

Contact Details:

Dr Tim Kenny

Email: timkenny101@gmail.com

Web: www.kenyaclinic.org



Hello supporters

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

Some changes

The last few weeks have been a time of change and hand-over.

Keith and Dee Dick, the driving force behind the project to date, have stepped down as Trustees after 22 years. They keep a keen personal interest in Simbiri - they have many friends there (and a daughter soon to be there - see later!) - but feel it is time for them to retire.

Raymond Dennis, the chairman of the Trustees, is also retiring as a Trustee. In his letter to the Trust he wrote.... "in those nearly 13 years [as being involved with the Trust] Simbiri has had many ups and downs and it is only through Keith and Dee's tenacity and God's help that the clinic is as it is today. Through these years as you well know, many lives have been saved and parents have been able to see their children grow up to be healthy and strong. It has been a great privilege, looking back, to have been involved in this work."

David, the manager of the project in Kenya is also retiring at the end of December. He has been with the project for 18 years, has been Keith and Dee's "right hand man", and seen the project through its various ups and downs.

The Trustees would like to thank Keith, Dee, Raymond, and David for their many years of service to the project and wish them all well in their retirement.

Ruth Dick (Keith and Dee's daughter) has been elected as a new Trustee. She will also be working at Simbiri for 6 months from January - see later.

We are looking for another trustee - any volunteers?!!

Recent visits to Simbiri

Dr Tim Kenny spent 10 days in Simbiri October. He spent time mentoring and teaching the clinical officers, and reviewing the income generating projects put in place. He also saw each member of staff individually to review their role, and to seek their opinions (and voice their frustrations!). Staff were given a modest pay rise at the time. The most striking thing Tim noticed was the imminent arrival of electricity - more on this later.

Dr Ann Egan spent a week at Simbiri in March. In addition to giving her support and mentoring to the clinical staff, she saw the first fruits of her exciting new initiative that pays for the very poorest widows in the area around Simbiri to enrol in the Kenyan Government's health insurance scheme. Over 100 widows (and their dependants) now have health insurance which they otherwise would not have been able to have. This means they can now access health care without paying. (This is a separate charitable initiative to the Simbiri Trust, but has a 'knock-on effect' as many of the insured widows and their dependants use Simbiri Health Centre for their health-care needs.)

Ruth Dick to spend time in Simbiri

An exciting announcement is that Ruth Dick, daughter of Keith and Dee, will be spending six months at Simbiri from January 2015. As many supporters will know, Ruth spent much of her childhood in Simbiri and knows many of the locals and staff. She speaks Luo fluently (the local language) which will be a huge advantage to the project.

Ruth is a nurse and so is familiar with health care, but her main role will be to take over from our manager who is retiring (David - as mentioned) and to develop a fresh, modern management structure in the Health Centre. Ruth will review all the income generating schemes, to augment those where appropriate (farm, carpentry, etc), and to develop any viable new ones (she has plenty of ideas! - such as a shop on site and other retail opportunities, ideas to use our vehicle in a more commercial way, ideas to use our canteen/cafe area in a more commercial way, etc).

Finance - moving towards self reliance

The long term goal of the Simbiri Trust is to help the Health Centre to become self reliant. See our previous newsletter (on the website) to explain about the income streams of the Health Centre. The appendix gives an overview of the last two years finances. More detailed financial information will be put on the website shortly.

The trend, as shown in the appendix, is encouraging. That is, despite the Health Centre growing in size, of the income needed to run day-to-day activities, the percentage of the income generated from local sources (reimbursements from the Kenyan Government, income generating schemes, etc) is going up, and the percentage required from the UK Trust is going down. The aim is for the day-to-day expenses (clinic expenses, salaries, etc) to be totally from local resources as soon as possible. This will leave money from the UK Trust to be spent on capital projects to expand the facility.

Current fundraising aims

We have several current fundraising objectives. These are for specific capital expenses and projects - some are for medical equipment, others are to facilitate income generating schemes on site, or to reduce on-site costs:

- 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 - £600.
- To provide a small modern hob for the kitchen - about £50. Currently all cooking is done on traditional stoves that use charcoal and paraffin. A hob would be only useful when we have grid electricity - which is about to happen very soon!
- To provide a large fridge for the kitchen - about £300. 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 would be great.)

In our last newsletter we mentioned fundraising to buy two cows, to kick start a fish farm project, to construct a simple shower block and to buy an oxygen concentrator. I am pleased to say that an oxygen concentrator is now in place - taken out by Ann Egan last March, and money has been raised to start on the fish farm, to buy one cow and to build a shower block. Ruth will be responsible for implementing these initiatives when she arrives in Simbiri in January. A second cow would be useful - about £500.

Electricity: we are excited to announce that the national grid of Kenya has finally arrived next to Simbiri. The local Kenyan MP said in 1992 (22 years ago) it would be coming soon!!! But it is only now that it actually seems to be happening. When I (Tim) was there a few weeks ago, I saw work in progress literally right next to the compound where electricity poles and wires were being installed. There will be a fee to provide a transformer and to 'hook up' to the grid of around £1500. We have had a very generous donation of exactly this amount in November for the purpose of 'hooking up' for which we are very grateful. I, and everyone at Simbiri, is convinced that mains electricity to the project would be an enormous boost to what we can do, and a great reduction in our expenditure on diesel which is needed to run our generator (currently only run for three hours a day due to the expense).

To all our supporters

Just to remind you that more details, pictures, and videos can be found on our website. Thanks you very much for your continued support, and may I take this opportunity to wish you a very happy Christmas.

Dr Tim Kenny on behalf of the Trustees - December 2014