

Doctors Without Borders to host fundraising event in Joburg

International organisation Doctors Without Borders (MSF) brings medical care and hope to millions of refugees, and to people displaced in their home countries during conflict and crises.



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Most of the people they treat have been forced to flee their homes and because they are on the move, they face a desperate struggle for access to medical services.

The fieldworkers of MSF put their own lives at risk to ensure that those fleeing persecution and war have a chance of survival.

The dedicated international medical and support teams cover the full spectrum of healthcare: from psychological help, to teaching about life-saving nutrition; they set up hospitals in refugee camps, help women deliver babies safely, vaccinate children and provide potable water.

The task at hand is huge: more than 60-million people around the world are currently displaced. And every day as conflicts throughout the world grow, so too does the job required of MSF.

MSF in SA

MSF first came to South Africa 30 years ago; one of its first missions, in 1986, was to bring relief and medical care to Mozambican refugees in the east of the country during the civil war.

Since 2000, MSF has worked on offering treatment for HIV and TB in projects in Khayelitsha in the Western Cape and Eshowe in KwaZulu-Natal. MSF pioneered a public health ARV programme in Khayelitsha in 2000 and has developed patient centred models of HIV care ever since. In 2014, another project was established in the North West province on Rustenburg's platinum belt offering medical assistance to survivors of sexual violence.

The MSF Southern Africa Office, established in 2007, recruits donors to support their work as well as medical staff to work internationally on short-term contracts of three to nine months. In 2015, a total of 142 recruited fieldworkers departed on assignments – a 25% increase on 2014.

Dr Mohammed Dalwai, president of MSF SA Board, explained: "Several South Africans have worked in Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and South Sudan where their skills in emergency medicine are sought after.

"Since 2008, a growing number of South Africans are choosing to support the life-saving work of MSF fieldworkers.

"Today over 25,000 individuals are showing their strong commitment to keeping our medical work independent, free and rapidly deployable. Nearly 80% of our South African supporters are regular monthly donors donating modest amounts."

In 2015, MSF raised R19.8m in South Africa, Dalwai said, based "on the strong commitment of ordinary people toward our work locally and internationally. We have also achieved a clean financial audit, which is a testament to our financial management, transparency and accountability to donors."

All the good work done on the ground in areas of conflict – providing treatment free of charge - needs to be supported by an enormous purse. These coffers need to be refilled constantly – and MSF relies on donors and on the empowering generosity of a caring public for these funds.

On the Move

During the last two years, the Syrian war and the European refugee crisis has focused the world's attention on the perilous routes people on the move are forced to flee along. On the Move, is the title of an MSF fundraising event aimed at getting donations from the public, and also bringing awareness of the organisation and its work to a larger African and South African audience.

Proceeds from the On the Move fundraising event will go to supporting MSF teams' work in Northeastern Nigeria's nutrition crisis-hit Borno State. In the wake of more than a year's conflict, pitting the Nigerian government against Boko Haram, over 500,000 people have been displaced, forced to flee their homes, living in terribly desperate conditions while others still remain cut off from the outside world. MSF emergency teams are working hard to get medical care, safe water and therapeutic food to where it's needed most.

A core part of the fundraising event will be entertainment from iconic jazz legend Hugh Masekela – himself a man who knows what it is like to be On the Move. In 1960, aged 21, the young Masekela left South Africa to begin what would be a 30-year exile in America.

In a carefully orchestrated evening, guests at the On the Move fundraiser at Johannesburg's Turbine Hall will be taken on a journey and given the chance to get a taste and understanding of the situation of people fleeing their homes. There will be stalls representing different countries and cultures, as well as a refugee/migration route people would take.

The event concept will be supported by artworks (to be auctioned off as part of the fundraising effort), as well as the national dishes from the countries of the displaced people. African style will be showcased through Kisua (a unique African

fashion brand that honours the continent's brightest design talent) in a fashion show.

The On the Move fundraising event will take place on Friday, 2 September 2016, at the Turbine Hall, Newtown, Johannesburg. For more info, go to www.msf.org.za/events.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>