

HEALTH IN ACTION

Autumn 2018

Health Poverty Action Newsletter



THIS EDITION BUILDING CAPACITY TO
IMPROVE HEALTHCARE

Plus: women taking control of their own health, celebrating one year of partnership with Find Your Feet and how the world profits from Africa's wealth.

**HEALTH
POVERTY
ACTION** 

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My name is Pieter Steenkamp and I am the Programme Manager for Health Poverty Action in Namibia.

For 17 years I have been working alongside the nomadic San tribe in the remote region of Tsumkwe, a three-hour drive to the closest town or hospital.

With your support, we are addressing the barriers to good maternal health - poor infrastructure,

a shortage of health workers, a lack of knowledge about sexual and reproductive health. **And most importantly, we are ensuring that everyone understands their rights, so they can continue to advocate for themselves.**

Health Poverty Action has worked with the




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Health Poverty Action has been working alongside the San in Namibia for over 20 years.

San for 20 years. We've gained their trust and understand their way of life, and because of this we are seeing a huge impact. **Women were dying in the bush and now babies are being safely delivered in clinics. Women are looking after their own health.**

Our approach has always been to work alongside communities to build capacity, ensuring long-term change at a grassroots level. This is why we are so excited to celebrate our first year working in partnership with Find Your Feet, focusing on building knowledge and skills, so people can improve their livelihoods. And for us both, that's what it's all about. **Sustainability and self-reliance are at the heart of all our programmes.**

In this newsletter you'll hear about the change-makers who are taking their health and livelihoods into their own hands: Xao, an expectant mother who understands the

importance of antenatal care in Namibia, and Musafare, a lead farmer from Zimbabwe who is overcoming poverty with his newfound knowledge. You'll also read more about the root causes of poverty and our latest news.

It is only thanks to your continued support that we're able to achieve so much. Thank you.

Pieter



A mother and child attend the healthcare clinic to receive a health check up.

HOW DONKEYS ARE TRANSFORMING LIVES

IMPROVING MATERNAL HEALTH IN RURAL NAMIBIA



Xiao is five months pregnant, and lives in a remote village in Namibia

Five months pregnant with her second child, Xiao lives in the remote region of Tsumkwe, Namibia. Xiao is a member of the San tribe - nomadic hunter gatherers who often live in remote, rural villages. Historically the San have been discriminated against and denied basic health and education rights. Even today, the huge distances mean that accessing healthcare remains a constant struggle - the region has only one doctor and one ambulance to cover hundreds of miles and 13,000 people.

“There are some people who don't want to come to the clinic. We had a problem with a mother, her baby was not moving or lying properly, but she didn't know because she hadn't had any check-ups. This caused the mother to die.

Sometimes people are scared to come, or they don't know that they can come here. It can take many days to walk to the clinic and then sometimes it is too late. With my first child I delivered on the side of the road on my way to the clinic.”

With your support, Health Poverty Action is working alongside the San to ensure women like Xiao can stay safe during pregnancy and childbirth. We are providing maternal health training to local volunteer groups and traditional birth attendants, who return to their communities and share what they have learnt.

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

As well as spreading health education messages, we are working with the community to develop innovative solutions to the challenges of living in such a remote area. Women like Xiao are making use of donkey cart



Donkey cart ambulances are often the only transportation that can navigate through the difficult terrain in Tsumkwe.

ambulances which transport mothers from deep in the bush so that they can give birth at a health facility.

You have also supported Health Poverty Action to build birth waiting homes, which can be found next door to every health facility in the region. These small huts allow women a safe place to stay when they are nearing their due dates, meaning they don't have to travel long distances once they go into labour. The huts also have their own small income generating projects, such as raising chickens or baking bread, meaning they are self-sufficient and sustainable.

TAKING CHARGE

More and more women like Xao are embracing these changes and taking charge of their own health:

“Today I came here on the donkey cart ambulance for an antenatal check-up. It is very important to come so that the nurses can look at my baby, and make sure they are healthy. Now more and more people know that it is important to come to the clinic for checkups and delivery.

I learnt a lot about the dangers of pregnancy as well the importance of condoms and family planning so that I do not have too many children. Now I feel very happy and safe.”

Maternal health is a huge part of Health Poverty Action's work, but we couldn't do it without your support. That's why we are launching our new campaign 'It Takes a Village' – to unite parents with a shared goal – to make pregnancy and childbirth safe for every mother. To find out more, visit takesavillage.org.uk

With thanks to the Big Lottery Fund for supporting this work in Namibia.

SPOTLIGHT ON FIND YOUR FEET

FIND YOUR FEET FARMERS LEADING THE WAY IN ZIMBABWE

Musafare Nyarukokora is 64 and lives with his wife, Grace, in the Mutoko region of rural Zimbabwe. Musafare and his family have always relied on farming to survive, mainly growing maize using expensive hybrid seeds and chemical fertilisers. His family suffered from malnutrition from the lack of variety in their diets, and the crops were often contaminated with dangerous chemical sprays.

“I only had a very small plot where we grew maize. We wondered for years why the crops weren’t thriving. We noticed stunting in our crops, unhealthy plants, lots of purple colours, yellowish leaves, and small maize cobs. I used to just put food on the table for survival without considering nutrition.”

A NEW WAY OF FARMING

With the training provided on natural farm management, Musafare and Grace are now producing a variety of drought tolerant crops and using compost and manure as fertiliser. The use of natural fertiliser, combined with mulching for the past three seasons, has improved the fertility of their soil, and boosted their harvests.

“I like the production of small grains; you always get a good yield no matter if there is less or more rainfall. My soil nutrients were lost but now, through compost, manure and mulch, the soil is replenishing. Our field has changed and now looks beautiful because its soils have improved, and there are trees that we also harvest for food. Now our field provides us with many types of food.”



Musafare proudly holds spiked pearl millet heads.



Thanks to improved crop productivity and better income, Musafare and Grace are now able to feed their family a varied and nutritious diet.

Musafare has led a group of 11 Follower Farmers (seven women and four men) and used his demonstration plot to pass on the farming knowledge he has learnt.

EXCITED FOR THE FUTURE

The family have reduced their costs as they no longer need to buy hybrid seeds and chemical fertilisers. The money saved has helped buy five cattle, six goats, three pigs and 20 chickens, used as both a source of protein as well as for manure for their land. They are now hoping to buy water pipes to ease the irrigation process and increase productivity.

“I am very honoured to be one of the lead farmers of this life changing project. I am very happy with this way of farming.”

This year we are celebrating one year of partnership between Find Your Feet and Health Poverty Action. Together we are working in 18 countries around the world to tackle the root causes of poverty and poor health. The partnership is allowing us to share expertise and provide a more holistic approach to development.

AFRICA'S BILLION-DOLLAR LOSSES

Countries need resources to build strong, accessible health systems, yet global rules in tax and trade mean that many countries are being denied the opportunity to develop.

As well as providing service delivery, Health Poverty Action works to tackle poverty and ill-health at a structural level.

AFRICA IS RICH

Whilst countries in Africa receive \$162 billion in resources, such as aid, loans, and foreign investment, an incredible \$203 billion is taken out, mostly by multinational corporations, debt payments, tax dodging, and the costs imposed by climate change caused by the rest of the world.

This results in a loss of over \$41 billion a year from African countries. This would be more than enough money to provide decent healthcare to all people in Africa.

Africa is rich. What is needed are policies that mean ordinary African people benefit from this wealth, rather than seeing it taken out by multinational corporations. If





Speaking out is an essential part of ensuring long-term change.

ordinary people could benefit from this wealth, it would help provide education, clean water, housing and healthcare. We need action to address the causes of poverty in Africa - tax dodging, a lack of corporate regulation, debt, climate change and unfair trade policies.

RE-THINKING OUR RELATIONSHIP

Our research shows that we need a massive rethink about the way we talk and think about the world's relationship with countries in Africa. This means accepting that aid alone will not solve poverty. Used well, aid can help a country to develop and address pressing issues, but it will always be a temporary solution if we fail to address the root causes of poverty and poor health.

We need to have an honest conversation about the causes of poverty. A conversation that takes into account this bigger picture. If

we can agree that aid alone won't solve poverty, then we can begin to tackle the wider issues that are causing a huge loss of wealth out of Africa.

This means:

- **Negotiating** trade and investment deals that allow African countries to nurture domestic industries, help tackle climate change, and promote social welfare.
- **Closing** tax havens and ensuring multinational companies pay fair rates of tax in all countries where they operate.
- **Lending** more responsibly, and cancelling debt as necessary.
- **Making sure** aid is spent on building public services for everybody.
- **Compensating** Africa for the damage caused by climate change.

Achieving all of this will not be easy but recognising and acting on these issues is a crucial step to ensuring ordinary people in Africa can benefit from their continent's wealth, and access the health, education and other public services they have a right to.

To read more, download our Honest Accounts report from the Speaking Out section of our website, or visit:

bit.ly/honestaccounts

LATEST NEWS



Despite the heat, Lesley was thrilled to finish the race in great time.

STAR FUNDRAISER

This year, our phenomenal London Marathon Team raised over £100,000. One of our star fundraisers is Lesley Lowe, a drama teacher from Derbyshire who had tried for the ballot several years in a row, but had never been successful. Supported by her friends and colleagues, Lesley organised some fantastic events, and ended up raising over £2,400.

“We are so lucky in the UK to have a fabulous NHS. Running for Health Poverty Action means I’ve done a little something to help others without this amazing resource.”

Get in touch to run the iconic London Marathon with us.

PEOPLE'S HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Forty years after the ground-breaking Alma Ata declaration, the People’s Health Movement will return to Bangladesh for the 4th People’s Health Assembly. The event will take place on the 15th - 19th November 2018 in Savar, Bangladesh.

Activists, civil society organisations, social movements and others from around the globe will be attending this exciting meeting. Together we will share experiences, and discuss ways to drive forward the global movement for health.

To learn more about the event, visit bit.ly/PHAssembly

FACEBOOK DONATE

Did you know you can now raise money for our work through Facebook? And there are no fees! So now it’s even easier to ask for donations instead of birthday presents, do a sponsored walk, or hold a bake sale. Just click ‘Fundraisers’ on our Facebook page to get started. If you don’t already, please follow us on social media:

 [HealthPovertyAction](https://www.facebook.com/HealthPovertyAction)

 [@HealthPoverty](https://twitter.com/HealthPoverty)

OUR COOKING CLASSES ARE BACK FOR 2018!

This year we are delighted to have some wonderful chefs teaching you the cooking secrets of authentic dishes from around the world.

After learning from the experts, you can put your new culinary expertise to the test at your very own Curry for Change night. Host a dinner with a difference and help to change the lives of families who suffer from hunger. It's not too late to book one of our upcoming classes:

7th October - Masterclass with cookbook author Mridula Baljekar

14th October - Priya Deshingkar's nostalgic food from North India

28th October - Brinda Bungaroo's Mauritian Delights

4th November - Maunika Gowardhan's Diwali Festival Feast

Newsletter readers get £10 off!
Just use the code **Curry4Change** at checkout.

Find out more at bit.ly/c4ccook



Our cooking class attendees learning to make crispy Vietnamese pancakes!

EVENING OF FLAVOUR



Curry for Change is a celebration of food from around the world.

We are incredibly excited to be back in the gorgeous Halycon Interiors on Wigmore Street on Tuesday 30th October for 'An Evening of Flavour'. This year, we will be taking guests on a gastronomic journey around the world, with cuisines from many of the countries where we work.

You will be able to sample dishes from talented chefs and there might even be some famous faces offering cooking demonstrations of their favourite dishes! 100% of ticket sales will be donated to Curry for Change and food, drinks and goodie bags are included in the ticket price!

To find out more about any of the above, get in touch with Verity at v.crawford@healthpovertyaction.org or give us a call at 0207 840 3765.



Health Poverty Action was founded in 1984 by a young doctor on his return from Afghanistan.



Today we work in 18 countries across Asia, Africa and Latin America.

WE ARE THE CAMPAIGNERS, THE DOCTORS AND THE ADVOCATES WHO HAVE BEEN TAKING A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO TACKLING POVERTY AND POOR HEALTH FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS.

A GIFT IN YOUR WILL MEANS YOU CAN ENSURE PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD CAN CONTINUE TO TAKE CHARGE OF THEIR OWN HEALTH.

To find out how even a small percentage of your Will can make a difference, please contact Sabrina at s.lloyd@healthpovertyaction or 020 7840 3766.

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