

The News

NEWS BEYOND THE UK FROM EMMS INTERNATIONAL | AUGUST 2022



Perfect Storm Brings Health Crisis

A 'perfect storm' is wreaking havoc worldwide and it's even more devastating for people living in poverty. The crises that grip our headlines - conflict, cost of living, climate change and coronavirus are bearing down on resource-poor countries and putting decades of development progress at risk.

As we have scarcely found our feet from the impact of COVID-19, we are now having to deal with a cost of living crisis of growing proportions. No corner of the world was immune to the financial shock from the pandemic and this is exacerbated by the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

The impact of the war on charities' efforts to deal with a range of pressing global concerns pales beside the experience of those living through it. Yet the war in Ukraine demands UK citizens' sympathy and

donations. Add to this that the public is made poorer by inflation and the increased cost of living, and you see they have less money for other charitable causes.

In the countries where we work, demand for a reduced supply of commodities, such as grains and fuel, mean that food and medicines are more expensive and this increases the need for international support.

COVID-19 looms large again and news of winter preparations reminds us this pandemic is far from over. As the pandemic struck, EMMS International started new projects to reduce the impact of COVID-19 in Malawi, India and Nepal. This included improving water supplies at health facilities to reduce COVID-19 infections, and boosting hospitals' oxygen supplies to treat patients.

But pre-existing challenges didn't disappear - poor infrastructure, a global

shortage of healthcare workers and the burden of disease still loomed large. Duncan Hospital in Bihar had hoped to expand its training of nurses. Instead, building of the new college halted when almost all the hospital's staff contracted COVID-19.

Climate change is not a new crisis for any of us. We all bear the brunt of excessive emissions of greenhouse gases and destruction of forests and wetlands.

Dr. Cathy Ratcliff, Chief Executive of EMMS International, explains: "We've seen serious climate change for years in many countries, in floods, droughts, storms, heatwaves, reduced crop yields, increased poverty and increased disease and injury.

"The world is changing in just about every arena. COVID-19, the climate crisis and conflict in Europe tell us all that the world is interconnected, and illustrate

what happens when society doesn't act on early warning signs."

This is a challenging time for organisations that serve people in times of crisis. The volunteering charity Raleigh International Trust went into voluntary liquidation after cuts to the aid budget and the impact of COVID-19 "had an irreversible impact" on its finances.

Cathy continues, "EMMS International is grateful for the generosity of its supporters through recent global challenges. All the same, last year we had to use reserves to help our partners through this crisis and this isn't sustainable. We need to step up together. We're asking you to continue to stand together with us in support of those whose stories do not hit the headlines, but who are feeling the growing impact of this perfect storm of conflict, cost of living, climate change and coronavirus."

Weather the storm. Please donate today.

Donate by post or online at www.emms.org/storm



Christina Mkandawire and Funny Lutepo celebrate their graduations

The global healthcare crisis demands bold and urgent action. EMMS International has launched an ambitious fundraising drive to recruit, train and find sustainable employment for a further 300 healthcare professionals to help address skills shortages in hospitals and healthcare centres.

The programme will especially target vulnerable women and girls, providing them with a rare opportunity to gain a profession and pursue their own dreams.

Christina Mkandawire is a nurse midwife technician

in Malawi and an alumna of EMMS-sponsored training. She explains: "If it was not for EMMS International, I could not be where I am today. You took me at a time when I needed help most in my life. My parents could not manage to provide the much-needed financial support to complete my studies. You treated me as your own daughter by providing everything that a student needed."

Having completed her training, Christina now works in a community health facility close to home. Her

Healthcare Career Pathways: A Roadmap to Sustainable Healthcare

presence improves access to healthcare and also gives her the opportunity to earn a living and inspire future generations who rarely see young, female role models.

From 2022-2028, EMMS International aims to boost and develop the healthcare workforce across Malawi, Nepal and India by providing access to the pathway to 300 potential healthcare professionals.

Learning from operating small-scale scholarship schemes like the one that supported Christina Mkandawire has shown EMMS that scholarship access alone is not always enough. EMMS has developed the Healthcare Pathway to increase successful outcomes for the most disenfranchised women and girls.

The process identifies

barriers and seeks to overcome these by providing a range of supportive measures to encourage vulnerable women and girls to continue in further education. This can include access to English language training, course fees, and essentials such as books, learning tools, accommodation and food, throughout their studies.

Laura Brown, Director of Fundraising and Communications at EMMS International explains the urgent need for support: "We must act now to address the urgent need for more doctors, nurses and medical staff. For just £3,000 we can recruit, train and find a job for a future healthcare professional. Together we can make a difference."

Free Will-Writing Service Returns in September

Will Relief Scotland is returning in September. It gives supporters the chance to have a will written by a participating Scottish solicitor without a fee. There is an opportunity to donate to the Will Relief fund which supports EMMS International and the other participating charities. Visit www.willreliefsotland.org to find a solicitor near you.

EMMS has also launched a Gift in Wills information guide to help supporters who want to make a lasting

difference.

Laura Brown, Director of Fundraising and Communications said, 'EMMS has a proud history of ensuring people's final wishes to help others are observed. Our new brochure explains how and where funds from wills are used. It helps inform people about how to leave a gift in their will. We'd be delighted to speak to anyone who would like to know more about our future plans and how we could be trusted guardians of their gift.'



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HEALTH
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EMMSInternational
Health for Today, Hope for Tomorrow

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Donate by phone on 0131 313 3828

Frontline Voices

Hear from those facing down the perfect storm



Dr Arie Glas
Medical Director, Mulanje Mission Hospital, Malawi

The increased cost of fuel, medicines, and all other imported goods have made balancing our budget very difficult.

Medicines have seen a 40% price increase in just a few months. Simultaneously, the Malawi Kwacha was devalued by 25%. In practice, this means that we have to make difficult decisions.



Dr Saira Paulose
Executive Director, Emmanuel Hospital Association, India

As India increasingly faces extreme temperatures and extreme weather events, many of our locations face severe impact. Currently, Assam is reeling under the effects of incessant rain and floods.

During the COVID-19 pandemic many lives were lost, and mental health-related issues continue to rise, with people living in fear of recurrent infection. The loss of livelihood has also pushed many into poverty.

Soaring food and energy prices, poverty, unemployment, increasing trafficking, endangered

food security, disincentives to farmers, and inadequate policy interventions are also major challenges India faces. Many patients can't even afford transport to hospital.



Krishna Adhikari
Executive Director, INF Nepal

We have witnessed how fragile our human lives are to these crises. We have experienced that conflict in one region contributes to hunger in another, and that environmental degradation and unsustainable consumption patterns threaten the lives and livelihoods of all.

Each of these crises is a wake-up call.



Lameck Tambo
Executive Director, Palliative Care Association of Malawi

Tropical Storm Ana caused heavy flooding in some districts in the country with approximately 994,967 people affected by the floods. 190,429 are displaced and living in camps. Currently there are outbreaks of diseases such as cholera, polio and Leprosy in Malawi due to poor sanitation in the camps.

Aid Cuts Continue to Hit World's Poorest

A year on from the cut in the UK aid budget, the impact is still being felt in the work of charities and the lives of those whom they seek to serve.

Then-Chancellor Rishi Sunak slashed aid spending from 0.7% to 0.5%, undermining the UK's commitment to global health, vulnerable women and girls and other vital programmes worldwide.

Cuts also meant delays in projects starting. EMMS International resisted the cut, as the people it should have helped in 2021 quite simply were no longer alive by the time the delayed project started in 2022. But the UK government was immovable, and so families went through their pain

and trauma without newly developed services which are now beginning to bring pain relief, home-based care, trained health workers and the start of evidence to help the Nepali government decide how best to develop these services.

The commitment of dedicated, regular givers means EMMS can stand by its global partners and mitigate the impact delayed aid brought. EMMS recently launched its Champion of Change campaign to recognise the invaluable support of regular givers and to grow this vital community of global change-makers. Current regular givers can claim a free lapel badge by emailing euan.mcintyre@emms.org

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Bikeride Reboot in Response To Climate Crisis

The famous EMMS International Malawi Bike Ride returns in September to raise vital funds for better health and healthcare for people living in poverty in Scotland, Malawi, Nepal and India. This year the challenge is being staged closer to home in response to the climate crisis. The environmentally-friendly event is one of several new challenge events being promoted by EMMS.

The climate crisis is contributing to significant healthcare challenges in the communities where EMMS International works. Dr Cathy Ratcliff, CEO at EMMS International:

“Cyclones and flooding in Malawi. Extreme temperatures in India and Europe. Floods in Nepal. The climate crisis is creating

healthcare emergencies around the world; business as usual is not an option.”

“As an organisation, we’re looking at every area of operations to minimise our contribution to the climate crisis. Our fundraisers rose to the challenges of fundraising in lockdown and our supporters enjoyed virtual visits to our partners in Malawi, India and Nepal. We’re applying lessons learned during the pandemic to our response to the climate crisis.”

Dr Arie Glas, Medical Director of EMMS International partner Mulanje Mission Hospital:

“The climate crisis is a healthcare crisis in Malawi. We need to do all we can to minimise the impact. It’s always a delight to welcome the EMMS International



Previous bike rides have taken participants to Malawi, India, Nepal and Israel

bike riders to the hospital and show the impact of their fundraising efforts. We look forward to welcoming them virtually this year.”

International challenges have been a core part of EMMS International fundraising for decades. As well as taking on epic cycle challenges, participants have trekked in the Himalayas, kayaked on Lake Malawi and hiked Mount Mulanje. Hundreds of thousands of pounds have been raised

in the past to improve vital healthcare services among the communities visited. In good conscience, we can no longer contribute to climate change in this way.

The Malawi Bike Ride 2022, will see participants choose their route and distance. An exciting variety of other challenge events, from the KiltWalk to Ben Nevis Hiking at Night, are now open for registration and can be viewed online at: www.emms.org/raise-funds.

MALAWI BIKE RIDE 2022

September 2022



Raise over £400 to receive a free special edition cycle shirt

Register free at www.emms.org/mbr22

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