

Background

Twinning” is the cooperative agreement between associations or groups in geographically and politically distinct areas, to promote cultural and mutually beneficial ties.

In 2010, the CHICA Eastern Ontario chapter decided to twin with infection Control Professionals in a less-developed country for the purpose of knowledge exchange, support and assistance.

In the wake of the chapter’s successful medical book drive in 2008-09, it was agreed to build on the relationship that had been established with ICPs in Cameroon, West Africa and determine if there would be tangible benefits to twinning.



The Project

- A needs assessment provided by the Cameroon Health Board (CHB), set short- and long-term program goals.
- Interested chapter members formed a subcommittee.
- In 2011 following fundraising efforts, donated medical supplies were shipped.
- In early 2012, two chapter members visited Cameroon to assist with auditing and rollout of a facility-wide hand hygiene program



Giving Back: The Cameroon Twinning Project



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Chapter Fundraising:

- Developed information brochure
- 25th anniversary dinner & silent auction
- Sale of African artifacts at 2011 CHICA conference and chapter education days
- “Pass the Bucket” at all chapter meetings
- Explored industry assistance



First shipment of supplies ready for transportation. Arrived in Cameroon April 2012.

Results

- Benefits to Cameroonian ICPs included membership in CHICA-Canada for one ICP, receipt of medical supplies and mentorship by Canadian ICPs.
- Benefits to Canadian ICPs included better understanding of infection prevention and control (IP&C) in developing countries and the opportunity to provide meaningful assistance.
- A visit by to Cameroon by 2 chapter members in May 2012 enhanced the relationship, allowing them to gain first-hand IP&C experience in a developing country and share knowledge and skills with Cameroonian ICPs.

Accomplishments to Date

- 2011 CHICA-Canada membership purchased for Jacob nkwan
- 4 skids of medical supplies Shipped in October, 2011 and 2 skids February, 2012 (predominately needles and syringes)
- Facilitated donation of plastic bottles for ABHR from GOJO
- Raised \$\$\$\$ to cover shipping costs for medical supplies
- Participated in revision of infection control chapter in health care manual



Making ABHR in the pharmacy

Chapter members visited Cameroon in May 2012

Lessons Learned

- Twinning is expensive! Early expectations from the CHB were high and exceeded initial resources.
- Funds were best utilized by selecting one or two projects to focus on for the year, rather than trying to meet multiple needs.
- The cost of shipping to Cameroon was also excessive, making fundraising the priority of our first year.
- Communications with Cameroonian ICPs was sporadic due to scarcity of electronic equipment and unreliable internet connections.
- Finally, travel to Cameroon became inevitable, to familiarize ourselves with needs and assist in bringing educational materials to the CHB, avoiding shipping expenses.

Next Steps

- Obtain visa and funding for Jacob to come to Ottawa conference in 2013
- Encourage other chapters to “twin”
- Promote project in CJIC
- Present project at CHICA, IFIC and APIC
- Ongoing annual donation of supplies

