

The first Anglican missionaries to preach the word of God in Rwanda were medical doctors and are known to have broken ground for the present-day hospitals in Gahini, Kigeme and Shyira among other health facilities like in Shyogwe Diocese. Their initiatives laid a foundation for health as one of the key pillars of the Anglican Church of Rwanda.

Located in the Southern Province, Shyogwe is among the 12 dioceses of the Anglican Church of Rwanda and continues to be steered by the three fundamental pillars of the Church that include; Evangelism, Education, and Health.

When the missionaries came to central Rwanda they settled at Shyogwe at around 1944 and within a period of two years they had built a school. The school would become so popular attracting many believers among the Protestant community in the country and beyond.

The school here became legendary after attracting many which led to Shyogwe to become a centre of education excellence. Over time, the missionaries realised that the school required a medical treatment centre hence building the first small infirmary to cater for the students and the neighbouring communities.



The Bishop of Shyogwe Rt. Reverend Dr. Jéréed Kalimba

The Bishop of Shyogwe Rt. Reverend Dr. Jéréed Kalimba observes that education was the first major development initiative implemented here where students from all over this region came to study. But when the school started people realised that there was no medical facility that would provide healthcare to these students and they built a small health facility they called an infirmary.

This small health facility for students began to attract a sway of people from the neighbouring communities who frequented the place for medical services. As people seeking the services increased they expanded and turned the facility into a dispensary.

According to Bishop Kalimba, in the 1940's, 50's and 60's the dispensary became popular for its specialty in treating of human worm infections among other treatments.

In 1996, due to an increase in the number of patients at Kabgayi hospital, the dispensary was expanded with the construction of more buildings and transformed

into Shyogwe HC.

“Health is an important issue and our plan is to upgrade Shyogwe health centre into a polyclinic ready to hospitalise more patients with qualified doctors to offer required medical services, I believe we will achieve this goal,” notes Bishop Kalimba.



### Shyogwe Health Centre

Emmanuel Ndengeyinka, the Head of Shyogwe HC emphasizes that the facility has remained true to the founding principle of offering healthcare to students and the neighbouring community. “Most of our clients are students from the neighbouring schools both primary and secondary.

The area has at least seven secondary schools without counting primary schools which are more; The HC oversees about 22,270 residents of Ruli, Mbare, Kinini and Nturuca cells that make up Shyogwe Sector.

The journey that started with a small infirmary almost 80 years ago has borne more medical facilities including health centres at Shyogwe, Hanika and, Gikomero while Ndiza is yet to be upgraded but already has a functional maternity ward. Health posts have also been built by the diocese in Mugina, Shaki, Mbayaya, Kirumbuzi and Gahogo that is among the two in Muhanga town.

Gahogo health post located in the centre of Muhanga town was given to the diocese by Muhanga District to run it. This health post which receives more people than most health centres was given to the diocese to oversee because it offered services that the church believes can bring community development.

Gahogo believes in offering family planning services to those in need of them and has thus become very important to the people in Muhanga town who seek services like, HIV/AIDS, immunization, TB, malaria, mental health, NCDs, maternity, eye care, circumcision, nutrition, reproductive health, hygiene, laboratory and general consultation.

Aphrodis Muremangango, the head of Gahogo health post explains that his facility is an extension of Shyogwe HC with comprehensive healthcare services. Gahogo has a team of 14 workers including five nurses and others in administration.

According to Muremangango, since Kabgayi Hospital can't offer family planning services the residents of Muhanga can get those services at his health post. He lists the family planning methods on offer including natural, contraception like oral contraceptive pills, implants, injectables, patches, vaginal rings, Intra uterine devices, condoms for both male and female.



Anita Dusabumuremyi, has been coming at Gahogo health post since her first born five years ago and explains that all her children are treated and vaccinated here. She appreciates the services she receives here because it's near her home, good and satisfactory.

The health facilities under Shyogwe Diocese do not only offer curative services but are prioritizing preventive services at its health centres and posts. People and communities are educated and sensitized on healthy living, hygiene, sanitation, advice on family planning, screening of NCDs and vaccination.

Hanika Health Centre in Busasamana Sector, in Nyanza district has been at the frontline of fighting Covid-19 and has a COVAX facility. During the first phase of Covid-19 vaccination, 360 eligible people received AstraZeneca while 60 people received Pfizer jabs at this centre.

Henriette Umubyeyi, the head of Hanika HC underlines that they are responsible for providing basic primary healthcare, which includes a complete and integrated array of curative, preventive, promotional, and rehabilitation services.

Umubyeyi attributes the work of the health centre to the strong will of the diocese which ensures that services are tailored to meet the healthy needs of everyone in this region, regardless of their ability to pay.



Henriette Umubyeyi, the head of Hanika Health Centre

Hanika HC caters for the residents of Busasamana and Muyira cells as well as the neighbouring schools. The health centre also oversees a health post located five kilometres in Kibinja that serves a population of 5,000.

Improving people's health continue to be central in the mission of Shyogwe Diocese that it has spared no efforts in addressing diseases that had taken a toll on people

working with community health workers. Gikomero health centre has invested enormous resources in the fight against infectious diseases and HIV/AIDS.

Jean Marie Vinney Nsabimana who has worked as a nurse since 2016 says that they are grateful to interventions by community health workers who have improved the situation through mass sensitisation on the health hazards.

Another critical intervention by Shyogwe Diocese is on nutrition which is another package among services at its health centres and posts.

Bishop Kalimba believes that the problem is not lack of food, but how to balance the diet by mothers. The diocese has put much emphasis on nutrition to educate mothers on how to breastfeed, immunize as well as timely complement feeding to prevent their born babies from diseases.

The Bishop of Shyogwe underlined the a mission of the Anglican Church of Rwanda as to preach the word of God in order build the spiritual strength as well as the social economic development of Rwandans.