

AFGHANISTAN Programme October 1997 to June 1998: Honorary Country Director Professor David Southall

Between October 1997 and June 1998, MCAI, in collaboration with another international educational charity - Children in Crisis (CiC), worked in Afghanistan at the Indira Ghandi Children's Hospital in Kabul (see a medical publication on our reflections on healthcare for women and children in Afghanistan in the Armed Conflict section of our publications on this website for further details)

Throughout this project MCAI had the support of the Ministry of Public Health of the Taleban Administration and the Directors of the hospital.

MCAI and CiC improved conditions in the three most neglected wards in the Indira Ghandi Hospital: the ward for critically ill children, the neonatal unit, and the ear, nose, and throat ward. New mattresses and sheets were bought at the local bazaar; the ward furniture was cleaned and repainted. Afghani workmen re-wired the electrical system, repainted, and renovated the wards.

MCAI also provided some equipment for both the Indira Ghandi Children's Hospital and the Malalie Maternity Hospital (also in Kabul). Medical and surgical supplies sufficient for a 3 to 6 month period were also provided. Equipment included oxygen concentrators, pulse oximeters, nebulizers, glucometers, syringe pumps, a neonatal resuscitator, bag and mask resuscitation equipment, electrical and manual suction systems, a ventouse delivery system, incubators and basic surgical instruments.

Two ultrasound scanners were about to be delivered when the security situation deteriorated so that our international work in the country had to be suspended.

In April 1998, a full-time paediatrician from MCAI worked in the children's wards but also had to leave when the security deteriorated. (If security had remained stable, it was planned that two additional expatriate paediatricians and a female expatriate obstetrician from MCAI would have been working in Kabul from September 1998).



Only heating in the neonatal ward in the hospital



Infant in an incubator designed for animals (not working)



14 year old girl with probable appendicitis awaiting surgery

Orphaned sisters resident in the orphanage in Kabul

