

The Bansang Hospital Appeal

Charity number - 1064469

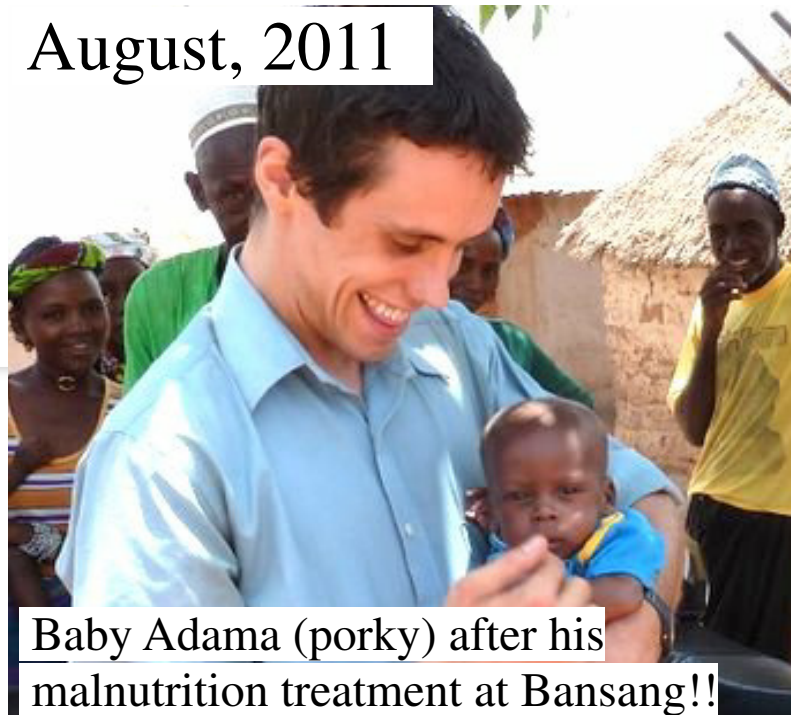
Welcome to the new BHA newsletter. I hope you enjoy finding out about all that's happening at the hospital. It really is an incredible place; one that is improving year on year thanks to your collective generosity...

March, 2011



Baby Adama at 5 months suffering from severe malnutrition...

August, 2011



Baby Adama (porky) after his malnutrition treatment at Bansang!!



Progress Report // Winter 2011



In April of next year, the Bansang Hospital Appeal will be twenty years old. Looking back on those first fateful days in 1992, I certainly wouldn't have dared dream that so much progress could have been made. The transformation really has been remarkable, and I feel incredibly proud and privileged to have been able to contribute to the uplift in resources, capabilities and hope.

Since our last charity newsletter, I have unfortunately had to contend with serious eye issues which have waylaid me for many months (these have prevented me from flying to the Gambia, giving fundraising talks, and even driving!). It has been a frustrating and testing time.

Yet through this adversity, the staff at Bansang have demonstrated just how driven they are to better the situation for the generations that follow them. Their hope for the future and passion for life hasn't come about by accident. It is you, the concerned and compassionate supporters of this appeal, that have given them the tools and belief that there will be a better tomorrow.

Thank you

Anita

BANSANG FRUIT & CROP PROJECT



Aim: To provide healthy and nutritious food for the staff and patients of Bansang.

Overview: Tough economic times are making basic food stuffs in the Gambia extremely expensive. Staff and patients in the health sector are particularly vulnerable as they have little time to cultivate their own crops, and as such devote an ever larger proportion of their wages to buying foodstuffs. This is putting a huge financial pressure on the staff/patients of Bansang.

Project status: Thanks to the support of two wonderful long-term donors, we have at last been able to proceed with this ambitious project. The staff have begun cultivating mangos, oranges, cashews and banana trees within the grounds of the hospital. A local village chief has also donated 7 hectares of land. This will be the second year of harvesting coucous and nutritious beans for the patients.

Status: This project is being funded long-term by friends of the Bansang Hospital Appeal

OXYGEN IN AMBULANCES:



Aim: To provide life-saving oxygen & first aid kits in ambulances operating in the Gambia.

Overview: Things have improved enormously since I first visited the hospital 20 years ago. We now have a fleet of scooters providing outreach healthcare. The hospital also have a few ambulances. But until this point, patients have had to wait until they arrived in Bansang before getting oxygen.

Project status: In concert with another healthcare development charity, MCAI (www.mcai.org.uk), we have begun work on a pilot study that's looking at the implementation of oxygen cylinders, regulators and first aid kits in 10 ambulances serving rural communities.

Funding Status: This project has been fully funded (The BHA has funded oxygen systems in 3 of the ambulances that operate furthest from Bansang Hospital).

Out with the old, in with the new...general theatre!

“Owing to eye issues, fundraising this year has been exceptionally challenging. Existing funds have been channeled into ongoing commitments, putting vital projects on the back burner somewhat. So with that in mind, what better way to end the year than to get the fundraising ball rolling on a vitally important building project”

£24,500
The amount we hope to
raise to make this a reality



What's wrong with the old theatre?

The current operating theatre remains almost as it was when first built by the British in 1938. It is rundown, poorly lit, and a depressing place in which to work. The electrical and plumbing systems are equally dated, and are now very much a health hazard. Most critically, there simply isn't enough space for the number of operations that are undertaken at Bansang.

The project:

The £24,500 cost of the project will cover the following;

- Complete gutting and renovation of the existing theatre (including new electrical systems & plumbing!)
- Building of the following;
 - Second theatre
 - Small theatre (minor operations)
 - Staff office and toilet

We have already received sponsorship from the Rotary Clubs of Brentwood-a-Beckett & Seaford to fund the renovation of the sterilisation & preparation room.

Additional benefit:

The project is to be undertaken by the hospitals own maintenance staff. This capacity and skill development is a core focus of all BHA projects, and also helps keep projects cost-effective/affordable.

How you can help:

This is one of our most ambitious projects in a number of years. The project has already started; we now need the funds to proceed with the rest of the building work.

If you would like to help us reach our fundraising goal in the most cost-effective way, go online to;

www.virginmoneygiving.com

Search for 'Bansang Hospital Appeal'

To donate by cheque, please make it payable to 'The Bansang Hospital Appeal', and post it to the address at the bottom right of this page. For other donation methods, please call or email Anita...

The Bansang Hospital Appeal.

4 The Leys, Orlingbury, Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN14 1JE
01933 679001 / 07783 551945 / anitasmith@bansanhospitalappeal.com

Our volunteers are the lifeblood of the appeal. They help to bring specialised skills to the hospital which are often either non-existent or would have to be subcontracted to outside workers. The staff at Bansang are standing on the shoulders of these various volunteering giants; and the volunteers themselves are learning a huge amount from the workers at Bansang too!

Dr Andrew Lowdon



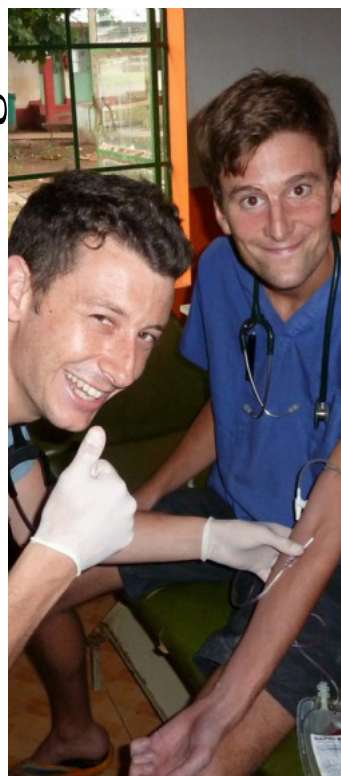
Profession: Doctor working for the NHS

Work role at Bansang: Dr Lowdon has been a great asset on the children's ward. His skill and tireless devotion to the work in hand really has been inspirational and a great morale booster for staff. During Andrew's time at the hospital, he was on call 24:7, demonstrating time and again just how dedicated and concerned he was towards the plight of the children of the Gambia. He will be missed, and of course will be welcome back any time!

Dr Lowdon's thoughts:

"Throughout the length and breadth of The Gambia, I was delighted to find that everyone I met held the name of Bansang Hospital and the work it does in the highest regard. I hope very much to return in the near future."

Dr's Bonham & Fudge



Profession: Final year medical students

Work role at Bansang: Thank you also to Christopher & Dominic for making such a valuable contribution during their 6 weeks in Bansang. Having spoken with the staff whom they worked alongside, their contribution was greatly appreciated (& the staff very much look forward to seeing them in the future!!)

Final thoughts:

"I would like to thank you for the amazing experience and long lasting impression that Bansang has left upon us. Without your tireless dedication to the staff of Bansang, nothing we have seen would have been remotely possible. The infectious nature of the good people of the Gambia has left a long and lasting impression on both Dom and I...and I hope one day in the future we can return to provide medical assistance"

From pest control to physiotherapy, computer networking to cardiovascular surgery, maintenance to maternal specialists - the hospital greatly benefits from outside expertise. Could YOU help? Email Anita for more information

SCOOTERS ACROSS THE SAHARA - DVD!



The project that has delivered more than 30 scooters to Bansang Hospital is now on DVD - and being heavily promoted through all 62 Cotswold Outdoor stores!

For those of you that haven't heard of these intrepid motorcyclists...they spent nearly a month traversing Spain, Morocco, Mauritania and the Sahara - riding through snow and rain. & they did it all on Honda C90's (pizza delivery scooters!)

This is the first time the project has been documented on film, and follows in the well worn tire grooves of previous teams that have made the journey over the last 6 years. Thanks to their collective efforts, Bansang medical staff can now reach remote communities that would otherwise have remained effectively cut-off.

You can buy the DVD either from Cotswold Outdoor stores across the UK, or by getting in touch with Anita. They cost £15 each, with **EVERY SINGLE PENNY** going to future Bansang Hospital projects.



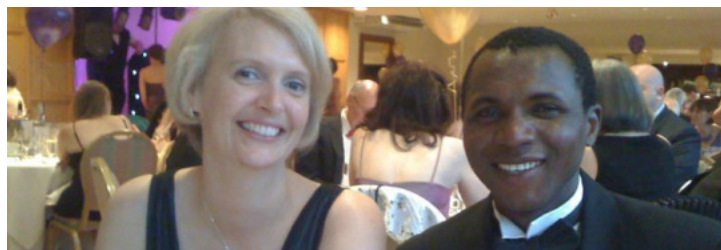
THE BICYCLE DIARIES...



As some of you will know, my son, Laurence, spent much of the summer cycling across Europe in support of the BHA and two other charities. Unfortunately, immigration issues in Turkey forced him to turn back. He has since returned home, and has been assisting with all manner of appeal work (which has been extremely useful for me given my eye issues).

Despite having 9'000km of European cycling already under his belt, he is still as determined as ever to get back on the bike and complete what he started. By the time the next newsletter goes out, he should be somewhere in Asia!

A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR B.H...



Bansang's principal nursing officer, Wandifa Samateh, is nearing the completion of his masters course in overseas development and hospital management. PNO Samateh has been studying at Ruskin University in Cambridge for the last year, and is looking forward to taking his skills back to Bansang.

Wandifa's management course has been jointly funded by the BHA and a previous volunteer, Dr Annabel Kerr. Dr Kerr has also set up her own charity to help disadvantaged children in Bansang. You can visit it online; www.bansangeducationalappeal.org/

Whilst this newsletter was being created, we have had the great news that two of our long-term supporters and friends have agreed to become patrons.



Former British High Commissioner to The Gambia, Mr Phil Sinkinson, OBE

Many of you will know Phil Sinkinson. In his former role as British High Commissioner to The Gambia, he assisted the charity greatly. Indeed, at every turn whilst in that role, I could count on his calm and assured nature and good judgement to help me deal with the complex issues that often cropped up. He was a wonderful representative of the British government; and I am sure now he is retired, he will be an equally wonderful patron!



Author, Simon Scarrow

Our second patron is someone whom I am sure many of you will have come across. Indeed, I am sure that many of you will have read his books! Simon Scarrow, the bestselling author of the Eagle series of historical war novels, has been a long-term supporter and donor to this charity as well as many others. Although we have yet to meet in person, I had the good fortune to speak by phone and am thus thrilled that Simon has agreed to be our patron.

How you can help:

Donations:

To make a donation to the appeal, please visit www.virginmoneygiving.com, & search for 'Bansang Hospital Appeal'. Alternatively, please get in touch using the contacts at the bottom of this page.

Christmas gift ideas:

- The Scooters through the Sahara DVD is available from Cotswold Outdoor stores, as well as from Anita - every penny is going directly to Bansang Hospital development projects.
- The charity directly funds the wages of 30 members of staff. Another 20 members of staff are generously paid for by donors via regular standing orders. Would you be interested in supporting the wage of a member of staff in this way? If you would, please do get in touch.

Newsletters by email:

If you know of someone that would like to subscribe to this newsletter, please ask them to send an email with 'subscribe' to anitasmith@bansanghospitalappeal.com.