

David de Klerk, Principal dentist of Merrifield Dental Practice in Sidmouth visited Gai region of Kenya accompanied by Dr James Buckle, a GP, Simon Fracklewicz, an optometrist and Mr Jeremy Rawle, a well known local engineer in November this year.

All members of the party paid for their own air travel and accommodation en route allowing all funds raised in the UK to be used for the benefit of the people intended. Davids objective was threefold, to examine and treat as many patients as possible in the time available, this was especially rewarding as most patients had all previous dental procedures carried out with little or no local anaesthetic. While nobody enjoys having teeth extracted, having the treatment pain free is a huge bonus.

While there they also spent time advising and demonstrating techniques to the local Medical Officers. These are essentially nurses who have to fulfil the roles of doctor, dentist, optometrist at their clinics. David was able to show them how to use local anaesthetic, extractions using the correct instruments and procedures to sterilize the equipment. He provided the clinics with a full set of extraction forceps, which will be used by the Medical Officers in the future to treat their patients.

The party also took time to visit schools, orphanages and various groups to educate the children with regard to oral hygiene and diet. David had received over 500 toothbrushes from various suppliers, which we distributed along with toothpaste and tooth brushing instruction pamphlets.

David would like to thank all of the local Dental Practices that donated unused equipment and materials to his trip to Kenya; their generosity has made a big difference to the villagers.

In the future David and his co charity workers would like to supply the clinics with local anaesthetic and needles when required. They also would like to raise enough money to pay the fees for patients who can then be referred to hospitals for specialist treatment. An example was one patient who was found to have a large tumour in her lower jaw, she was unable to afford the hospital fee of approx £50. By providing her with the means to allow her to be treated we are able to make a real difference.

The **Akamba Aid Fund** is an independent charitable trust based in South Somerset. It was set up in 1999 with the aim of enabling the poorest rural communities in Eastern Kenya to have access to the essentials of life that we take for granted and have done for generations for more information please go to the web site www.akambaaidfund.org

Pictures are of David de Klerk and David treating a patients at the village clinic.