

# BD Volunteers Advance Health Equity in Under-Resourced Regions of Kosovo, North Macedonia and Eswatini

## **Company's Time-Honored Service Trips Enable Associate Volunteers to Provide Hands-On Skills Training for Health Care Workers and Support Health Infrastructure**

**FRANKLIN LAKES, N.J. (Dec. 5, 2023)** – Today, in recognition of International Volunteer Day 2023, leading global medical technology company, BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company) (NYSE: BDX), celebrates 18 years of its employee-centered volunteer service program which serves to expand access and address challenges of health equity in remote, under-resourced regions around the world. In 2023, the company partnered with Project HOPE and Heart to Heart International to execute two service trips to Kosovo and North Macedonia, and Eswatini.

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“The BD Volunteer Service Program gives us unique insight into challenges and health gaps faced by under-resourced health systems – and this guides our support and investments to further strengthen capacity and expand access to resources for these communities,” said Sien Avalos, director of Social Investing at BD, and vice president of the BD Foundation. “But we don’t do this alone. We partner with global humanitarian organizations like Project HOPE and Heart to Heart International, and together we address those challenges through a combination of training and education, expertise and hands-on infrastructure support. Above all, we are living BD’s Purpose by advancing health in these communities.”

### **Combating Infant Mortality in Kosovo and North Macedonia**

BD partnered with global humanitarian organization [Project HOPE](#) to deploy BD volunteers from eight countries to Kosovo and North Macedonia to train more than 600 health care professionals in specialized areas of perinatal and neonatal care. While onsite, BD volunteers worked with nurses and doctors to improve vascular access technique, implement infection prevention measures, improve neonatal respiratory care, and enhance digital systems for patient data collection.

The clinical training program for this service project was conducted as part of Project HOPE’s Perinatal Care in North Macedonia (PeriMAC) project, which aims to improve the quality of local medical care associated with childbirth. Globally, preterm birth, intrapartum-related complications (such as birth asphyxia or inability to breathe at birth), infections and birth defects are the leading causes of most neonatal deaths<sup>i</sup>. Since the start of PeriMAC, perinatal and neonatal mortality has dropped by 50 percent throughout, North Macedonia<sup>ii</sup>.

### **Reducing Non-Communicable Disease in Eswatini**

BD partnered with [Heart to Heart International](#) to enable training and education of approximately 100 nurses in Eswatini on non-communicable diseases (NCD). While on-site, nurses were trained to combat high rates of common NCDs, such as asthma and diabetes, which often go undiagnosed due to lack of resources. Additional training topics included infection prevention and women’s health.

Volunteers also helped complete the construction of a 19-room health clinic to support a more accessible health system located in a highly remote region of Eswatini which serves a population of 15,000. In this facility, nurses and personnel now provide HIV testing, counseling, and Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART) patient-tracking. They also provide child welfare follow-up, medical diagnosis and treatment, emergency births, remote outreach visits and referrals to regional hospitals. This health clinic includes the first maternity facility in this region and provides a clean and reliable water source for the clinic and its patients. The clinic was funded in part by BD, expanding on the company’s previous community investment in 2022 to support the development of housing for nurses.

### **Addressing Health Equity and Achieving Our Purpose Through Service**

Since 2005, BD employees from more than 30 countries and nearly 100 BD sites have come together on volunteer service trips to help advance patient care and health infrastructure in 13 low-and middle-income countries and under-served communities, including in Zambia, Ghana, Haiti, Cameroon, El Salvador, Peru, Papua

New Guinea, Mexico and the United States, in partnership with 11 non-governmental humanitarian partners.

BD's volunteer service program is aligned to the company's environmental, social and governance (ESG) strategy to advance company, human, planet and community health. For more information about BD's commitment to advancing access and addressing health equity, visit [bd.com](https://bd.com) [Link to health equity blog].

## About BD

BD is one of the largest global medical technology companies in the world and is advancing the world of health by improving medical discovery, diagnostics and the delivery of care. The company supports the heroes on the frontlines of health care by developing innovative technology, services and solutions that help advance both clinical therapy for patients and clinical process for health care providers. BD and its more than 70,000 employees have a passion and commitment to help enhance the safety and efficiency of clinicians' care delivery process, enable laboratory scientists to accurately detect disease and advance researchers' capabilities to develop the next generation of diagnostics and therapeutics. BD has a presence in virtually every country and partners with organizations around the world to address some of the most challenging global health issues. By working in close collaboration with customers, BD can help enhance outcomes, lower costs, increase efficiencies, improve safety and expand access to health care. For more information on BD, please visit [bd.com](https://bd.com) or connect with us on LinkedIn at [www.linkedin.com/company/bd1/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/bd1/) and Twitter [@BDandCo](https://twitter.com/BDandCo).

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<sup>i</sup> World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/levels-and-trends-in-child-mortality-report-2021>

<sup>ii</sup> "The health of mothers and children in the Republic of North Macedonia in 2022" according to the Program for active health care of mothers and children in the Republic of North Macedonia for 2023 (Official Gazette of RSM, February, 2023).

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