

Afrikaada Teethsavers Nyhetsbrev



Amina´s corner...

It's the day after Christmas eve, as can be expected, practically everything is closed. Everything but the big chains of stores, it's days like this that the generous opening hours of McDonalds is so appreciated. I am about to meet up with Lars-Göran Wörn, one of the founders of Afrikaada Teethsavers and I have so many questions. Over a cup of coffee, we discussed the history and future of Afrikaada Teethsavers.

Amina: A lot of the members of Afrikaada Teethsavers know the good the organization does, but somehow the people behind Afrikaada Teethsavers are somewhat anonymous, so to put it blunt, who are you?

Lars-Göran Wörn: You could summarize by saying that I am one of the founders of Afrikaada Teethsavers, I am also the chairman. Jette Lehrmann Madsen is the executive secretary of the organization.

Amina: When did you first start working with oral health in The Gambia?

Lars-Göran Wörn: I first started working there in a town called Bansang which is in the Central River Division of The Gambia. The Swedish dental association, Tandläkarförbundet, had a project there. I stayed for three years

Amina: Before going to The Gambia for the first time, what were your expectations?

Lars-Göran Wörn: I thought that Africa was an exciting continent. Back then, and still now, my focus was on preventing oral disease. Oral disease can lead to something as serious as death and when you think about it, prevention isn't that difficult.

Amina: Back in 87', what was the type of treatment that was carried out?

Lars-Göran Wörn: We would pack suitcases with equipment and travel into the inner half of the county. We travelled around, performing mostly tooth extractions. We had instruction and information about disease prevention, nutrition etc..

Amina: So you first went to The Gambia in 87', how did Afrikaada as an organization come about?

Lars-Göran Wörn: In 92', I opened Swedent Dental clinic. The clinic reached out to the wealthier part of the population. Those who could afford dental care would travel to Paris, Beirut, Stockholm etc. I felt a need to reach out to the larger part of the population, to leave a legacy, something for my wife and for my daughter. So Afrikaada Teethsavers (under different names) have been active since early nineties, but has been a registered organization for about 2 years.

Amina: It seems to me like the organization has developed quite some bit.

Lars-Göran Wörn: In the early nineties there were 3 nurses, who didn't work full time with oral health promotion. The project was latent for a few years, and was then revitalized by Jette. I

Nr 1 februari 2009

Välkommen

till

Afrikaada
Teethsavers
Nyhetsbrev

ATS
org nr 802426-
6448

Post ads
Johannelundsv 18
16345 Spånga

Konto nr
PG 307094-3

Medlems avgift
150:-/år

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first heard of Jette in a newspaper article, mentioning that she had together with two dental students, went to The Gambia for a project. One of the student, Silvio, is now a finished dentist and he was working in The Gambia during the fall. It's a growing organization.

Amlna: According to some, diseases like caries can be used as a measurement of how industrialized a country is. What would you conclude from the situation, how would you measure the need of treatment in The Gambia?

Lars-Göran Wärn: The need of treatment is increasing. The Gambia is among the countries with the highest sugar consumption. Candy, Coka Cola can be found everywhere. A lot of people drink Attaya (green tea with a lot of sugar). With an increasing average age, periodontitis is becoming a bigger problem.

Amlna: There is a great need for treatment in other words. How many trained personnel can be found in the country?

Lars-Göran Wärn: When I first came to The Gambia in 1987, there were about five dentists. Today there's about 10 dentist, but the population has trippelled since 1987, so the situation has not improved.

Amlna: So there's about ten dentists in a country with 1,7 million inhabitants, in other words, a shortage of trained personnel. Do you think is the solution of this problem?

Lars-Göran Wärn: Prophylaxis is most important. The situation in The Gambia is somehow comparable with that in Sweden during the 1930's. Information about oral health, general health, nutrition is crucial. What is good for your body, is probably good for your teeth, this must be informed about. Mothers and children are two strong target groups.

Amlna: In Sweden, the use of fluoridated toothpaste was of importance. There were even "fluortant" (fluoride lady) who would go around in schools with fluoride rinse. What are your ideas about a similar thing in The Gambia.

Lars-Göran Wärn: In many areas of The Gambia, the amount of fluoride in the water is low. Samples from wells in eastern Gambia showed almost no traces of fluoride. Fluoride can be found in among other foods, fish. It has become less common to eat fish because of rising prices. Adding fluoride to drinking water is no alternative, since the only municipal water pipe system can be found in Banjul. Different ways to administrate fluoride would be; fluoridated salt, toothpaste or fluoridated rinse. Of the three, fluoridated salt is the cheapest.

Amlna: What is your take on the shortage of trained personnel?

Lars-Göran Wärn: That is a tricky problem. It would be most realistic to educate professionals who can perform ART and removable partial denture. An idea would also be to include education in tooth extraction into the medical program, the medical doctors would then perform easier cases of tooth extraction and refer complicated cases. You even have dental nurses who performed ART. It is most likely not possible to treat every person in need, but it would at least slow down the progression of the situation. And also, when you have human beings dying of something as easy to treat as the measles, oral disease is not as prioritized.

Amlna: The use of ART sounds interesting, do you know of other cases where this is used?

Lars-Göran Wärn: There's an organization similar to ours in Zambia called Teethsavers International. Their program takes use of ART. From the information I gathered from Jack

Viste du att -
500:- täcker
lönekostnaden
för en lokala
field arbetare i
1 månad



Bilderna på denna sidan visar studenterna Amina och Ida, samt Kumba från Afrikaada Gambia. Här på JC Faye skolan i Banjul. Sommaren

Rudd, who is on their board of directors, it's a method that is quite successful.

Amina: So what is happening in 2009?

Lars-Göran Wärn: The annual meeting in Stockholm is scheduled. During the spring Åsa and Rebecka will leave to The Gambia for volunteering. They will be joined by a dental hygienist, Marlene Höffer and a retired dentist, Marie-Louise Ballarin. Marie-Louise is a retired dentist from Norrtälje who has been active in Guinea-Bissau, and she will be of great help to the project. Inger Wennhall, know for the so called "Rosengårds projektet" will also be leaving for The Gambia.



Amina: Do you have any wishes as far as the project goes for 2009?

Lars-Göran Wärn: More help from sponsors. The need of treatment is great for many

Från ATS första
Senegal resa
Ett samarbete med
Afrikaada Senegal

Årsmöte 2009 - kallelse

Välkommen

till Afrikaada Teethsavers årsmöte 2009

Tid: Lördagen den 7 mars kl 14:00

plats: PT´s Kansli, Värtavägen 30, Östermalm

Viste du att det i
Gambia går ca
170 000
potentielle
patienter på en
tandläkare?

Studenterna sommaren 2008

Studenter sommaren 2008 hade lite andra projekt på g än vad vi har varit vana med.

Amina från Umeå jobbar i sitt examens projekt med chewing sticks, traditionelle "tandborstar". Ett mycket miljö vänligt alternativ till våra plast borstar. Vi hoppas att det visar sig att dessa två "borst" typer är likvärdiga.

Ida från Stockholm/KI jobbar med parod frågor tillsammans med kompisen Katrin. De reser åter till Gambia kring påsk för att göra en uppföljning av sommarens insatser.

Under deras uppehålle i Gambia och Senegal fick de också inleda utbildningen av den förste kullen av potentielle field arbetere.



Chewing sticks eller
låt os saga
traditionell
tandborsta

Har du frågor angående Afrikaada
Teethsavers maila till:
afrikaadateethsevers@hotmail.co
m

Har du frågor eller idéer till
nyhetsbrevet maila till Amina:
sabiira@hotmail.com

Oral health for everyone.



I nästa nummer:

**Samtal med Golsara och Silvio
Om deras arbete och
upplevelser under höstens
arbete i
Gambia och Senegal.**

**Referat av årsmötet samt
presentation av den nya styrelse**



**Bild kavalkad
sommaren
2008**