

## STARFISH ENTERPRIZE

### The JAW 4

Joseph (16), Christine (20), Henry (27) and Susan (42) all have had a jaw tumour growing for at least three years but their common bond is that none of them have enough money to receive treatment within the healthcare structure in Uganda. There is no maxillofacial surgeon in their local hospital in Hoima and the waiting list at Mulago Hospital in Kampala is very long.

### THE HISTORY

In July 2014 Dr Keith Thomson was visiting Hoima and on a Sunday attended a local church where he saw 35 year old Specioza Tusiime singing in the choir. He noticed that she had an obvious lower jaw tumour (ameloblastoma of the mandible) and spoke to her after the service. She told him she had had the problem for more than 7 years but she had no money and had not seen a doctor. She did not possess a phone but gave him a friend's number. Four days later Dr Keith was returning to Entebbe to fly back to the UK but he arranged for Specioza to accompany him to be seen by Dr George Galiwango, a Ugandan surgeon at Corsu Hospital only a few miles from the airport. Dr George said he could help and Specioza had an operation (mandibular resection and reconstruction with a fibula free flap) three months later. She then spent three weeks in hospital being cared for by Dr George and his dedicated team before returning home where she has continued to recover from such a major operation.

Specioza and senior Hoima Hospital anaesthetic officer Eunice Akusekera have now found four others with a similar jaw problem. They all travelled together with Specioza as guide in a minivan from Hoima to Corsu Hospital on February the 8th for assessment by surgeon Dr George. He gave them all dates for surgery: JOSEPH (March 22), HENRY (April 6), SUSAN (May 2), NAIGA (May 9)

If you are interested in being involved with this venture which I have called **STARFISH ENTERPRIZE** go to the website [virginmoneygiving.com](http://virginmoneygiving.com) and donate to the charity **Shalimar Trust**. I feel the plan is unique because it involves Ugandans finding the patients and a Ugandan surgeon treating them in a Ugandan hospital.

Best wishes, Keith (Dr Keith Thomson, retired consultant anaesthetist)

[www.africansmiles.co.uk](http://www.africansmiles.co.uk)