# Community Health Nursing in Uganda



Courses: N456/N423

COBERS 2019

thatch homes.

Mitchell Keefer, BSN 2020

**Bugoye Subcounty** 

- Bugoye is a rural community in the

southwestern Uganda. The village

surrounding the health center sits

along a dirt road lined with small

shop stalls and some mud-and-

Data collected by Village Health

Teams (VHTs) showed that Ihani

Village, a nearby group of scattered

homes deeper in the mountains, had

a disproportionately high incidence

Community Health Center (BCHC)

needed data to determine the cause.

of diarrheal diseases in children

under 5 years old. The Bugoye

Background

verdant Rwenzori Mountains in

## Experience

#### Information

Our team of U of M and Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) students created a community survey to assess understanding of diarrheal diseases in Ihani Village. This was used to determine knowledge gaps, provide in-home education, and assess existing hygiene and sanitation facilities. The Bugoye Community Health Center (BCHC) graciously allowed us to study their records and sent a guide to lead our hike to the village homes and to interpret between English and Lukonjo.

#### Purpose of Trip:

The goal of our abroad travel was cultural and clinical immersion in the community health setting.

#### **Outcomes**

We were unfortunately only able to visit 7 homes due to program delays and an eventual evacuation due to an Ebola outbreak. We compiled the data collected from our household assessments and compiled it into a report which was given to the Bugoye Community Health Center. BCHC could then continue the assessments, develop interventions based on the trends established by our findings, and continue the educational process to teach families more about how to prevent diarrheal disease.

### Skills Utilized/Developed

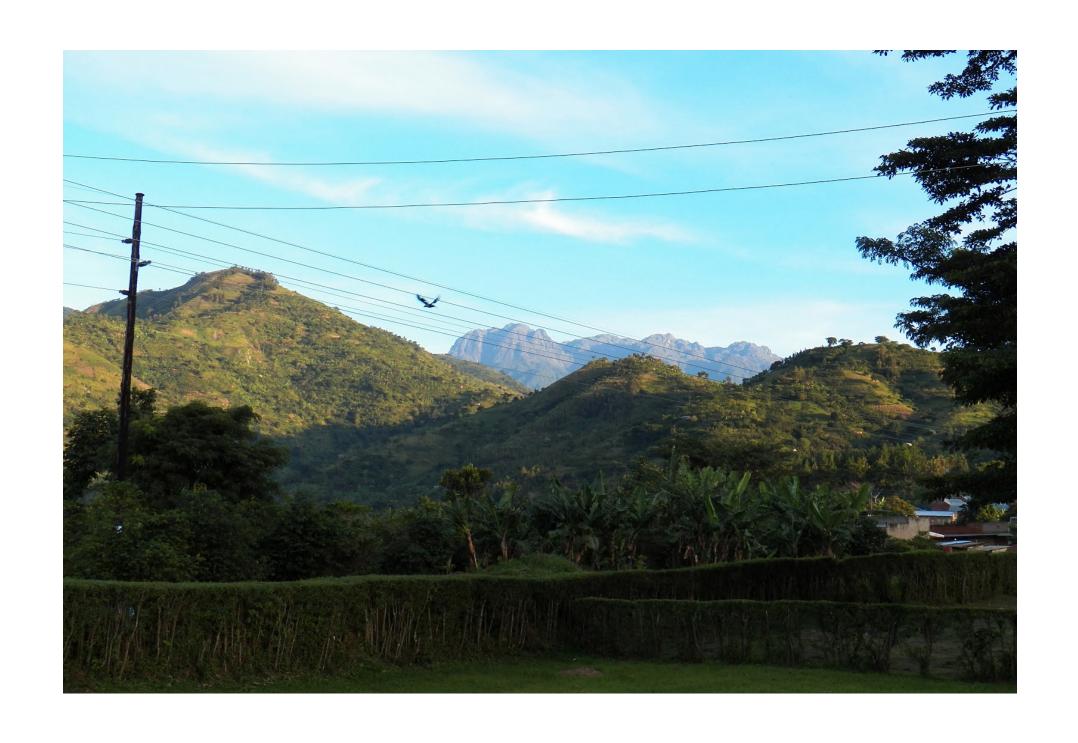
The ability to form respectful relationships with leaders of the community opened doors to resources and information crucial to an effective intervention. Being politically savvy to form connections with local government officials ensured our safety and access to resources during our time in the community. The ability to form friendly relationships with citizens made performing assessments and collecting data not only much easier, but enjoyable too!

#### **Classroom Connections**

N420/421 Global Health and N456 Community Health laid the foundation for a culturally competent, attainable intervention supported by the community, both for their health and our educational benefit.

#### **Lessons Learned**

Our global experience taught me to trust my own abilities, be confident, and trust the process.



### Advice

Be patient with yourself. You may find yourself in an uncomfortable situation uncertain of what is next, and that's okay! Being unsure is part of growth; you are stronger than you think, you can figure out more than you realize, and you will be stronger for it in the end.

# Acknowledgements

We give the deepest thanks to BCHC for welcoming us with open arms, MUST for their wonderful instruction, Dr. Williams, Brewster, and Policicchio for being our sources of wisdom on the ground, and for our families and loved ones for fielding our early-morning calls and helping us get home safely.







