DOCTORS FOR PEACE

PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES IN ITALY AND AROUND THE WORLD

DOCTORS FOR PEACE

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We can learn a lot about an organization from its name.

While the word “doctors” simply refers to technical aspects of what we do, ‘peace’ is undoubtedly a strong term: peace is the highest aspiration and the most important need of the humans, and of other species too.

Peace is the foundation of serenity and wellbeing, a basis for the development of populations and of single individuals, of each and every one of us.

Yet peace can never be taken for granted – it must be fought for, and with effort. It is the prize for a struggle not so much against external enemies, as against the negative and destructive aspects of each one of us: against selfish impulses, the temptation to bully and take advantage of others, to tell convenient lies, and against the whole range of evils triggered by greed, meanness and the thirst for power.

So peace is not a gift, but a hard-won victory. Fortunately there is an instrument available to help us reach this aim, and that instrument is justice. Without justice there can be no lasting peace between individuals, populations or nations. The existence or absence of justice therefore has strong predictive power: a simple check of the degree of justice in our everyday actions, in the articles of a law code, or in the clauses of an international treaty allow us to predict the future of a personal relationship, of social coexistence within a population, or of a non-aggression pact between nations.

So it is not by chance that the motto of Doctors for Peace is ‘From rights to health’. The slogan refers to the concept of justice and applies it to our association’s main sphere of activity, public health. This is not an appeal for charitable or compassionate gestures, but for the recognition of and respect for all the inalienable rights of every human being, including the right to health. In our world, health is considered to be of primary importance (as reflected in popular sayings like “If you have health you have everything”).

But in the so-called Third World, as we have been able to observe in person, frequently other, more pressing priorities necessarily come first. Health is of little use to those who receive no recognition – for themselves and their children - of the rights to life, liberty and work which allows at least subsistence.

When we recognise in the other person (whatever the colour of his skin, his nationality, language, sex, religious beliefs or other apparent differences) a subject equal to ourselves who has specific rights, we are taking the first essential step to approaching this person as our peer, and this allows us to build an alliance between equals, the only kind of alliance from which true cooperation can come.

Perhaps it is worth remembering that to experience such an “encounter”, to “look into the other person’s eyes”, it is not necessary to travel thousands of kilometres to exotic and distant lands – it is enough to see and recognise what is probably happening in the area where we live, or in a city park, or in camps on the outskirts of town.

Wherever this encounter takes place, whether in the slums of Calcutta or in gypsy camps in our cities, if the premises are sound, the motivation sincere and the intervention professional, one of the partners in this cooperation will see an improvement in his conditions of poverty and need; the other partner will be freed, at least in part, from the grip of isolation and selfishness to which he has been condemned by a society imprisoned by the values of materialism and profit at any price.

Fabrizio Abrescia  
President of Doctors for Peace
WHO WE ARE

Doctors for Peace is a non-profit organization founded in 2001 whose mission is to protect the right to health in Italy and worldwide.

Originally founded by a group of doctors and nurses, over the years volunteers from various professions have also joined it, along with young people and students.

Since 2002 Doctors for Peace has participated in international cooperative projects in Asia (India, Cambodia, Myanmar, Nepal, Bangladesh), in South America (Ecuador), in Africa (Rwanda, Kenya) and in Eastern Europe (Romania), working with local institutions and in partnership with civic organisations.

In Italy, in 2006 it was selected by the City of Verona to provide hygiene and health services in the difficult conditions of a local Roma community. Since then, Doctors for Peace has offered services, assistance and health education to local people in conditions of extreme poverty and social marginalization.

As well as health services, it organises awareness-raising and educational activities to foster solidarity and the rejection of discrimination, through lectures, photographic exhibitions, and meetings in schools, universities and jails.

MISSION

Doctors for Peace works in order to:

- improve the health, social and educational conditions of people in need;
- fight against poverty, ignorance, discrimination and injustice;
- offer social and health services to people in need, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, culture, gender or religion.

GOVERNANCE

Doctors for Peace is composed of the following governing bodies: Assembly of Members, Management Board, and the President.

An operational team takes care of planning, communication and fundraising.

NETWORKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Doctors for Peace has been recognized as a non-profit organization and volunteering organization since 2002. Since 2007 it has had legal status and has been registered as a legal subject at the Prefecture of Verona. In 2019 it joined AOI (Associazione delle Organizzazioni Italiane di cooperazione e solidarietà internazionale), an Italian network of organizations, and it is part of the network Nella mia città nessuno è straniero (In my city nobody is a foreigner) of Verona.
Kampilya Women and Children Health Project, Uttar Pradesh

What Maternal and child health
Where Uttar Pradesh, Kampil
When January 2003 - December 2006
Who 10,000 people
Partner NGO CINI
Donor Cariverona Foundation
Budget € 120,000

Doctors for Peace, thanks to the Cariverona Foundation’s funding and private donations, implemented a social health project for women and children living in villages around Kampil, in the State of Uttar Pradesh. The whole population of those villages benefited from an intensive health and social education program.

Families recognized by the Indian Government as being below the poverty line (BPL) received free healthcare.

The Dispensary of Kampil, a referral medical centre for more than 7000 inhabitants of the surrounding villages, was renovated.

Diagnostic and therapeutic services included: survey and monitoring of high-risk pregnancies through regular obstetric and gynaecological checkups, with prompt hospitalization of obstetric emergencies; antitetanus vaccination for pregnant women and vaccinations for their children against diphtheria, tetanus, measles and polio; administration of iron and folic acid supplements to prevent maternal and paediatric anaemia.

Sessions of nutritional and hygiene education were provided to future mothers, and sex education and family planning to young couples.
Street Children Project - Play for Life, Jharkhand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Maternal and child health, education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>Jharkhand, Ranchi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>January 2007 - December 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>100 children and street children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>NGO CINI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor</td>
<td>Verona Province, A.C. Chievo Verona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>€ 28,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Street Children Project was implemented in Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand, the poorest and least literate Indian State: 61% of the population live below the poverty line and the literacy rate is only 39%.

The project, financed by Verona Province, made education and basic medical assistance accessible to 100 street children aged between 8 and 14 years.

The child beneficiaries of the project had moderate or serious parasitosis and anaemia, which jeopardized their learning ability.

Children without family support were hosted in accommodation where counselling, nutritional and recovery support and healthcare were provided.

The intervention, integrated with government activities already in progress, allowed the children to progressively rejoin the school system that they had abandoned.

Thanks to sponsorship by the A.C. Chievo Verona football team, Doctors for Peace reinforced the project with the Play for Life project, designed to promote socialization and enjoyment among children through sporting activities and team games.

A qualified teacher of physical education was employed and supported by two volunteers and a social worker. Sporting material (games, balls, shoes, shirts) were supplied and participation in sporting events was encouraged.
Amici dei Bambini launched the project "Grains of Happiness" in public orphanages, providing emergency first aid and activities in support of children abandoned at birth and not officially registered.

The medical staff of Doctors for Peace examined children in three orphanages, finding psycho-physical problems, inherited venereal diseases, psychomotor deficits and, in some cases, damage due to the outcomes of surgical operations.

Doctors for Peace supported the Association AiBi – Amici dei Bambini, providing health screening for children living in orphanages in Phnom Penh, Pursat and Battabang.

In this country dictatorship and civil war, which lasted until 1989, caused further poverty and social breakup. Children were the worst affected victims of this tragedy and even today, the abandonment of minors is still a very widespread phenomenon in Cambodia.
Doctors for Peace, in collaboration with CESVI and A.C. Chievo, was in charge of malaria prevention, diagnosis and treatment in Shan highland's rural villages.

In these areas malaria represents one of the main causes of morbidity and mortality: there are still 3,000 cases a year, of which 50-100 prove fatal.

Existing health services are inadequate and often unattainable for most of the rural population, who live in isolated villages without roads.

Malaria control strategy was based on implementing a health education programme in the communities. It provided microscopic diagnosis of malaria (WHO Guidelines for the treatment of malaria), training sessions for volunteer staff and the distribution of Insecticide Treated Nets (ITNs).

383 village health inspectors and 10 specialists in microscopy were involved in diagnostic activity. 15 outpatient clinics were set up which, along with 6 mobile clinics, reached 383 high-priority villages, benefiting a total of 40,140 families or 200,608 individuals.

43,815 mosquito nets were soaked with insecticide and 33,619 LLIN (Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets) were distributed. Services for the prevention of malnutrition were also offered to the more vulnerable and weaker part of the population living in the rural centres.

Lastly, 33 village health operators received specific training in RDTs (rapid diagnostic tests) and malaria treatment.
Doctors for Peace supported the international initiative “technical and financial support for the Surabhi Pharmacy in collaboration with The Women’s Foundation”, opening a pharmaceutical dispensary in the Surabhi area, south of the capital.

In Nepal there are only 300 graduate pharmacists, most of whom work in the pharmaceutical industry. The personnel employed in pharmacies is often not properly prepared to respond to the needs of consumers. Cases have been reported in the press of accidents, some of them serious, due to wrong prescriptions.

Doctors for Peace bought medicines and goods of prime necessity and also paid the logistic and administrative expenses necessary for the operation of the community pharmacy, along with salary for a pharmacist and for two new collaborators.

The project made medicines available at a fair price, provided education and prevention, and promoted the general health of the community.
A better life through a better job

**What** Professional training

**Where** Kathmandu

**When** September 2009 - September 2011

**Who** 9 people

**Partner** Kalinta Giff Manufacturing Pvt Ltd

**Donor** San Zeno Foundation

**Budget** € 21,900

Thanks to support from the San Zeno Foundation, Doctors for Peace activated a vocational training course for carpenters and wood carvers in Kathmandu, Nepal, for young Nepalis from needy families resident in the poorest and most remote areas of the country, and for Tibetan political refugees who were without professional qualifications and therefore unemployed, having grown up in a local Buddhist monastery and later returned to secular life as laymen.

In the valley of Kathmandu there exists a rich tradition of carpentry, and particularly of wood carving. Nevertheless, family-run handicraft workshops have not stood up to the competition from large furniture factories or manufacturers of window and door frames in chipboard and plywood.

Doctors for Peace chose to invest in relaunching and upgrading the ancient tradition through a two-year training course in basic carpentry and carving. The courses, taught by the teacher Sonam Dorje and by two skilled Indian carpenters, were developed within the firm "Kalinta Gift Manufacturing Pvt Ltd." The young participants learned to produce small gifts, ornaments, decorations, furniture, utensils and furnishings in general. Specific training was devoted to the production of small pieces of furniture in solid wood with decorations (handles, corners, external hinges) in brass, bronze and iron.

Some scholarships were set up and tool kits were provided to guarantee the continuation of this activity in the future. All the participants found a job in the local employment market.
The project “The right to Smile in Kathmandu”, realised during 2016 by Doctors for Peace in collaboration with the local partner Benchen P.D. Monastery, was a social dentistry intervention aiming to improve the oral health of the Nepalese population.

In particular, the project strengthened the services offered by the Free Clinic of the Benchen P.D Monastery of Kathmandu through the supply of free dental treatment to the indigent population, the training of healthcare workers and the provision of services and healthcare supplies.

Access to dental care and to measures to prevent oral cavity pathologies is denied to many Nepalese living in conditions of poverty because of the lack of public health coverage and the huge costs in private clinics (100 Euros for one session of dental treatment, in a country with an average monthly income below this figure).

From February to November 2016, 1100 free dental examinations were offered to over 760 beneficiaries, with an average of 110 accesses a month. Traditional dental services were provided: dental hygiene and prophylaxis, conservative therapy, endodontic and periodontal treatment.

In addition, Doctors for Peace set up 3 training courses, conducted by voluntary experts, for 23 students of the 3rd and 4th years of Nepal Medical College Course (Jorpati, Kathmandu).
Despite the efforts made by public health services in the last decades, the availability of health services and access to them is often uncertain, especially in remote rural areas.

40% of individuals needed to travel for one to four hours to reach the nearest health centre. In urban areas, especially in the overcrowded capital of Kathmandu, public health services were often insufficient and unattainable for the poorest and most marginalized parts of the population. Malnutrition and the lack of hygiene still weighed on the health of the population at large and of minors in particular.

Here Doctors for Peace carried out a project aiming to guarantee access to dental care to residents of villages south-west of Kathmandu. This was possible thanks to a mobile dental clinic (Himalayan Dental Mobile Clinic) that allowed dentists to reach the most remote villages and promote oral health through free dental treatments and oral hygiene education. The intervention, carried out in school buildings, targeted vulnerable groups, especially minors between the age of 6 and 16 from poor families. 1300 students residing in the villages of Sokhel, Bhanjang, Satikhel, Chaaimale and Pharping received free dental care, while the 25,000 residents of the same villages and the students’ families were indirect beneficiaries of the project.
Nepal is one of the poorest countries in Asia. Despite recent progress, a quarter of the population is still living below the poverty line and half of the population (48%) is illiterate.

Widespread poverty has a great impact on the population’s health, especially that of children. 41% of children under 5 years old suffer from malnutrition. In this context, Doctors for Peace aims to continue its efforts to improve health conditions in Nepal by ensuring access to dental care for inhabitants of the remote villages of the Tsum valley. The villages are not served by the road system, which is why a team made up of a dentist, a dental hygienist and a social worker has to bring a mobile dental care facility to the villages after a 5 to 6 day trek. The team installs two base camps, for a duration of 16 days each, in order to examine patients from the surrounding villages and give first line treatments for pathologies like tooth decay, gingivitis and periodontitis while teaching oral hygiene. The project’s target are the most vulnerable social groups, especially the residents of villages at an altitude of over 3000 metres who have poor access to health care. The direct beneficiaries of the project are 1200 patients, while health education reaches the whole community, for a total of 12,000 residents.

Himalayan Dental Mobile Camp

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Social dentistry</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>Villages in the Tsum valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>February – December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>1200 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>Benchen Karma Tegsum Tashi Ling Association, Free Dental Clinic of Benchen P.D.Monastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor</td>
<td>Italian Buddhist Union</td>
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<td>Budget</td>
<td>€ 42,000</td>
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Doctors for Peace carried out a health project in collaboration with the local partner DALIT, in the aftermath of flooding in Keshabpur, Jessore district. In October 2017, this area at the border with India had been badly hit by heavy rains, with people affected by floods and landslides. In Bangladesh alone, 8 million people were affected and 650,000 houses were damaged or destroyed. Doctors for Peace and its partner DALIT implemented an emergency healthcare support plan for the population, in particular for people belonging to the Dalit social group, the most discriminated against. The program guaranteed medical examinations to 5275 people, of whom 3053 were women, 1207 men and 1015 children.

This was possible thanks to the creation of 25 medical camps in the 10 worst affected villages around the city of Keshabpur (Moddokul, Komorpol, Sabdia, Brommakati, Habashpool, Baladanga, Altapol, Mulgram, Dormutia, Ramchandrapur). The medical team of the mobile clinic, composed of local personnel, examined adults and children from the villages, offering quality healthcare and medicines. The medical camps were set up in schools and other public spaces.

In addition, Doctors for Peace was invited by its local partner to visit the refugee camps for Rohingya people in Cox’s Bazar, and interviewed 15 refugees who had been victims of violence and abuses by the Burmese army.
Project to improve the health and well-being of mothers, children and chronically ill patients living in Esmeraldas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Maternal and child health</th>
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<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>Esmeraldas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>2011 - 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>4,600 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>CECOMET, Tropical Diseases Centre – Sacro Cuore Hospital, Negrar (Verona, Italy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor</td>
<td>Cariverona Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>€ 258,400</td>
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</table>

Esmeraldas, a city with 184,000 inhabitants situated 300 km from Quito, has a 78.3% poverty rate, significantly higher than the national average (60%). Doctors for Peace, in partnership with CECOMET and with the Tropical Diseases Centre of Sacro Cuore Hospital, Negrar, Verona, started a community epidemiology project in a local Health Centre, with the aim of reducing mortality in the population of the poorest districts. Doctors for Peace implemented monitoring, prevention activities and treatment for high-risk pregnancies, child malnutrition and chronic pathologies.

The healthcare staff involved in the project were responsible for ensuring the nutrition of children up to 5 years old; for monitoring pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period; for identifying chronic patients (hypertensive, diabetic, or epileptic); for checking the treatment of patients with tuberculosis; for health education.

A group of volunteer mothers from Ecuador, trained by medical personnel, promoted the spread of information and good preventive practices in the community, which mainly consisted of populations of African origin, descending from victims of the slave trade.
Rwanda’s Human Development Index (HDI) ranking is 167th out of 187 countries. Child and maternal mortality rates are considerable: for every 100,000 children born alive, 487 mothers die. The birth rate is 5.4 children per woman, with significant differences between urban and rural populations.

Doctors for Peace promoted the retraining of 61 health workers of the Rwamagana District, through a specialist course on family planning, contraceptive consultation and prevention of infectious diseases. The project also supplemented, where needed, the provisioning of health supplies (equipment, medicines and devices) required for the courses.

At the end of the course the trained personnel, assisted by medical specialists, provided specific treatments and individual counselling to 151 women at the Centre de Santé.

Community information meetings took place with 46 representatives of Agentes de Santé (staff trained to detect the specific health needs of each community) about responsible maternity, correct management of pregnancy and the postpartum period, STDs and sexual hygiene.

Moreover, the project promoted the adoption by Rwamagana’s Hospital of the “WHO Family Planning Protocol”, which provides for the use of the latest contraceptive methods and correct patient understanding of them.
Mama na Mtoto - Health improvement for women and children in Isinya and Northern Kajado districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Maternal and child health</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>Isinya and Northern Kajado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>2015 - 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>11,500 people</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>Amici del Mondo - World Friends, Zam Zam Medical Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donor</td>
<td>Cariverona Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
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Doctors for Peace, in collaboration with local partners Amici del Mondo - World Friends and Zam Zam Medical Services, promoted an international co-operation project aiming to protect mothers' and children's health in rural areas of Northern Kajado and Isinya districts. A mobile clinic regularly visited 20 local communities poorly served by the national health system. Services were provided regarding maternal and child health, nutrition and reproductive health, in close cooperation with village health committees which facilitate the communities' access to services.

Through 188 visits by the mobile clinic, free assistance was offered to 7,262 women and 8,690 minors, of whom 5,131 were under five years of age.

The presence of nurses, midwives, nutritionists and social workers made it possible to compensate for the serious lack of qualified health workers in such remote areas. The mobile clinic offered prenatal and childbirth services, postpartum assistance and vaccinations. Children's growth was monitored and mothers were educated about nutrition. In addition, cycles of treatment for intestinal parasites were administered in numerous schools in the selected communities. In close collaboration with the Health Ministry and local partners, update sessions about new guidelines on the integrated management of paediatric pathologies were conducted for healthcare staff. Thanks to the know-how acquired during many years’ experience, Doctors for Peace offered technical and scientific consultancy for training activities, while also monitoring and supervising the management and administration of the project.
Nairobi Nutritional Project – Improvement of nutrition and health of pregnant women and minors living in the slums of north-eastern Nairobi

**What** Maternal and child health

**Where** Nairobi

**When** 2016 - 2018

**Who** 38,000 people

Amici del Mondo - World Friends, Ruaraka Uhai Neema Hospital; Mwangaza Ulio na Tumaini Health Centre; Redeemed Gospel Church Health Center

**Partner**

Donor Cariverona Foundation

**Budget** € 97,500

Thanks to the Cariverona Foundation’s support and to collaboration with Amici del Mondo – World Friends, in Kenya Doctors for Peace promoted a well-structured medical and social project to deal with the problem of malnutrition in the slums of north-eastern Nairobi. The project aimed to improve the health of that population, and to take care of pregnant women and children. The project worked by facilitating access to nutritional services and by developing awareness, along with better hygienic and eating habits. When the project was carried out, slum settlements represented the most disadvantaged areas as regards health and access to health services. In these settlements maternal and child (under 5 years of age) mortality rates were higher (by 53% and 147% respectively) than the national average, which itself was already pretty high.

This situation was also due to inadequate nutrition - quantitatively and qualitatively - which massively compromises the health of pregnant women and babies. Diarrhea (22%) and malnutrition (7%) were the causes of one third of deaths among children up to 5 years of age. This occurred despite the fact that such pathologies are easily preventable through appropriate hygiene and nutrition.

The Nairobi Nutritional Project strengthened the health services offered by World Friends with human resources and medical equipment, increased the frequency of periodic treatment of intestinal parasitosis, and monitored the nutritional state of students in the target schools. It also promoted education sessions about nutrition and hygiene for mothers and children in target health centres and schools. Finally, great importance was given to the training of healthcare staff.
The project, in collaboration with the Romanian city of Alba Iulia and with the support of Intesa Sanpaolo Charity Fund, aims to improve social inclusion and quality of life for children living in poverty, social exclusion or in need of medical assistance in Alba Iulia.

The project implements services for children with serious neurological and psychomotor dysfunctions at the “Maria Beatrice” rehabilitation centre, and supports various socio-sanitary interventions at the “Sfanta Maria” drop-in centre.

Despite recent progress, Romania is one of the weakest economies in the European Union, with a per capita GDP 5 times lower than the European average. Romania allocates just 5% of its GDP to the health sector - the smallest percentage in Europe. People who are socially marginalised or poor are especially vulnerable, and almost half of minors are at risk of living in poverty.

In order to better meet the needs of those who fall outside the Romanian welfare system, the project offers free socio-sanitary rehabilitation services to children in need, without discrimination based on nationality, ethnicity, culture, sex or religion.

Moreover, the project supports medical and rehabilitative interventions for children hosted by the “Maria Beatrice” centre. It promotes training programmes, education and support regarding issues involving children hosted by the “Sfanta Maria” centre, as well as training physiotherapy and occupational therapy students.
PROJECTS IN ITALY
Respect for yourself and for others

**Where**  Verona

**When**  January 2010 - December 2012

**Who**  male and female inmates in Montorio Prison, Verona

**Partner**  Montorio Prison, Local Health Authority ULSS 9 Scaligera

**Donor**  CSV – Centro Servizi per il Volontariato di Verona (Volunteer Service Centre), Banca Popolare of Verona

**Budget**  € 45,000

With financial support from CSV (Volunteer Service Centre) and the Banca Popolare of Verona, Doctors for Peace, in collaboration with the director of Montorio Prison and representatives of the local health Authority Azienda ULSS 9 Scaligera (formerly ULSS 20), started a pilot project for the prison community focusing on health issues and sexuality. Later, Doctors for Peace shared this experience in several schools in the city of Verona and in the province, holding meetings with students about health in jail.

Healthcare: a right for everyone?

**Where**  Verona

**When**  September 2013 - December 2015

**Who**  aspiring volunteers, public service workers, secondary schools

**Partner**  City of Verona, local health authority Azienda ULSS 9 Scaligera (formerly ULSS 20), Medici Volontari Italiani, CECOMET

**Donor**  Veneto Region

**Budget**  € 49,800

With a contribution from the Veneto Region and in collaboration with various partners, Doctors for Peace promoted a campaign to raise awareness and provide information about the right to health. Attention was drawn to the fact that some categories of citizens are discriminated against and denied access to local social and health services. In Italy, in Europe and throughout the world, the right to the health is not the same for everybody.
Healthcare for the Roma gypsy camp in Boscomantico

**Where**  Boscomantico (Verona)

**When**  September 2006 - February 2008

**Who**  150 Roma people

**Donor**  City of Verona

At the request of the Municipality of Verona, Doctors for Peace assumed responsibility for health problems and health and hygiene education in a Roma ethnic community (of mainly women and children), which until February 2008 was hosted at a serviced campsite in Boscomantico. Voluntary physicians from our association assisted Roma families by conducting free medical examinations every week in a mobile clinic set up in a container. This intervention resulted in a general improvement in health and a decrease in recourse to Emergency Room services, which is the only form of healthcare available to this marginalised population.

SOS Roma families

**Where**  Verona

**When**  September 2008 - ongoing

**Who**  30 Roma families

Doctors for Peace offers social and health support to a group of indigent Roma families, providing free specialist medical care.

Roma families are supported in preparing documents required for access to health services, education and welfare.

Doctors for Peace also helps children to study and adults to find jobs, and distributes any goods (such as clothes) that could be useful to these families.
Out-patient services for those not entitled to healthcare

- **Where**: Boscomantico (Verona)
- **When**: October 2008
- **Who**: people without healthcare
- **Partner**: Caritas Diocesana Veronese

In collaboration with the Diocesan organization Caritas of Verona, Doctors for Peace started a project to provide specialist healthcare in Verona. This allowed disadvantaged people access to qualified specialist diagnosis and therapy, and to receive medical and humanitarian help.

Since access to social and health services is denied to people without a medical card, indigent or marginalized people are accompanied to the Local Health Authority offices to prepare the documentation necessary to access basic health care.

Reinstatement of a programme to provide vaccination coverage to a Roma ethnic community of Romanian origin

- **Where**: Verona
- **When**: January 2010 - December 2012
- **Who**: 200 people, mainly minors
- **Partner**: local health authority Azienda ULSS 9 Scaligera (formerly ULSS 20)

For many Roma families, the closure of the Boscomantico campsite in 2008 meant the end of their relationship with vaccination centres and public health services.

In the Azienda ULSS 9 Scaligera (formerly ULSS 20) area, thanks to collaboration between Doctors for Peace and the Prevention Department, the problem was addressed from 2010 onwards by a targeted programme for Roma communities to promote and renew vaccination prophylaxis.

The project aimed to inform Romanian Roma families in Verona and raise awareness about contagious diseases and vaccination, while facilitating their access to health services.
Within the CCM 2012 project, which involved 5 Italian regions, Doctors for Peace played an operational role in the territory covered by local health authority Azienda ULSS 9 Scaligera (formerly ULSS 20). Thanks to previous experience, Doctors for Peace boosted vaccination prophylaxis and promoted cancer screening for the Roma and Sinti community. The intervention was effective, obtaining good results in vaccine coverage of minors, which increased from 30-40% to 70-75%, and in helping Roma and Sinti families to access health services more independently.

The aim of the project was to guarantee the standard vaccinations offered in the Veneto region, along with high priority preventive interventions, to homeless people and other groups considered “hard to reach” by facilitating their access to Azienda ULSS 9 Scaligera (formerly ULSS 20) health services.

An ad hoc project was set up for homeless people, while activity among the Roma and Sinti communities was a continuation of initiatives which began in 2010.

A campaign was started against tuberculosis among homeless people, through the administration of Mantoux tests and, where indicated, subsequent radiological investigation and treatment. In the last year of the project, diagnoses were made through chest X-rays taken by mobile radiological units at local canteens and homeless shelters.
SOS Families: fighting extreme poverty through a path of responsible citizenship

Where: Verona
When: July 2017 - June 2018
Who: 6 families living in extreme poverty
Donor: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Budget: €29,100

The SOS Families Project has contributed to tackling poverty (in the broadest sense of the word) and social marginalisation through empowerment of families, by enhancing relationships between individuals and small social groups and by developing solidarity behaviour. The solidarity tutor (an individual, a couple or a family) offered general support (free of charge) to one or more disadvantaged families through close collaboration with public and private institutions which implement interventions (in health and social services, in education, etc) for the benefit of individuals or families in need.

The one-to-one relationship which developed between the tutor and the family in difficulty has been an effective instrument for meeting needs not covered by public services (e.g. free time, the need for affection and a sense of belonging).

It guaranteed a global assumption of responsibility for the family and its members, on the basis of closeness and mutual help, and aimed to favour the greatest possible autonomy and to combat possible processes of marginalization.

A Supervision Committee made up of experts from Doctors for Peace gave full support to solidaritous tutors, sharing with them the planning of supportive measures. The tutors, monitored by the Supervision Committee, helped families to find sustainable solutions in any area - housing, employment, education and training, healthcare, administration - using a holistic approach to solve problems.
Combatting TB infection among the homeless population of Verona

Where: Verona
When: March 2019 – February 2020
Who: 100 homeless people
Donor: Cariverona Foundation
Budget: €22,500

Tuberculosis is a disease whose morbidity is fast decreasing in the general population, but whose prevalence among homeless people is still high due to their exposure to bad weather, overcrowding and poor hygienic conditions, along with the difficulty of accessing healthcare services. All these factors increase exposure to the disease and the possibility of infection.

The project aims to provide early diagnosis of tuberculosis in those spaces most commonly frequented by homeless people (soup kitchens, shelters, ...) in order to identify possible contagious subjects and to decrease the risk of infection by treating people who test positive for the disease.

A chest x-ray is the diagnostic method chosen for the project, as it can be carried out directly at the location where homeless people gather. The medical report is delivered to the patient in 10 to 15 days. If the results are positive or inconclusive, the patient is accompanied to public health facilities specialized in the diagnosis and treatment of infectious diseases.

In addition to diagnosing and accompanying them, the project provides health and hygiene training for those who are most at risk of infection and advises those who do not possess all the documents necessary to access public healthcare services.

Lastly, the project maps all the meeting points for homeless people in the city, the services provided to them by local associations and gathers and analyses epidemiologic data.
Since 2013, the project has offered qualified dental services to extremely poor people. The lack of dental hygiene in people who are marginalized or live in conditions of extreme poverty is often the cause of dental pathologies. The aim of “The right to smile” project is to prevent dental pathologies by offering dental treatments and oral hygiene education. Thanks to the work of a team of dentists, free check-ups are offered to categorize priorities and types of treatment. These individuals are taken to the dentist's office by Doctors for Peace volunteers who guarantee a correct relationship between doctor and patient.

The project was financed in 2013-2014 by CSV Verona and was able to continue thanks to Tavola Valdese in 2017 and thanks to Giorgio Zanotto Foundation in 2019.

The objective of the project is to guarantee dental health to refugees and asylum seekers hosted in Verona, during two phases: 1) dental health screening of all refugees hosted by partner associations; 2) dental treatments, offered according to the priority of problems detected.

The project reached 224 migrants and asylum seekers, offering 426 free dental examinations. Moreover, several education sessions on oral hygiene were conducted at local reception centres.
The objective of the project “The right to Smile for Elderly people” is to prevent and treat pathologies of the oral cavity among elderly people in the city and province of Verona who live in conditions of poverty and marginalization.

Elderly people with economic problems have difficulty taking care of their own health, and in particular, often have to do without dental check-ups and treatments.

Doctors for Peace had two main objectives: to prevent dental pathologies in children and to ensure the dental health of patients in need of treatment.

Doctors for Peace coordinated a team of dentists, who offered dental examination and treatment in their offices, by managing and booking appointments which were offered free of charge.
In Italy, in 2016, more than 12 million people avoided medical checkups because of their insufficient income. In order to better meet the needs of those who fall outside the welfare system, in Verona city and province, the *We Care* project has offered free social and health services to those who could not otherwise afford them. The services offered were the following:

- Vaccinations and medical screenings for those social groups who are considered hard to reach, especially homeless people and Roma and Sinti groups
- Specialist examinations (paediatric, cardiological, ophthalmic, dermatological, gynaecological, psychiatric, etc)
- Psychological support and counselling regarding family planning issues, with the aim of empowering women
- Dental care, dental prosthetics and oral hygiene education
- Forensic legal advice for asylum seekers or refugees who suffered torture, rape or other severe forms of violence (psychological, physical or sexual)
- Help for foreigners in the regularisation of their health documentation
- Training and awareness raising of beneficiaries regarding health topics and access to health services, also through cultural mediation
- Support for integration and autonomy through undertaking overall responsibility for vulnerable people, following principles of closeness and mutual help.
Awareness campaign “I do not fall”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where</th>
<th>Verona city and province</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>January 2013 - ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>3,000 elderly people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>City of Verona</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the patronage of the Municipality of Verona and in collaboration with several other municipalities in the province, along with centres for elderly people and with Auser associations, Doctors for Peace promotes a campaign to prevent falls among the elderly. Fractures because of falls are actually one of the principal causes of death in people over 65 years old.

Education about falls and identification and correction of risk factors can reduce the incidence among elderly people of these very serious accidents.

Music and theatre therapy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where</th>
<th>Verona</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>January 2015 - January 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>140 elderly people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>Conservatory of Verona &quot;Evaristo Felice Dall'Abaco&quot;, Le Betulle Centre for the Elderly, Gino Franzi Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2015 Doctors for Peace, in collaboration with 7 theatre companies coordinated by the Gino Franzi Company, proposed a series of 8 shows to residents of the Le Betulle Centre.

The spectators were given cognitive tests before and after the series of plays to evaluate the therapeutic effects of music and theatre, and to test the hypothesis that cognitive, sensory and emotional stimulation can contribute to slowing cognitive decline in elderly people.

The selection of shows aimed to improve the cognitive and socialisation skills of the spectators, so the series had a dual aim, both therapeutic and recreational. The committee of experts made up of neurologists, geriatricians and psychologists, collected and studied the results of the project.
In 2016, thanks to collaboration with the Conservatory of Verona, the music therapy project Musicare was carried out. The workshops were not limited to offering passive listening to pieces of music, but also involved active participation on 3 levels:

- emotional
- physical
- cognitive.

In 2017, the workshops continued in collaboration with the Conservatory of Verona "Evaristo Felice Dall'Abaco", thanks to funding by AGSM and AMIA, and in 2018-2019 thanks to funding by Cattolica Assicurazioni Foundation.

Active aging is possible thanks to preventive measures and the adoption of healthy lifestyles. Many pathologies, even serious ones, are preventable to some degree through the right lifestyle, which is made up of three aspects:

- nutrition
- physical exercise
- mental exercise

Changing one’s habits for the better can lead to a 30% increase in the quality of life and lifespan. It is worth remembering that it is easier to keep active and healthy than to become active later in life. For all these reasons, our volunteers inform the population of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, giving concrete examples of healthy habits and offering simple solutions to change one’s routine in order to improve one’s health today and stay healthier for longer.
Our partners

AiBi – Amici dei Bambini (Verona, Italia)
Amici del Mondo – World Friends (Roma, Italia e Nairobi, Kenya)
Associazione il Corallo (Verona, Italia)
Associazione Villa Buri (Verona, Italia)
Auser Volontariato Provinciale (Verona, Italia)
Azienda ULSS 9 Scaligera (Verona, Italia)
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Virtusvecomp (Verona, Italia)
Vita Virtus (Verona, Italia)
Women’s Foundation Nepal (Kathmandu, Nepal)
Zam Zam Medical Services (Nairobi, Kenya)
VOLUNTEERING
Doctors for Peace welcomes volunteers for the many activities in which it is possible to get involved to protect the right to health. Do not hesitate to call us for information!

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- Banca Intesa Sanpaolo | IBAN code: IT1500306909606100000165785
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