



AFRICA/UGANDA-The population of Bumwalukani prefer to pay for health care services

Bududua (Agenzia Fides) - In Uganda, health care services provided by the State from 2011 are free, but patients in the town of Bumwalukani, in the Bududua district, about 200 km from Kampala, prefer to pay a small fee to the local clinic to make sure they receive adequate assistance, which is not guaranteed by the public structure. The Clinic Beatrice Tierney of Bumwalukani, set up by the 'International Foundation for Children Medical Care', provides services to the entire community. The local residents prefer that their family are cured there, even if they must pay a dollar per visit and per adult. Assistance to children instead is free. A volunteer doctor works in the clinic along with a few nurses. In medical state centers, however, the nurses take care of everything along with a midwife, two assistants and another auxiliary. The presence of a doctor in the clinic has also attracted patients from the neighboring districts, due to desperate poor health care assistance provided by the state. Between 100 and 150 are received every day and at the end of each month, they are all informed about how the money they paid for treatment was used. Normally used to buy medicine and pay for the transfer of patients to other health centers. The local hospital services are very precarious, especially for the poor who do not have the financial ability to "pay" for health care personnel: although assistance is free it is not uncommon for employees who try to extort money from patients. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 07/20/2011)