



## Summary

**2007 – Present** Luwi Mission Hospital  
4 eRanger Ambulances  
Private Donation

**Objectives:** Provide rural patients with reliable medical transport. Reduce access barriers to health care.

**Outcomes:** 63 patients referred.  
3.7 patients per week (av).  
Expanding service beyond 20km radius of hospital.



## Zambia Rural Health Overview – 2008

Rural populations in Zambia continue to be under-served and under-resourced in health service provisions. Difficulties in training and retaining medical personnel due to better opportunities abroad or in the private sector and the impact of HIV/AIDS on declining workforces and increasing healthcare demands mean that 33% of health facilities do not have any trained health workers (DFID, 2008), whilst distances to services in rural areas act to dissuade positive health seeking behaviour and service utilisation due to high financial and opportunity costs in seeking far-away care.

Zambia's HIV/AIDS prevalence amongst adults is among the highest in the world at 16.5 % in 2003 (WHO, 2006). Whilst the epidemic appears to have stabilised with fewer new infections, treatment for HIV and other major diseases is still inaccessible to rural patients who cannot afford the time or money needed to reach clinics and suitable care.

Distances to health care services combined with unavailable, unaffordable or inaccessible transport mean that rural populations spend higher proportions of their income on health care whilst the care they receive is inferior to those in urban, more-populated areas where material and human resources are concentrated.

## Luwi Mission Hospital, Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Service

A donation of 4 eRanger Ambulances was made by St Thomas of Canterbury Parish, Woodford Green to the hospital in – 2006.

### Operational Location and Context:

Luwi Mission Hospital lies in the North West Province of Zambia some 220km from the provincial capital town of Solwezi. Without a doctor at the hospital, the staff manage to operate most departments except an operating theatre, x-ray, dental and psychotherapy.

The hospital has a large catchment area yet the hospital is limited to only one ambulance and transport infrastructure between the populations served by the hospital and the hospital itself is weak making outreach medical programs and hospital access difficult.

### eRanger Introduction:

Having completed driver and maintenance training for 2 drivers to each eRanger Ambulance, Luwi hospital conducted extensive Information and Education (IEC) sessions amongst all their catchment communities to sensitise them to the provision and availability of the four eRanger Ambulances which became operational at the end of September 2007.



Through October 2007 to the end of January 2008, Luwi Hospital recorded 63 patients referred to the hospital by the eRanger Ambulances – an average of 3.7 journeys made with an eRanger Ambulance per week. The most common cause for medical referral during this time was Malaria; most likely very prevalent during this time as it is the rainy season. Other medical conditions, such as obstetric complications, pneumonia, TB, trauma and childhood diarrhoea have also been frequent causes for the eRanger Ambulance's use.

During the first 17 weeks of eRanger Ambulance operations, the four vehicles covered over 440 km in transporting patients to Luwi Hospital. Now that the rainy season has passed and roads are no longer flooded, Luwi Hospital intends to extend the Ambulance service to those communities served by the hospital but in excess of 20 km from its location.

