

HOPE

beyond borders

&

HEALING

beyond measure



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IMAGES:

(COVER) Musu, reconstructive plastic patient, with Dieke van Tuijl, volunteer nurse from The Netherlands. *See page 14 for Musu's story.*

(RIGHT) Dr. David Chong, volunteer maxillofacial/head and neck surgeon from Australia, mentors Dr. Nirina Adrien Mandrano, plastic surgeon from Madagascar, on board the *Africa Mercy*.



As we look back on 2025, I am reminded once again of our Lord's steady hand guiding Mercy Ships through another year of service, growth, and steadfast compassion. What we witnessed across Africa this year affirms that when we follow His leadership, lives are changed in ways we could never accomplish on our own.

This year, our two-vessel fleet continued to expand the reach of safe surgical care across the continent. The *Global Mercy* completed a full field service marked by renewed partnerships, transformative surgeries, and moments of deep spiritual healing. The commitment of her crew and volunteers who chose to serve far from home made it possible for families to experience surgeries they had long prayed for but could never access.

The *Africa Mercy* also continued her faithful work, returning to field service in Madagascar for Mercy Ships' fifth visit to the nation. Though the year brought its share of challenges, the crew met each one with humility, creativity, and resilience. Their dedication and perseverance ensured that patients in some of the world's most underserved communities received the care they deserved.

In 2025, we advanced our education and training initiatives with renewed purpose, laying the groundwork for impact that will endure far beyond the presence of our ships. We also deepened our partnerships on the ground, solidifying our long-term commitment and ensuring that our efforts align with national healthcare priorities. From university-level medical training to hospital-based mentorships and specialized programs in sterile processing, anesthesia, and more, our focus remained clear: to equip local healthcare professionals with the skills, confidence, and resources they need to provide excellent surgical care for generations to come.

As I look back on the year 2025, I am grateful for the privilege of serving as your Interim CEO while our board prayerfully searched for the leader God had prepared for us. It has been an honor to help guide the organization through this transition period and to support Dr. Michelle White, whose deep faith and long history with Mercy Ships uniquely qualify her for the role of Chief Executive Officer. As we head into 2026 together, I am confident God will continue to bless all your efforts in a new season of renewed impact of hope and healing.

Thank you for your sacrifices and continued commitment. The impact of your partnership is felt across many nations.

Gary Brown,
Chairman and Interim CEO

**MISSION**

Mercy Ships follows the 2,000-year-old model of Jesus, bringing hope and healing to the world's forgotten poor.

**VISION**

Mercy Ships uses hospital ships to transform lives and serve nations.

**VALUES**

- Love God
- Love and serve others
- Be people of integrity
- Strive for excellence in all we say and do

IMPACT SINCE 1978:

128,800+ LIFE-CHANGING SURGICAL PROCEDURES

588,800+ DENTAL PROCEDURES

56,500+ PROFESSIONALS TRAINED IN THEIR AREA OF EXPERTISE

2.92 million+ DIRECT BENEFICIARIES

OUR TWO-SHIP FLEET

THE WORLD'S LARGEST CIVILIAN HOSPITAL SHIPS

**The Global Mercy®**

- **6** operating theaters
- **199** patient beds
- **640** crew capacity
- **37,856** gross tonnage

**The Africa Mercy®**

- **5** operating theaters
- **85** patient beds
- **470** crew capacity
- **16,572** gross tonnage

Dear Friends,

Every year that passes, I remain humbled by the impact hope and healing have on so many. What began as a simple dream eventually became a ship that soon grew into a fleet where thousands of volunteers serve the underserved every year. Every day our mission continues to grow — reaching further, discovering new communities, while transforming lives and futures in ways none of us could have ever imagined.

For many of our patients, healing doesn't begin in the operating room. It starts with a gentle hug offered to someone who has been told they are unwanted, or in the quiet relief of a mother hearing that her child has a hopeful future. It begins with the simple assurance that they are seen, valued, and not alone.

This past year, we witnessed that truth again and again. We saw it in the laughter that filled the wards when 8-year-old Musu reached high for the first time in years. We saw it in the quiet dignity Farah discovered after surgery finally removed the tumor that had burdened him for so long. Their journeys tell a story far richer than any number or statistic could capture.

As you read through the following pages, we hope that you know these stories were made possible because of you and others who also believe in our mission and purpose. Your partnership crosses oceans and communities, empowering us to bring hope and healing, comfort and care to some of the world's most vulnerable.

Today, Musu, Farah, and thousands more can look to the future with confidence and joy, and communities can witness what is possible when hope meets action. Together, we are transforming lives, bringing healing that truly extends far beyond what we could have ever imagined.

Following the model of Jesus,

Don Stephens

Don Stephens
Founder/President Emeritus

Approach to IMPACT

In many parts of the world, especially low-resource countries, the burden of untreated surgical conditions is felt more deeply than anywhere else. In sub-Saharan Africa, the situation is dire: at least 90% of the population has no access to surgical care, and those who do are twice as likely to die from complications than in higher income regions.

Mercy Ships recognizes these critical gaps and partners with African nations to help bridge disparities. Our multifaceted approach begins with collaborative assessments to understand local needs and continues through direct medical services, education and training, and impact evaluation. This strategy aims to heal patients and strengthen local healthcare systems.

The focus extends beyond individual surgeries to include education and training for healthcare professionals. Partnering with providers to develop the skills and knowledge they need ensures that healing continues after a Mercy Ship departs, creating long-term sustainable change.

At the heart of Mercy Ships' efforts is a belief in the true power of transformation. When lives are transformed, so are communities and nations. Mercy Ships is actively building a future where healthcare is accessible and sustainable for generations to come.

DIRECT MEDICAL SERVICES

Direct Medical Services are designed to meet patients where they are, deploying hospital ships to African nations to provide free surgeries and dental services. The specialty surgical procedures offered are typically unavailable in the country, or simply inaccessible for many due to high costs and a limited surgical workforce.

Mercy Ships takes a whole-person approach to surgery, developing thorough pre- and post-operative care based on the patient's condition and specific needs. The design of the surgical schedule and selection of patients aims to ensure care is curative, independent of the local healthcare system.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Mercy Ships fosters long-term partnerships with nations by developing programs where there's a need for increased specialized training, such as:

- **Residency and fellowship rotations** in reconstructive plastic surgery, maxillofacial/head and neck surgery, anesthesia, and perioperative nursing.
- **On-ship clinical rotations** in the partner country's established training programs for surgery, anesthesia, and nursing.
- **Long-term partnerships and investments**, such as Université Gamal Abdel Nasser de Conakry in Guinea and Connaught Hospital in Sierra Leone.

Mercy Ships strives to create a world where those suffering from treatable conditions have access to quality, affordable medical and surgical treatment and whole-person care so they can reach their God-given potential.

Whether it's being able to return to school, having the ability to provide for their families, or simply being accepted by others, the impact extends far beyond surgery into families and entire communities.

IMAGES: (OPPOSITE PAGE) Hawa, a patient from Sierra Leone with a goiter; Hawa with Rosaline Sidratu Bundu, day crew, after surgery; Dr. Betelhem Hailu Belda, PAACS anesthesia resident, working through a mock airway procedure in the simulation room on the *Global Mercy* with Elaine Sigalet, volunteer simulation coordinator from Canada; Malagasy lab technicians study in the practical training room at the UGANC dental school.



HOPE beyond borders & HEALING beyond measure

In 2025, Mercy Ships' impact reached across communities and countries. Alongside thousands of life-changing surgeries, vital education and training programs supported long-term improvements to surgical and anesthesia systems. This year marked continued momentum toward lasting, sustainable impact.

Mercy Ships' two hospital ships were at the heart of this work. The *Global Mercy* continued serving Sierra Leone, while the *Africa Mercy* resumed operations in Madagascar, delivering critical surgical care and hands-on training to healthcare professionals on board. Thanks to collaboration with national partners, lives were transformed and healthcare systems changed for good.

The impact also reached beyond the ships and spanned Africa. Mercy Ships launched a number of new partnerships to further strengthen medical education and training, funded continent-wide surgical dialogue and diplomacy events, and supported critical healthcare infrastructure projects. In partner nations like Guinea, Mercy Ships also built upon existing relationships to deepen the impact of student sponsorships and surgical education programs. Off-ship initiatives ensured even more healthcare professionals are equipped to serve their communities with competence and confidence.

A defining moment of 2025 was the start of construction on a new hospital ship, the *Africa Mercy II*. Sister vessel to the *Global Mercy* and future successor to the *Africa Mercy*, the new ship will boost the organization's ability to provide life-changing surgical care and education across Africa for years to come. Made possible by a significant anchor donation from the MSC Foundation, the vessel is anticipated to enter service by 2029.

2025 stands as a reminder of what is possible when people of compassion, excellence, and faith come together to bring hope and healing.

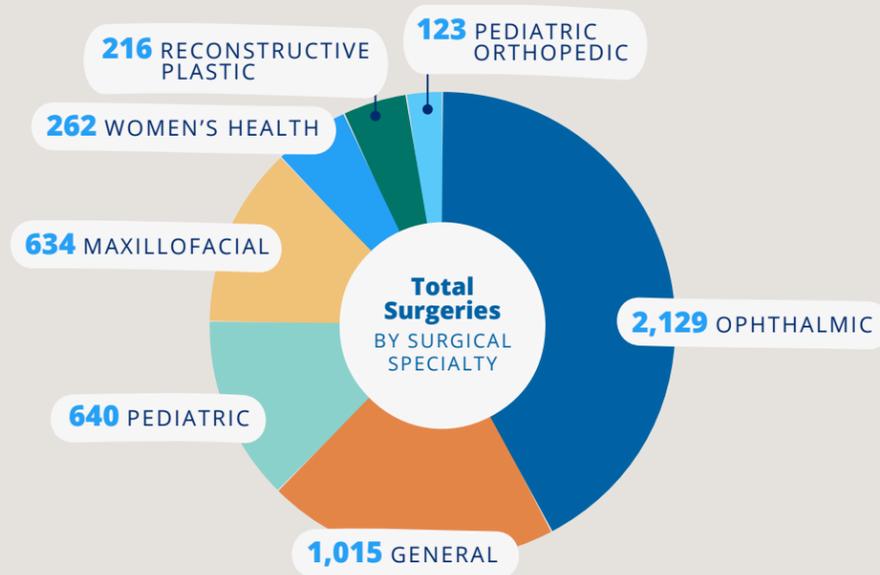


IMAGES: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) Abubakarr, reconstructive plastic patient from Sierra Leone, playing with Joanna Immendorfer, pediatric ICU nurse from the USA, in the hospital corridor; Bek Purcival, volunteer physical therapist from Australia, works with Adrien, reconstructive plastic patient, in rehab alongside Hosea Rakotondrafara, rehab day crew from Madagascar; Graduate Mohamed Bangura during the Nurse Anesthesia Diploma Swearing-In Ceremony, a multi-year program developed in partnership between Mercy Ships, the Ministry of Health and the University of Sierra Leone; Patients and crew during Celebration of Sight, an event to commemorate successful eye surgeries.

2025

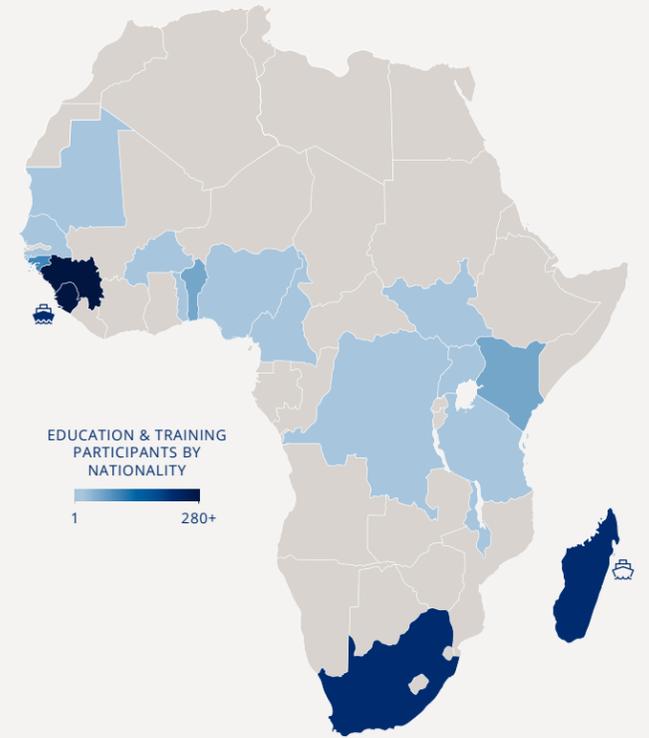
By the Numbers

DIRECT MEDICAL SERVICES



NOTE: A patient often has multiple procedures as part of a single surgery or dental visit and may also have multiple surgeries or dental visits.

EDUCATION & TRAINING



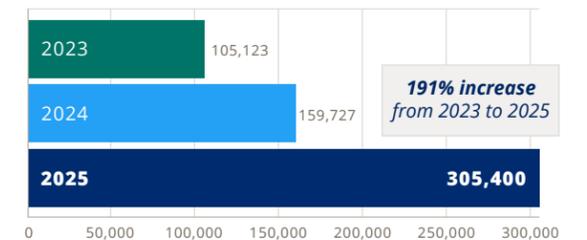
AFRICA'S SURGICAL FUTURE

In 2023, Mercy Ships expanded its education and training approach to include long-term investment in individual learners, reflecting the commitment to addressing Africa's critical shortage of specialized healthcare professionals. Access to specialized education remains limited due to scarce training programs and significant financial barriers. By sponsoring students over time, Mercy Ships helps remove these obstacles and strengthen pathways into specialized care.

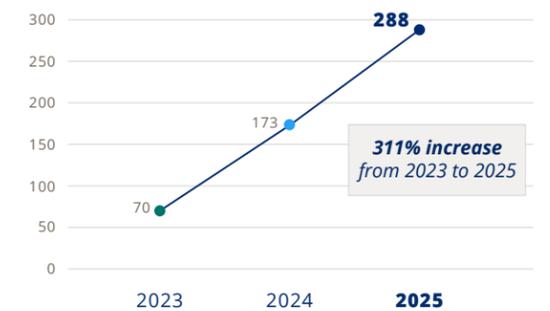
Alongside this, Mercy Ships is supporting current healthcare providers through continuing professional development, delivering immediate impact while building lasting sustainable capacity. As Africa's population grows rapidly, strengthening today's providers while investing in the next generation of specialists is vital to expanding access to safe surgical care across the continent.

NOTE: A participant may be involved in more than one education and training project.

Total Education & Training Hours



Average Hours of Training Per Participant





Patients, caregivers,
and crew celebrate
Christmas at the
Hope Center.

1,998

UNIQUE SURGICAL
PATIENTS

2,124

SURGERIES

3,071

SURGICAL
PROCEDURES

1,421

UNIQUE DENTAL
PATIENTS

2,348

DENTAL VISITS

6,231

DENTAL
PROCEDURES

386

UNIQUE EDUCATION &
TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

49,957

EDUCATION & TRAINING
PARTICIPANT HOURS

SIERRA LEONE

Global Mercy Field Service

"What [Mercy Ships] has done is give the government the breathing space to build capabilities, and ensure that even as we're building, we're filling the void of providing services. So, the ship has been a blessing to Sierra Leone, and we are eternally grateful."

DR. AUSTIN DEMBY,
MINISTER OF HEALTH
SIERRA LEONE

After another successful field service in Freetown completed in June 2025, the President of Sierra Leone invited the *Global Mercy* to return for a third consecutive visit. Taking place August 2025 through June 2026, this marked the eighth Mercy Ships field service to the country over the course of 30 years.

The need in Sierra Leone is great and the government remains committed to improving its healthcare system. To help achieve this goal, Mercy Ships provided surgical education and training programs alongside the Ministry of Health, the University of Sierra Leone, and Connaught Hospital. Many medical professionals grew their skills through practical mentorship on board. Meanwhile, the Safer Surgery program done in partnership with Connaught Hospital brought critical education to participants in areas like sterile processing, infection prevention, nursing, and physiotherapy. Support for dental education also continued through the sponsorship of Sierra Leonean dental students studying in Guinea.

Many patients received life-changing safe surgery across maxillofacial, pediatric, orthopedic, general, reconstructive plastic, and ophthalmic specialties. Skilled and dedicated crew on board the *Global Mercy*, including more than 300 Sierra Leonean national day crew members, brought healing to thousands this year.

Mercy Ships is thankful to partner with the Government of Sierra Leone to provide a positive, lasting impact for future generations.

MUSU'S STORY

From Pain To Possibility

Mamie was working when she received a call from her brother with news that every mother dreads: "Your daughter Musu was in an accident. Hot oil spilled on her." Mamie rushed Musu to the nearest hospital. After three months, she recovered but could no longer straighten her arm.

At just 8-years-old, scars stretched from Musu's face down to her fingers. Children would call her cruel names and at home, she was incapable of helping her mother. This sweet girl with a bright future was also being held back in school. Hope for healing faded, and Musu seemed to be fading along with it.

But when Mamie's sister told her about the *Global Mercy's* arrival in Sierra Leone, hope reappeared. "Musu was so happy," said Mamie. "She asked me, 'Mama, do you believe that they will be able to operate this hand?' I told her, let's leave everything to God."

After a three-hour surgery, Musu could move her left arm again for the first time in two years. The sight of her daughter stretching without restraint brought a new realization for Mamie as well. "God is the one doing everything. When He says yes, it's yes, and when He says no, it's no."

When Musu returned home, her healing was not only apparent to her own family, but also to her community. "She now comes to school regularly, moves around freely, and plays with her friends," shared her teacher, Samuel.

Her mother also holds renewed hope for Musu's future: "She wants to be a nurse, and I told her that I will support her."

IMAGES: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT)

Mamie and Musu before Musu's surgery; Dr. Toko Wilson, PAACS resident surgeon from Liberia, and Dr. John de Waal, reconstructive plastic surgeon from New Zealand operate on Musu; Musu at her school after surgery; Musu practices household tasks in rehab after surgery; Musu plays pretend nurse with Louisa Dunne, volunteer ward nurse from Australia.





FARAH'S STORY A Reason To Smile Again

For over 15 years, Farah, a 65-year-old farmer from Sierra Leone, lived with a painful tumor that began with a decayed tooth. After the tooth fell out, he was left with a persistent sore. He sought help any way he could, but his condition worsened. The sore grew into a large mass, forcing him to give up the work that supported his family.

When he heard about the *Global Mercy*, he knew it was his chance for healing. "[The] tumor was benign but had grown for more than a decade; something that would have been removed in minutes elsewhere," explained Dr. Georg Eggers, a volunteer surgeon from Germany.

After surgery, Farah's transformation was immediate. He finally claimed victory over the growth that had altered his life. When he returned home, his village gathered to celebrate. "I thought my father would die," said his daughter, "When I saw him [when he returned], I was surprised."

Today, Farah can live with dignity and hope. "I just have to say thank you to Mercy Ships. They've given me peace of mind."



IMAGES: Farah's village welcomes him home after surgery; Farah before and after surgery.

NURSE BETTY KOKER Turning Loss Into Lifesaving Care

For Betty Koker, nursing is more than a profession... it's a life purpose. Her journey began with heartbreak when she lost her mother due to medical negligence. "From there, I decided to become a nurse so that I can help people, especially children, not become orphans," she said.

That vow carried her to Freetown, where she earned a nursing qualification in 2016. Afterwards, she volunteered at Connaught Hospital until she was hired full time. Her compassion and determination quickly set her apart.

When Betty learned about the mentorship program at Connaught through Mercy Ships, she jumped at the opportunity. Under the guidance of volunteer nurse and mentor, Katie Henderson, Betty refined her skills, learning structured patient care protocols and emergency response techniques, strengthening her confidence and precision.

IMAGE: Nurse Betty Koker at Connaught Hospital.

Her time on board the *Global Mercy* expanded her hands-on experience even further from orthopedic rehabilitation to hands-on emergency simulations. But what resonated most was the culture of dedication and empathy she witnessed. "The main thing I've learned here is whatever you are doing, you should be compassionate about it," said Betty. "You should do it with love, confidence, and teamwork."

"There are things we were not doing before, but now we are putting them into practice, and it has helped a lot of patients."

At Connaught, Betty now applies her new skills daily, helping strengthen patient care and inspiring her colleagues to do the same. For her, the program provided more than training; it created lasting change in how care is delivered.

"We learned a lot. There are things we were not doing before, but now we are putting them into practice, and it has helped a lot of patients," she said.

Connaught Hospital SAFER SURGERY

"We want this training to contribute to strengthening the entire healthcare system in Sierra Leone and make sure that the nurses who will be trained during this period will not only serve in Freetown, but will go on to impact the entire healthcare system in the country."

MASSIAMI SOUMAHORO, PROGRAM OFFICER

At Freetown's Connaught Hospital, big changes were underway in 2025. Ongoing, multi-year training initiatives, all designed to deliver sustainable impact, strengthened the foundations of surgical care. Co-designed by Mercy Ships and Connaught Hospital leadership, the Safer Surgery Program enhanced surgical safety by improving nursing practice, infection prevention, and sterile processing standards, ensuring safer outcomes for patients.

NURSE MENTORSHIP

In 2025, the Nurse Mentorship project equipped surgical nurses through intensive four-week modules that blended classroom learning, simulations, and supervised ward practice. By focusing on patient assessment, infection prevention, wound care, and specialty surgical knowledge, the program strengthens the largest workforce in the hospital. Nurses bring these skills directly into their daily practice, driving improvements in pre- and post-operative care.

INFECTION PREVENTION

Through a partnership with Lifebox, the Infection Prevention component introduced the Clean Cut project to reduce surgical site infections. Teams received training in antibiotic timing, sterile field maintenance, instrument sterility, skin preparation, and use of the WHO Surgical Safety Checklist. By strengthening

essential processes and supporting data collection on patient outcomes, the project reduces infection rates without requiring major infrastructure upgrades.

STERILE PROCESSING

The Sterile Processing project, delivered in partnership with SPECT, trained hospital staff how to decontaminate, clean, inspect, and sterilize surgical instruments. Standardizing these procedures will help to reduce infection risk and equip participants to successfully train others.

PHYSIOTHERAPY

In addition to the Safer Surgery program, the Physiotherapy project brought Sierra Leonean physiotherapists to work alongside the *Global Mercy* rehabilitation teams to expand their clinical and technical skills. Building national rehabilitation capacity helps reduce disability, improve patient recovery and quality of life, and decrease long-term healthcare burdens.

These efforts are all part of a larger, long-term strategy for safer surgical care. By upskilling local professionals, strengthening systems, and fostering a culture of quality improvement, Safer Surgery at Connaught is laying the groundwork for lasting improvements in Sierra Leone and beyond.

Nurse Betty Koker cares for a patient at Connaught Hospital, under the mentorship of Katie Henderson, volunteer nurse from Great Britain.

**1,430**

UNIQUE SURGICAL PATIENTS

1,588

SURGERIES

2,472

TOTAL SURGICAL PROCEDURES

1,292

UNIQUE DENTAL PATIENTS

2,286

DENTAL VISITS

8,266

DENTAL PROCEDURES

169

UNIQUE EDUCATION & TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

23,825

EDUCATION & TRAINING PARTICIPANT HOURS

Pierre, reconstructive plastic patient, and crew celebrate his discharge from the hospital.

MADAGASCAR

Africa Mercy Field Service

"The surgery activity is not just a single event; it reflects the collective spirit of teamwork, compassion and excellence that defines all of us."

DR. CELESTINE VAVY RAZAFIARISOA,
REGIONAL HEALTH DIRECTOR
MADAGASCAR

In February 2025, the *Africa Mercy* returned to Madagascar for her second consecutive field service. This stay marked the fifth time Mercy Ships visited the island nation since 1996.

Throughout the year, Mercy Ships focused on providing direct medical services and expanding upon surgical education and training programs. Working with the Ministry of Health, Mercy Ships selected patients from multiple regions across Madagascar.

Crew on the *Africa Mercy* performed more than one thousand successful surgeries in areas like maxillofacial, ophthalmic, reconstructive plastic, pediatric orthopedic, and general surgery.

Hundreds of healthcare professionals received instruction in areas like comprehensive cleft care, clubfoot, and surgical and anesthesia training. Additional programs included Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons (PAACS) residency rotations and on-ship education for student nurses.

These initiatives meet participants where they are and equip them with essential skills to improve surgical conditions nationwide. These programs also make safe surgical care more accessible and support the long-term, sustainable development of Madagascar's surgical and anesthetic systems.

Lasting change is only possible thanks to the ongoing support of the Government of Madagascar, and Mercy Ships is grateful to continue the partnership into 2026.

ALFREDO'S STORY

Against All Odds, Alfredo Finds His Smile

When Alfredo was born, his family feared showing him to his mother because of his cleft lip. But when Doxie saw him, she was overcome with love. As a first-time mother, she vowed to do everything she could for her baby. "I said to the Lord, 'What should I do for this baby since you have given him to me?'"

After she heard about Mercy Ships from a midwife, she carried Alfredo to the Mercy Ships screening center in hopes of finding healing for her son. The medical team explained that, at just a few days old, Alfredo was still too small for surgery and needed time to grow stronger, and they gave her an appointment date to return.

Doxie returned to her village with guidance on his feeding from the medical team. As they waited, she did everything she could to help Alfredo gain strength. Due to his cleft, he could not latch and breastfeed properly, so she relied on formula to nourish him. But she could not afford the formula for long. Without consistent access to nutrition, Alfredo grew weaker. He was thin and fragile when she made the journey back to the *Africa Mercy*.

When the team met the 6-month-old, he only weighed 5 lbs. 11 oz. Surgery was too risky, so he was placed on the Mercy Ships infant feeding program, which gives malnourished babies the sustenance they need to safely receive care. Alfredo received specialized nutrition and close medical support to help him gain weight. As Alfredo grew stronger, he was finally ready for his life-changing surgery.

Today, Alfredo's cleft lip is healed and Doxie is at ease about his future: "My wish for him is that he will study like every other kid and have a better future." A future that was made possible by a mother's love and the hands of mercy.

IMAGES: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) Doxie and Alfredo (6 months old) before beginning the Infant Feeding Program; Alfredo at one year old, now healthy enough for surgery; Dr. Emmanuel Kyobe, PAACS resident from Uganda and Dr. Stavan Patel, volunteer maxillofacial surgeon from the USA, examine Alfredo during ward rounds; Alfredo after surgery with Alana Donkin, volunteer ward nurse from New Zealand; Alfredo (18 months old), fully healed after surgery.





One Path, Two Chapters

HOW TRAINING HELPED BROTHERS WALK FORWARD

At Hôpital Analankininina in Toamasina, two brothers sat side by side, their legs wrapped in white casts. Born with the same condition, they shared a journey shaped by two moments in time.

Both boys were born with clubfoot, a congenital condition that causes a child's feet to twist inward and downward. Without treatment, walking is often painful and limited. When the older brother, Fanirisoa, was born, his parents couldn't access specialized care, so they tried traditional massage and bandaging. While there was some improvement, walking remained a struggle.

When Vonjy was born with the same condition, the family's worries grew. "Before, walking was painful for them," their father said. "They used to cry and say, 'It hurts.'" In their community, the boys were sometimes given nicknames because of how they walked. Their parents stayed silent: "That was just how things were."

Hope came through a radio announcement. After hearing about Mercy Ships, the family traveled from their home near Antananarivo to a screening in Toamasina, where their story became part of a much bigger legacy.

Mercy Ships began supporting clubfoot care in Madagascar in 2015, mentoring local teams in the Ponseti method, a gentle, evidence-based approach using weekly casting, careful manipulation, and, when needed, a small surgical procedure. The first mentoring program focused on babies and young children, training Malagasy health professionals to provide long-term care.

Dr. Saholy Razafindranaly, a Malagasy general practitioner and Ponseti trainer, remembers the beginning clearly. "2015 marked the start of clubfoot treatment using the Ponseti method here in Madagascar, with support from Mercy Ships," she said. Since then, she estimated that more than 3,000 children had been treated and healed.

When Mercy Ships left in 2016, the work continued. Through partnerships with the Ministry of Health and organizations like MiracleFeet, clubfoot clinics spread across the country. Despite challenges like long travel distances and too few specialists, Malagasy clinicians continued providing care year after year.

Vonjy's treatment reflected that success. He was treated entirely by Malagasy health professionals

at a Ponseti clinic established through that original training. His care was the outcome of a program that prioritized sustainability from the start.

Fanirisoa's care, however, represented a new chapter. While Madagascar had a strong national clubfoot program, many children missed early treatment. As they grew older, untreated clubfoot became more complex to manage.

When Mercy Ships returned in 2025, the organization launched a new Clubfoot Mentoring Project under the leadership of Nick Veltjens, the physiotherapist who led the 2015–2016 efforts. The focus was on strengthening care, especially for older children, and mentoring clinicians who could carry this work forward for the next generation.

"When you see a child improving, and at the same time you see a local team gaining confidence...that's sustainability. The treatment will finish, but the knowledge will stay," said Veltjens.

IMAGES: (OPPOSITE PAGE) Dr. Saholy (left) removes one of Fanirisoa's casts; (ABOVE) Fanirisoa and Vonjy with their parents after their surgeries.

The principles of the Ponseti method remained the same, but treatment took longer and needed greater expertise. Weeks of casting gradually stretched stiff feet, reducing the need for invasive surgery and improving outcomes.

For Fanirisoa, that meant careful correction, a small but crucial procedure, and close follow-up. For the clinicians, it meant hands-on mentoring to gain skills and build confidence.

For the boys' father, the impact was already clear. "Now their feet are straight, and they can walk normally," he said. "They can do everything the others can do."

Two brothers, treated side by side, carried the impact of two moments in time: one shaped by training planted ten years earlier, and the other helping to train what came next. Their story reflects what's possible when care is locally led, knowledge is passed on, and hope is built to last.

"When you see a child improving, and at the same time you see a local team gaining confidence...that's sustainability. The treatment will finish, but the knowledge will stay."

SENEGAL

GUINEA

TOGO



GHANA

ACROSS AFRICA

Hope Beyond Borders

SOUTH AFRICA



Mercy Ships' work across Africa throughout 2025 was shaped by long-term partnerships, local leadership, and a shared vision for stronger, more accessible healthcare systems. In multiple countries, ongoing education and training programs continued to meet urgent surgical needs and invest in lasting, sustainable solutions.

At the heart of this strategy is a commitment to close critical gaps in surgical care. Free, life-changing surgeries, while core to Mercy Ships' mission, represent just one part of a broader approach. Mercy Ships places equal emphasis on strengthening the people, institutions, and systems that make safe surgery possible.

Through sustained collaboration with ministries of health, hospitals, and local universities, Mercy Ships supports the training and professional development of surgeons, anesthetists, nurses, and other essential healthcare providers.

These investments build local capacity, expand access to safe care, and enable program graduates to return to their home countries to train others and serve their communities with greater skill and confidence. In addition, Mercy Ships is committed to strengthening systems through infrastructure renovation and construction projects, as well as providing equipment and equipment training, to ensure nations have the resources they need to offer quality care.

Over time, this integrated approach creates a multiplying effect. Patients regain health, providers gain expertise, hospitals improve standards of care, and countries move closer to self-sustaining surgical systems that can meet the needs of their people. Across the continent, Mercy Ships is honored to walk alongside nations and be part of supporting healing today and strengthening the healthcare systems of tomorrow.



2,404

UNIQUE DENTAL PATIENTS

5,097

DENTAL VISITS

17,366

DENTAL PROCEDURES

284

UNIQUE EDUCATION & TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

189,022

EDUCATION & TRAINING PARTICIPANT HOURS

IMAGES: Dr. Mariama Camara, Dr. Guirassy Il Mariama, Dr. Diallo Mariama Cire, and Dr. Soumah Yalikhathou, the first female general surgeons trained in Guinea.

GUINEA

Long-term Partnership

In 2025, the long-term partnership between Mercy Ships and the Université Gamal Abdel Nasser de Conakry (UGANC) expanded to sponsor more students from across Africa to receive dental and surgical training. Following the completion of a new clinical training space in late 2024, Mercy Ships increased the number of international students participating in UGANC programs. Students came from across the region, including Madagascar, Benin, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, and more.

HANDS-ON TRAINING WITH REGIONAL IMPACT

The partnership supported clinical training, administrative systems, and pedagogical guidance for UGANC's dental curriculum, alongside surgical and anesthesia programs. Dental students and recent graduates received simulation-based and hands-on training while also providing basic oral health education to patients and caregivers.

"These growing partnerships with other countries are an important part of what we do," said David Ugai, Mercy Ships Country Director for Guinea. "Some students come because they don't have dental schools in their own countries. Others come for one year, and we sponsor their residencies so they can return home as future educators."



EXPANDING SURGICAL EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

Since 2024, Mercy Ships has partnered with the Faculté de Sciences et Techniques de la Santé (FSTS) to support their existing suite of surgical education programs, including anesthesia, general and visceral surgery, ENT, plastic and orthopedic surgery, trauma, neurosurgery, pediatric surgery, OB-GYN, and urology.

This year, the medical education sponsorship program broke new ground in Guinea as four participants earned their diplomas of specialization, becoming the first female general surgeons trained in-country. "Their achievements mark a historic turning point, and we are honored to have supported these leaders as they step forward as specialists in general and visceral surgery, inspiring others to follow their path," said Estelle Mouadeu Toualeu, Mercy Ships Medical Education Sponsorship Manager. Mercy Ships also supported them to do international internships to broaden their experience in Morocco, Tunisia, and France.

BUILDING FACULTY FOR THE FUTURE

Beyond technical instruction, these partnerships emphasize faculty

development, curriculum strengthening, and practical simulation. By sponsoring future educators and supporting specialty-specific training, Mercy Ships continued to invest in sustainable surgical systems and local capacity.

"There are significant gaps in the surgical workforce across Africa," Ugai said. "Without strong surgical education programs, those gaps will widen as the population grows."

RENOVATING FACULTÉ DE SCIENCES ET TECHNIQUES DE LA SANTÉ (FSTS)

Mirroring its collaboration with Gamal's Dental School, Mercy Ships grew its partnership with FSTS, which houses the UGANC Departments of Nursing and Medicine. In late 2025, candidates were selected to participate in the UGANC FSTS Faculty Development project, which encompasses a range of master's degrees in the medicine, nursing, and pedagogy fields.

As part of this partnership, Mercy Ships also launched a key infrastructure project. Renovations began for what will become a new Faculty of Science Simulation Center, to be completed in 2026.

IMAGE: A dental student and Dr. Ana Filipa, Mercy Ships education and training program officer, treat a patient in the UGANC clinic.

MEDICAL EDUCATION

Sponsorships

Mercy Ships partnered with universities in 13 African nations to sponsor students for specialized education in dentistry, surgery, anesthesia, nursing, biomedical engineering, and ancillary services. Students received training through various specialized medical partnerships, including UGANC in Guinea and PAACS. These projects are managed by the Mercy Ships Guinea country team. The Medical Education Sponsorship Program aims to:

- Create specialists that can go on to become educators.
- Support faculty who can strengthen health professions education programs.
- Grow the specialized workforce in underrepresented and under-resourced specialties and geographical regions.

The vision is big and the journey's only beginning. Moving forward, Mercy Ships plans to continue building new partnerships with universities and institutions across Africa so that more students can receive specialized education. Mercy Ships intentionally selects programs in Africa so students can receive context-relevant education, promoting the growth and development of existing specialization programs.



"This training program, made possible through the sponsorship of Mercy Ships, has profoundly transformed the way I view orthodontic practice. It has enabled me to move beyond a purely technical approach and embrace a more holistic one, integrating quality of care, social responsibility, and a commitment to ongoing learning."

DR. AMADOU OURY DIALLO
RESIDENT IN ORTHODONTICS

	UNIQUE MEDICAL ED. PARTICIPANTS	MEDICAL ED. PARTICIPANT HOURS
GUINEA*	60	87,544
SIERRA LEONE†	16	19,207
GUINEA-BISSAU	12	10,137
MADAGASCAR‡	10	13,308
BENIN	9	9,527
KENYA	3	9,792
MAURITANIA	3	864
CAMEROON	2	4,035
TANZANIA	1	3,264
BURKINA FASO	1	632
SOUTH SUDAN§	1	116
UGANDA§	1	116

Data is included in the following totals: *Guinea (pg 28), †Sierra Leone (pg 12), ‡Madagascar (pg 20), § South Africa (pg 32)



TOGO

In 2025, Mercy Ships began partnering with the University of Lomé to advance dental education in Togo. This multi-year project aims to increase the number of qualified Togolese dentists through infrastructure improvements to equip the dental clinic and simulation space.

Mercy Ships also continued supporting surgeon mentoring through Lumière Divine, the NGO founded by Dr. Abram Wodomé, Mercy Ships Ophthalmic Specialty Consultant.

In addition, Mercy Ships sponsored 1,000 cataract surgeries in northern and rural Togo through the Christian NGO, Sight.org. These efforts will help improve access to ophthalmic surgical care in the region for years to come.

IMAGE: Dr. Nestor Avia from Sight.org performs surgery at a clinic in Elavagnon, Togo.



897
UNIQUE SURGICAL PATIENTS

1,073
SURGERIES

1,075
SURGICAL PROCEDURES

5
UNIQUE TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

619
TRAINING PARTICIPANT HOURS

MADAGASCAR

229
UNIQUE SURGICAL PATIENTS

234
SURGERIES

242
SURGICAL PROCEDURES

MADAGASCAR & SIERRA LEONE



Freedom From Fistula is a key long-term partner of Mercy Ships, providing free fistula surgeries and free maternity care to ensure safe childbirth. In 2025, Mercy Ships supported the organization by funding surgeries at the Madagascar obstetric fistula clinic, which Mercy Ships supported the establishment of in 2015.

In Sierra Leone, Mercy Ships provided funding for pediatric consultations at the Aberdeen Women's Center, which was built and established by Mercy Ships in 2005. This ongoing partnership has been instrumental in transforming the lives of women and girls across Africa.

186
UNIQUE TRAINING
PARTICIPANTS

3,725
TRAINING
PARTICIPANT
HOURS

SOUTH AFRICA

In 2025, Mercy Ships continued to work with local healthcare professionals to strengthen surgical and anesthesia systems across South Africa as part of an enduring, ongoing partnership. Mercy Ships furthered this mission by supporting the Society of Anesthesiologists of South Africa (SASA) to deliver SAFE Anesthesia courses nationwide. This included SAFE Paediatrics and SAFE Obstetrics. Several courses also featured a “Training the Trainer” component, which equipped participants to pass on their knowledge by training others in the same material.



GHANA

Mercy Ships provided funding and content for the Ghana Surgical Dialogue 2025. This was a prominent national-level forum where key leaders gathered to support the government’s efforts to enhance surgical, obstetric, trauma, and anesthetic care.

In addition, Mercy Ships has been in Ghana conducting local assessments in preparation for the *Global Mercy*’s arrival to the Port of Tema for field service in 2026.



SENEGAL

In 2025, Mercy Ships began supporting the Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar’s (UCAD) dental school expansion. This partnership strives to increase training capacity so that more students can receive high-quality instruction. Mercy Ships’ investment in the dental school includes providing prosthodontics equipment, addressing the need to enhance specialized instruction. In addition, Mercy Ships procured medical simulation equipment to donate to the university’s simulation center, allowing more students to receive high quality theoretical and practical instruction.

Dakar is also home to the Mercy Ships Africa Service Center, a strategic base that supports the organization’s operations, enhances logistics, and fosters relationships with local communities and government partners across Africa.

PAN-AFRICA

Healthcare Diplomacy

NATIONAL SURGICAL, OBSTETRIC, AND ANESTHESIA PLAN (NSOAP)

In 2025, Sierra Leone launched its NSOAP (2026-2030) in collaboration with partners like Mercy Ships. Led by the Ministry of Health, the plan demonstrates the government’s commitment to strengthening the country’s surgical care. This actionable and measurable plan will provide a strategic roadmap to expand access to safe, timely, and affordable surgical care nationwide, while also leading to improved coordination and accountability.

Mercy Ships also supported NSOAP development in Ghana, and is now part of the nation’s NSOAP implementation committee. Together, these resolutions are designed to deliver lasting, Africa-led solutions for surgical care.

AFRICAN DENTAL EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM

In Morocco, deans, program directors, and faculty from across Africa gathered for the inaugural African Dental Education Symposium. The event culminated in the launch of the African Education Dental Association (AEDA), the continent’s first collaborative association committed to advancing dental education.

Supported by Mercy Ships, the symposium assembled Africa’s dental educators, committed to building stronger academic programs, sharing resources, and increasing access to training across borders. Inspired by similar associations in the United States and Europe, the AEDA supports curriculum development, faculty exchange, and student training, while advocating for stronger dental health systems in Africa.

As partnerships deepen, this collaboration marks a hopeful turning point for the future of dental care across Africa.



PAN-AFRICAN SURGICAL HEALTHCARE FORUM (PASHEF)

In 2025, Mercy Ships advanced Pan-Africa Diplomacy efforts by helping African leaders turn political commitment into practical action. This included partnering with Smile Train to fund PASHeF, now in its third year and firmly established as a continental platform where solutions are shaped for Africa, by Africa.

In attendance was the African Union, the Africa Center for Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), and representatives from 42 Ministries of Health and Finance. The forum focused on showcasing scalable national models, innovative financing approaches, and collaborative pathways to strengthen surgical, obstetric, and anesthetic care.

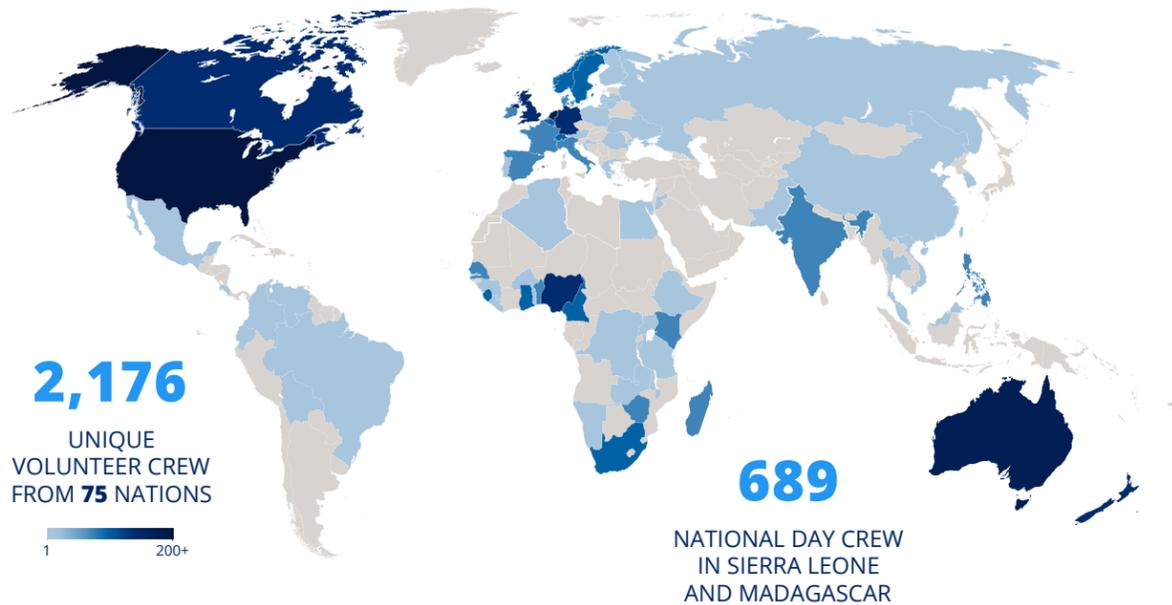
The formal strengthening of partnership with the Africa CDC marked another milestone. As the African Union’s technical health arm, the Africa CDC is positioned to elevate PASHeF priorities onto the AU agenda and support implementation at scale.

IMAGE:

Dr. Mustapha Kabba, Sierra Leone’s Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Clinical Services in the Ministry of Health, presents at PASHeF.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Serving with Purpose



Mercy Ships volunteers are the heartbeat of the organization. They come from around the world, selflessly donating their time and expertise to provide life-changing medical care to those who need it most. Without them, the hospital ships wouldn't be able to operate. Year after year, they lead by example and live out the 2,000-year-old model of Jesus. Mercy Ships is forever grateful for our generous and compassionate volunteers.



The volunteer crew of the *Global Mercy*.



BECKY CHAPLIN: **Once Rescued, Now a Rescuer**

"I'm joyful and bubbly. I love to laugh. I care a lot about people. I like to be creative, and I love the Lord."

That's how Becky Chaplin, volunteer Rehab Team Leader on the *Global Mercy*, introduces herself. Her story is one of faith and a lifelong dream fulfilled: hope and healing that truly goes beyond borders.

Becky's journey began in Kenya, where, as a newborn, she was found by a veterinarian who felt a divine prompting to check a roadside bag. "I think God was looking after me and sent a voice to the vet to find me," she said. Adopted at 7 weeks old by a missionary couple from the UK, Becky grew up surrounded by faith and compassion. "Mum said when she picked me up, she felt God was saying, 'this is your daughter.'"

Living in the UK but identifying as both Kenyan and British, Becky has always been drawn back to Africa. "I've always had a heart to come back to an African country," she shared. "I wanted to do it once I had the skill or experience to be able to help."

IMAGES:

Becky in the rehab clinic on board the *Global Mercy*; Becky works with a patient in rehab.

While earning her master's, she was researching occupational therapists working in low-income countries when Mercy Ships popped up. A few years later, she eagerly applied to volunteer.

Today, Becky is not just serving patients, she's also teaching recent physiotherapy graduates essential skills so they can help even more people in their communities. She began supporting their education on board the ship and now, she leads the Physiotherapy Project at Connaught Hospital in Sierra Leone.

Serving with Mercy Ships has even deepened her faith and leadership. "Mercy Ships has had a big impact on helping me grow and become more of a leader," Becky said. "It's amazing to be in a place where you get to live out your faith openly."

Becky sees her role not only as physical restoration but as spiritual encouragement. She believes that each patient is seen and loved by God. "If you want something that's enriching, pushes you, and grows you, then it's for you," she advises future volunteers. "Just step out in faith and you won't be disappointed!"

"Mercy Ships has had a big impact on helping me grow and become more of a leader ... It's amazing to be in a place where you get to live out your faith openly."

EMMANUEL NWAJI Guided by Faith & Service

When Nigerian-born Emmanuel Nwaji set sail on his first vessel, he never imagined what adventure his skills would take him on. Today, as Second Officer on board the *Global Mercy*, Emmanuel ensures safe navigation and oversees training on the world's largest civilian hospital ship.

Emmanuel's father hoped he'd become a doctor. Instead, a government scholarship redirected his path to study nautical science in Egypt, launching a maritime career that would take him across oceans and through countless ports.

Years later, Emmanuel traded his commercial career for Mercy Ships. His first experience was on board the *Africa Mercy*. "On a commercial vessel, you work for money, and your goal is your career. But with Mercy Ships, there's a better reward. There's this fulfillment you get knowing that you're a part of something bigger." He became so passionate about serving that he extended his commitment.

He was also drawn by the organization's faith-based mission and impact across Africa. "Mercy Ships



made me really see the need in Africa. I'm happy this is happening in Africa, and I get to be a part of it," he said.

Now serving alongside his wife, Sophia, who volunteers as Crew Banker, Emmanuel finds joy in both his work and their shared purpose.

As an African officer helping steer a hospital ship serving his own continent, Emmanuel's story comes full circle. He may not be wearing a white coat, but he's helping change lives.

"I definitely recommend serving with Mercy Ships to other seafarers, even if it's just one time," Emmanuel urged. "It has a way of changing your outlook on how the maritime industry should operate."

SHIRLY DEBOER: A Lifetime of Caring



From Tasmania, Australia, to Papua New Guinea, and Senegal to the decks of the *Africa Mercy*, nurse Shirly De Boer has spent five decades serving across the globe. Known fondly as "Aunty Shirly," she now cares for pediatric patients on board, continuing a dream sparked at age ten when she saw a photo of a child in need.

"I've been nursing for 50 years, and I have loved every bit of my nursing career," she said. "It's something that as a child I wanted to do, and I think God has prepared me for that role in my life."

While working in remote areas, often as the only healthcare provider, Shirly delivered babies, performed skin grafts, and even tended to animals when no vet was available. Her faith and resilience have inspired countless others.

She first heard about Mercy Ships in Senegal in 1992. Decades later, when the opportunity arose to volunteer, she sold her caravan, car, and calves to serve on board the *Africa Mercy*. "I thought maybe coming to Mercy Ships would be a lovely way to finish my nursing career."

Now, mentoring younger nurses and photographing moments of hope, Shirly is a living testimony to one powerful truth: it's never too late to provide hope and healing!

ESG INITIATIVES

Environmental, Social, and Governance

In 2025, Mercy Ships continued building upon its commitment to leave a lasting impact on the health of people and communities in sub-Saharan Africa, using its state-of-the-art hospital ships in close collaboration with local partners and stakeholders. In the spirit of the organization's core values to strive for excellence across all areas of operations, Mercy Ships is committed to upholding the highest Environmental, Social, and Governance standards.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Each Mercy Ships vessel meets international safety and environmental standards and regulations, such as the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), the main international convention covering prevention of pollution of the marine environment by ships. To maintain optimum safety and efficiency, the ships and their operations are managed in accordance with the International Safety Management (ISM) Code and the classification requirements of Lloyd's Register.

The *Global Mercy* was built with energy efficiency as a major component of her design. It lays a roadmap for Mercy Ships' commitment to operating eco-friendly vessels into the future, expanding the organization's positive impact on partner nations while minimizing the impact on the environment. Key features on board the vessel include modern and efficient systems that provide reliable power, clean water, and air conditioning for the hospital and crew, all of which reduce the ship's total energy consumption relative to earlier generation vessels.

SOCIAL

The core of the Mercy Ships mission is to tangibly improve the lives of individuals and communities through the delivery of direct

surgical services and education and training programs to its partner African nations. This transformative work is made possible by a crew of volunteers serving on board as well as staff working around the world, all of whom Mercy Ships is dedicated to supporting as they live out their mission.

Qualified, prepared, and mission-focused people are the hands and feet of Mercy Ships. In 2025, the organization began a multi-year strategy to improve the volunteer experience, ensuring long-term, sustainable volunteer staffing for Mercy Ships' programs. An organization-wide Gallup engagement survey resulted in management action plans aimed at improving workplace satisfaction, as well as volunteer and staff experience.

GOVERNANCE

Mercy Ships' governance model includes oversight from the Mercy Ships International Board of Directors consisting of men and women with diverse profiles from around the world. The Mercy Ships brand represents the headquarters in Garden Valley, Texas, a fleet of hospital ships operating in host countries in Africa, 16 affiliated independent charities around the world under the name Mercy Ships that raise funds and recruit volunteers to staff and run the hospital ships and related operations, and an Africa Service Center in Dakar, Senegal.

Each National Office is an independent charity organized under the laws of its respective country, has its own Board of Directors, and complies with each country's specific legislation for nonprofit NGOs. Mercy Ships currently operates a two-ship fleet consisting of the *Africa Mercy* and the *Global Mercy*, each of which is led by a Managing Director and management team that reports directly to Mercy Ships' executive leadership.



Tatsy, general surgery patient from Madagascar, holding a photo of himself before surgery.

LOOKING AHEAD

Healing Beyond Measure

A LETTER FROM MERCY SHIPS' CEO

As I step into this new role as CEO of Mercy Ships, I do so with deep gratitude and a sense of God's leading. This season has reminded me again of the extraordinary potential within our people, our partnerships, and our mission. Together, we look toward 2026 with great expectation as we aim to be best-in-class for our patients, our people, and our partners.

In 2026, the *Africa Mercy* will continue serving in Toamasina, Madagascar, deepening long-standing local healthcare partnerships through surgical care and expanded training. This next chapter allows us to keep building for greater impact, ensuring our work strengthens the foundations of surgical care for years to come.

Meanwhile, the *Global Mercy* will complete her third consecutive field service in Sierra Leone mid-year. After her annual maintenance period, she will sail to Ghana for Mercy Ships' fifth visit to the nation since 1991. Building on a long and trusted relationship, this next field service will focus on providing safe surgical care while strengthening local healthcare systems through training and collaboration with national partners.

Across the continent, we will continue advancing our work in Guinea through our partnership with Université Gamal Abdel Nasser de Conakry, expanding dental, anesthetic, and surgical training programs that contribute to long-term national capacity.

As we prepare for the coming year, we will lean into strengthening our internal systems and the stewardship that supports our mission so that both those we serve, and those who serve with us can flourish and reach their God-given potential.

We invite you to join us in prayer for the volunteers who will fill and fuel our ships, for the nations and leaders we are honored to partner with, and for the patients and families who we will be caring for. We look to the Lord for wisdom as He leads us forward in His strength and courage.

McWhite
— Dr. Michelle White



Governance

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IMAGE: Volunteer crew on the *Africa Mercy* celebrate her arrival in Toamasina, Madagascar.

The work of Mercy Ships is only made possible through generous supporters and dedicated volunteer crew.

Your unwavering, faithful commitment ensures that we can continue to provide hope beyond borders and healing beyond measure, making safe surgical care accessible for those in the greatest need.

Because of you, a sustainable lasting impact is being made on individual lives, families, communities, and entire nations.

Thank you!

Mather, orthopedics patient, with Larissa Obrist, volunteer ward nurse from Switzerland, on the veranda during patient recreation time.





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