

Bamenda & Portsmouth Link News



A N N U A L B A M E N D A S U N D A Y N E W S L E T T E R 2 0 1 6

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

In February this year I went to Bamenda with some colleagues to see for ourselves the various projects being supported with the help of the monies you have generously given to our Bamenda Sunday collection.



We managed to visit the 12 schools twinned with those in the Diocese of Portsmouth and see the Health and Faith projects we are supporting. During our visit we could see for ourselves the difficulties faced by many local communities in providing basic needs we take for granted whether it is clean water, health care or education. Clearly there is a lot more we can do to improve living conditions working in partnership with local communities. However this can only be done through your support and generosity. The major part of our funding is dependent upon the special collection throughout the diocese on Bamenda Sunday; once again please give as generously as you can. More details of our work can be seen on our website: www.bamendaandportsmouth.com

Colm Lennon, Chairman, Bamenda Committee

U P D A T E O N P R O J E C T S

FAITH

Each year we continue to support the Pastoral Centre in its work training Catechists and running a variety of spiritual courses. During our stay at the Pastoral Centre we were delighted to attend Mass in the new church of Blessed Paul VI which has been supported financially by Portsmouth. We also visited the village of Alatening to see the progress in building the new church which we have been supporting (see photo on right). Over the past year financial support has also been given to the Diocesan radio station "Radio Evangelium" and to the Pastoral Formation Team who bring the Faith to the remotest parts of the Diocese.



SOCIAL WELFARE



This year, members of the Portsmouth Bamenda Committee, the local chief and the community at Esu celebrated the opening of the new training centre with fully functioning water and electricity supplies. All were presented with the traditional garments and jewellery that the first year students had created. In addition, funds have been used to support the Justice and Peace Commission in training 'advocates of peace and conflict resolution', a new toilet and shower in the prison brings greater privacy and dignity and materials have been bought for the workshops at the centre for adults and children with physical impairments (see photo left).

HEALTH

Project Hope (Community health and HIV outreach) used Bamenda Funds from the Cathedral parish to train 42 youths in supervising and training others as 'Peer Educators'. Each student undertakes to cascade the training to 10 more peers in health clubs and schools around the region thereby multiplying the health pro-



motion message. (Left) Youth energise their peers during special events sponsored by Project Hope Portsmouth Primary Prevention Project. (Right) Members of an HIV support group in Bamenda town made a special journey to bring their thanks to our health partner Clinicare for £1000 provided for income generating projects.



EDUCATION



Our school twinning programme continues to expand with some 12 schools now twinned and growing interest from other schools in our two dioceses. The formal opening of the new nursery school in a remote part of Bamenda and an area of primary evangelisation was a wonderful occasion. Next year the



theme of our visit will be Education and we will be inviting teachers, parents and supporters of our twinned schools to come with us to Bamenda and see for themselves the ways in which we can help and create a greater understanding of each other. We are also continuing our policy of paying school fees for orphans and children in the poorer parts of Bamenda. (Left) Children at St Peter & Paul primary in Ndop playing with the parachute donated by St Finian's primary in Newbury. (Right) Yemge nursery.

FINANCE

In the last financial year we sent £116,610 to Bamenda to support our projects. This amount was made possible because of some very significant one-off donations and because we also transferred funds from our capital reserves. Our major source of regular funds continues to be the amounts given by the parishes to the second collection on Bamenda Sunday. With this in mind please give as generously as possible to enable us to continue to provide vital assistance to our twinned diocese.

FRIENDS OF BAMENDA

Groups of "Friends" have already started in Portsmouth and Bournemouth and two further groups are planned in the North of the Diocese.

The purpose of the groups is to foster a closer relationship with our sisters and brothers in Bamenda through creating cultural links, supporting projects, twinning on a parish to parish basis and exchange visits.

If you would like to learn more about our work please contact Sylvia Foster via sfoster@bamendaandportsmouth.com

AN INSPIRING INTRODUCTION

"I have now been involved with Bamenda for 12 months. My trip to visit the areas we are supporting was the highlight of the year. Our group visited for 12 days. The sheer number of projects helped meant that the group split into two to cover it all. From nursery schools to health centres, from a women's empowerment centre to the central prison. What I saw convinced me that what has been done makes a difference and by working ever closer together more can be achieved."

Chris White, Committee Member

