



# HEALTH CARE



## The Wider Picture

Throughout the world, poor and vulnerable people have less access to health-care, are more likely to become sick, suffer from more severe illness and die earlier than people who are more privileged. At the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, 191 countries set themselves the task of tackling poverty and ill-health by 2015. Three of the eight goals agreed to – cutting child deaths, improving maternal health, and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases – are directly related to health.

## The Issue

In developing countries, gaining access to health care can be difficult for a number of reasons including:

- In rural areas, health care simply may not exist, or may require travelling long distances to urban centres to gain treatment.
- Often even basic health care can be extremely expensive, meaning that only a small number of people are able to afford it.
- Poor nutrition can leave already vulnerable people – such as children and the elderly – further at risk of health problems.
- Even hospitals in urban centres may have insufficient resources or trained medical professionals to treat certain conditions or perform more complex surgeries.

People suffering sickness are often unable to work, earn an income and support their families. Sickness for the family breadwinner can plunge a whole family into poverty with all the consequences that can have, especially on children.

## The Solution

By working through our international church partners and understanding the issues faced by local communities, UnitingWorld is involved in addressing major health issues and working to ensure people can access their right to basic health care.

In cases where health facilities do exist, UnitingWorld works to increase the capacity of existing local services. A key objective is ensuring the building up of local expertise and resources so that the benefits are lasting and transferable to other regions. Another focus is on preventative strategies to avoid disease and health problems, through strategies such as such as HIV/ AIDS education, prenatal care and promoting sanitation practices.

In more remote areas where health services are inaccessible, such as rural and small island communities, mobile health clinics are undertaken by travelling health teams made up of local and visiting health professionals. These clinics not only provide treatment of

common medical conditions, but also take a preventative approach to medical problems through immunisation, education on healthcare, sanitation and avoiding serious disease.

## Project in focus: Zimbabwe – HIV/ AIDS Education

Gutsa-Warambwa lies in the Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe. The area has experienced economic depression, political instability and endured HIV/AIDS and cholera epidemics. This project addresses the impact of HIV/AIDS by teaching vocational skills that can be used to generate income to support the 300 HIV/AIDS orphans who have been integrated into the community enabling the provision of access health care, education and essential goods for the orphans. This project incorporates health awareness training for the whole community covering topics that include HIV/AIDS, water-borne diseases and good hygiene and sanitation practices.

Other Healthcare Projects in 2012:

- Fiji – Eye Care Initiative/ Methodist Church in Fiji & Rotuma
- Vanuatu – Eye Care Initiative/ Presbyterian Church in Vanuatu
- Timor-Leste - Health Clinics / Protestant Church in Timor-Leste
- Solomon Islands – Helena Goldie Hospital & Mobile Clinics/ United Church in Solomon Islands

## Prayer Points

- Pray that sufferers of HIV/ AIDS and their families are able to access the medicine and support they greatly need.
- Give thanks for the progress being made in the combat of malaria, tuberculosis and other preventable diseases.
- Pray for medical professionals and workers in partner communities caring for the sick and needy people in their midst.
- Pray that we who live in developed countries may not be overwhelmed by the task ahead of us and instead concentrate on God's call to reach out in love to care for the sick and suffering people of our broken world.

## Connecting Further

To find out more and financially partner in Relief and Development through UnitingWorld, please call 1800 998 122 or visit [www.unitingworld.org.au](http://www.unitingworld.org.au)



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