

NURSES PROJECT

For some time, it has been recognised that it would be good for IREF(India) to employ **a full-time nurse** to provide all-the-year-round health care for the 1,500 children in IREF's care. Earlier this year, we heard that the salary cost would be about **£900 per annum**. IREF(UK) had indicated its willingness to try and raise this amount of money each year to enable a nurse to be employed by IREF(India).

In February this year, Emmanuel Rebba wrote, *“For a long time, we could not take a decision about appointing nurses for the IREF clinic, because the decision about the appointment of a doctor was pending. At last, very recently, it has been decided to appoint a doctor and two full-time nurses for the clinic. We have placed an advertisement in the newspapers. We will inform you as soon as the procedure is completed, and the doctor and the nurses appointed. Thank you so much for pursuing the matter. Surely, this would help our health programme, for the children, and the poor people in the vicinity.”*

At their half-yearly meeting earlier this month, the IREF(UK) Trustees took the bold step of offering to support **both** nurses from UK funds. We feel able to do this, thanks to some very generous undesigned gifts received in the past and some very fruitful fund-raising initiatives that have taken place recently (including a Spring Bank Holiday barbecue at the chairman's home, which raised over £1,000 for the project!). If you would like to contribute to our newly established **Fulltime Nurses Fund**, please let our Treasurer know. All contributions can be Gift Aided. We are also exploring the possibility of making a one-off contribution to the doctor's salary.

Important Change of Address

Our treasurer has moved! Please note his new contact details.

Mr Jimmy Fraser [Hon Treasurer IREF(UK)]
22 Savoy Park, Ayr KA7 2XA Scotland
telephone: 01292 266288
e-mail (as before): Jim@rtresources.co.uk

Seethanapalli Village Church

One of IREF's most recent building projects, a church building for the village of Seethanapalli, has been funded entirely from the UK, thanks to some very generous donors. Writing earlier this year, Emmanuel Rebba was able to report the good news that *“the village church has almost been completed. It is being filled in with the earth, now. As there*

were standing crops in the fields till the last week of January, it had become very difficult to transport the soil needed. Roof slabs will be laid by the end of this month and total construction will be completed by 30th June 2007.” We look forward to hearing news of the official opening.

Seethanapalli Church Building under construction



IREF(UK) Relief Fund

Almost every year, we receive news of disasters hitting the rural poor of Andhra Pradesh. In the autumn, cyclones bring flooding and destruction to many villages, destroying homes and ruining rice fields and banana plantations, on which so many of the rural poor are dependent for their livelihood. Then in the summer months, as temperatures rise to the high 40°Cs (120+°F), the danger is from fire. A single spark from a cooking area can set the tinder-dry surroundings alight, causing fire to spread through a whole village with enormous speed and devastating effect.



Village Fire, May 2007

For some time, the IREF(UK) Trustees have wondered how best to respond to these recurring needs. We have been reluctant to issue constant appeals for money, as some Christian relief organisations do, although an exception was made for the Boxing Day Tsunami disaster of 2004 because of its massive impact.

So a decision has been taken to set up a **Disasters Emergency Fund**. It will be supported through undesignated gifts (at the discretion of the Trustees) and any gifts received specifically for disaster relief. The Fund will enable us to make a rapid response to needs, as and when they occur. We have always sought to do this in the past, but our resources have often been limited. It is hoped that by establishing the Disasters Emergency Fund, we will be able to respond both rapidly and more generously than we have been able to do in the past. Please contact the Treasurer if you would like to make a contribution to this Fund at any time.

At our meeting earlier this month, the IREF(UK) Trustees agreed to send an immediate gift of £1,000 to India to help meet the needs of villages recently ravaged by fires.

Special Projects Fund

Our recent IREF(UK) Trustees meeting was a very encouraging one. We were amazed at the high balance in our funds, due in no small part to the number of undesignated donations we have received in recent months. So it was agreed that we should establish a **Special Projects Fund** to help finance a range of capital projects. Our first objective is to raise enough money for the building of an IREF(UK)-funded church-building in India. This will be a first for us! So far, we have about £4,000 in the fund towards our target figure of £7,000. Please contact the Treasurer if you would like to make a contribution to this Fund at any time.

Penumudi CDC

IREF's latest Child Development Centre is being established in the village of Penumudi. Now that the CDC at Ullipalem is fully supported through the generosity of UK sponsors, we are directing new potential sponsors to the work at Penumudi. We had built up an Ullipalem Reserve Fund, to cover any shortfall in our support for the Ullipalem CDC until such time as it was fully sponsored. This Fund is no longer required (at least, not at the level it was running at), and so at our recent IREF(UK) Trustees meeting, we agreed to allocate £2,500 from it to the new Penumudi CDC as a one-off gift. This will cover the running costs for its first six-months of operation. Please let us know if any of your friends or personal contacts would be interested in sponsoring a child at the new CDC. Remember, this can be done for as little as £1 a week (for co-sponsorship)!

Capping and Lighting Ceremony at IREF's Nursing School

IREF's Nursing Institute was established in 1997. It provides training in basic medical care for about 24 young women (secondary school leavers) each year. A "*Capping and Lighting*" ceremony was held recently to commission those graduating from the Institute. Dee Rebba (Emmanuel's wife, and a qualified nurse) spoke to the nursing students about the importance of serving the rural poor in a spirit of sacrifice, whilst sharing the love of God. She said that by providing health services where there are no hospitals or medical help, the newly qualified nurses would be providing justice to the poor and the neglected, thereby fulfilling an important scriptural command (see Psalm 140.12; Prov 29.7). Holding lighted candles, the nursing students took the "*Nightingale Pledge*", seeking to devote their lives to the welfare of the people committed to their care. They concluded the ceremony by singing a song, consecrating their lives to the Lord.

IREF Youth Conference 2007

Over 4,000 young men and women attended this year's Youth Conference, held from 10-14th January. By the end of the week, 95 young people had been baptised. Rev. David McMahon, Rev. Blake McKenzie, and Mr. Dale Vermillion, gave inspiring messages that were enthusiastically received by the audience, mostly comprised of young students. Despite the large crowds, at times the messages were delivered in an atmosphere described as "*pin-dropping silence*." Several visiting young people gave their testimonies. These are especially helpful to the conference participants, who can identify with experiences from someone their own age.

Participating in the conference is a rigorous challenge, with morning devotions beginning 6.00am, and daytime sessions running until 9 pm. The afternoon sessions are filled with written Bible tests, followed by the fun annual Hymn Singing and Bible Quiz competitions. Winners were awarded prizes and certificates. To end the conference, a stream of young people poured through the streets of Repalle, singing Gospel songs and handing out tracts. Many bystanders showed an interest in receiving salvation through Jesus Christ.

2008 UK Team

Ten medical personnel from the UK have already committed themselves to being part of the team due to visit India between 26th January and 8th February 2008. Our next newsletter will provide details of how you can help support them financially.

David Hunt [Chairman, IREF(UK)]