

mma newsletter

sharing hope, health and life

medical mission aid inc.

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Tanzanian Village Medical Outreach

by Shanta Parker

In the heart of East Africa lies Tanzania, a country with diverse landscapes and a rich cultural heritage. However, beyond its beauty, the nation grapples with persistent challenges in maternal and child health, particularly within its rural communities. Over many years, concerted efforts by charities, such as MMA, and local initiatives have brought about improvements in these health outcomes, contributing to increased well-being for mothers and their children. The under-five mortality rate is a third of what it was in 1990 and the number of maternal deaths has dropped from 11,000 in 2000 to 5,400 in 2020.

However, statistics still paint a sobering picture of maternal and child health in Tanzania. According to the World Health Organization (WHO 2021), the under-five mortality rate is 47 deaths per 1,000 live births (compared to 3.7 in Australia), and the maternal mortality ratio stands at 524 deaths per 100,000 live births (compared to 6 in Australia), significantly higher than global averages. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 3.1 is to reduce maternal mortality to less than 70 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births by 2030. Clearly, there is a long way to go to achieve this in Tanzania.

MMA's partners in Tanzania are working very hard to make a difference in the lives of impoverished women and children in their surrounding villages. Part of their compassionate care involves running village outreach clinics where many women walk for hours to see the doctors and nurses. The clinics provide ante natal and post natal care,

immunisations, general health checks and child development assessments. Reproductive health education, including family planning, improving hygiene and common complications in pregnancy, are also part of the program, with a hope that women become agents of change within their communities, sharing new found knowledge and fostering healthier lives. Unfortunately, due to a lack of funding, Murgwanza, Kilimatinde and Berega hospitals have all reduced the number of villages they visit.



Tanzanian Village Medical Outreach, cont...



Earlier this year, I had the privilege of travelling with five fantastic self-funded volunteers – Amanda (Obstetrician), Narelle and Peta (Midwives), Chris (Accountant) and Melinda (Businesswoman). Together, they were a part of the Wezesha project, and raised thousands of dollars to take 3000 reusable pads to impoverished women and girls. One in ten adolescent girls in Sub-Saharan Africa miss school every month during their period. This leads to a significant proportion of education being missed, resulting in outcomes such as elevated rates of secondary school dropouts. The goal of the Wezesha project is to empower women with knowledge around reproductive health. Other goals include encouraging the making of these sanitary products in the villages firstly to produce income, and secondly, to ensure access to pads for all girls and women to minimise school and work absenteeism. Education and regular employment are keys to escaping the poverty cycle.

Amanda, Narelle and Peta used their expertise to upskill hospital staff in maternity care, to teach students at the nursing schools and to work together with hospital staff in reproductive health education in villages and schools. Chris did an audit on the Jitambue Reproductive Health Education in Schools program and Melinda assisted (and continues



Narelle, Peta, Amanda, Melinda, Shanta, Chris

to work with) hospital leaders in terms of strategy and development. Together, they were a brilliant team and I am so grateful to them for their commitment, hard work, compassion and constant beautiful smiles. 😊

Photos page 1 and 2: Medical Outreach Mkirehe and Sasajila Villages, Tanzania



International Nepal Fellowship (INF)

"Thank you Medical Mission Aid for kind cooperation and support to provide me opportunities for sustainable future."

Poonam graduates!!

MMA committed to support Poonam, who is wheelchair bound, with a medical scholarship to study counselling. We would like to congratulate her on her recent graduation! Being a key member of Green Pastures Hospital's pastoral care department, Poonam says she feels empowered by her new found knowledge and development of her skills. She will undoubtedly be a huge asset in the treatment of mental health issues in her hospital. Congratulations!! 🎉



from the president



Dear MMA friends,

Thank you all for your faithful support for MMA both financially and in your prayers.

This has been an even greater blessing to the organisation as we live in a time of need in our own communities.

Throughout Luke, Jesus teaches that living in God's kingdom means looking to God, rather than human effort, as the ultimate source of the things we need for life. Our work at MMA is always a participation in the grace of God's provision.

During May, Shanta, our Executive Director, was able to visit many projects in Tanzania, along with a team of self-funded volunteers. Some of what they saw was at times heart breaking, but at the same time encouraging, as MMA is truly making a difference with the support given.

I was able to include a short trip to Egypt whilst overseas. There the level of poverty continues to be significant. Inflation rates are more than 40%, and with no social security, many are dependent on charity for their survival. It was great to again see the outcome of MMA assistance in the medical programs bearing much fruit. It is exciting that the Christian organisations MMA partners with are reaching out in the name of Christ to those in need.

We look forward to our Spring Fest and AGM in October when you can hear more of the impact MMA is making.

Thank you again for your ongoing support, particularly as you pray for MMA.

Yours in Christ, Meryl

Join MMA at the basketball!

To celebrate three years of MMA supporting the training of doctors and midwives in South Sudan, we are heading to the basketball to meet South Sudanese basketballer Jo Lual Acuil Jr and see Melbourne United play the Brisbane Bullets at John Cain Arena. Book tickets using QR below.



New Student Sponsorship Initiative



Photo above: Current Berega students awaiting sponsorship

When you sponsor a young person to train as a health professional, you are creating a sustainable solution to improved healthcare in vulnerable communities by strengthening the local healthcare system. You are giving an impoverished young person the opportunity to reach their God-given potential and serve their communities. You are empowering them to lift themselves and their families out of poverty. Life changing, life saving...



MMA has been providing scholarships for students to study health related professions for many years. Many of our supporters have asked how they can be more connected to the students they are supporting. We have, therefore, created a sponsorship model, where a supporter, a friendship or life group or a church can sponsor a particular student and receive twice yearly updates from them. If you would like to know more, please contact mmaexd@gmail.com, use the QR code or visit <https://medicalmissionaid.org.au/sponsorship/>

Minority Focus, Nepal

"Thank you for showing God's love and reminding me each day how blessed I am and it's all because of Minority Focus and its inbound partner MMA."

Kyaran is one of four children from a poor farming family in far western Nepal. Due to an insufficient income to support the family, Kyaran's parents sent her to a Children's home where she was able to continue her studies at school. She heard about Jesus when she was in the hostel and grew up in a Christian environment. After finishing her secondary education, she wanted to study nursing, but couldn't afford it. Her pastor introduced her to Minority Focus and she applied for and was successful in receiving an MMA scholarship. Congratulations on your recent graduation Kyaran!! 🎓🌸



"I got to learn a lot during my studies about life, the world and most importantly that God never fails. Thank you for these four years of blessings and compassion towards me..."

\$116/month or \$1392 a year will provide a scholarship in Nepal or Tanzania for one student for one year.

Young girls say Thank You! By Thomas Shavu

Training on reproductive health, puberty, menstruation and hygiene has been held several times at the Kanazi School, but the training on May 6, 2023 has become the talk of the town due to several testimonies. At the end of the training, approximately 450 girls received reusable sanitary pads from the project. We thank Dr Amanda, Shanta Parker and the team for facilitating the availability of reusable sanitary pads that day.

Young people are now able to fully embrace the opportunities and education provided to them and be hopeful about the bright future God has planned for their lives.

Sarome was quoted as saying "Being unable to access sanitary towels made me stay home during my menstrual days. I was uncomfortable attending school or playing with my friends. Through educational and reusable pads support, I am able to attend school full time, as I was not able to do before. I no longer fall behind and think about dropping out."

Yovita found attending school to be an overwhelming challenge before Jitambue training. "I missed school days while I was on my period due to fear of discrimination from other students," she remembers. These fears also impacted her academic performance, and filled her with shame. This is because, where she lives, there are many taboos associated with menstruation. Now, however, Yovita manages her period with dignity and confidence each month.

School absence is now reducing, stigmas surrounding menstruation are easing and girls and boys alike are being more supportive of their classmates. Pad making initiatives are also commencing, giving hope of a sustainable and affordable solution to those girls with no current access to effective sanitary products in these rural communities.

Jitambue Project, Tanzania



Joyce and Joana, MMA scholarship graduates, changing lives.

want to help
mma?

All donations
over \$2 are
tax-deductible

There are four ways of donating to MMA:

1 Electronic transfer to MMA's account:

BSB 033 112 Name and Number: MMA Inc. 378527

Please enter your surname as 'description/reference' and
email your contact details to: mmaacts@gmail.com

2 MMA Website

Please visit
<https://medicalmissionaid.org.au/ways-to-give/donate/>

Please note 1.4% fees are deducted from these donations
and a receipt will be automatically issued.

3 Cheque/Money Order payable to MMA Inc.

Mail cheque/money order together with your name, address
or email address for receipt to:
Medical Mission Aid, PO Box 1142, Surrey Hills North, Vic 3127

4 Paypal/Credit Card via MMA Inc Facebook page

Please visit
<https://m.facebook.com/Medicalmissionaidaustralia/>

No fees are deducted from these donations and a receipt
will be automatically issued by email if your FB page is linked
to your email account.

Donations may be designated to:

- General Funds **or**,
- Any specific project. Visit our website to see the list of current projects.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of a **Legacy Gift** to MMA.
For more information, please contact mmaexd@gmail.com or visit
<https://wills.gatheredhere.com.au/c/medical-mission-aid>

MMA Inc. is registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and has
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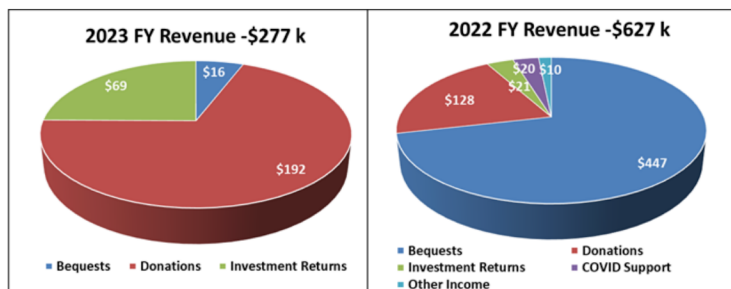
MMA is a not-for-profit Christian charity. Our mission is to show God's love in practical
ways by supporting people in disadvantaged countries to improve health outcomes.

Finance

by Barry Kelly

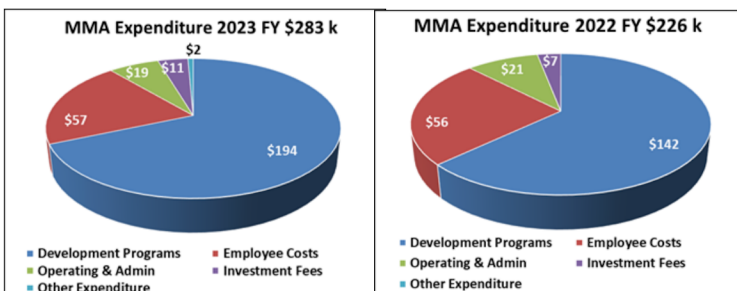
2023 FY Financial Information

MMA Income



- 2023 FY Revenue (excluding Bequests) was up on 2022 FY.
- 2023 FY Donations were up by 4% on 2022 FY.
- Hewison Portfolio (income & market appreciation) increased 230% on 2023 performance.

MMA Expenditure



- MMA distributed \$194k to 14 Project Beneficiaries during 2023 FY.
- Project Wezesha, through crowd sourcing, raised \$58k to improve women's health in the Tanzanian hospitals' catchment areas.
- Operating and Administration expenses were controlled well.

The Result

- A deficit of \$6k was recorded for 2023 FY (compared to a surplus of \$400k in 2022 FY).
- MMA maintained its reserves through 2023 FY and is well placed to continue to fund an annual project distribution of \$150k plus.



Lucy and Brenton

Medical Mission Aid was very excited to be a part of Belgrave Convention this year. Thank you to all the board members who helped, and a special thank you to our youngest and most passionate supporter, Lucy. ❤️

AGM/SPRING Celebration 2023

MMA's AGM and Spring Celebration

Date: Saturday October 21st, 2023

Time: 1.30pm for a 2pm start

Venue: St Thomas Anglican Church, 44 Station St, Burwood

MMA's AGM/Spring Celebration will be a great opportunity to catch up with the MMA Community.