

A TRIBUTE TO ROBERT EDWARD MWOGEZA

By Marshall de Souza



I first met Robert in the summer of 2007, when 3 trustees and 7 WAIT members visited Uganda to promote the work of WAIT UK and help save lives lost through HIV/AIDS.

In the years that followed, when Ashley Crosthwaite introduced IRFF (International Relief Friendship Foundation), we all got to know Robert a bit better, especially when he was appointed the Director of IRFF in Uganda.

I learnt more about Robert well when Patrick German and I visited Uganda in 2014 in order to film our projects and interview key people so that we could make a promotional video of IRFF's work in Uganda! We stayed in Robert's home, travelled around the country with him, and had ample talks and laughs with him and many others.

From the time I started working seriously with IRFF UK in August 2015, I started communicating regularly with both Robert (IRFF) and Tadeo Buyinza (WAIT) in Uganda. Many times, I would listen to Robert as he explained what was happening – both concerns and good news – which I would pass on to the UK Working Board for decisions to be taken.

If I were to describe what kind of person Robert was, I would say that he was a real and kind gentleman, yet a stallion of a man; one who was consistent in promoting the good work of IRFF in Uganda; who went out bravely into rural areas with the Mobile Medical Team (MMT) to faithfully help local people improve their standard of life by removing jiggers, disinfecting their homes, and talking about basic hygiene; who took initiative to start some projects that were not supported by IRFF UK; and who regularly reported to us in the UK on the on-goings of the projects we've been supporting in Uganda.

Once during our WhatsApp conversation, Robert surprised me by saying that he was planning to visit the UK in 2022, and would like to meet all the Working Board members and also visit some beauty spots. He even told me that he was saving up for that trip!!

Robert became ill whilst in the field doing MMT work recently. He was working with some young teachers in the Iganga region. They became ill too, but recovered. Sadly, Robert who also had some underlying medical conditions, died in a Kampala hospital today, the 19th November 2020. May God truly bless his soul! He leaves behind his wife, Agnes and children, Brian, Connie, Joelryan, Jesse and Peace.