

# Aba Urban Health Centre



## Where is it?

Aba is in SE Nigeria and has a population of 2 to 3 million. It has a vast slum area with little infrastructure, and inevitable problems of water and electricity supply, drainage, sanitation, refuse disposal, and poor roads.

The Aba Urban Health Centre was set up by the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria in 1992 to address the urgent primary health care needs of the slum area. With small simple buildings and rudimentary equipment it aims to provide basic health and maternity care for some of the poorest and most disadvantaged.

The clinic is self-supporting in terms of salaries and drugs through the modest charges it makes to those who can afford to pay for their treatment. No one in need is turned away.

However, the income generated is not sufficient for any upgrading or development. The staff work with great dedication and faith, and are making a real difference to people's lives.

## Banchory West Church's link with Aba

Many charities have withdrawn from Nigeria because it is a difficult country to work in. The Aba Health Centre is currently the only project in Nigeria supported by a congregation of the Church of Scotland. The World Mission Department of the Church of Scotland is therefore very supportive of the project.

Banchory West Church started a link with the Health Centre several years ago following visits to Aba by our minister, Donald Walker, and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland.

By 2006, enough funds were raised by the generosity of the people of Banchory for a bore hole to be sunk and much needed renovation work to be done to the dilapidated buildings.



A team of 6 from Banchory went to Aba in 2006 and worked with a team from the local churches and the Governors of the Health centre. In a remarkably short time the roof was raised and replaced, re-wiring done, the walls plastered and painted, and water storage tanks were installed for the bore hole.

The team was inspired by the faith and integrity of the people they met and impressed by what can be achieved with such limited resources.

The visit strengthened the links we have with the staff in Aba and was a vital part of making this project a partnership. We have also been very encouraged to have had visitors from Aba who are directly involved in the Health Centre.

In January 2008, 2 people from Banchory went out again and were encouraged to see the difference the renovations had made in improving the service to patients and in raising the profile of the clinic.

The theme chosen for our partnership is Romans **15: 5-9**, which speaks of the Spirit of Unity. This has become a reality as we have learnt so much from each other.

## What has been achieved so far?

- Basic medical equipment has been bought – including a delivery couch, fetoscope, scales, drip stands, forceps, bed pans and blood pressure apparatus.



- The borehole is now providing clean water. This means the staff no longer have to buy and fetch water. Water is also sold, generating some income for the clinic. A generator means water can be pumped when there is no electricity supply.
- Ceiling fans, mosquito nets, TV/DVD for education and other new equipment is improving the service for patients.
- A new minilab means that basic blood tests can be done to enable proper diagnosis for patients.



- The renovation work to the clinic and staff quarters means that the clinic now meets Government standards. This has given it a higher profile and a Doctor now visits on a regular basis.



- There are family planning clinics, antenatal and postnatal care and education and immunisation clinics.



## The next steps– a new Clinic

- Land has been bought and building has started for a new purpose built clinic which can offer a wider range of facilities and services, including a laboratory and HIV screening.



- A full time project manager, Nnanna, is overseeing the work on the new clinic and this means that work is progressing faster.



- The site has been cleared, a borehole has been sunk and the boundary wall is being built. Work can then start on the new building.
- The service at the existing clinic will continue to improve and will operate as a satellite clinic for the new main clinic.

## Fund raising

The people of Banchory have been incredibly active in fund raising and generous in their support for the clinic at Aba. We have been able to see first hand the huge difference the money and support have made to the health provision for some very vulnerable people.

We are continuing to raise funds to support the provision of the new clinic on the new site.

### What can you do?

#### Make a donation

A small donation can make a big difference.

Donations to Mrs V Crawley, (General Treasurer),  
c/o 2 Wilson Rd, Banchory, AB31 5UY. Cheques payable to "The Church of Scotland". If you are a UK tax payer, you can Gift Aid your donation by supplying your name, address and post code. This means that we can reclaim an extra £2.80 tax relief for every £10 you give.

#### Pray for

- the staff at the clinic.
- the Board of Governors of the Aba Health Centre.
- wisdom for everyone involved in the project.



*For more information, contact Judith Walker (01330 822811 or [walkerdj@uk2.net](mailto:walkerdj@uk2.net)) or Jenny Smith (01330 820253 or [jenny@waversark28.freemove.co.uk](mailto:jenny@waversark28.freemove.co.uk)).*