

Zoissa Dispensary

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The Seventh-day Adventist work at Zoissa started in 1977 through the families of Elder Ndumula and Elder Asheli Lusenga from Mghumbi.¹ The two families from Kibaigwa village, Kongwa, Dodoma, some 58 kilometers away, had gone there for agricultural reasons. Upon arrival, they initiated Bible study with some people at Zoissa, which resulted in the conversion of Amon Kudel in 1979, who was subsequently baptized in 1980. As time went by, the number of baptized increased to 14.²

Founding of Zoissa Seventh-day Adventist Dispensary

As the number of Adventists increased, Matongolo SDA Church was built. The first projects the church thought about were building a dispensary and a school, and on January 18, 1990, the dispensary was opened with Justine Onyango Okeyo and Penina Bwahema serving as clinical officer and nurse, respectively.³ Both the dispensary and Zoissa Secondary School are owned by the Eastern Tanzania Conference.⁴

Zoissa Seventh-day Adventist Dispensary started as a small part of the Zoissa Secondary School, for the purpose of providing medical treatment for the students of the school, and for evangelism in the community.⁵ The dispensary began with three rooms which were part of the school, and the funding was from the school as well.⁶ The initial services were for the students.

As time went by, medical service was extended to the surrounding community.⁷ At the end of 1992, there arose a challenge of ownership between the church and government.⁸

History of the Institution

At the beginning of 1993 the regional government of Kongwa decided to take over the ownership of Zoissa Secondary School. After government take-over of the school, Upendo Malongoza became the director of the dispensary and decided to buy additional land for the dispensary with the assistance of the Eastern Tanzania Conference. A four-room building was built. In November 1993 the dispensary shifted to the new building and the operation to serve the community began. Also, in 1993, the dispensary received government certification to offer dispensary services and officially became known as Zoissa Seventh-day Adventist Dispensary.⁹

When Upendo Malongoza retired in 1994, John Mtula became the director of the dispensary. He initiated the process of registering the laboratory for the purposes of extending laboratory services to the community and succeeded in 1995 when he secured registration number FRP2680.¹⁰ Due to the expansion of buildings, clients increased and led to the improvement in income and services. Consequently, the number of staff increased and reached eight, which included one clinical officer and seven nurses.¹¹ In 2018, William Stephen became the clinical officer. After the formation of the Southern Tanzania Union Mission and a new field called the Central Tanzania Field, the Zoissa Dispensary came under the new field.¹²

Historical Role of the Institution

The dispensary has contributed to the mission of the Church and enhanced its image. In 2015 Zoissa Dispensary was awarded one-star level recognition from the district medical officer as appreciation for the quality services of the dispensary to Kongwa district in Mkoka village. The dispensary has acquainted the community with Seventh-day Adventists, and introduced them to the beliefs of the Church. Whenever there is satellite evangelism, the dispensary makes arrangements whereby the patients are able to watch the entire evangelistic program. This is in addition to the Adventist TV programs which are shown throughout each day. As a result of these programs, there has been a rapid growth of the church. Currently there are nine churches and three companies with a church membership of 707.¹³

In 2019 the dispensary had nine workers including a clinical officer in charge of the dispensary, nurses, and other support staff. The income has increased due to the number of clients, with a daily average of 31.¹⁴ The dispensary is self-supporting. Future plans include improving the facility to the status of a health center and employing a chaplain.

List of Leaders

Justine Onyango Okeyo (1990-1992), Upendo Malongoza (1993-1994), John Mtula (1994-1999), Yared Chacha (2000-2003), Isack Mtigitu (2004-2011), Mr. Nyamjungu (2012-2013), Andrew Lyimo (2014-2017), William Stephen (2018-present).

SOURCES

Legislation Certificate. Zoissa Dispensary, Mkoka, Kongwa, Dodoma, 1993.

Laboratory Legislation document. Zoissa Dispensary, Mkoka, Kongwa, Dodoma, 1994/1995.

CTF Inauguration Report. Dodoma, March 1, 2019.

NOTES

1. Lenjoli of Matongolo village, telephone interview with the author, Dodoma, December 20, 2019.
2. Ibid.
3. Justine Onyango Okeyo, interview with author, Mkoka, Kongwa, Dodoma, December 20, 2019.
4. Upendo Malongoza, interview with author, Mkoka, Kongwa, Dodoma, December 10, 2019.
5. Amos Maganga, interview with author, Leganga, Kongwa, Dodoma, December 21, 2019.
6. Justine Onyango, interview with author, Mkoka, Kongwa, Dodoma, December 20, 2019.
7. Legislation Certificate, Zoissa Dispensary, Mkoka, Kongwa, Dodoma, 1993.
8. Upendo Mlongoza, interview with author, Mkoka, Kongwa, Dodoma, December 28, 2019.
9. Legislation Certificate, Zoissa Dispensary, Mkoka, Kongwa, Dodoma (1993).
10. Laboratory Legislation document, Zoissa Dispensary, Mkoka, Kongwa, Dodoma, 1994/1995.
11. John Mtula, telephone interview with author, December 11, 2019.
12. CTF Inauguration report, Dodoma, March 1, 2019.
13. Toto Kusaga, interview with author, CTF headquarters, Dodoma, February 19, 2020.
14. William Stephen, interview with author, Mkoka, Kongwa, Dodoma, December 10, 2019.

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