

ARDINGLY OLD JESHWANG ASSOCIATION: A.O.J.A

Chairman's Annual Report 2013-2014

The Trustees are pleased to present their report for the year ended 30th June 2014

AOJA was formed in 1993. Its aim is to provide affordable healthcare to the community of Old Jeshwang, The Gambia. To this end, in 2000, it built a modern health centre, which it now staffs.

The Charity registration number is 1024627 and is governed by its Constitution dated 6th August 1993.

Registered Office: Avins Bridge Cottage, College Rd, Ardingly, West Sussex, RH17 6SH

Mr Stephen Doerr. : Chairman
Mrs Peggy Guggenheim. : Secretary / Administrator
Mrs Barbara Monk. : Treasurer.

The trustees are the above and in addition: Mr Lynn Wilson, Vice Chairman
Mr David Ogilvie.

The charity's bankers are Barclays and all three officers are signatories.

Finance

The detailed results of the year are set out in the annexed Receipts and Payments Account. The cash funds, without charge, remaining at the end of the year, of £16,058, reflects a surplus of £2648. A useful consolidation of our financial position and making us well placed to meet some expected essential plant replacement. During the year an additional advance of £2,500 was made to refurbish a workshop as a dental surgery - the final stage of a new initiative as part of our sustainability programme. We are always mindful of our commitment to support the monthly salaries of 45 staff and continue to maintain a 'six month running cost fund' in line with good financial governance.

Our cash flow continues to benefit from a more stable exchange rate with the trend in fluctuations being in sterling's favour.

It is expected that our sound financial base will continue to give the opportunity for greater investment in the infrastructure of the clinic to make it more self-sufficient.

Sponsorship

The sponsorship scheme continues to be the bedrock as our main source of regular income. Our sponsor pool has plateaued at about 130 supporters, giving a monthly income of around £2000, which underpins the running costs of the Health Centre including salaries and overheads. The increased income from additional clinic activity has enabled the O.J management committee to fund its own staffing demands and decisions. Separate fund raising in the UK has continued to support new initiatives and essential refurbishment. These events have included, coffee mornings, charity dinners, BBQs, and concerts. We are

particularly indebted to our group of corporate sponsors; St. Peters Church Ardingly, St. Nicholas Church Brighton, Bellapaise Lodge Cyprus, Worth School, Bidborough Primary School, and Redcoat Express.

Clinic Activities

The activities of the health centre continue to grow, with the infant welfare clinics thriving.. Deliveries at the clinic are now averaging above 30 per month – peaking at 40 in one month, as news of our high standards of care spread. Approximately two-thirds of the women attending the antenatal clinics deliver their babies at the health centre.

The general out-patient attendance, an important part of the clinic programme, is now above 1000 patients per month. The clinic currently has a doctor on site twice a week focusing on the ‘under – fives’ but we are now looking towards additional more ‘general doctor’ provision when a suitable appointment can be made, funding permitting.

The centre is now training its own midwives under a government programme and expects it’s first ‘home grown’ midwife to qualify next year.

The ‘feeding’ programme, initiated to meet any acute nutritional needs, continues, as does the anti-malaria ‘bed net’ project with the distribution of pre-impregnated nets.

As part of a Global Health Fund initiative the Health Centre is now a counselling and testing centre for HIV/AIDS.

The ambulance now makes routine transfers to a new local hospital at Serrakunda and provides key transport for patients from home to Health Centre.

We are home to the Area Public Health Officer whose office was given a solar energy facility. We are currently carrying out a feasibility study as to its possible extension to other parts of the Centre.

Future development.

Throughout the year groups have continued to go out from the UK to give specialist support in midwifery, primary health care, medical research projects and building maintenance. The retention of high standards in all these areas remains a priority and continues to be commented upon by both visitors and new patients to the centre.

The income from the new path lab is now on stream and to further increase the centre’s financial independence we have agreed the funding for an ‘on-site’ dentist. With equipment already ordered from Senegal and the required staff, trained by Africa Toothsavers’ about to be appointed, we expect our dentistry to be operational by the end of the year. At present there are only 11 dentists in the Gambia and it is expected that this development will help underwrite our main function as a primary health care centre.

Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS)

The elective programme continues to be available with Brighton and Sussex Medical School and involving the Medical Research Council (MRC) in Fajara. Students stay at the MRC for 6 weeks, spending one day a week at our Health Centre, usually a Monday or Tuesday the

busiest days, and the remainder of the week at the MRC. Generally two students from BSMS go out at a time, when they are able to visit other local medical facilities apart from helping with our Anti Natal and Infant Welfare Clinics. Provision also remains to support students studying for the Msc. in Global Health.

Research

With the increasing number of births at the health centre we continue to audit the birth outcomes. This study will examine the effect of maternal anaemia during pregnancy on the well-being of the mother and baby at delivery. It will also indicate what can be achieved in The Gambia in a health centre with facilities such as those available at Old Jeshwang. A study of cardiovascular risk factors in Gambian adults (in conjunction with the MRC) is also at the planning stage.

Pharmacy

The revolving drug fund continues to keep us adequately stocked but the system still requires review in terms of suppliers and rate of consumption of some items. Supplies in the Gambia continue to be uncertain for 'essential' items and procurement in the UK has provided a partial solution. We are establishing a regular delivery from the UK but our support in this area will be limited by financial constraints.

Buildings and Plant

The buildings remain in good condition, with the continuation of our rolling plan of redecoration and visits from groups of UK sponsors who are always able to put their varying skills to good purpose.

Our magnificent 25yr old plus generator still cuts in most days to cover for the regular power cuts which are a feature of Gambian life, but its ailments are now likely to be terminal! The Minister for Health following a recent visit has directed that the government will now pay our electricity bill, but he is unlikely to stretch to a new generator! However, we are already well advanced in our planning for this eventuality.

Old Jeshwang (OJ) Management Committee

The O.J. management committee continues to be ably led by its chairman Emmanuel Stafford who in supporting our administrator, Abdoulie Sowe, retains a good team spirit and sense of ownership amongst the staff. Bakary our cashier and stock controller continues to support the day to day management of the centre and is now ably assisted by Kisseme our 'data entry' and 'time keeping' clerk.

The system of monthly reporting continues, enabling us to respond more accurately to changing circumstances at the centre. With the introduction of VAT on all goods and income tax being applied to all expenses our Gambian staff experienced a difficult year financially. We were able to offset some of these difficulties with a general salary increase – but the overall situation is uncertain and will need to be kept under review.

Discussions concerning a review of our MOU's continue.

Risk Assessment

The trustees have identified and are aware of any risks to which the Charity is exposed and will keep this under constant review to establish procedures to mitigate those risks.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees

Stephen Doerr
Chairman.

31st July 2014