PRESIDENT’S REPORT 2018
Harry Graham, President of Mission Without Borders

In Mark’s gospel we find one of Jesus’ great miracles. He takes the equivalent of one person’s lunch, and feeds a whole crowd with it! “And all ate and were filled: and they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces and of fish.” (Mark 6: 42-43).

Jesus took what was offered to him, blessed it and shared it abundantly.
We are immensely blessed as a Mission. And it is important to keep reflecting on the amazing impact our work has been able to achieve with relatively few resources, and to become better at seeing it for ourselves and telling those who support us.

As I look around at some of the reports of our work over the past year, the impact is truly amazing. The stories that you will read in this report are just a small selection and could be told over and over again in different settings.

The impact of all of these projects goes far beyond the immediate intervention by MWB. People are given the opportunity for better health, dignity and a future, which they in turn often repay many times over to the community and their country, thanks to the God who keeps on giving so abundantly. And we must never forget the contribution to that impact made by investment over the years, and our brilliant staff and volunteers around the world.

All this does not go on in isolation however. In my report last year, I spoke of how conflict and political tension has been amplified again, not just in Europe, but across the world, with borders hardening, refugees moving in large numbers, and cyber and physical terrorism a continuing threat. The deterioration in the West's relationship with Russia over the past year now adds to the uncertainty felt in many of our Field countries where persecution is on the rise again. The past year has been described as 'the deadliest' in Ukraine since the conflict began (now entering its fifth year), and for example, Ukraine Christian radio has now been banned by national channels, showing the need more than ever now for our work.

So it is important that we continue to review and evaluate our Field work – being honest about what is good and what might need to change. 2017 saw the complete transfer of the Gifts In Kind International warehouse from Rotterdam to Sibiu. This big change has presented its challenges, but has already proved a valuable step in better use of our resources.

Finally, may I return to what I said at the beginning: let’s celebrate together the abundant provision of God, and remember that this is His Mission not ours. So thank you to all our board members, international colleagues, managers, staff, volunteers, professional advisers and supporters – everyone involved in Christ’s Mission as we seek to reach people for Christ in Eastern Europe.
‘I felt helpless when winter came. But when you brought warm clothes and boots for my children, I was amazed.’
ANDREI’S STORY

Andrei was abandoned by his mother as a toddler and has always been neglected by his father. He lives in Victoria, a forgotten city in the heart of Romania. With its dormant factory and high levels of unemployment, children like Andrei are brought up in poverty – and have little confidence that life will ever change.

Pastor Timotei, himself an orphan, came to Victoria determined to reach people with the gospel – and bring the knowledge of God’s love to those who feel forgotten. After overcoming persecution and even death threats, today he leads a church in the city once known as ‘the atheist city’ because of its ban on all religion. And in partnership with MWB he supports 35 vulnerable children – including Andrei – through an After School project.

Andrei now receives a warm meal each day and has a safe place to do his homework. Instead of feeling neglected, he knows he is loved. Instead of feeling hopeless, he knows that his education and his future matter.

“I want to finish high school. Now I have the confidence that I can do things in life,” he says.

Pastor Timotei says, “You help us to stand in the gap and give these children affection and love. We will never stop supporting children in this city and telling them about the Good News of Jesus Christ.”

9,258
are supported through our child sponsorship programme
“Now I have the confidence that I can do things in life.”
VICTOR'S STORY

"I learned to beg from childhood," Victor says. "We had nothing to eat, and I had to go into the village and knock on people's doors and ask for bread. Some children threw stones at me and shouted: 'Beggar, beggar, don't play with him.'"

From begging on the streets, Victor and his four siblings were then sent to live in a children's institution by their desperately poor mother. On visits home, Victor's stepfather would beat him and force him to go out and steal.

The light in all the darkness was when MWB staff would visit the children's home where Victor lived. They read the Bible to the children and showed them care and affection.

"When I was 12 I got to go to Summer Camp and I gave my life to Jesus," Victor says. "Looking back, I never could have dreamed that my life would turn out how it has. The day when I was baptized became the happiest day in my life."

Today, Victor is a leader at Summer Camp — and is the perfect example to the children of how nothing is impossible for God — and how there is hope and a future for anyone who trusts Him.

"I want to show children God's love in the same way it was shown to me, and I want these children to know that there is a plan for their lives too," he says.
"I never could have dreamed that my life would turn out the way it has."

Victor who, after a difficult childhood, has become a Christian and volunteer at Summer Camp.
MATEA'S STORY

When Matea was nine years old, life looked hopeless. Her father was an abusive alcoholic and her family lived in poverty. When her parents went on to divorce, her mother was left to bring up three children alone - and struggled to meet her family’s needs.

MWB began to support the family - and seeing how bright the children were, saw the potential to especially support them in their education. Matea subsequently thrived at school and made it to university, achieving the highest grades and qualifying to become a communicationist. She has since spoken in Parliament and appeared on national TV discussing children’s rights in her country.

And Matea’s journey with MWB continued when, through a scholarship, MWB enabled her to study for a Masters degree. The little girl who once lived in poverty and fear is now a well-educated, happy young woman who loves volunteering at MWB’s Summer Camps.

“I know what it is like to live in poverty and to struggle,” she says. “My ambition has always been to make a difference to the lives of the most vulnerable children. I wanted to study for a Masters so that I could become more qualified and build my knowledge - and you helped me.

“Through education I can contribute to my local community and do what I love doing – making children laugh. My hope is to do all I can to bless future generations as you have blessed me.”