A picture of health

25 years ago, IMPACT’s founder, the late Sir John Wilson, conceived of a world in which the interlinked healthcare needs of the world’s poorest people were met and needless disability became a distant memory.

IMPACT Foundation Bangladesh’s community health centres in Chuadanga and Meherpur realise his vision by providing the impoverished districts they serve with first rate healthcare and surgical facilities; initiatives such as kitchen gardening to combat malnutrition and strengthen immunity; immunisation to protect against disabling disease; health education; and access to safe water and sanitation.

IMPACT Trustee and orthopaedic surgeon, Mr. Jameson-Evans recently visited Bangladesh to restore mobility and was pleased to report that club foot, while once common, is now rarely seen in local children. This is largely because IMPACT trains Traditional Birth Attendants to recognise the condition in newborns and refer them immediately for non-surgical treatment; averting the need later for surgery and giving affected children a head start in life.

The Jibon Tari Floating Hospital

Healthcare is limited in Bangladesh making it difficult to break the downward spiral of ill health and poverty which traps so many people, especially in rural areas.

Every year IMPACT’s floating hospital takes medical care, surgery and rehabilitation down the waterways to approximately 50,000 men, women and children at risk of disabling conditions.

At each site, 200 local healthworkers are trained in skills from midwifery to identifying eye and ear disease. This new expertise benefits their communities long after the boat has moved on to its next destination.

“The greatest mass poisoning in history” – World Health Organisation

In the 1970s, the international community installed over eight million tubewells in Bangladesh. Sadly, in the 1990s, scientists discovered that many were contaminated with arsenic (which occurs naturally); affecting up to 57 million people.

Long-term exposure to arsenic in drinking water debilitates people and can be fatal. So IMPACT is providing poor families with special filters to make their water safe.

Community spirit

Zanzibar’s exotic reputation masks widespread poverty. Almost two-thirds of people struggle to meet their basic needs for shelter, healthcare, clean water and adequate food. Needless disability flourishes in such conditions.

IMPACT’s action is based at the main hospital but reaches out into the community through a growing programme of training School Health Monitors to take health checks into the classroom; regular surgical and treatment camps to restore sight, hearing and movement or provide reproductive care to poor women; and a new mobile eye and ear clinic to visit outlying villages. Men, women and children requiring specialist ear treatment are referred to the modern ENT Unit we have helped to establish.

Zanzibar faces repeated outbreaks of cholera, which spreads easily in unsanitary conditions and kills many people. IMPACT supporters have enabled the installation of water tanks for clean water. This is helping to protect against the scourge of waterborne diseases.
In Kandal province, IMPACT Cambodia has established a lively network of Mothers’ Clubs, replicating successful programmes in Nepal, India and Bangladesh. Rural women, who are often illiterate, come together to learn how to keep their families healthy and how to grow vegetables. During a recent cholera outbreak, IMPACT Cambodia’s ‘Health Messengers’ held special education sessions to help prevent the spread of the disease.

In a spirit of partnership, ENT specialists from IMPACT Nepal and IMPACT East Africa regularly visit to provide support and training to Cambodian surgeons, as they build up the capacity for ear care in the country.

Under the Khmer Rouge, hospitals were destroyed and doctors killed or fled and long-term under-investment in health ever since means people are chronically underserved.

In remote Prey Tralach, our partner ‘All Ears Cambodia’ has a new clinic which serves a mountain community of 15,000 impoverished refugees who have been repatriated from the Thai border. Regular screening clinics protect the hearing of men, women and children by identifying ear infections and providing timely treatment.

IMPACT Sri Lanka’s Weerawila Wellness Clinic, which was established in the aftermath of the devastating Asian Tsunami, provides vital healthcare for local people who would otherwise have little opportunity to see a doctor. On average 1,500 people are screened and treated at the clinic every month, making it an invaluable service.

The model home garden in its grounds has now been restored after it was attacked by wild monkeys. Elephants in the nearby sanctuary keep a neighbourly watch on proceedings!

IMPACT Sri Lanka continues to work with the communities affected by devastating flooding in September 2009, when more than a month’s worth of monsoon rains fell in just 24 hours.

IMPACT responded immediately; distributing 9,000 emergency packs containing food, clothes and household essentials particularly targeting help towards disabled people.

Screening and treatment camps provided urgently needed medical care while the School Bakeries already established to improve the nutritional status of children proved a valuable asset; distributing bread to 18,000 homeless people.

Many vulnerable families still remain in temporary shelters, face malnutrition and depend on the medical care and nutritional programmes IMPACT Philippines is providing.
Tomorrow’s world

Some years ago, a generous legacy helped IMPACT East Africa transform from an organisation with great ideas but few resources, into the flourishing programme of action to prevent and treat needless disability it is today.

Thanks to this early investment, IMPACT’s projects in Kenya today provide clean drinking water to poor communities; combat malnutrition through kitchen gardening; protect children from disease through immunisation; widen access to basic healthcare; restore sight, hearing and movement; and teach health education so thousands of people can look after their own wellbeing. Action is now expanding from Mwea and Kibwezi into Embu.

In Tanzania, women undergo surgery to repair the damage caused during complicated childbirth which often leaves them in pain, incontinent and cast-out by their families.

IMPACT’s action is transforming lives every day as healthy men and women can return to work and bring in much needed income for their families while children can learn in school.

We are grateful to IMPACT’s special friends who remember tomorrow’s children in their will.

Translating Lives

Before IMPACT installed a tubewell in their school, children in Nyaga trekked an hour a day to collect river water, which was unclean and made them ill.

Their new tubewell provides safe water - and an extra hour a day in which to study! With water more plentiful, the pupils now wash their hands after visiting the toilet, which is keeping them safe from life-threatening diseases such as typhoid and diarrhoea.

India

A new start in life

Orthopaedic surgeons who volunteer on board the Lifeline Express hospital train find their skills in high demand, as in rural India very few people can afford surgery or treatment if they are born or become physically disabled. The Lifeline Express takes the hospital to the people, providing free surgery to the very poorest patients.

The train recently held a project in Bihar, where 40% of the state’s 90 million people live below the poverty line. The World Bank estimates that it is home to one of the densest concentrations of impoverished people anywhere in the world.

Whilst new cases of polio are rare, thanks to the success of immunisation campaigns, many young people live with restricted mobility following infection during childhood and this can affect all aspects of their wellbeing and limit opportunities. Life remains extremely hard for most disabled people in the developing world.

Operations to restore sight, hearing and repair cleft lip are also provided on board the magic train. Over the past 12 months, more than 32,000 men, women and children have been screened and treated.

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In Maharashtra State, IMPACT India’s Community Health Initiative is achieving great success. Thanks to the provision of surgery, the number of children with cleft lip and other needlessly disabling conditions has been significantly reduced. The Lifeline Express will travel there so that even more people can receive the operations they need.

India

A new start in life

Translating Lives

The Lifeline Express restores hope and movement to young people like Sabita (20), who contracted polio as a baby. After a successful operation to release her damaged limbs, she is now able to walk unaided for the first time. She has a new start in life.
Please help us to help others

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Raising awareness brings positive change

IMPACT Nepal is creating a sea-change in the way pregnant women are cared for in its remote project areas, where until now dangerous practices (such as using cow-dung to treat birth wounds) were widespread.

Our partner provides ante and post natal care and trains Traditional Birth Attendants, which research suggests are very effective ways to protect women and babies during pregnancy and childbirth. IMPACT supporters have also bought specialist equipment such as incubators for the care of vulnerable newborns.

Chronic malnourishment is widespread. IMPACT Nepal targets families at risk, providing vitamin enriched foods and supplements and help to establish vegetable gardens as a sustainable solution.

This action is all part of a comprehensive programme designed to meet the many health needs of the poorest people which is being expanded into new villages. Other initiatives include providing wells for safe water, latrines to improve sanitation, immunisation against disease, training health workers and providing health education.

Thanks to the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission a new rural ear care centre and mobile ear care programme is reaching out to the people of Saptari District. Surgeons also restore hearing and mobility inside a special tented operating theatre which is taken to outlying villages. Mobility aids and prostheses are provided to put people back on their feet, renewing opportunities and improving wellbeing.

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TRANSFORMING LIVES
Reena miscarried her first child, not knowing of the importance of antenatal care. IMPACT Nepal’s field worker ensured that she visited our maternity clinic during her second pregnancy, and that she knew of the dangers of heavy manual work late into pregnancy. She and her family were overjoyed when her baby was born healthy.

The UK

Common ground

Being well nourished is fundamental to good health. In developing countries, children often struggle to get enough nutrients, which stunts growth and threatens survival. In richer countries, the abundance of fatty and sugary foods place young people at risk from heart disease, diabetes and stroke.

IMPACT’s school gardening schemes in Kenya and the UK engage children’s interest in what they eat and reinforce the link between diet and wellbeing. The lessons learned are the same in both countries.

We have worked with 16 schools in Sussex to establish growing plots so that children gain hands-on experience of cultivating vegetables. They eat what they grow, learn about nutrition and know that children in Kenya are doing the same!

Unhealthy diets and sedentary lifestyles threaten to reverse the health gains made during the last century. Preventable child illness is already approaching epidemic proportions in the UK.

IMPACT is bucking the trend in our local area. In addition to gardening and food tasting sessions in schools, we provide cooking and nutrition sessions for the parents of young children, adults with learning disabilities and older people.
IMPACT is celebrating 25 years of transforming lives around the world. The late Sir John Wilson said, “Millions, indeed billions, are spent in developing countries on the rehabilitation of people who should never have become disabled in the first place”.

A man of action, he established the IMPACT movement to prevent needless disability and a quarter of a century later, more than 30 million men, women and children have benefited from IMPACT’s global action.

The children who first benefited from IMPACT’s projects are now adults, many supporting families of their own. Thank you to everyone who is helping IMPACT to reach out to the next generation.

Research suggests that half of all disabled Indian children do not live into adulthood. Disabled people are more likely to live in poverty, which creates additional health problems, and suffer discrimination.

IMPACT supports the KEM Hospital to identify and treat disabling conditions in pre-school children, while there is still time to fulfil their potential. More than 10,000 nursery workers have recently been trained as health monitors to examine the children they care for. Those needing medical attention are referred for treatment and where necessary provided with free surgery, glasses, hearing aids and mobility devices.

Once free from the challenge of living with a disability, it is surprising how quickly young children catch up with their friends!

Our partner is passionate about reducing the number of babies born with birth defects as a result of rubella. 31,500 girls and women of childbearing age have attended awareness sessions and been vaccinated in recent months.

Sadly, India is one of the world’s four remaining countries where polio is endemic. Our colleagues in Pune work extremely hard (in tandem with government campaigns) to motivate parents to immunise their children, in order that they will be protected from this devastating disease.