The events of 2023 demonstrated the interconnectedness between people and the issues that shape all our lives; health, education, poverty, peace, climate, food... Each factor threatens to destabilise nations, and together, they create what seems like an insurmountable challenge.

IHP works collaboratively, knowing that we alone cannot be the sole actors in providing a solution. Over the last 20 years, we've worked hand in hand with donors, healthcare providers, NGO partners and volunteers, making a lasting impact on underserved communities that lack needed healthcare.

Through these partnerships, IHP was able to support over 7.5 million patients in 25 countries in 2023.

This coming year, we will be marking our 20th anniversary. While our vision of a world where no-one has to suffer due to a lack of access to medicines has yet to be realised, we are grateful to be joined in our mission by a generous community of local, national and international actors. In 2023 we worked with 47 partner organisations who share our passion to support vulnerable communities all over the world.

To all our supporters, we give you our heartfelt thanks for helping us accomplish all that we did in 2023 and for joining us on our journey towards better access to health for all.
International Health Partners (IHP) is a global health NGO based in the UK. We support people in some of the world’s most challenging places to get the medicines they need, by coordinating the safe and responsible donation of long-dated medical products from the healthcare industry.

Working with our strong network of global healthcare, NGO, and logistics partners we procure, pack and send shipments of treatments to help vulnerable people around the world.
We want to see a world in which all suffering due to lack of healthcare is eradicated.
We serve those in need by providing donated healthcare products that are long-dated and of the best quality.
Today, 2 billion people in the world still lack access to the healthcare that they need.

The World Health Organization has identified three key issues in global health we need to contend with as we aim to transform health systems to become more sustainable, resilient and equitable.
Maternal and child mortality

Since the turn of the century, the world has made substantial progress in improving the health of mothers and children. However, in the past decade, there has been a pronounced slowdown. Approximately 800 women still die every day from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth.

Children around the world face vastly different chances of survival depending on where they are born. The under-five mortality rate in Africa remains the highest in the world at almost twice the global average.

All women need access to high-quality care during their pregnancy. All births should be attended by skilled health professionals. Adequate antenatal care is vital to the life of the child and the mother, but often barriers such as cost and/or lack of access to medicine and services stand in their way. To improve maternal and child health, barriers that limit access to quality maternal health services must be identified and addressed at both health system and societal levels.

How IHP is helping:

We support our NGO partners in a variety of ways to serve these vulnerable groups better. This includes providing medicines for the treatment and prevention of postpartum haemorrhage (PPH), the leading cause of maternal mortality. Additionally, we collaborate with organisations dedicated to supporting children through paediatric oncology and other childhood illnesses. We also supply pregnancy-related supplements and vitamins, and support mass drug administration programs for school-aged children to prevent and control intestinal worms. We are dedicated to ensuring that mothers and children can access the high-quality medicines they need when they need them. We will continue to grow our reach in this area so that mothers, children and their communities can thrive.
Non-communicable diseases

Not only do non-communicable diseases (NCDs) continue to cause the highest disease burden worldwide, but their impact has worsened in the past two decades. NCD deaths have increased by more than one-third since 2000, from 31 million lives lost to 41 million lives lost.

Currently, in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), NCDs account for almost seven of every ten deaths worldwide, accounting for 77% of all NCD deaths. Access to medication for NCD patients in LMICs is a huge barrier. Cost is the leading factor, with more than 60% of people living in some LMICs with cancer, cardiovascular disease, and the repercussions of a stroke, spending more than 40% of their income on medication.

This makes NCDs far more than a health issue – they are a major human rights and equity issue, as they disproportionately burden the poorest and most vulnerable populations.

**How IHP is helping:**

At IHP, NCDs are a strategic priority, meaning we’re focusing our work in this area to expand our programmes to reach more people living with chronic conditions like diabetes, heart disease and cancer. Currently, we’re supporting six different NGO partners in ten countries with a variety of medicines to support the treatment of NCDs, ensuring ongoing and sustained supply so patients do not have to face disruptions to their treatment plans. As we broaden this programme we hope to expand to new partners and new countries to reach more patients in need.
Climate change and health

Climate change is one of the greatest health challenges of the 21st century. We are witnessing more frequent and intensifying weather and climate events, such as storms, floods, droughts and wildfires. These crises affect health both directly and indirectly, increasing the risk of NCDs, the emergence and spread of infectious diseases, and health emergencies.

3.6 billion people around the globe live in contexts that are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. As ever, low- and middle-income communities bear the biggest burden and face the greatest health consequences. Disasters like flooding and droughts can elevate levels of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorders and increase the risk of violent conflict, with innocent civilians the ones most often experiencing catastrophic consequences.

No matter what we do now, the world is locked into at least 30 years of worsening climate impacts. The effects on health for some of us could be disastrous. Serious global action must be taken to protect the health and wellbeing of people in vulnerable populations. In sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America, we must commit to strengthening local healthcare systems, training and equipping healthcare workers, meeting the needs of displaced populations, and standing ready to respond to emergencies and disasters as they continue to increase over the coming decades.

**How IHP is helping:**

As disasters increase as a direct result of climate change, IHP is focusing its efforts on improving and expanding its Disaster Response programmes. Through improved processes, continual learning cycles and by scaling up pre-positioned stock to be ready with medical products right away, we're ensuring we can be there immediately for the people who need our support. We also know the impact of a disaster lasts significantly longer than the headlines in the news. We're therefore, also focusing on better supporting the long-term health needs of a disaster hit region as it recovers and rebuilds.
2023 IN NUMBERS

- **Over 7.5 million** patients supported
- **497 pallets** shipped
- **69 shipments** sent
- **99,400 kg** of product shipped
- **£9.9 million** value of shipments sent
- **Over 4.8 million** treatments shipped

Over 7.5 million patients supported in 2023, with over 4.8 million treatments shipped and a value of shipments sent of £9.9 million.
25 vulnerable and disaster-hit countries around the world received IHP medicines and supplies.
SHIPMENTS BY COUNTRY

- **52%** Africa
  - Kosovo
  - North Macedonia
  - Ukraine
  - Latin America & Caribbean
  - Haiti
  - Honduras
  - Nicaragua
  - Cameroon
  - Central African Republic
  - Democratic Republic of Congo
  - Ethiopia

- **16%** Europe
  - Kenya
  - Liberia
  - Libya
  - Malawi
  - Nigeria
  - Sierra Leone
  - Somalia and Somaliland
  - South Sudan
  - Tanzania
  - Jordan

- **12%** Latin America & Caribbean
  - Lebanon
  - Occupied Palestinian Territories
  - Syria
  - Turkey
  - Yemen

- **20%** Asia & Middle East
Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are typically long-term chronic conditions that both external and genetic factors influence. These include diseases such as cancer, diabetes, asthma and hypertension.

The inability in low- and middle-income countries to access and afford sustained, long-term treatment for NCDs can have devastating consequences for those affected, increasing the likelihood of complications and mortality for the millions who live with these conditions.
Zanzibar has a high burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), particularly among its adult population. Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, is a major cause of premature death worldwide, and two thirds of cases are found in low- and middle-income countries.

This is a significant problem in Zanzibar. Without consistent access to treatment, hypertension leads to serious heart complications and the risk of stroke. Around 33% of the adult population have been diagnosed with hypertension, yet only 12.7% are on treatment, and of those, only 7.8% have adequate blood pressure control. Consequently, hypertension is one of the leading causes of hospital admission and death in adults across Zanzibar, along with diabetes.

For hypertension patients living in Zanzibar, there is no guarantee that their treatment will be available, or if it is, whether they can afford it. Through our in-country partner HIPZ we are providing consistent access to medicine to manage high blood pressure in Makunduchi Hospital in the south of the island and Kivunge Hospital in northern Zanzibar, as well as smaller health initiatives across the island, all free of charge to the patient – giving patients hope for a better, healthier future.
“My name is Mosi, and I am a farmer in Kijini, where I live with my wife and six children.

I have long experienced issues with my blood pressure and so have come to see the clinical officer at the hospital to measure it. They first diagnosed my high-blood pressure after I had the flu and then I experienced pain which moved from my legs to chest and finally to my head which was very heavy and painful, so I came to the hospital.

I continue to come to the clinic for health check-ups and also receive free medication which helps manage my blood pressure. Getting them for free has really helped my life so much...we would struggle to get the money so that we could go to the chemist and purchase the drugs.

The way my life is now, I'm very grateful. The medicine helped me, and I can go to my work healthy and do what I need to do without worry.”

“It has really helped my life so much – I could have died otherwise.”
Cancer is a leading cause of death worldwide, with less than 15% of children surviving cancer in low-income countries. Accessing medicine is one of the main barriers to treating childhood cancer and increasing survival rates, particularly in Malawi. Oncology medicines can be extremely expensive, especially for long-term courses of treatment.

Whilst most childhood cancers diagnosed in Malawi can be easily treated, a lack of accessibility or affordability to medicines can mean delays, leading to children starting their treatment too late to cure them. It is estimated that 1,200 children are expected to develop cancer each year in Malawi, yet only 500 of these patients will be diagnosed, and even fewer will receive treatment.

Through our partnership with World Child Cancer at the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Blantyre, Malawi, we are supporting the Paediatric Oncology Unit with donated oncology medicines and supplies. 90% of the medicines used in the Paediatric Oncology Unit here are donated. The Unit sees over 200 new admissions per year and over 1,300 children during clinics annually. The average survival rate of common and curable cancers is around 55%. This programme is working to change these odds – improving the chances of children’s survival after cancer diagnosis.
Towera is 15 years old. She lives in Blantyre with her six siblings and enjoys learning maths and playing ball games. Four months ago, Towera was diagnosed with Germ Cell Tumour after she started to experience fever, fatigue and a mass developed in her abdomen.

Towera was admitted to the special care unit to undergo surgery to remove the left ovary which had been damaged by the cancer. After surgery, she was given an appointment to start chemotherapy. She requires eight cycles of carboplatin, neomycin and etoposide. She is currently on her second cycle of treatment. So far, she is responding well.

"I am so thankful that the medicines are for free as I had fears about this when we came," Towera’s mum shared the impact of this on her and the family. "I am a single parent. It is my responsibility to make money and provide for my family but I cannot do that while Towera is sick. We are struggling financially."

"As soon as she received treatment, these symptoms improved. The medication is doing a good job of shrinking the cancer in her uterus."

"When I grow up I want to be a nurse as I have such good care here"
North Macedonia faces a high burden of NCDs, accounting for 58% of mortalities. Cancers are the most common causes of adult mortality and morbidity in the country, with lung cancer the most prevalent, followed by breast cancer and colorectal cancer.

Stock shortages are a common barrier to patients accessing the medicines they need due to low health budgets in the country. The cost of procuring these medicines for patients can also be crippling over a long period of time and create added financial pressures. The cost and unavailability of medicines is a significant concern for the population, particularly in relation to a cancer diagnosis where treatment must be consistent and accessible to increase chances of survival and eliminate the cancer.

Since 2016 IHP has partnered with Project HOPE in The Balkans and together in 2019 we launched an adult oncology programme, supporting The Mother Theresa Clinical Centre in Skopje. Through this partnership we are creating a more sustainable supply of medicines and filling the resource gap to make the diagnosis and treatment of cancer more accessible leading to better health outcomes for the population.
“I have three children, two boys and one girl. I am from a rural area in the Eastern part of North Macedonia. There are lots of farms there, and the countryside is beautiful.

It all began when I started having chest pains, so I [went] to the doctor for a visit and I was transferred to the tertiary hospital here in Skopje.”

Vancho was initially admitted for an unclear, acute kidney disease. A biopsy was performed, which revealed high levels of proteins in his blood, which later confirmed his diagnosis of multiple myeloma. Clinicians have put Vancho on dialysis to preserve his kidney function as much as possible, and he is currently on bortezomib and other supporting medications.

“I received a treatment of bortezomib last week and yesterday. I am happy with the care I am receiving. I do not have a positive outlook on the future yet as I cannot think beyond my current condition. Depending on the results, we will see.”

"For the moment...I am feeling good"
DISASTER RESPONSE

When disaster strikes, it profoundly impacts health systems, strains resources, disrupts infrastructure and overwhelms healthcare facilities. Disasters lead to increased demand for medical services, supply shortages, compromised access to care, and an exacerbation of existing health issues, underscoring the critical need for strengthening and supporting health systems in the aftermath.

Disaster response is at the core of what we do. IHP was founded in the aftermath of a disaster and we continue to stand ready to act and meet the greatest health needs.

490,961 patients helped in 5 countries

- Ukraine conflict
- Turkey-Syria earthquake
- Libya floods
- Middle East crisis

4 responses in 5 countries
A series of powerful earthquakes struck near the border of Turkey and Syria on 6 February, 2023, killing more than 50,000 people and injuring many more.

The need for healthcare support in the affected areas was critical, with millions of people displaced. Antibiotics, access to chronic disease medications, mental health and psychosocial support, wound care, maternal and paediatric health, cholera treatment and clean water were some of the top reported needs.

IHP responded immediately to support our partners in the aftermath of the quakes to meet these needs by sending medicines to support mental health and psychosocial services, personal hygiene products, primary healthcare and chronic diseases.

In Syria, we resourced the Independent Doctors Association (IDA) with six shipments of essential medicines and healthcare to reach 80,310 patients with essential medicines and healthcare.

IHP also responded in Turkey focusing on women's and children's health through a shipment of medical supplies, supporting the sanitation and hygiene needs of 14,310 people. This included items such as sanitary pads for menstrual hygiene, baby soap and bath soap.
Sabeen, 30, is from the southern countryside of Idlib in Syria, but now finds herself internally displaced in northwestern Syria. Sabeen is pregnant and experienced severe pain so visited the maternity clinic at Qah Hospital to be examined. The doctor explained that she was suffering from inflammation of the cervix and a urinary tract infection.

Sabeen said, "Honestly, the pain was not easy, and I was worried about the cost of medications because many medicines are expensive.

Azithromycin, an antibiotic that plays a crucial role in treating infections, was prescribed and provided free of charge from the hospital pharmacy for precise monitoring of her treatment.

"Thank God, I was able to get the medication for free and I can continue the treatment."
On 10 September, 2023, Storm Daniel struck Libya with winds of up to 50 mph and extreme rainfall. The next day, two dams upstream from the city of Derna collapsed, inundating the once bustling port city and causing devastation. Over 4,000 people were confirmed dead, and thousands more missing.

This disaster caused an exponential growth in health needs including in trauma and emergency medicine, mental health and psychosocial support as well as a lack of medical personnel, body bags and ambulances to adequately respond. In addition, many medical supplies were also swept away, leading to a severe depletion in available medicines to treat those in need.

Migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons, who were already vulnerable prior to the disaster, were of particular concern as they became disproportionately affected by health threats and barriers to healthcare.

IHP responded in collaboration with International Medical Corps, shipping medicine and health supplies to support over 29,000 patients in need. These included treatments for the management of non-communicable diseases like diabetes and heart disease, water purification tablets and vitamins.
On 7 October, 2023, Hamas launched an attack on Israel, killing approximately 1,200 people and taking over 200 hostages. In response, Israel declared a state of war. Military bombardment of the Gaza strip has caused significant civilian casualties, mass displacement and widespread destruction of infrastructure. The violence has also escalated in other parts of the region, including the West Bank and Lebanon. The shocking human cost of the crisis has left over 3 million people in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.

The health situation in Gaza has reached catastrophic levels. A lack of medical supplies, food, water and fuel has virtually depleted an already under-resourced health system, and continued access restraints on humanitarian aid are compounding the situation. Diseases such as acute respiratory infections, diarrhoea, scabies and meningitis have become rampant across the region. Half of the population in Gaza is on the brink of starvation, and famine has already been reported in parts of the region.

Prior to the escalation, IHP had an existing long-term programme in Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon. Despite incredibly limited access, this meant that we were well positioned to launch a response immediately.

By the end of the year, IHP had sent two shipments to Gaza, supporting over 325,000 patients. In addition, two shipments to West Bank and one to Lebanon helped reach over 25,600 patients affected by the crisis.

As the conflict continues, this disaster response will dominate much of our work in 2024 and beyond, as we work to rebuild health systems in the region.
Mental health is critically important to everyone, everywhere. Yet, responses to supporting people’s mental health needs and the provision of specialist psychosocial services are often insufficient and inadequate.

Chronic exposure to instability and violence increases the risk of people needing support for their mental health. Refugees can often be exposed to various factors that affect their mental health, especially when they have experienced trauma when displaced, and there has been a disruption to the continuity of care. Mental disorders, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder, are exacerbated due to the lack of access to mental health services or medicines they need.

16,555 patients helped
8 countries supported
£80k worth of medicines donated
According to a study published in 2021, data from Lebanon shows severe levels of distress among the population, in a country with minimal resources. It is estimated that among the Arab states, Lebanon has the highest prevalence of anxiety. Lebanon’s economic, political and health crises as well as the enduring aftermath of the 2020 port explosion have adversely impacted the mental health of people across the country and drastically increased the need for mental health support.

22% of the displaced, war-affected Syrians seeking refuge in Lebanon, suffer from moderate to severe depressive symptoms, and a recent study found that a third of children and adolescents in Lebanon showed signs of at least one psychiatric disorder.

While the demand for mental health support in Lebanon has increased, the availability of treatment has lagged behind due to a shortage of accessible medicine. Most drugs used to treat neurological conditions are imported but not subsidized by the government. Like other imported goods, prices for psychiatric drugs have soared as the Lebanese pound has collapsed, leaving most of the population unable to afford them. As a result, many go without, or are forced to ration their medicine. Others turn to the black market.

Through our partnership with Anera in Lebanon, we are working hard to improve access to medicines for psychosocial conditions ensuring that clinics can continue to provide essential mental health support.
Mohammad Kalash, a respected psychiatrist in Beirut, underscores the gravity of Lebanon’s mental health issues. He says mental health concerns have surged, particularly in free clinics. Kalash emphasizes the significance of amitriptyline, a versatile antidepressant that targets multiple neurotransmitters and offers a comprehensive solution for patients battling depression, anxiety, and psychosis.

Kalash calls the medicine "a valuable tool in our efforts to address the rising tide of mental health issues." He also stresses the importance of a holistic approach, acknowledging that medication alone may not always be the sole solution. He stresses the crucial role of therapy in supporting mental wellbeing. By supplying donated medicines, we’re freeing up vital resources for our partners that can be invested in providing other services, such as counselling and therapeutic programmes.

“The amitriptyline donation addresses the needs of patients dependent on this medication.”
As we mark 20 years, we look forward to the next chapter. Our commitment to improving healthcare access, addressing health disparities, and promoting best practice in medical donation remains as strong as ever and we want to see real change in health outcomes for underserved populations. Without proper access to medicines and healthcare, the next generation will not be able to thrive. **We will change this, we will bridge the gap.**

To support this work, we’re launching the Bridging the Gap Fund, a new fund of £250,000, which will enable us to be more agile, respond to needs as they arise, build our networks and develop our services to meet health needs now and into the future.

We invite you to be part of our journey. Your donation and involvement will help us continue making a meaningful impact on global health for future generations to come. Together, we have the power to transform lives, shape healthier futures, and foster a world where access to quality healthcare isn’t a privilege, but a universal right.

Scan the QR code below or visit [justgiving.com/campaign/ihpbridgingthegap](http://justgiving.com/campaign/ihpbridgingthegap) to find out more and donate today.
Thank you!

Your support has made the provision of these lifesaving services possible. Because of you, millions of people around the world received the medicines they needed when they needed them. Thank you for joining with us to improve access to healthcare for all.