

Annual Review
2019-20 highlights



Back from the brink

How your support has brought
health, hope and comfort to people
in desperate circumstances over the
last year



Happy after cataract surgery, South Sudan

Dear friend,

I hope and pray you are keeping well through these difficult days as the coronavirus crisis continues.

The fear and uncertainty many of us feel now is only too familiar to those who live on the edge every day. For that reason, we are more grateful than ever for the courageous, sacrificial, outstanding work of MAI partners in India, Nepal, South Africa and South Sudan.

One of the privileges of my job is to hear their stories. I wish I could share them all with you, but instead here is one story from each country which embodies the quality and compassion of our partners' response to the people they serve.

Health and hope in the hardest times - your generosity helped make this happen.

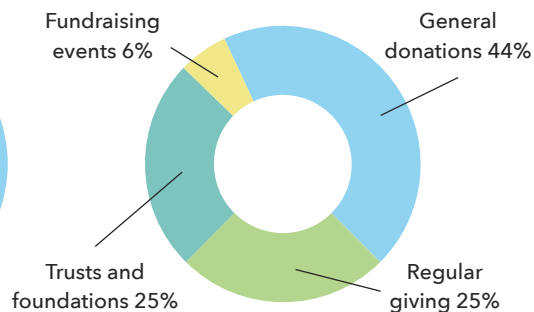
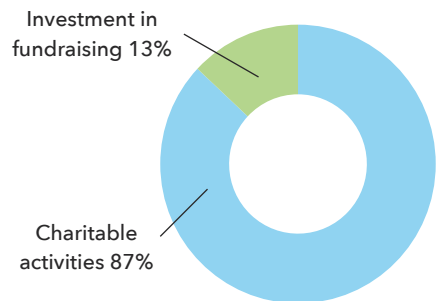
Thank you.

Steve Travis

Executive Director

2019 Expenses £104,329

2019 Income £110,896



'I can see!'

Your response to last summer's South Sudan appeal enabled MAI, in partnership with our friends at Brickworks, to fund a life-changing cataract surgery camp.

Your gifts enabled the country's only ophthalmologist to perform 130 operations and to assess a further 500 people at Martha Clinic, Yei.

Totally blind for many years, Joyce depended on a teenage relative's help for many of her everyday needs. But since the operation she can now see clearly.

'My heart is full of joy,' she told us, 'I can see my family members and even the girl who used to help me around. I thank God for the people who made it possible for the cataract camp to come to Yei.'

Main photo: Joyce after her operation
Inset: patients waiting for surgery



"Giving the dignity that everyone deserves, no matter how little they have"

Giving dignity

MAI trustee Nick Moore shares a powerful highlight from his recent visit to Chinchpada Christian Hospital.

'It was a sight I won't forget - a man in his 30s, we'll call him Aravind, kneeling on his bed, hands clasped, begging his wife to let him be admitted to hospital.

The cancer growing in Aravind's mouth prevented him from speaking or eating. But the palliative care team visited him faithfully, teaching his wife how to feed him a liquid mix via a tube into his nose.

When Elaine, my wife, and I arrived at the house it was clear all was not well. Overwhelmed and in denial about Aravind's condition, his wife was flatly refusing to allow him to be taken to hospital. The team couldn't understand her stubbornness - until they spotted two murky bottles. She had paid a witch doctor money she didn't have for a traditional cure. As soon as Dr Ashita gave permission for the bottles to go too, she relented. Aravind was in hospital ▶



Inset photo:
Aravind during the home visit



▶ that evening. Two days later he looked a different man. The painkillers, kindness and care had done their job. His pain score dropped from 10 to 1, and he scribbled notes asking for prayer.

Aravind died peacefully just a few days later. What a privilege it was to witness the work that enabled him to go to be with his Lord with the peace and dignity that everyone deserves, no matter how little they have.'



Thanks to you, the past year has seen 157 patients receive competent, compassionate home-based care, 24 volunteers and 405 family members trained in palliative homecare, and over 5,000 people hear vital cancer awareness messages.

A visit from Priscilla changed everything

Musa was born HIV-positive 22 years ago in Embo, South Africa. When his parents died, his grandmother took over his care. But then she developed TB – and Musa had to drop out of school to be her caregiver. A while later, he caught TB too.

They relied heavily on Musa's older brother, the family breadwinner. But when he died of AIDS, Musa was left devastated – sick, lonely and desperately poor.

He took to his bed and waited to die.

But then a visit from MAI community caregiver

Priscilla changed everything.

As soon as she saw how ill Musa was, she called for transport to take him straight to hospital. When he was finally well enough to come home, Priscilla came day after day to help with his medication and care. She also cared for his

grandmother, whose health began steadily to improve thanks to her kindness and expertise.

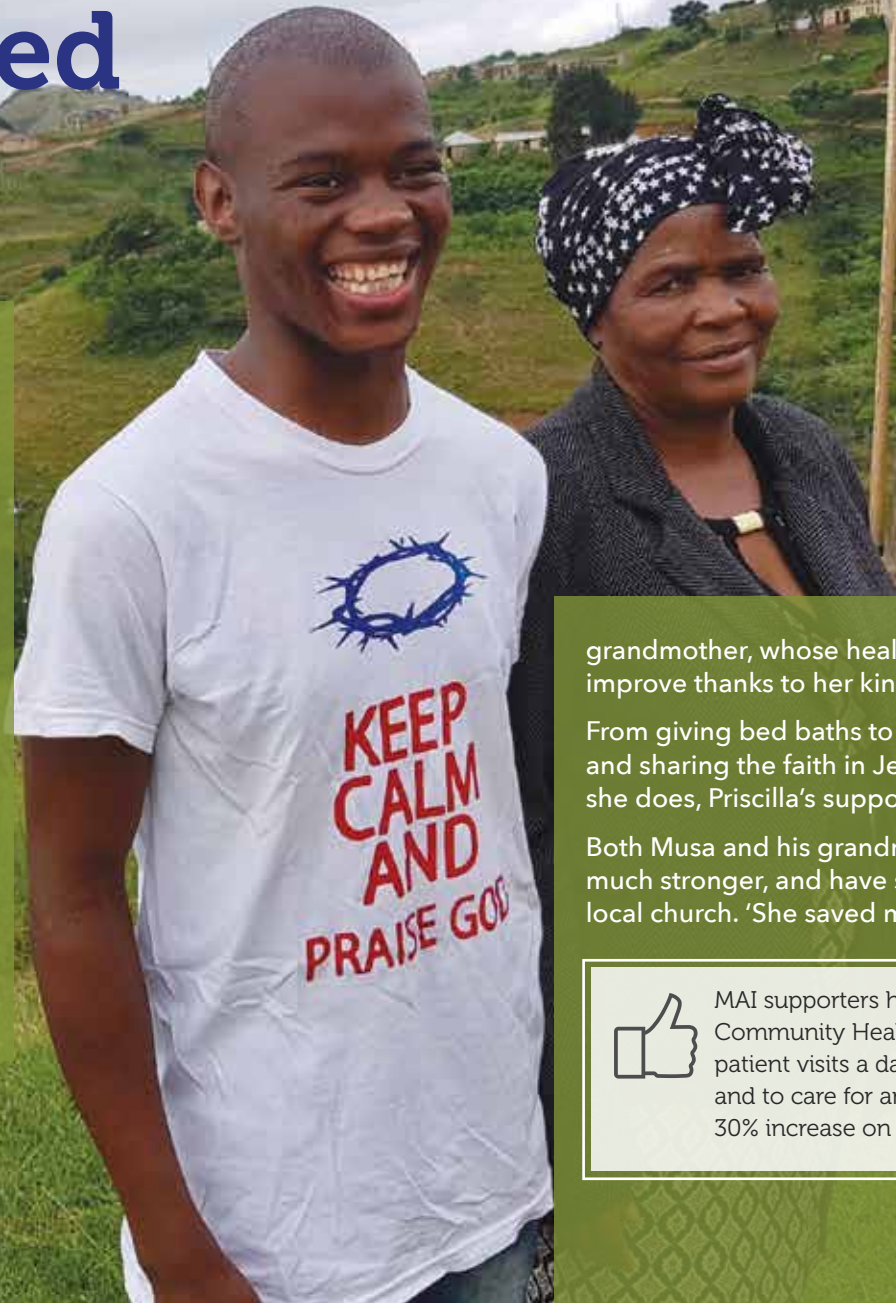
From giving bed baths to arranging food parcels and sharing the faith in Jesus that motivates all she does, Priscilla's support has been unwavering.

Both Musa and his grandmother are now feeling much stronger, and have started going to their local church. 'She saved my life,' he says.



MAI supporters helped the Embo Community Health Team to manage 100 patient visits a day at the clinic last year, and to care for another 167 at home – a 30% increase on the previous year.

Main photo: Musa with Priscilla



Country: **Nepal**

From stigma to support

Eleven-year-old Rohan had already lost his parents and grandmother to HIV when his aunt reluctantly took over his care.

Inset photo: A happy Rohan on his way to school



Main photo: Rohan with his aunt

Worried that she would catch HIV too, she neglected her nephew who was left malnourished and sick.

But a concerned teacher spotted that something was wrong and asked the Lumbini Christian Society (an associate of MAI's partner, UMN) for help.

They built trust with Rohan's aunt and explained the facts about HIV. She learned how to support Rohan in his diet,

medicine and education. His health is improving steadily and Rohan's aunt has since apologised for her behaviour, saying:

'I was scared of Rohan because I thought HIV will be transferred to me by touching. But now I am very much clear.'



With your help, in 2019, 97 people with HIV received home-based care, 26 started income generating enterprises, 95 children affected by AIDS were given school materials, and HIV and AIDS awareness events reached 4,900 people.

How you can help

Five ways to help in the short and longer term



Coronavirus response

Please hold the vulnerable communities in which we work in your prayers through these very testing times. Please pray for our partners' healthcare teams as they adjust to the immediate – and longer term – challenges that coronavirus brings.

Photo:
A very happy girl in India



Give financially

If you are in a position to give financially, your support is needed more than ever. Just £2 per week will make a difference – to start a monthly gift go to www.medicassistinternational.org/donate

Cheques or charity vouchers can be sent to MAI, PO Box 1626, Oxford, OX4 9NF. If you prefer online banking, MAI's account number is **00018761**, and our sort code is **40-52-40**.



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Leave a legacy

Want to make sure your support for MAI lasts long into the future? You could leave a legacy of health and hope by including us in your will.



Visit our partners

Interested in seeing this work for yourself and then telling others about it? Let us know if you would like to join a group visiting our partners in South Africa or India when travel restrictions are lifted.



Please email steve@medicassistinternational.org to explore any of these opportunities.

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Thank you all for your love, support and prayer. They mean much to us and you have been such a blessing to us and to our dear people. You will not lose your reward! //

Dr Ashita Singh,
Chinchpada Christian Hospital



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Lilabai, palliative care patient,
Chinchpada