

History

The Karitas Hospital Weetebula is one of the health service programs owned by the Congregation of Nuns Amalkasih Darah Mulia run by the charity Karitas Weetebula. This health service program is run by the nuns of the ADM convent in Weetebula which saw the need for health services within the community. Sister Regina began to nurse the sick in a large covered veranda next to the convent on November 19 1958, at which time everything was very, very basic. On 6th February 1959 Father Deken met the political head of the area, Lede Kalmbang, to discuss building a polyclinic and a school to teach basic domestic skills, and also to request permission for Sr. Regina to give injections. Since 16th February 1959 Sr. Regina was fully permitted to work as a nurse in the polyclinic at the convent in Weetebula. On 17th February 1959 discussions were begun with Mr. Yosep Nudu regarding forming a charity to be named Karitas Katolik Sumba. On 15th December 1959 the Area Head, Lede Kalumbang, and the "King" of Loura district, Timoteus Tako Geli, gave to the leaders of the Church of Sumba-Sumbawa a large piece of land adjoining the convent to be used to build a hospital. On 7th December 1960 Governor Oberst Peikum and his team visited the workshops of the CSsR (a Catholic mission), the ADM convent and Karitas Hospital Weetebula. The Governor was very impressed and requested that Pater Luckas (the head of CSsR) visit Kupang. The Governor announced officially that Karitas Hospital had already been accredited in Kupang and national accreditation would soon follow. On 1st February 1961 the clinic next to the convent moved to a two-storey building owned by Mr. Win Yan. The first floor was used for health services and the second as a dormitory. Sister Regina was still in charge of the polyclinic. On 1st June 1961 Sr Regina received the news that on 17th May 1961 Karitas Hospital had been accredited by the Health Ministry in Jakarta, with accreditation number 28473/RS. On 21 June 1961 the new Area Head visited Karitas Hospital and the Convent. That December Sister Martha Bergman arrived to join the nursing staff. The number of sick people being served was growing all the time, nearly all as outpatients as there was still nowhere for patients to stay overnight. On 9th June 1962 the General Director of the ADM Congregation, Mother Elisabeth from Germany, together with Mother Patricia, Kutoarjo Regional Director and Sister Mikaela came back to Sumba to discuss building Karitas. On 18th July 1962 a contract was signed between the Sisters of ADM and the Prefecture of Sumba-Sumbawa. On 25th August 1963 discussions about the building itself were started, with Brother Albert SCsR, Msgr. Legeland CSsR, Sr. Hildegard and Sr. Andrea. By September 1963 the building plans were almost complete, and 1000 square meters of land was ready "enough to receive 30 to 60 inpatients. In 1964 37 workmen were building and on 11th July 1964 the hospital building was finished. It took another two years to prepare the complex for patients and to obtain all of its fittings and equipment. On 17th March 1966 Karitas Hospital was blessed and ready for continuous use according to the wishes of God through the Congregation of Sisters Amalkasih Darah Mulia in Sumba. The hospital has been in continuous use since then. Through all the ups and downs of planning and building the hospital, which from the beginning was pioneered by the CCsR fathers and ADM sisters, service to the sick has never stopped. Besides nursing and other services to the sick who came to the convent clinic through three changes of location, there has also been outreach to sick people who have been cared for in their own villages. The health issues of the local people at that time, and still continuing today are: Many women die in childbirth. Many people are suffering from TBC, malaria, leukemia and worms. The people are unaware of the importance of health and cleanliness. People do not have clean water, their land is infertile and there is insufficient rainfall. People are poor, earning power is low. Status of women is low, many a woman is unmarried. Education is very low, many children never go to school. The need of services for sick people grows constantly, and has to be responded to. The hospital is constantly working to give the best service possible by upgrading its equipment, its nurses and doctors and all of the components needed so that all of our patients return to health and prosperity, physical and spiritual, in accordance with the will of God. Since being built 27 years before, the hospital began by 1992 to show damage (much wood was infested, stones were beginning to crumble). The hospital building was no longer sufficient for the needs of the day and did not fulfill the standards for a hospital set out by the government. The hospital developed a renovation plan for its physical structure in 1992, but was not financially able to undertake it. On 8th February 1993 the hospital received government permission to continue running but with the caveat that it must improve the physical standard of the building. So the ADM congregation began to do everything it possibly could to undertake the renovation. Eventually, with help from Mr. Wusanahardja, Diph HE as advisor and Mr. Widya Gunarsa as architect, the renovation of the hospital building began. This undertaking obviously took a great deal of money, and the hospital had hardly any. So the Karitas charity searches for ways to help the Congregation to find enough money. One of the ways was to hold a "Sumba Night" in Jakarta. This effort was helped by the Elisabeth Prayer Association under the leadership of Mrs. Ester Kandou, together with the organization called "Keluarga Besar Sumba" (Extended Sumba Family), and attended by Bishop Mgr. Kerubim Pereira, SVD. Because of the limited funds available, the renovation of the hospital was undertaken as a self-management project. Besides this, to keep costs down and extend the life of the building, the structure was made of steel with aluminium door and window frames. A problem which often arose was not only scarce funds but also the small location. The Yayasan discussed this with the Bishop, who decided to exchange a building known as "Sekpas" owned by the bishopric with the kindergarten "Tunas Harapan" by the parish of Weetebula. Thus the kindergarten located to the east of the hospital moved to the "sekpas" building, and the old kindergarten was available for Yayasan Karitas to extend the hospital building. This increased size helped enormously the planning of the new building. Under the management of Mr. Wely Woda Lado (Field Manager) and with Brother Albert SVD handling logistics, and with help from skilled workers brought from Java as well as local skilled workers, the planned renovation soon took place. The first phase was to build unit III, followed by Unit II and lastly Unit I. The following sets out at a glance a picture of how we built a new hospital. We brought in some workers very skilled in their area from Java so that they could exchange experience and skills with workers from Sumba. The building of this new hospital was planned to last for many years "we hoped it would last for 50 years. We brought in some quality

building materials from outside Sumba whereas building materials such as stone, sand and most of the wood was sourced locally. The roof was made from steel (in cooperation with PT Amarta Karya Jakarta), door and window frames were made from aluminium (in cooperation with Victory Aluminium Surabaya). On 12th February 1998 we dismantled the old hospital so as to build units I and II, followed by clearing of the location. The dismantling and cleaning of the location of units I and II was done manually because there was no space to store materials. On 3rd March 1998 the foundations for Unit II were dug, also using manual labour for the same reason. In October 1998 Unit II of about 890 m² was completed and soon thereafter the Operating Room began to be used. On 1st May 1998 we began to measure the site of Unit I and soon after started on the foundations. On 13th February 1999 Unit I, with about 876 m² was completed. The hospital was blessed by Bishop Kherubim SVD, and the opening ceremony was officiated by the First Assistant to the Province, representing the Governor, Piet A Tallo, who was unable to attend. Thus Units I and II were built in 12 months, more quickly than unit III. In fact the whole building program (Units I, II and III) were planned to be completed in about one year, but with the shortage of workers and materials, and not least the difficulty in communication from Sumba to the outside, we were unable to complete the work in the time we had planned. Signed Sr. Magda, ADM