the challenges. "Often the clinics are overlooked, and we feel pressure to see the patients, some who walked up to sit down to see the doctor." When there are the cultural norms: people delaying too long before seeing a doctor, or not returning for further treatment when it's desperately needed. "The job is not easy but certainly rewarding," says Dr. Pin.

He is hopeful, despite the fact that they are "working in quite a harsh environment, both physically and spiritually." It's a hope built on faith and a desire to share the love of Christ.

"It is our intention to show God's love to the people around us through our work," says Dr. Pin. "From time to time we have