

Contact Details:

Dr Tim Kenny

Email: [timkenny101@gmail.com](mailto:timkenny101@gmail.com)

Web: [www.kenyaclinic.org](http://www.kenyaclinic.org)



## All change!

This is the new look newsletter to the supporters of the Simbiri Trust – the new operational name of the K and D 61:1 Trust. This is the Trust that supports the work of the Simbiri Nan Bell Health Centre, in western Kenya (often shortened to Simbiri Health Centre).

Another change is the website. If you have internet access, please have a look at the completely revamped website – [www.kenyaclinic.org](http://www.kenyaclinic.org) This provides much more information about the Health Centre, with plenty of pictures and videos to give you a feel for what goes on there.

But the main change is to say that Keith and Dee Dick, the main driving force behind the whole project to date, have stepped down as the main overseers of the project. They remain as Trustees and take a great interest in all things Simbiri, but the medical oversight and project director is now Dr Tim Kenny. Tim has been a trustee for 3 years. He has been a GP in Newcastle for many years. Last year he obtained the Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Health (Liverpool university) to enable him to have a much better understanding of the needs and running of the Health Centre.

I am sure that all supporters would like to thank Keith and Dee for all their work, enterprise, commitment and dedication to the project at Simbiri over the past 20 years or so. The photo below shows Keith and Dee with the staff on their last visit to Simbiri.



## Tim's visits to Simbiri

Tim spent seven weeks at Simbiri last May and June. Apart from getting involved with clinical aspects at Simbiri, time was also devoted to getting various projects underway: the farm project (see website for details); computerising the accounts and training staff in using the new system; an extension to the kitchen and eating area; installing two new water collecting vats. He visited again in November for 10 days to review the projects put in place, to review all the staff (all seen individually) and to see how things were going generally.

Tim plans to visit again this summer, and then at least annually. He also keeps in regular contact with the staff by email and phone and takes a close interest in the daily work of the project.

## Moving towards self reliance

The long term goal of the Simbiri Trust is to help the Health Centre to become self reliant. At present, about two thirds of the income needed for the day-to-day running of the facility is generated from the Health Centre itself, with about a third provided by the Trust. As much progress has been made over the years, it is realistic to envisage the day-to-day running costs be met entirely from the Health centre itself within 3-5 years. This would then leave the Trust income to be used exclusively for capital projects – to enhance the services provided by the Health Centre. The main sources of income on site are:

- Clinic fees paid by patients who can afford it. The fees we charge are much less than most other health facilities in the region. Essentially, patients get subsidized health care.
- National health income fund (NHIF). This is Kenyan Government scheme. It is a bit like National Insurance in the UK. Kenyan citizens can choose to pay a monthly fee to be registered on this scheme (and many do). They then get basic in-patient care for free but the health facility has to claim back the fee from the government. It is a very bureaucratic and paper-hungry scheme which involves lots of form filling by our staff. Often the reimbursements to the Health Centre are frustratingly very delayed. But, it has made a big difference to our income. Note: NHIF does not cover out-patient care.
- Income generation schemes from the Health Centre. This includes income generated by the mortuary, the cafe, carpentry, and the farm project (see website for details). We are looking into other possible income generation schemes. For example, a small fish farm.

## Current fundraising aims

In addition to raising money for the general running of the Health Centre, we have several current fundraising objectives. These are for specific capital expenses and projects - some are for medical equipment, others are to kick-start income generating schemes on site, or to reduce on-site costs:

- To buy two cows. These would provide more than enough milk that we use on site, and some left over to sell. Estimated cost – about £300 per cow.

- To buy an oxygen concentrator. This was the number one request from the clinical staff. Oxygen would help to manage, and even save lives of severely ill people (often with malaria). Estimated cost – about £1200.
- To construct a small fish farm on site for food and income generation. Fish farming is becoming more commonplace in Western Kenya . Estimated cost to set up – about £400.
- Electricity. Ideally we would like to go totally solar. This would be a large one off investment but would provide long term savings, and be a greener option than to connect to the electrical grid when it arrives. Estimated cost for full solar installation – £9000.
- To construct a simple shower block. Running shower water would be a lovely enhancement for the patients. Currently, patients wash by using water in a bowl. Estimated cost – £300.
- To provide some laboratory equipment to increase the range of tests we can do on site. In the first instance a modern instrument to accurately measure haemoglobin would be a start. Estimated cost – variable depending on the equipment.
- To provide a small modern hob for the kitchen. Currently all cooking is done on traditional stoves that use charcoal and paraffin.
- To provide a fridge for the kitchen. This is possibly the first thing we would buy once a 24 hour electricity supply is secured. (We have a gas fridge in the health centre for vaccines but a large food fridge is also needed.)

## **Dr Ann Egan to visit again**

Dr Ann Egan took a sabbatical off from her GP practice in Northumberland to spend five months working in Simbiri in 2012. If you have not already seen it, the video produced during her time there is well worth a look. It is on the website. Ann is returning in February 2014 for 10 days. We wish her well and look forward to hearing about her time there which includes an exciting new initiative that she is planning. This is to help pay for the very poorest widows in the area around Simbiri to enrol in the Kenyan Government's health insurance scheme (NHIF - described earlier).

## **Doctors wanted!**

If you are a doctor, or if you know of a doctor, who may be interested in spending some time at Simbiri, then please get in touch. The Health Centre runs well without resident doctors. It is staffed by clinical officers and nurses. However, any visiting doctor is a great asset to drive forward standards of care, teach, and to develop new initiatives.

## **To all our supporters**

A big thank you to everyone who has supported the work at Simbiri. Even though Keith and Dee Dick have taken more of a back seat, we hope that you will feel confident that the project continues, and is going from strength to strength.