

Guest author

Geography empowers you, doc!

Asking a few geography questions can help treat a patient or a whole population. Here are some examples of how a geographical inquiry helped in this regard.

Tummy troubles

In 1990, while doing my PhD, I visited India in the summer for my fieldwork. Having lived in USA for over eight years, one of the joys of every visit to India was the delicious food I would enjoy. This trip was no different. Once summer was over and I returned to my university, my stomach started bothering me a week or so after my return. When over-the-counter medicines did not help, I decided to go to the health centre on our campus. After the nurse took my basic data, I was shown into the doctor's chamber where the doctor, a very elegant man, probably in his early 40s, walked in and greeted me with a smile. Instead of

poking or prodding me and examining me physically, he started chatting with me. "So, how do you pronounce your name," he asked me. I told him, and he tried to say it, getting it reasonably right. "Where are you from?" I told him India. "Ah, I see. I have never been there. Someday, I hope to. I have a lot of Indian doctor friends here," he told me.

"What seems to be bothering you? Tummy trouble? What are your symptoms?" He listened very attentively instead of merely writing out a prescription of some kind and asked me "Do you like American food?" "Yes, I love American food." "How about Indian food? Do you get to have Indian food often?" "Yeah, usually on weekends when I feel like cooking it. Otherwise, I have whatever American food I fancy." That's when he told me, "That's your problem. American food is not



C S Balachandran

healthy. Your body is used to all that good Indian food with spices, important nutrients and a lot of fibre which are all good for your digestion and health. Instead of having that, why are you eating unfamiliar American food. Just go back to making Indian food and eating it. Taking medicines for this is unnecessary. You'll be fine in a few days."

I followed his advice once I left from the clinic and true to his word, in three or four days, I was just fine!

Outbreaks and spreads

Whenever a disease spreads, geographical understanding is vital to

treating it and stopping its spread. This process, we hope, leads us to patient zero. Unless we understand the geographical connections of patient zero, it becomes very difficult to figure out how to address the deadly disease at the individual level (the current patient) and at the population level (because it spreads very quickly). In the mid-1990s, in a village near Mandya, Karnataka, India, a farmer who had been a healthy man all his life, suddenly developed strange symptoms, fell very ill, and passed away. The doctors diagnosed him with AIDS, caused by HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) which is transmitted in very specific ways. So, there was a geographical investigation ... where did he travel, did he go to any barber shop (tainted blades were one way by which HIV was supposed to spread), and so on. Eventually, they found

out that he frequently travelled to Bangalore for work. He seemed to have become infected by having risky sexual behaviour during his visits.

Geographer-doctor

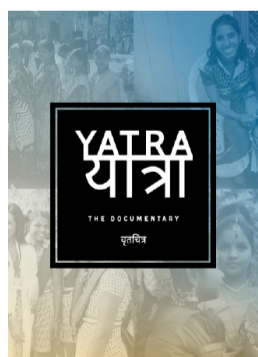
Whenever an epidemic breaks out, good geographical knowledge can make a huge difference. And if you are a doctor dealing with such a situation, you will be able to help more people by virtue of being geographically aware and using this awareness in your work.

Dr C S Balachandran is the founder and director of The Institute of Geographical Studies in Bangalore. A geographer with over 30 years of teaching experience in the USA and India, he started the institute aiming to popularise geography education in an innovative way. An earlier version of this was published in the Student Edition of the newspaper Deccan Herald.

Yatra: The documentary

Shadowing the 2018 AIPNO Medical Yatra in Vishakapatnam, a six member crew from India and USA captured the inspiring humanitarian mission that is now completing nearly 20 years of providing free medical services and education to India's most under served. Aarogya seva is proud to be the first official fiscal sponsor of this initiative and continue the several years of association with the AIPNO Yatra

The team is presently looking for: Philanthropic donors, Post-production talent, PR professionals and Telugu-to-English translators.



The documentary crew talking to schoolchildren during the 2018 AIPNO Medical Yatra in Vishakapatnam



Diyun, Arunachal Pradesh
Majuli, Assam
Ijeirong, Manipur

Each of our centers in the North East has a residential school with 200-1000 students. We have a permanent free clinic in Diyun for the last three years and are in the process of establishing the same in Majuli and Ijeorong as well. The centers are in rural, remote and hard to access areas where healthcare, sanitation and education are important needs.

OUR FOCUS AREAS



HEALTHCARE



SANITATION



EDUCATION

VOLUNTEER OR SUPPORT A CENTRE



DIYUN



MAJULI



IJEIRONG

Contact us at: volunteer@aarogyaseva.org

www.aarogyaseva.org
www.facebook.com/aarogyaseva

Intern blog

Prepping for Majuli



Angela and Dr Dayaprasad Kulkarni at Proto village in Andhra Pradesh

My name is Angela Tsuda and I'm a 24-year-old medicine student and e-NABLE volunteer from Brazil. I'll spend 5 months interning at Aarogya Seva, accompanying different medical specialties and contexts, learning about the healthcare system and primarily working on the Gift of the Hand project. I'm especially interested in low-cost med-tech solutions to approach underprivileged healthcare challenges. I'm certain this opportunity will allow me to grow so I can make a difference in my homeland

I've been gathering some resources for my trip to Majuli and thinking about what kind of activities I'll do with the children there. In my second year of college we did a hand washing awareness activity that was very fun where we would blindfold the children; pour some water-soluble paint on their hands and then ask them to wash it while still blindfolded. When they were finished, we would remove the blindfold and they would then see the parts that were not washed, since it would still have paint on it. It was a very fun exercise as some of the children would completely forget to wash their thumb or the back of the hand. After that we'd teach them how is the correct way and the importance of hand washing. I have been told that there is no running tap water in the village, so someone would have to pump it from a handpump while the others wash hands so it'll be an interesting group exercise. Besides the health-related activities, I will also help to set up a makerspace there. So, I'm also researching for the materials that would be good to bring there.

I have also been going to an integrative medicine centre twice a week where a combination of traditional and modern allopath-

ic techniques are used to treat various lifestyle related diseases. I marvelled to see a practical example of preventive and integrative medicine and I'm looking forward to accompanying more of their work during this month.

We have also been having training sessions with the MSRIT college-student volunteers in preparation of the first event as part of the IEEE Foundation Grant project and it has been challenging and fun.

This week I went to the M S Ramaiah college campus for the first time and I was amazed with its size and infrastructure. We had a meeting to discuss how the project will be conducted and are looking forward to the first event eagerly.

I have been missing the food back home, but I have luckily discovered a Japanese restaurant here which is my new favourite already.

I've also been experimenting with cooking here at Seva House and found it very hard to find tomato sauce in the normal supermarkets as for some reason only ketchup was available. I chanced upon a store named Food Hall where there are a lot of imported items and finally found what I was looking for!

TCS WORLD 10K MAY 27, 2018

#runforhealth

We are very excited to announce that Aarogya Seva is one of the listed CSOs in the TCS World 10K run, one of the most awaited runs of the year. Here are our supporters



Dr Jeevak Shetty



Sreehari G V



Poornima Sukumar



Pushpa Preeya



Dr Angela Tsuda



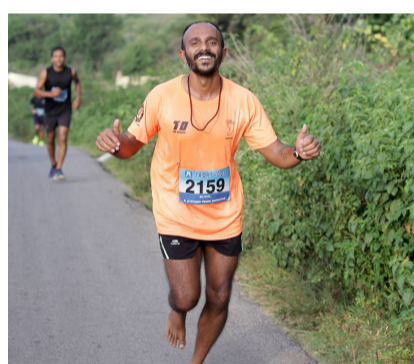
8-year-old Saara



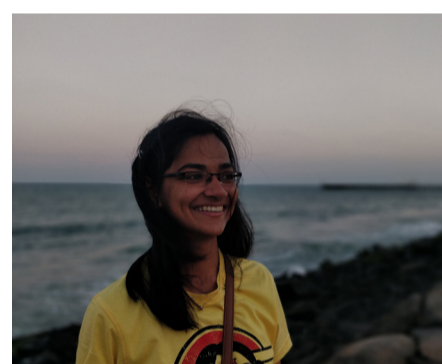
Shamaa



Dr Bhaskar Rajkumar



Sunil Gaikwad



Dr Ilhaam Ashraf



Purushotham

The IEEE Foundation Grant Project Begins!

Aarogya Seva's Gift of Hand project supported by the IEEE Foundation grant aims to make 3D printing technology accessible and available and use it as an avenue for solving real life global health challenges through community participation and micro volunteering.

To achieve this objective, 4 centres in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have been identified where 3D printers will be set up to create community innovation hubs through a series of training, mentoring and workshops. These centres will be involved in 3D printing upper limb prosthetics for distribution to amputee children in need. They will also work to identify, innovate and address problems faced by their community for which solutions are available through the use of 3D printing technology.



The Aarogya Seva team at Ramaiah Medical College

As a precursor to this, on 13th April 2018, a half day, hands on workshop on 3D printing was organised in M S Ramaiah Institute of technology, Bangalore in association with IEEE EMBS, IEEE Bangalore Chapter and Aarogya Seva. Run entirely by a dedicated team of student volunteers

who have undergone in house, hands on training for the past month, the objective of the event was to create awareness about the process and applications of 3D printing and pick the brains of young innovators regarding its seemingly endless possibilities in the field of humanitarian technology.

The sessions included a brief overview of the fundamentals of 3D printing, followed by workshops on 3D modelling, 3D printer trouble shooting, and 3D printed prosthetic hand assembly and the role micro volunteering can play in disseminating this knowledge and skill to communities in need.

With active participant engagement, meaningful dialogue and an atmosphere of curiosity, team spirit and excitement, the event was well received and was the first of several more field events that will take place over the course of the year as part of the IEEE Foundation Grant.

We are looking for volunteers to drive this movement and make a lasting impact on communities in need. To get involved, write to us at : volunteer@aarogyaseva.org

- **Akash P**
Student Core Team Volunteer

Volunteers of the month Marco and MiMi

Signature Soul (Marco & MiMi)

Signature Soul is made up of eclectic duo Marco Soulo & Signature MiMi. They facilitate creative expression labs and writing workshops that encourage participants to find and use their voice, especially for the greater good. They offer writing and performance feedback to aspiring artists and musicians interested in connecting deeper with their craft. They also provide creative consultation to groups and organisations in need of inspiration and guidance. They believe in sustaining an interdependent network of artistic activists, free-thinkers and community connectors who are dedicated to making their world more creative and peaceful. They have been collaborating with the Aarogya Seva team in Syracuse NY to hold spaces for Community Conversations around mental health and elements that affect overall well being. Signature Soul is passionate about creative expression and have been empowering participants to find and share their voice through creative outlets especially as a means of community-based healing. Marco and MiMi believe that teamwork makes dreams work. They believe in raising the collective consciousness of one soul at a time. They volunteer to contribute to the growth of the community as they have seen the magic that evolves when communities feel heard and empowered. They hope that by sharing their stories and experiences of service, others will feel moved to add to the greater good in ways they feel called to address.

The duo has been hosting spaces around New



MiMi and Marco

What does Seva mean to you?

*It means Hope for Humanity.
It means to share your gifts for
the greater good. It means end-
less gratitude and boundless
service to each other. It means
love & light always.*

York to talk about mental health. They are learning of the many ways mental health has been considered taboo in POC communities and they are trying to raise awareness about mental health especially inter-generationally. It has been a challenge for them to bridge-communication gaps within the city. Marco and MiMi plan to continue developing the Community Conversation series with Aarogya Seva and to connect more people and places to the mix. They are looking forward to address other elements connected to mental health and to expand on previous elements that have already been discussed. In addition, they are traveling to Ghana this summer with a group of high school girls from the Gage Girl Ambassadors Program.

MAY 2018

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY 13



Event: Workshop on 3D printing and its applications in humanitarian technology

Location: Seva House, Bangalore, India

For more details, visit
www.facebook.com/aarogyaseva
Email us at: events@aarogyaseva.org

MAY 20



Speak for Health Webinar Series -
Season 1, Episode 3

Topic: "Public Health Ethics in Practice"
Speaker: Prof. Sandra Lane

Time: 9.30 AM EST, 7.00 PM IST
Live Venue: Syracuse, NY, USA

www.aarogyaseva.speakforhealth.org

MAY 26



Community Conversations - Beyond the Binary

Time: 11AM - 2PM EDT
Venue: Syracuse, NY

RSVP: www.facebook.com/aarogyaseva

MAY 27



TCS WORLD 10K RUN

Time: 5AM - 12PM
Location: Kanteerva Stadium, Bangalore, India

To know more
www.icfn.in/tcsworld10k/AarogyaSeva/

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SEVA SUMMERS

SHADOW DOCTORS
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ELDERCARE

19 Feb 2017
515 patients
25 Doctors
40 volunteers
250 volunteer hours

3D PRINTING AND PROSTHETICS

INDIA RWANDA USA GHANA HAITI ONLINE

TECH4HEALTH HACK4HEALTH MAKE4SEVA

ART FOR

WWW.SEVERSUMMERS.AAROGYASEVA.ORG

EARTH DAY 2018

SPEAK FOR HEALTH
WEBINAR SEASON 1
EPISODE 2

"Health impacts of climate change and
how YOU as a volunteer can make a
difference"

PROF CHARLES T DRISCOLL JR

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