



# Mercy Ships Australia

## 2024 Annual Report



**A YEAR OF TRANSFORMATION: SERVING AFRICA, ASIA-PACIFIC & BEYOND**

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## PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

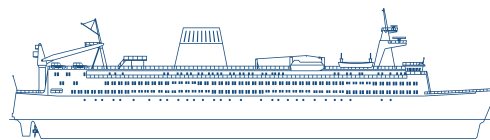
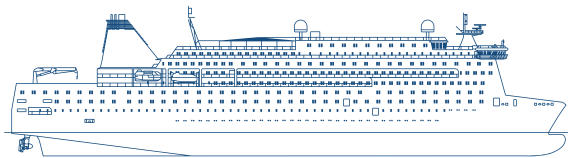
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**IMAGES: (COVER)** Claire Sydenham, volunteer rehab team leader from Australia, and Anjelfianah, an orthopedics patient. A free surgery restored Anjelfianah's mobility after a malaria injection caused a contracture in her thigh muscles, leaving her unable to bend her knee for almost five years.

**(LEFT):** When Maeva was just one month old, the mosquito net above her crib caught fire in a terrible accident, which left her with severely contracted skin on her leg and foot. After surgery on board the *Africa Mercy*, Maeva, now five years-old, blossomed in rehabilitation, where she learned to walk, run, and dance on her newly repaired foot and toes.



# The World's Largest Civilian Hospital Ships



## The Global Mercy™

- 6 operating theatres
- 102 acute care beds
- 7 ICU/isolation beds
- 90 self-care beds
- 6.1m draft
- 174m length
- 28.6m breadth
- 37,000 gross tonnage

## The Africa Mercy®

- 5 operating theatres
- 80 patient beds including recovery, intensive care, and low dependency wards
- 6.0m draft
- 152m length
- 23.7m breadth
- 16,572 gross tonnage



### Mission

Bringing hope and healing to the world's forgotten poor.



### Vision

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



### Values

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



### Impact

Each year, 16.9 million people around the world die due to lack of access to surgical care. Mercy Ships is an international development organisation that deploys hospital ships and volunteers to developing nations - improving the quality of life for people living with the diseases of poverty, disfigurement, and disability through direct medical services and building the capacities of healthcare systems to meet the needs of the future.

**IMAGE:**  
The *Global Mercy* and the *Africa Mercy* sail side-by-side on their way to Senegal and South Africa, respectively.



“

*This year we've seen how a simple act of compassion—a surgery, a shipment, or a training—can transform not just individuals but entire communities.”*

– Richard Wankmuller

## Letter from the *Chairman*

Dear Friends,

As I look back on 2024, I do so with deep gratitude and awe at what has been accomplished through the work of Mercy Ships, across oceans, across continents, and into the hearts of thousands of people in need.

This year marked a historic achievement as both of our hospital ships, *Global Mercy* and *Africa Mercy*, operated side by side on opposite coasts of Africa. Their presence in countries like Sierra Leone and Madagascar was more than symbolic, it was transformative. Children stood straighter, parents smiled wider, and futures were rewritten, thanks to surgeries and training delivered with skill, compassion, and grace.

At Mercy Ships Australia, we are privileged to play a pivotal role in this global mission. In addition to supporting our work in sub-Saharan Africa, our teams extended their impact to regions like Papua New Guinea, Tonga, and Antigua & Barbuda, evidence that the need for safe, accessible surgical care knows no boundaries.

What makes all this possible is you—our community of volunteers, donors, and partners. Your unwavering support is the lifeblood of this mission. Each act of generosity, each hour given, and each corporate gift contributes to a wave of healing that stretches far beyond what we can see.

As we move into a new season, I am hopeful. There is still so much to do, but we go forward with confidence, knowing that lives will continue to be transformed—one patient, one nation, one act of love at a time.

Thank you for standing with us.

With heartfelt thanks,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'RWankmuller', written in a cursive style.

**Richard Wankmuller**  
Chairman Mercy Ships Australia

# Letter from the *Managing Director*

Dear Partners and Supporters,

2024 has been a landmark year for Mercy Ships—and for Mercy Ships Australia, it has been a year of remarkable reach and deeper impact.

With both ships serving simultaneously in Africa, we celebrated the transformation of thousands of lives through free surgeries and comprehensive medical training. From restoring vision and mobility to strengthening national surgical systems, our mission unfolded in powerful ways across Sierra Leone, Madagascar, Guinea, and beyond.

Here in Australia, we were proud to expand our global footprint. In partnership with government and NGO stakeholders, we contributed to surgical and health capacity-building in places like Tonga, Papua New Guinea, and Antigua & Barbuda. These collaborations underscore our belief that hope and healing should not be limited by geography.

Australia's proximity to the Pacific and our expanding logistics capacity have positioned Mercy Ships Australia to play a vital role in strengthening healthcare systems across island nations.

As we navigated these global challenges and opportunities, I was continually inspired by the faithfulness and generosity of our community. Every dollar given, every volunteer hour served, and every corporate gift helped fuel this movement of transformation.

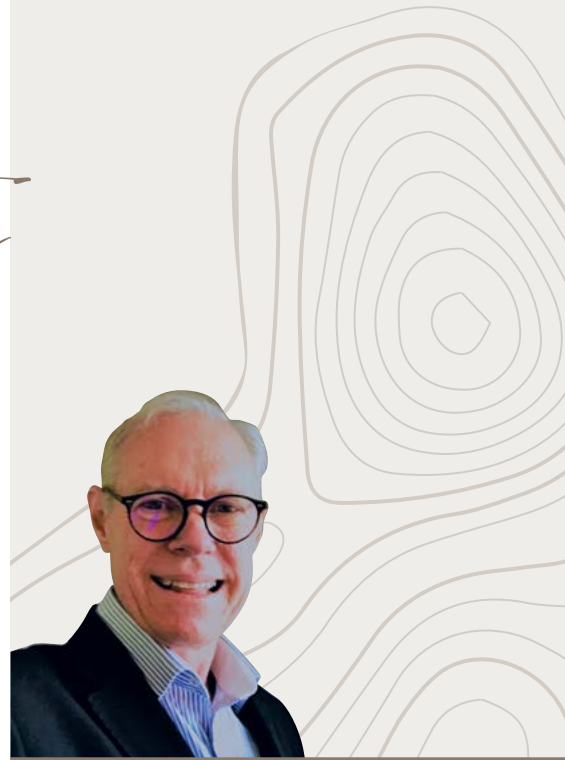
Together, we are not only addressing today's critical surgical needs, we are helping build tomorrow's solutions.

Thank you for standing with us. The horizon ahead is full of promise, and with your continued support, we will keep moving forward, bringing hope where it is needed most.

Warm regards,



**Alan Burrell**  
Managing Director, Mercy Ships Australia



“

*From hospital ships off the coast of Africa to medical supply hubs in the Pacific and Caribbean, we are equipping nations with tools for lasting change.”*

– Alan Burrell

# About Mercy Ships

## Globally, 5 billion people lack access to surgery

As a result of this lack of access to surgical care, more than 16.9 million people die each year. Every day, children and adults in some of the poorest communities die from causes that can easily be treated in hospitals in nations like Australia. 1 in 8 children will die before they have the chance to go to school.

Founded in 1978, Mercy Ships is an international development organisation, using hospital ships, in-field services and volunteers to deliver:

1. **Direct medical care, dental care and surgery to those without access**
2. **Education, training, and mentoring of local healthcare workers**
3. **Improvements to healthcare infrastructure**
4. **Humanitarian aid, PPE supplies and medical equipment**

Our model is based on transformational development and as a result, we have

witnessed thousands of changed lives for more than 42 years.

We believe transformed lives can, and do, change nations. We witness the profound impact of free surgeries, as our volunteers restore hope to patients and their families.

We see the potential of local medical professionals to inspire, build up, and transform their surgical systems and take care of their populations.

This Mercy Ships International Programs Strategy is based on current global health frameworks. It describes our theory of change and oversees the direction of our programs.





**IMAGE:**

Alya Lopez, volunteer pediatric ICU nurse from Australia, with an orthopedics patient on the veranda.

As a surgical, non-governmental organisation working across eight different surgical specialties, our programs focus on improving the quality of life for people living with disease, disfigurement, and disability.

We achieve this through direct medical services, whole person care, and building the capacity of surgical systems to meet the needs of the future.

We have a unique part to play in the attainment of key Global Goals, such as Sustainable Development Goal 3: Good health and wellbeing. We will achieve this by directing our programs to three key strategic aims:

- 1. Decreasing the burden of unmet surgical need;**
- 2. Improving outcomes for patients by supporting surgical systems to become more effective, efficient, and responsive;**
- 3. Engaging with governments and policymakers at local and national levels.**

To achieve these aims, we align our transformative work with the World Health Organisation (WHO) Health Systems Strengthening (HSS) approach.

This approach strives to strengthen health systems in a uniform way so that they improve community health, are responsive

to the needs of their populations, have social and financial risk protection, and are efficient and well-governed.

We will align activities to contribute to one or more of the 6 WHO HSS 'Building Blocks' in our country engagement strategies:

- 1. Service delivery**
- 2. Health workforce**
- 3. Health information**
- 4. Medical products and technologies**
- 5. Health financing**
- 6. Leadership and governance**

To achieve this, we create 5-year Country Engagement Plans based on 3 areas of operational focus: direct medical services; medical capacity building; and engagement with governments and policymakers at the national and local level.

These plans enable Mercy Ships to walk alongside host nations in their journey towards health systems strengthening, working in partnership to understand the existing capacities and developmental needs of surgical care systems. Based on our level of relationship and partnership with each country, plans allow for longer-term capacity building to strengthen the surgical system.

We believe that transformed lives lead to transformed systems and communities. Moreover, when communities are transformed, so are nations.

# What We Do

## Within the Global SDG Context

*We know all too well that for people living in most developing nations, access to essential surgery is often limited.*

The signing of the WHO's Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 has given all nations a road map within which to grow and thrive. The ambitious goals seek to promote mutual flourishing of all peoples, economies, and environments by 2030, placing equal importance on the health and wellbeing of individuals, populations, and the earth and her resources.

Of the 17 goals, Good Health and Wellbeing (SDG 3) is a key priority to Mercy Ships. From maternal, infant, and child mortality, to road traffic accidents and non-communicable diseases, surgery has an indispensable role to play in attaining SDG 3 targets. As surgical and anaesthesia specialists in eight specialties – plastic reconstructive, maxillofacial, paediatric orthopaedic surgery, general surgery, paediatric general surgery, women's health (including obstetric fistula), ophthalmic, and dental – our programs focus on attaining the greatest health outcomes for patients requiring surgical treatment in the countries in which we work. We accomplish these outcomes through direct medical services and medical capacity building to meet the needs of the future.

We know all too well that for people living in most developing nations, access to essential surgery is often limited, unaffordable, and carries high risks with variable outcomes. Too many people live with their ailments for longer than they need to, because the service they need is not available or too expensive. Our programs provide relief from suffering through direct medical services, while also investing in the health infrastructure and workforce to develop surgical skills and expand surgical service provision nationwide.





## The WHO 'Building Blocks' Of An Effective Health System

- 1. Service delivery:** Good health services are those which deliver effective, safe, quality health interventions to those that need them, when and where needed, with minimum waste of resources.
- 2. Health workforce:** A well-performing health workforce is one that works in ways that are responsive, fair, and efficient to achieve the best health outcomes possible, given the available resources and circumstances. This means having sufficient staff, fairly distributed, who are competent, responsive, and productive.
- 3. Health information:** A well-functioning health information system is one that ensures the production, analysis, dissemination, and use of reliable and timely information on health determinants, health system performance, and health status.
- 4. Medical products and technologies:** A well-functioning health system ensures equitable access to essential, scientifically-sound medical products and technologies of assured quality, safety, efficacy, and cost-effectiveness.
- 5. Health financing:** A good health financing system raises adequate funds for health in ways that ensure people can use needed services and are protected from financial catastrophe or impoverishment associated with having to pay for them.
- 6. Leadership and governance:** A well-managed health system ensures strategic policy frameworks exist and are combined with effective oversight, coalition-building, and regulation, with appropriate attention to system-design and accountability.

**IMAGE:**

Dr. Rachel Buckingham, Specialty Consultant - Orthopaedic, Dr. Belen Carsi Lluich, Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgeon, and Dr. Herbert Kallon, ETA Student, perform surgery on Ruth, orthopaedics patient.



## APPROACH TO

# Impact in Africa

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 more developed regions.**

Mercy Ships recognises 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. By empowering providers with the skills and knowledge they need, this ensures that healing lasts after a Mercy Ship departs, creating long-term sustainable change.

At the heart of these efforts is a belief in the 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 (DMS)

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 procedures offered are typically unavailable in the country, or those presenting a backlog of cases due to limited surgical workforce or unaffordability for patients.

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.

**IMAGE:** Naserry, reconstructive plastic patient, with her schoolmates after the free surgery to release extensive burn contractures on her arm.

**IMAGE:** Dr. Fabruce Ramaherimamonjy, former Mercy Ships trainee, at the hospital he founded in Toamasina.



### **EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND ADVOCACY (ETA)**

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

- Offering residency and fellowship rotations in reconstructive plastic surgery, maxillofacial/ head and neck surgery, anaesthesia, and perioperative nursing.
- Using the ship's hospital as a clinical rotation in the partner country's established training programs for surgery, anaesthesia, and nursing.
- Developing 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 disability, disfigurement, or disease have access to quality, affordable medical/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.

## **BEYOND THE HORIZON**

In 2024, Mercy Ships returned to Madagascar and reconnected with former patient Muriella, now a thriving wife, mother, and businesswoman. But her story didn't begin that way. Growing up, she faced years of isolation due to a facial tumour. In 2015, Muriella underwent surgery on the *Africa Mercy* and the results were life changing. She met her husband and they started a grocery store business. She's also studying business management so she can expand the business.

The increased accessibility of safe surgery not only provides hope for individual futures like Muriella's, but it transforms families and entire communities as well. Communities like that of Dr. Fabruce Ramaherimamonjy, a passionate Malagasy medical professional.

After an eye-opening experience with Mercy Ships in 2016, Dr. Fabruce returned home with a renewed sense of purpose. Inspired by his time on board and discussions with Emeritus Chief Medical Officer Dr. Gary Parker, he chose to remain in his home country to serve his fellow countrymen, and to advocate for medical training and improving the nation's healthcare standards.

In 2018, he founded the Bethany Hospital Centre in Toamasina. What started as a warehouse is now a thriving hospital with 35 beds and a team of 70 staff. Through his work, Dr. Fabruce is dedicated to shaping the future of healthcare in Madagascar.



**IMAGE:** Now 26 years old, Muriella holds a photo of herself as a teenager, before her free surgery with Mercy Ships.

# Charting a Course Together

## 2024 in Review

**2024 was a year of significant milestones for Mercy Ships. For the first time, we operated as a two-ship fleet in Africa simultaneously, bringing hope and healing to both the east and west coasts.**

The year began with the *Global Mercy* docked in Freetown, Sierra Leone, continuing to provide free and safe surgeries that started in August 2023. Today, we're reflecting on a season of service that changed so many lives. Lives like Fudia's, a 10-year-old girl with severely bowed legs who could barely walk. After six years waiting for Mercy Ships, her legs were finally straightened, giving her new joy for life.

Our Education, Training, and Advocacy (ETA) programmatic strategy is increasingly shifting to support long-term surgical education to provide specialised skills. As a result, we are investing more time in each participant. Increasing the amount of specialised surgical providers will create a ripple effect across surgical ecosystems for generations to come.

In Sierra Leone, this effort launched the Nurse Anaesthesia Diploma program and a partnership with Connaught Hospital, bringing essential education to students through their Safer Surgery program.

In East Africa, the newly refitted *Africa Mercy* set sail to bring life-changing surgeries and renewed hope for Mercy Ships' fourth field service in Madagascar. Local healthcare professionals were also trained in several areas to help improve the availability and access to safe surgical care in Madagascar.

Mercy Ships' presence was also felt on the ground. In Guinea, a new clinical training centre opened at Université Gamal Abdel Nasser de Conakry (UGANC). This will more than double the school's previous capacity to train dental students. Mercy Ships is also sponsoring dental graduates to obtain specialised degrees at a partner university in Morocco.

**Thank you for being part of a monumental year. We couldn't do it without you.**

Scan to watch  
the 2024 Thank  
You video



IMAGE: Hailemariam Kasim, Mercy Ships Instructor, with Nurse Anaesthesia Diploma participants at Connaught Hospital in Sierra Leone.





# 2024

by the numbers

## DIRECT MEDICAL SERVICES



**4,746**

TOTAL SURGICAL PROCEDURES



**2,904**

TOTAL UNIQUE SURGICAL PATIENTS



**13,312**

TOTAL DENTAL PROCEDURES



**2,829**

TOTAL UNIQUE DENTAL PATIENTS

## TOTAL SURGICAL PROCEDURES BY SURGICAL SPECIALTY



**1,897**

OPHTHALMIC



**917**

GENERAL



**913**

MAXILLOFACIAL/  
HEAD AND NECK



**391**

PAEDIATRIC



**277**

PLASTIC  
RECONSTRUCTIVE



**351**

ORTHOPAEDIC

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, AND ADVOCACY



**923**

TOTAL HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS TRAINED FROM EIGHT AFRICAN NATIONS



**456**  
GUINEA



**215**  
SIERRA LEONE



**189**  
SOUTH AFRICA



**49**  
MADAGASCAR



**6**  
BENIN



**6**  
GUINEA-BISSAU



**1**  
CAMEROON\*

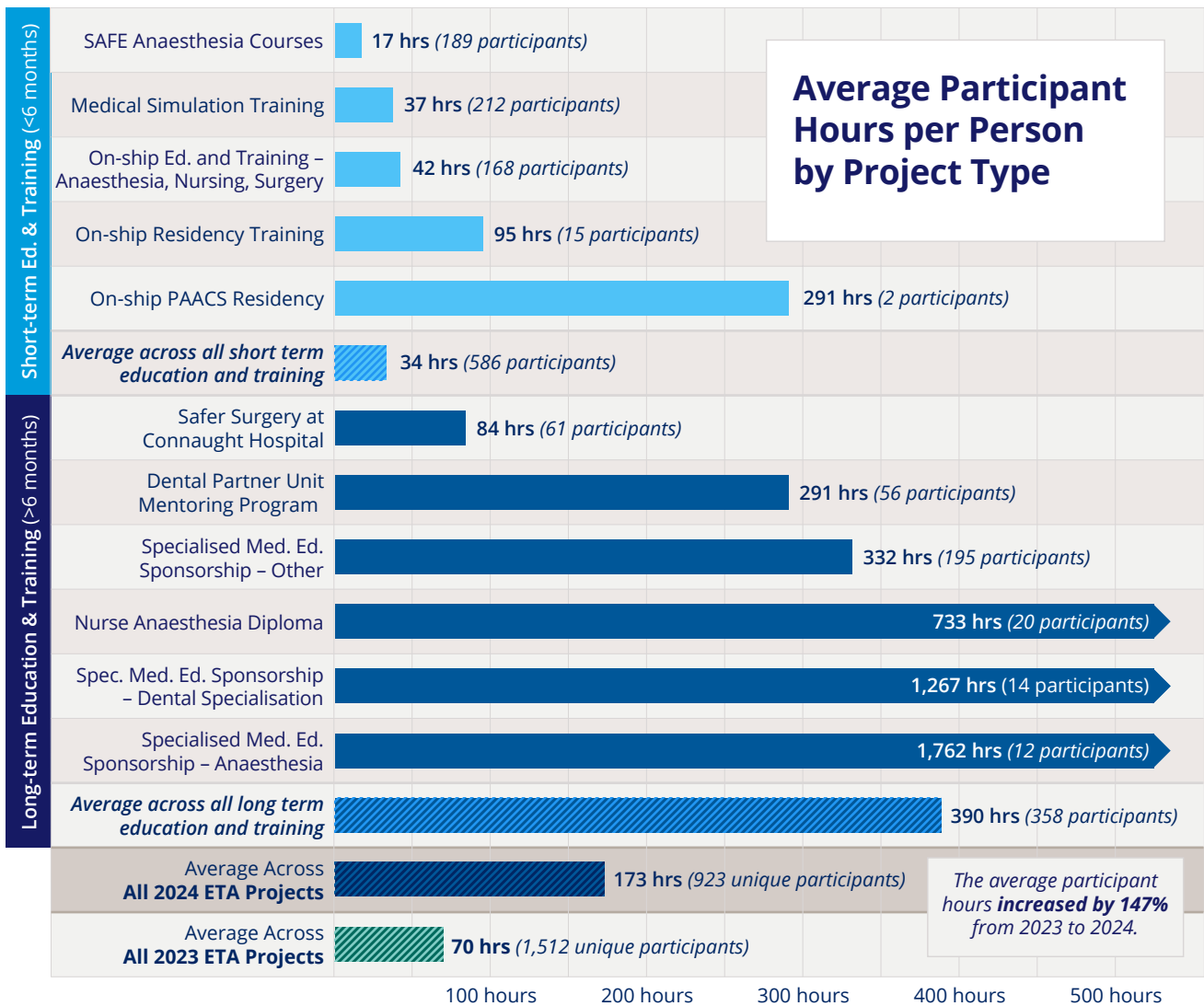


**1**  
LIBERIA\*



**159,727**

TOTAL HOURS OF HEALTHCARE EDUCATION AND TRAINING



\*The participants from Cameroon and Liberia were trained as part of the Sierra Leone field services.

†The UGANC clinic was closed from Jan – Sept for renovations, resulting in lower than typical participant hours.

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

# Sierra Leone



**Freetown,  
Sierra Leone**  
8° 29' 27" N  
13° 12' 46" W

**2,707**  
TOTAL SURGICAL  
PROCEDURES

**1,488**  
UNIQUE SURGICAL  
PATIENTS

**4,628**  
TOTAL DENTAL  
PROCEDURES

**1,062**  
UNIQUE DENTAL  
PATIENTS

**38,617**  
TOTAL ETA  
PARTICIPANT HOURS

**217**  
UNIQUE ETA  
PARTICIPANTS\*

\*Includes participants from Sierra Leone (215), Cameroon (1), and Liberia (1).

In 2024, the *Global Mercy* continued her 10-month field service in Sierra Leone, which began in August 2023. This was the sixth Mercy Ships visit to the country over the course of 30 years, a testament to the long-standing partnership between Sierra Leone and Mercy Ships. After a short break from service in June 2024, the *Global Mercy* returned to Freetown in August for a consecutive field service through 2025.

The need in Sierra Leone continues to be great, but despite the challenges, Sierra Leone remains undeterred in its commitment to improving its healthcare system.

To assist in this effort, Mercy Ships provided Education, Training, and Advocacy programs alongside the Ministry of Health, the University of Sierra Leone, and Connaught Hospital. Emerging medical professionals received mentorship on board, the Nurse Anaesthesia Diploma Program started, and a partnership with Connaught Hospital brought critical education to students through the Safer Surgery program.

During this field service, it was inspiring to see hope and healing brought to so many people undergoing their long-awaited surgeries in areas such as maxillofacial/head and neck, reconstructive plastic, paediatric, general, orthopaedic, and ophthalmic. In addition, through Mercy Ships' support and partnership with Freedom From Fistula, more than 1,000 children and teens were able to receive primary healthcare consultations, medications, and critical immunisations through the Aberdeen Women's Centre in Freetown.

Following a season of incredible impact, Sierra Leone's President, His Excellency Julius Maada Bio, invited the *Global Mercy* to extend her stay for a third consecutive field service, to continue life-changing surgical care and education into 2026.



**IMAGES:** Fiona Morgan (left), a physical therapist from South Africa, mentors Mohamed Dauda Faroh (right) in Rehab; (OPPOSITE PAGE) Mamadou can return to school after a free surgery restored his sight.



*"I'm extremely happy that Mercy Ships honoured the President's call to stay longer to provide life-changing surgeries and train our healthcare professionals. I am excited about this possibility and very proud of the partnership with Mercy Ships."*

**- Dr. Austin Demby, Minister of Health, Sierra Leone**

## ELEVATING SURGICAL CARE IN FREETOWN

Hospitals hum steadily—machines beeping, voices murmuring, hurried footsteps. Betsy Deen, a surgical matron, moves through the hallways with quiet authority at Connaught Hospital, Freetown's largest government hospital. For over three decades, she has orchestrated the flow of surgical care, ensuring every procedure runs smoothly.

During Mercy Ships' 2023-24 field service in Sierra Leone, Matron Deen was among 145 medical professionals trained on the *Global Mercy* through Education, Training, and Advocacy (ETA) programs. With years of surgical nursing experience, she embraced this opportunity to refine her leadership and deepen her knowledge of patient safety and surgical administration.

On board, she observed the seamless coordination of patient care, from intake to surgery and beyond. The most impactful lesson? Daily surgical team briefings — structured discussions before each procedure to anticipate challenges and improve outcomes.

At Connaught Hospital, she implemented this approach by streamlining surgical schedules, reducing cancellations, and fostering a patient-first culture. She encourages her team to participate in simulation training on the *Global Mercy*, ensuring more nurses gain hands-on experience.

Matron Deen believes the partnership between Mercy Ships and Sierra Leone's Ministry of Health is crucial for improving access to quality surgical care and training healthcare professionals.

"We can focus on acquiring skills to strengthen our capacity," she said. "Training like this indirectly saves thousands of lives. And that is what Mercy Ships is doing, and I just think it's great."



IMAGE: Matron Betsy Deen at Connaught Hospital.





IMAGES: (TOP LEFT) Nurse Anaesthesia Diploma participants practice skills in the simulation lab on the *Global Mercy*; (ABOVE) Mohammed Bangura; (BELOW LEFT) Nurse Anaesthesia Diploma participants checking patients in the wards of Connaught Hospital.

## A Future Transformed: Training Nurse Anaesthetists for Safer Surgeries in Sierra Leone

In Sierra Leone, where safe surgery is often out of reach, a long-awaited change is taking root. A new Nurse Anaesthesia Diploma Program – born of a partnership between Mercy Ships, the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, and the University of Sierra Leone – is shaping a future where no patient must face surgery without the assurance of skilled anaesthesia care. This initiative will strengthen surgical care long after the hospital ship sets sail.

For years, the statistics underscored a critical need in the country: one anaesthesiologist per million people. 90% of surgeries took place without trained anaesthesia providers, heightening risks and uncertainty in the operating room.

That reality is shifting – one student at a time. In April 2024, twenty nurses selected from across the country stepped forward, determined to rewrite Sierra Leone's surgical future. They undertook specialised training that combined theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Already experienced caregivers, they embraced the challenge of mastering the delicate balance of anaesthesia.

On board the *Global Mercy*, their training began in a state-of-the-art simulation centre, guided by seasoned

mentors like volunteer Anaesthetist Josefin Tapper. "It's been rewarding sharing skills with these students. Mentorship and education—this is how we make a lasting impact," she said.

Ethiopian anaesthetist and professor Hailemariam Kasim led their classroom training. "This program is a beacon of hope," he said. "It's not just about training; it's about transformation."

Mohammed Bangura, one of the students, spoke of the profound shift: "We are receiving high-quality education. Anaesthesia is a specialised field, demanding deep knowledge and critical thinking. This training will change everything –for our careers and our country."

Mercy Ships has committed three years to this endeavor, providing expert tutors and resources. But the vision extends further. These students will become the foundation of a self-sustaining system, ensuring safe anaesthesia in every corner of Sierra Leone.

As Dr. Sandra Lako, Country Director for Mercy Ships, reflects, "We're not just training individuals; we're building a future where safe surgery is not a privilege, but a right."



*"The actions and operations that Mercy Ships is undertaking in Madagascar are commendable and we should continue in this direction to help our neighbours, particularly those in difficulty and suffering from illnesses."*

– His Excellency, Andry Nirina Rajoelina, president, Madagascar

# Madagascar

The newly-refitted *Africa Mercy* sailed to Madagascar for her first field service following extensive renovations. This was the fourth Mercy Ships visit to the country since 1996.

During the 10-month field service, hundreds of surgeries were performed over the course of six months, in areas such as maxillofacial/head and neck, ophthalmic, reconstructive plastic, paediatric orthopaedic, and general surgery.

An early arrival and later start of surgeries this year allowed time to properly train all new crew and fully prepare the newly-refitted hospital ship to open at the end of May 2024. It also allowed the crew on board the *Africa Mercy* to launch the dental program in March 2024, and focus on patient registration and selection prior to surgeries.

Local healthcare professionals also received instruction in areas including anaesthesia monitoring, comprehensive cleft care, nursing student training, and surgical and anaesthesia resident training. These programs will help increase the availability and access to safe surgical care in Madagascar.

Mercy Ships work wouldn't be possible without the support of the President of Madagascar, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Finance. We look forward to deepening these partnerships in 2025 during a second consecutive field service.

We're thankful for the opportunity to build upon the current momentum, and to continue bringing hope and healing to the Malagasy people.

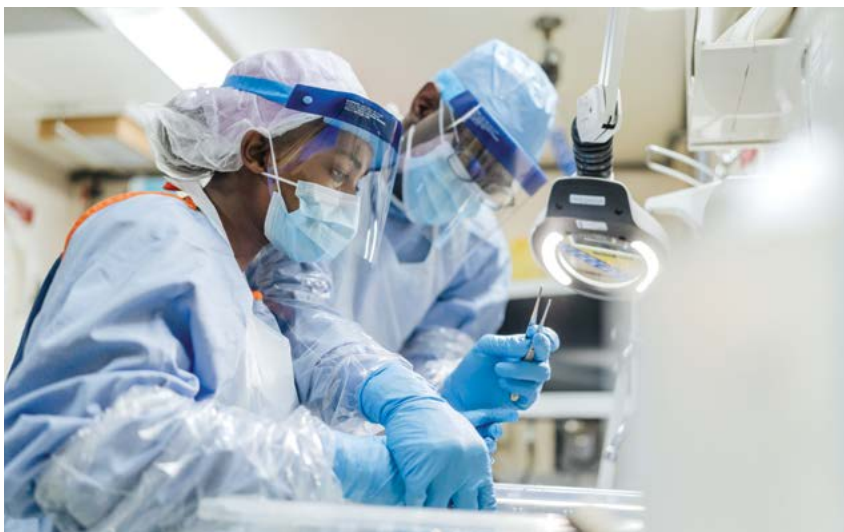
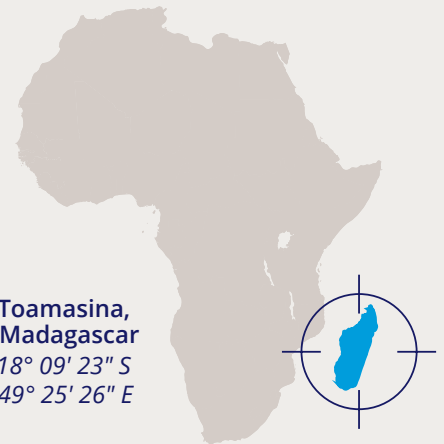


IMAGE: (OPPOSITE PAGE) Annica celebrates her new mobility after surgery to release burn contractures on her arms; (ABOVE) A University of Toamasina nursing student learns sterile processing techniques during an ETA program on board the *Africa Mercy*.



Toamasina,  
Madagascar  
18° 09' 23" S  
49° 25' 26" E

**1,096**  
TOTAL SURGICAL  
PROCEDURES

**645**  
UNIQUE SURGICAL  
PATIENTS

**4,472**  
TOTAL DENTAL  
PROCEDURES

**989**  
UNIQUE DENTAL  
PATIENTS

**7,821**  
TOTAL ETA  
PARTICIPANT HOURS

**49**  
UNIQUE ETA  
PARTICIPANTS



## A MOTHER'S JOY

After a decade of longing for a second child, Lalaina's prayers were answered with the birth of her daughter, Anjara, whose name means "destiny." "She's a very funny and wise baby," Lalaina shared. "She gets to know you before she smiles or plays."

But the joy was mixed with worry. Born with a bilateral cleft lip, Anjara's condition weighed heavily on Lalaina, filling her with guilt and uncertainty.

Lalaina had heard of Mercy Ships years before and clung to hope that, one day, help would return.

In February 2024, that hope became reality. The *Africa Mercy* arrived in Madagascar, and Anjara was the first patient scheduled for surgery.

With her mother's love and the dedication of the ship's volunteer crew, Anjara's cleft lip was repaired. As the medical team bowed their heads in prayer, her family at home did the same, believing in a future where Anjara would grow up without the burden of her condition.

"I thank God for sending Mercy Ships to be used as an instrument to do her surgery," said her father, Victor. "She will be like other kids."

For Lalaina, the surgery was more than a new beginning for Anjara—it was a promise of hope for her and countless other children waiting for life-changing care.

IMAGES: Lalaina and Anjara before surgery; Anjara after surgery.





"I was sick and willing to risk it – I had nothing to lose."

## Found By Grace:

# Marie Elisa's Story

For years, Marie Elisa's days began in prayer. At dawn, she walked to church in her small village in Madagascar, lifting her family and their future. But at 40, a relentless toothache shattered her routine. Pain turned to swelling, and soon, an orange-sized tumour left her unable to work her fields.

Even as the weight of pitying glances grew, her prayers never wavered. "I prayed to Jesus to heal me," she said. But as her strength faded, so did her family's livelihood—her youngest daughter had to drop out of school. Traditional healers couldn't help, and surgery was beyond reach.

Then, an unexpected answer arrived. While traveling across Madagascar, a cyclone diverted Mercy Ships' patient selection team right to Marie Elisa's village. They spotted her in the market. "Stop the bus!" shouted Maddie Hartung, an Australian volunteer nurse.

Marie Elisa listened as they explained how they could help. Hesitant yet hopeful, she took a leap of faith. "I was sick and willing to risk it – I had nothing to lose."

"She was meant to be on that road. God had a plan," reflected Maddy.

On the *Africa Mercy*, free surgery changed everything for Marie Elisa.

Back home, Claude, her husband, clung to one prayer: "Oh God, please heal my wife." Weeks later, he welcomed her back—healthy, whole, strong, and ready to reclaim the life she thought she had lost.

Months later, she stepped back onto the ship as a caregiver. This time, she walked beside Claude as he received eye surgery.

For Marie Elisa, healing meant more than restoring health; it restored her purpose.

"Soon, I'll be back in my fields, planting and harvesting," she said. Faith led her to hope, and hope led her to healing.

**IMAGES:** (TOP LEFT) Marie Elisa holds a photo of herself before surgery; (TOP) Marie Elisa and Claude on their farm; (LEFT) Marie Elisa and Claude pray together at their church.

# Tera's Leap

## The Boy who wanted to belong



Fourteen-year-old Tera grew up in a fishing village in Madagascar, where life is woven tightly with community. Here, a child belongs to everyone, but belonging always felt out of reach for Tera.

When he was one, he had an accident with boiling water which resulted in his foot fusing to his ankle. He couldn't wear shoes or run with his friends. His family, unable to afford medical care, turned to traditional healers. The burns healed into a painful contracture that made walking difficult.

Rejection stung the most on the soccer field, where he longed to be a goalkeeper. "I see my friends playing, and I want to play too," he said. "But they don't like me."

When his mother heard about free surgery from Mercy Ships, she set off on a two-day journey with Tera and his baby brother.

On board, volunteer nurse Natasha Short quickly became Tera's friend.

"Tera has been through so much, yet he carries an infectious joy," she said.



*"We all play together now. The things that my friends can do, I can do, too."*

Dr. Tertius Venter led the surgery to release his contracture, and, in just two hours, 13 years of hardship began to fade.

With his mother and little brother cheering him on, Tera tackled recovery, determined to walk, run, and play soccer.

He returned home to a deafening welcome. He stepped onto the field, proudly wearing his favourite "number one" jersey. But this time, he wasn't just a spectator.

When Tera joins his friends on the soccer field, he isn't standing on the sidelines – he's part of the team.

"We all play together now," he beamed. "The things my friends can do, I can do too." For the first time, he felt he truly belonged.

**IMAGES:** (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) Tera watches other boys playing soccer on the beach; Tera during rehab with Theo Jacot, volunteer physical therapist from Switzerland; Tera plays goalie while his village watches.



## INSPIRING THE FUTURE

For 23-year-old Diane, nursing is more than a profession—it's a calling to serve others with compassion. Diane, a third-year nursing student at the University of Toamasina, first encountered Mercy Ships when her little cousin received life-changing surgery for a club foot on the *Africa Mercy* in 2015. This profound experience sparked her interest in healthcare, and when it was time to decide what to do after high school, she enrolled in nursing school.

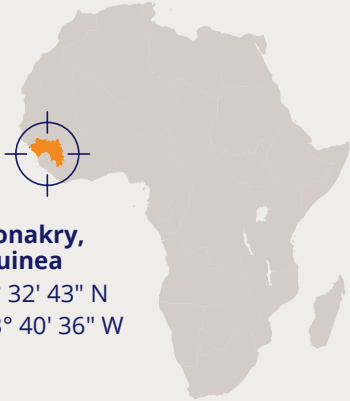
When the ship returned to Madagascar in 2024, Diane was one of nine nursing students from the university selected for mentoring and training on board the *Africa Mercy*. This was part of Mercy Ships' Education, Training, and Advocacy program, where students would get the opportunity to observe, learn, and practice clinical nursing skills in a peri-operative setting and non-technical skills, such as communication, bedside manner, and teamwork. During a three-week clinical rotation on board, Diane shadowed and worked with volunteer health professionals from across the world and was exposed to diverse medical scenarios, patient populations, and surgical procedures.

"I've gained so much experience here," Diane shared. "The way the crew treats patients is unlike anything I've seen before... they care with love and without discrimination."

For her, the time on board highlighted the importance of human connection in healthcare. "I've learned to value every patient as a person, to recognise their worth," she said. "This training has given me hope and motivation to bring this approach into my future practice."

**IMAGE:** Diane, nursing student and ETA participant, with a patient on the *Africa Mercy*.

# Guinea



**Conakry,  
Guinea**

9° 32' 43" N  
13° 40' 36" W

**4,212**

TOTAL DENTAL  
PROCEDURES

**778**

UNIQUE DENTAL  
PATIENTS

**103,115**

TOTAL ETA  
PARTICIPANT HOURS

**456**

UNIQUE ETA  
PARTICIPANTS

Scan to watch the  
dental expansion  
dedication video.



IMAGES:

(RIGHT) Students treat a patient under the guidance of staff in the new clinic. (OPPOSITE PAGE) A biomedical student services dental equipment.

Lack of access to affordable, safe dental care is a critical health issue in Guinea, and there are very few dentists or training opportunities.

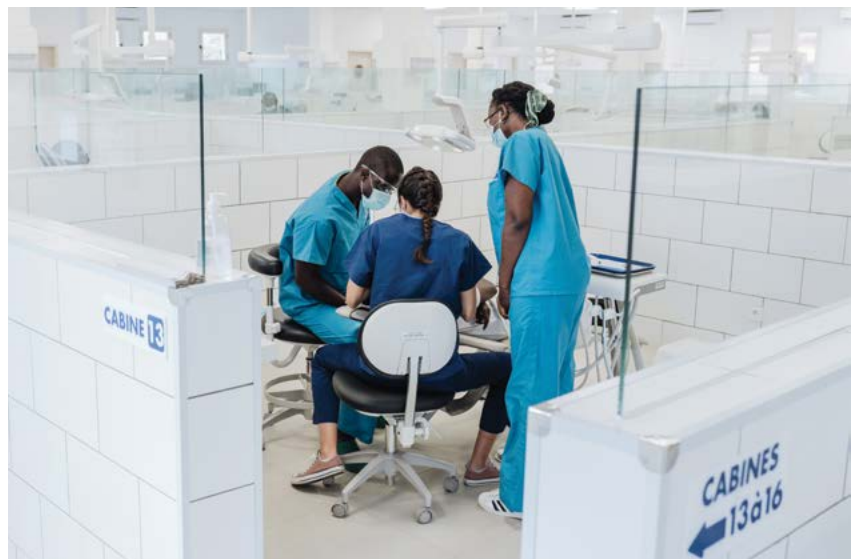
In 2018, Mercy Ships saw an opportunity to launch a long-term partnership with Université Gamal Abdel Nasser de Conakry (UGANC) dental school. The partnership has since expanded to include additional surgical specialty training, sponsoring international students, broadening the scope of training beyond Guinea, and creating a network that will improve dental care across Africa for years to come.

An exciting development this year was the opening of the new clinical training centre at UGNAC. The expansion was made possible through funding and oversight from Mercy Ships, and more than doubles the school's previous capacity for dental students to learn, practice, and treat patients.

As part of this expansion, Mercy Ships has proactively worked in the region to serve more students. In 2024, the Mercy Ships dental program at UGNAC included students from Benin, Madagascar, Guinea Bissau, and Sierra Leone. As of September 2024, there were 26 international students enrolled in various programs in the university, including 11 dental students from neighbouring Sierra Leone.

The recent expansion increased capacity from 6 simulation stations to 30 stations, along with 22 dental chairs for patient care, as well as adding labs for practical training and dental prosthodontics.

Mercy Ships is also sponsoring dental graduates to obtain specialised degrees at a partner university in Morocco. When they return home, they'll become educators and pass on their knowledge and skills to the next generation.





*"If we have good health professionals, the level of health of the population will certainly be better. It's true that the partnership model that we have with Mercy Ships is unique. This is the first time I have seen this type of partnership for specialists, and I hope this partnership will not stop there."*

**- Ihsane Ben Yahya, President,  
FDI World Dental Federation**



*"I'm going home to serve my country and help young people like me, who dream of becoming dental surgeons, to progress in this field."*

- Ruth Catraye  
UAC/UGANC Student

# Across Africa



Benin  
6° 27' 3" N  
2° 20' 52" E

**3,392**

TOTAL ETA  
PARTICIPANT HOURS

**6**

UNIQUE ETA PARTICIPANTS

IMAGE: Ruth Catraye (left), a UAC student studying at UGANC, and a UGANC Dental School staff member treat a patient.

## Benin

Mercy Ships has invested significant efforts with Benin over the years and in 2024, continued to support the nation through funding and education initiatives. In collaboration with UGANC, the Medical Education Sponsorship with the University of Abomey-Calavi's (UAC) Faculty of Health Sciences addressed the medical training and healthcare needs of the people of Benin. Students from Benin were selected to participate in a clinical and simulation internship in Guinea and dental specialisation training in Morocco, following the completion of their internship. Additionally, a joint collaboration with UAC worked toward re-establishing their dental program and planning for the long-term development of simulation and clinical training.

Mercy Ships provided student support and further NGO development to Phaz Compassion – an agricultural NGO in Benin founded by former long-term Mercy Ships volunteer Eliphaz Essah. Mercy Ships also provided funding to the Mission Internationale d'Evangelisation et de Reveil Spirituel's MIERS Clinic, allocated towards construction of a perimeter wall, solar system upgrades, and staff salary support.

## Guinea-Bissau

In 2024, Mercy Ships and UGANC began a partnership with the Universidade Jean Piaget de Guiné-Bissau (UNUPIAGET) aimed at advancing dental education and improving care in Guinea-Bissau. Over the next several years, this Medical Education Sponsorship will provide a full dental sponsorship for four cohorts of six medical students from Guinea-Bissau to attend UGANC in the pursuit of their Doctor of Dental Surgery.

This program aims to enhance the nation's healthcare workforce, address disparities, facilitate networking, and invest in participants on a holistic level. These efforts mark a significant step forward by providing a critical foundation for dental care in Guinea-Bissau.

## South Africa

In 2024, Mercy Ships offered a series of Safer Anaesthesia From Education (SAFE) courses in obstetrics and paediatric anaesthesia. These exist to help improve critical areas through sustainable training for anaesthesia providers alongside partner hospitals around the country. The courses taught participants specific skills and information on improving standards of care and personal medical practice. They also utilised a combination of lectures, simulations, and workshops. Several courses included a Training-of-Trainers component, which is a mentorship initiative that equips course participants to pass on their knowledge and train others in the same material.

## Togo

Mercy Ships' relationship with Togo spans many years, and in 2024, continued building upon strategic partnerships focusing on ophthalmic surgery and training. This included continued support of Lumiere Divine, the cataract surgical teaching institute of Togo's leading ophthalmic surgeon and former Mercy Ships trainee, Dr. Abram Wodome. In addition, Mercy Ships sponsored surgeries for remote patients through Togo-based NGO Sight.org. This year, Mercy Ships funded many procedures at both of these organisations, particularly less invasive procedures, such as the Manual Small Incision Cataract Surgery.



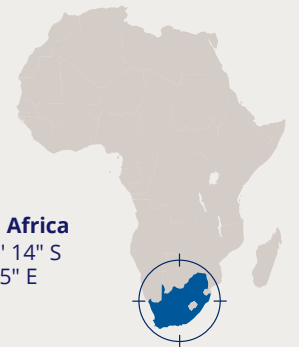
**Guinea-Bissau**  
11° 55' 11" N  
15° 35' 4" W

**3,480**

TOTAL ETA  
PARTICIPANT HOURS

**6**

UNIQUE ETA  
PARTICIPANTS



**South Africa**  
29° 53' 14" S  
31° 0' 5" E

**3,302**

TOTAL ETA  
PARTICIPANT HOURS

**189**

UNIQUE ETA  
PARTICIPANTS



**Togo**  
6° 11' 51" N  
1° 11' 18" E

**943**

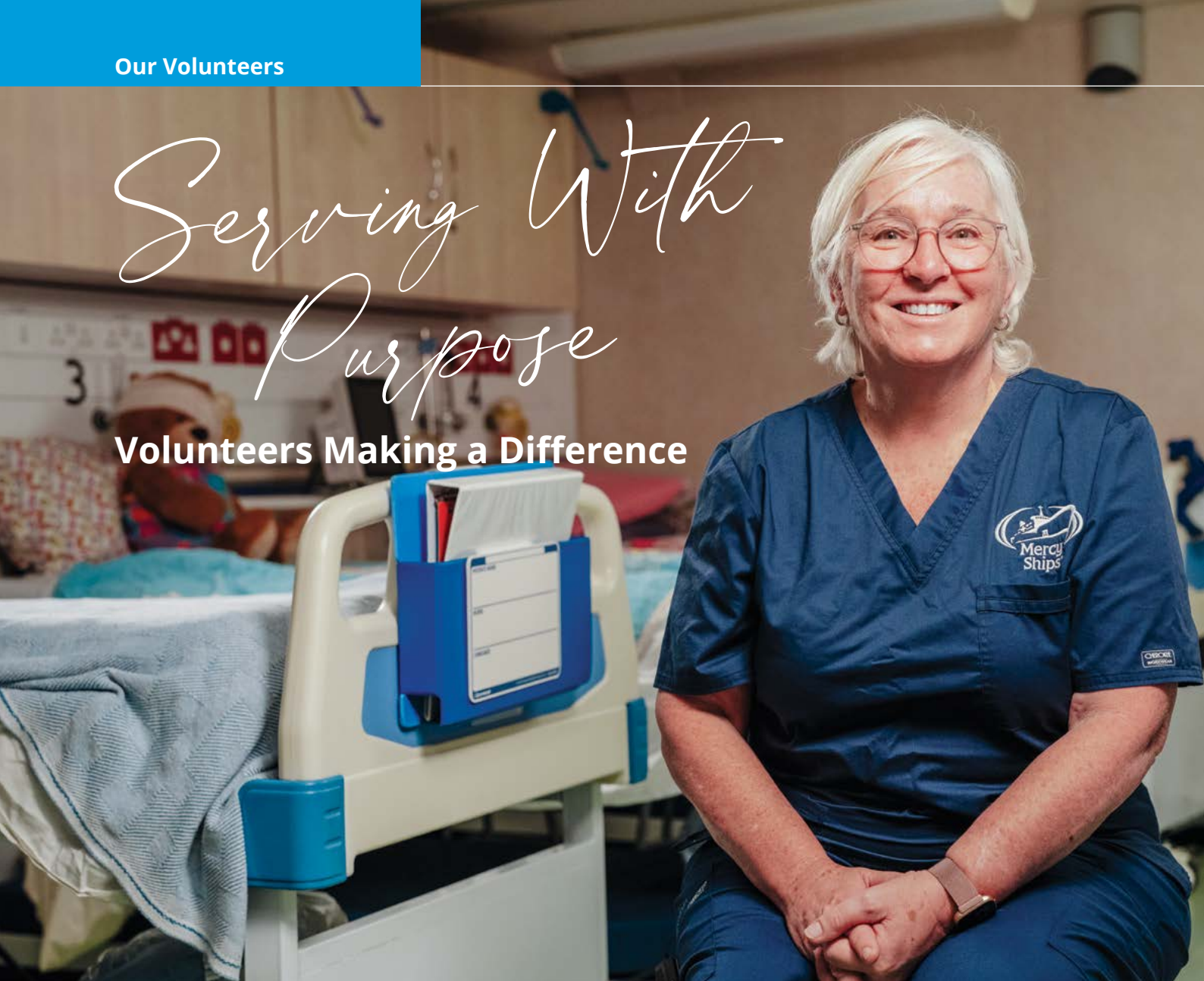
TOTAL SURGICAL  
PROCEDURES

**771**

UNIQUE SURGICAL PATIENTS

# Serving With Purpose

## Volunteers Making a Difference



Merryl Mackenzie began her journey with Mercy Ships in 2007 when she left Australia to serve as an operating room nurse in Ghana.

Inspired by a childhood dream and driven by her faith, she worked alongside volunteer surgeon Dr. Gary Parker on maxillofacial surgeries. Despite her desire to stay longer, Merryl returned to care for her daughter, Anna-Claire, who was born with severe congenital deformities.

After multiple short-term missions, including in Togo and Liberia, Merryl became increasingly passionate about

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*"This has been one of the most fulfilling roles of my career."*

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providing surgical care to children, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where millions lack access to safe surgeries. Having experienced the challenges of obtaining medical care for her own daughter, Merryl was determined to help bridge the gap.

In 2017, she became a full-time operating room clinical supervisor on the *Africa Mercy*. In 2021, she moved to the *Global Mercy*, overseeing the setup of six ORs. Merryl's leadership, which includes mentoring staff and empowering medical teams, has been a source of fulfillment. Her daughter, Anna-Claire, now an adult, supports her mother's work, saying, "I'm super proud of her and want her to keep doing it."

Today, Merryl serves as the Hospital Director on the *Africa Mercy*. She shared, "This has been one of the most fulfilling roles of my career."

## A Shared Purpose: Dr. Marijke Westerduin & Dr. Camara

Dr. Marijke Westerduin and Dr. Salématou Camara's partnership began virtually. In 2020, Dutch dentist Dr. Westerduin trained Dr. Camara, a dental student from UGANC in Guinea, via Zoom.

"At that time, we started doing many things online... meetings and teaching. So, for me, it was an easy step to continue teaching," said Dr. Westerduin.

Their online mentorship evolved into a real-world collaboration on board the *Global Mercy* hospital ship in Sierra Leone, where they worked side by side in the dental clinic, blending their expertise to provide care to patients and crew.

"She says we are colleagues, but, to me, she's still my teacher," said Dr. Camara. "Any time I want to discuss something, she always has time, and we discuss very well."

Dr. Westerduin, inspired by her visit to

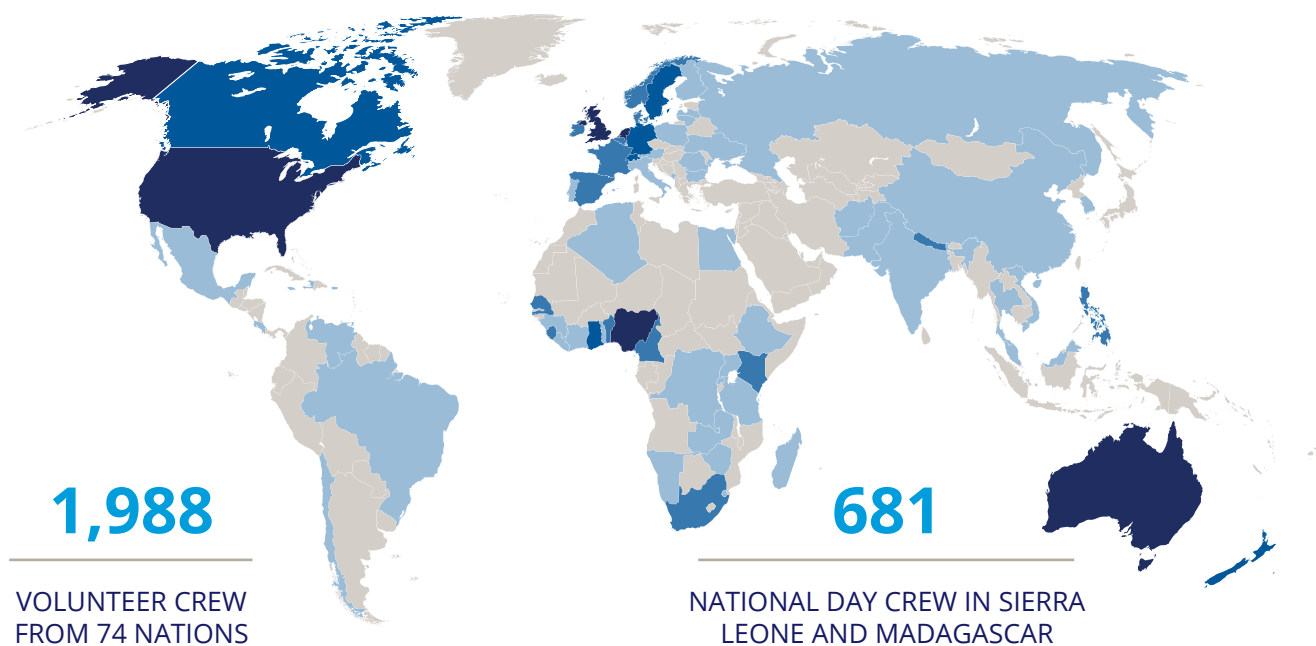
Mercy Ships' first vessel as a teenager, had always dreamt of volunteering. After delays caused by COVID-19, she used her skills to train dental students in Guinea.

In 2021, she joined the *Africa Mercy* as lead dentist along with her husband and two children, before transferring to the *Global Mercy* in 2023. Working in a demanding setting has honed her decision-making skills, particularly in diagnosing and treating dental issues like swelling, often misdiagnosed as tumours.

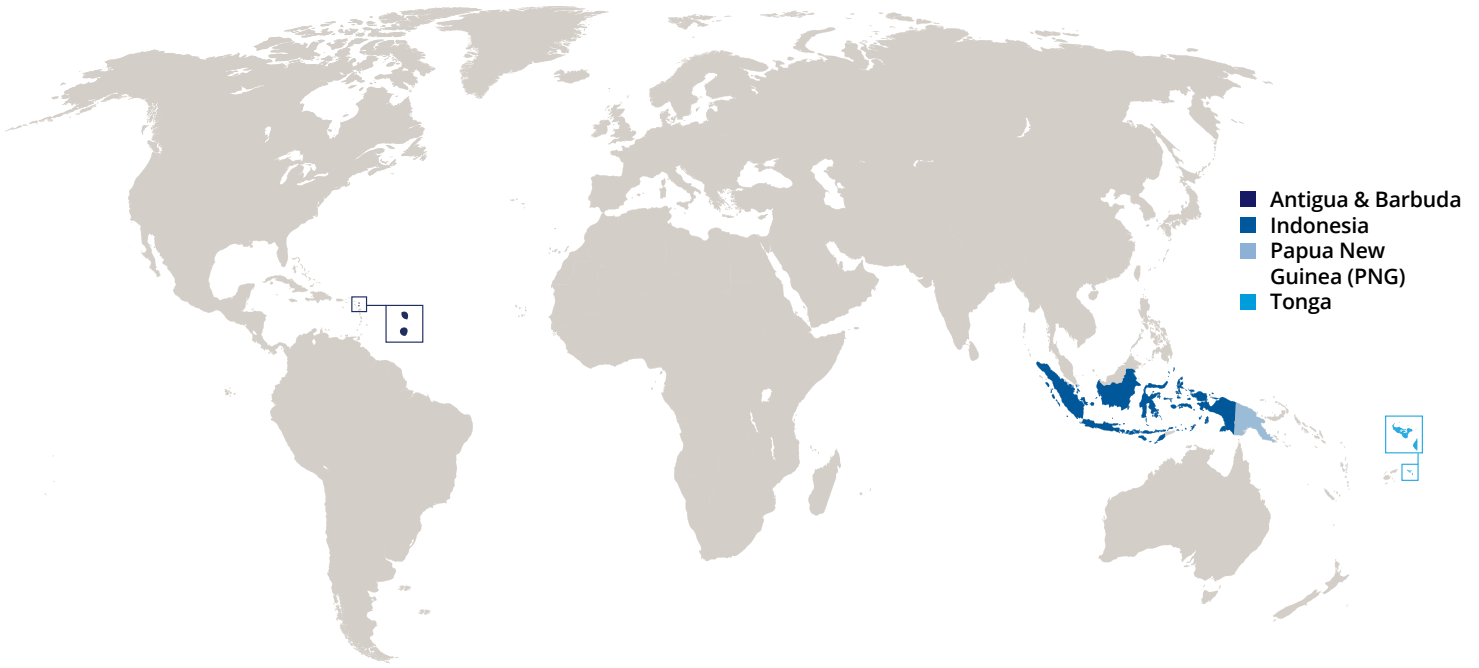
Dr. Camara was motivated to pursue dentistry after witnessing the lack of awareness and care for dental health in her community. After graduating from UGANC, she joined the *Global Mercy* as a volunteer, inspired by the ship's innovative dental clinic. Her experience there has expanded her vision to improve dental care in rural Guinea, where access remains limited.



IMAGES: (TOP TO BOTTOM)  
Dr. Salématou Camara; Dr. Marijke Westerduin and her family onboard the *Global Mercy*.



Mercy Ships volunteers are the heartbeat of the organisation and crucial to Mercy Ships' work. 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. Mercy Ships is forever grateful for our generous and compassionate volunteers.



## Beyond Africa: Global Impact Across

# Asia-Pacific & the Caribbean

At the heart of our mission is the unwavering commitment to bring hope and healing to those in need, especially as we continue to respond to regional gaps in medical supply chains and health system fragility post-COVID.

### Antigua & Barbuda

In November 2024, responding to an urgent request from the UN Public Foundation FOSD and the Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda, we mobilised quickly to send two 40-foot shipping containers of urgently needed medical equipment and supplies. These critical resources were delivered to help bolster the nation's healthcare response, build resilience and ensure frontline workers had access to the tools they needed most.

### Papua New Guinea

In collaboration with Future Value Foundation Limited, we also organised the shipment of a 20-foot container of health and educational supplies to Papua New Guinea. This shipment, scheduled for late February 2025, will be delivered to Kikori Hospital and surrounding communities, providing much needed resources to improve healthcare access in these remote areas.

### Tonga

Building on this momentum, in early 2025, we sent two more 40-foot containers to Tonga. These shipments included essential medical supplies such as respirator masks, gloves, protective glasses, digital thermometers, gowns, and more. These efforts are designed to strengthen Tonga's healthcare system, enabling them to better serve their communities.

Together, with the support of Australian companies and our partners in Queensland and New South Wales Health, we continue to make a lasting impact. By strengthening healthcare systems and improving lives, we are part of a mission that delivers both hope and healing to those who need it most.





## CORPORATE PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

### EASTERN PACIFIC SHIPPING'S FUNDRAISER EXCEEDS S\$2 MILLION FOR MERCY SHIPS

This remarkable achievement by committed EPS's employees for the 'To The Moon' fundraiser enabled them to collectively cover 574,644 kilometres in 20 days.

EPS's employees across sea and shore, and the wider community beyond the maritime sector, collectively took part in over 11,000 run, walk and cycle activities.

Highlights included a Round-The-Island (RTI) Ride, Run, and Walk in Singapore, where groups of EPS employees took on an overnight endurance challenge. Cyclists covered 200 kilometres each on the RTI cycle, while runners logged an impressive 108 kilometres, and walkers contributed 33 kilometres overnight. The campaign also featured a Zwift Ladies Takeover event, where experienced and first-time female cyclists came together to collectively cover over 600 kilometres on three indoor Zwift bikes in less than 10 hours, celebrating both the strength and diversity of the EPS team.

EPS's commitment spanned across its global offices with inter-departmental rides, runs, and walks, which encouraged friendly competition and teamwork. Additionally, a company-wide Run and Walk Day united all seven EPS offices worldwide, enabling employees everywhere to contribute to the campaign's ambitious distance goal. The impact extended beyond the shore as EPS's global fleet played a vital role, with crews on board EPS vessels logging miles 24/7.

**IMAGES (TOP):** Some of the EPS office staff who participated in the 'EPS To The Moon' challenge, that raised over S\$2 million.  
**(ABOVE)** EPS's Tanker Commercial Director, Company CEO and Mercy Ships Australia CPO Rick Menzies.



*"Seeing the entire EPS community come together with such energy and dedication has been incredibly inspiring," said Cyril Ducau, Chief Executive Officer of EPS. "To The Moon' is not just about achieving a distance or a fundraising goal; it's about uniting for a common purpose, promoting a healthy lifestyle, and making a tangible difference in the lives of those in need. I am immensely proud of our team's achievements and their commitment to creating lasting positive change."*

Rick Menzies, Mercy Ships Chief Partnership Officer said *"I had the privilege of participating in some of the 'To The Moon' events with EPS staff and others. There was always a wonderful atmosphere of camaraderie, a great opportunity to get some exercise, and a common purpose to raise money to help people in desperate need. Not only did they reach the distance to the moon, which was the objective, but managed to get halfway back to earth again!"*

Through collective effort, determination, and a commitment to health and wellness, EPS employees across offices and vessels worldwide together with partners, families and friends, have shown what is possible when a community unites behind a meaningful cause. The funds raised through this fundraiser will support Mercy Ships in providing life-saving medical care to underserved communities.

# Building Healthcare Resilience

## THROUGH MEDICAL SUPPLY DISTRIBUTION

Mercy Ships Australia (MSA) remains committed to strengthening healthcare systems and providing urgently needed medical aid to some of the world's most vulnerable communities. In 2024 and early 2025, we expanded our strategic medical supply distribution efforts, ensuring essential healthcare resources reached Small Island Developing States (SIDS), remote hospitals, and emergency response hubs.

Thanks to the generosity of corporate partners such as Mun Australia and 2San Australia, we were able to deliver life-saving medical equipment and personal protective gear to frontline healthcare workers in the Caribbean and Pacific. These shipments provide immediate relief while also supporting long-term health system resilience in disaster-prone regions.

## Strengthening Healthcare in the Caribbean

### ANTIGUA & BARBUDA HUB – A LIFELINE FOR THE REGION

Through our Antigua & Barbuda Medical Supply Hub, MSA is helping to create a regional distribution centre for medical aid across the Caribbean SIDS. This initiative ensures that urgent supplies, medical equipment and PPE reach hospitals, clinics and frontline responders across the region. This helps to strengthen pandemic preparedness, disaster response and routine healthcare delivery.

#### Key Impact:

- **Over 50 tonnes of critical medical supplies:** Shipped to frontline healthcare workers, strengthening hospitals and clinics with essential resources including gloves, gowns, masks, diagnostic kits and life-saving medicines.
- **Enhanced Healthcare Preparedness:** Equipping healthcare facilities with resources to better respond to future outbreaks and emergencies.
- **Strengthened Partnerships:** Working alongside government agencies, NGO's and medical institutions to create sustainable supply chains for essential healthcare materials.



## Pacific Island Shipments – Supporting Hospitals and Clinics

### TONGA – DELIVERING MEDICAL RELIEF THROUGH ROYAL PARTNERSHIPS

In February 2025, MSA, with the support of 2San Australia and the Queensland Police Service, successfully delivered over 50 tonnes of critical medical supplies to Her Majesty's Charity in Tonga. The shipment was distributed under the direction of Queen Nanasipau'u, ensuring that critical resources reached:

- **Vaiola Hospital** – Tonga's main referral hospital, receiving bulk medical supplies to serve thousands of patients.
- **Outer Island Hospitals** – Facilities in Vava'u, Ha'apai, and 'Eua were equipped with supplies for ongoing care.
- **Student Healthcare Programs** – Schools including Tupou College, Tonga College, Tonga High School and Queen Salote College received medical kits to enhance student health services.

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*Tonga's Ministry of Health expressed deep appreciation, stating that these supplies will significantly improve clinical healthcare services for the people of Tonga.'*

**- Spokesperson from the Tonga's Ministry of Health.**

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### **PAPUA NEW GUINEA – SUPPORTING KIKORI DISTRICT HOSPITAL**

Deep in Papua New Guinea's Gulf Province, Kikori District Hospital serves an isolated population with limited access to healthcare infrastructure. In 2024, MSA shipped over 25 tonnes of essential medical supplies to strengthen healthcare services in this remote region.

#### **Shipment Highlights:**

- **Medical Equipment & Consumables** – Diagnostic tools, wound care products, and basic hospital supplies.
- **Emergency Stock for Rural Clinics** – Ensuring smaller clinics have access to critical care items.

This logistical support to Papua New Guinea's health system is part of our broader effort to enhance healthcare resilience in the Pacific, ensuring that even the most remote communities have access to the tools they need to save lives.

## **A Shared Commitment to Saving Lives**

None of these efforts would be possible without the generosity of corporate partners like Mun Australia, 2San Australia and the Queensland Police Service, whose commitment to global health equity has made a tangible difference in some of the most underserved regions of the world.

**Together, we are not only delivering immediate medical relief—we are building stronger healthcare systems that will serve these communities for years to come.**

IMAGES (ABOVE LEFT): Pacific Island healthcare workers receiving a shipment of medical supplies. (RIGHT): The Matron and Nurse Practitioners from Valola Hospital, Tonga inspect a shipment of medical supplies.





**PROJECT  
SPOTLIGHT**

## Regenerative Agriculture in Sierra Leone Cultivating God's Way



In the rural district of Falaba, northern Sierra Leone, where food insecurity affects more than half the population, a transformative project is underway to address hunger, economic marginalisation, and land degradation.

Affectionately known as “Cultivating God’s Way”, this initiative is made possible through a collaborative effort between Mercy Ships Australia, The Margo Hartley Foundation, the World Food Programme (WFP), and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). It represents a bold, response to one of West Africa’s most pressing humanitarian needs.

With improved seeds, modern tools, and training in regenerative farming and sustainable livestock practices, farmers and cattle herders are being equipped to thrive, not just survive. From inland valley swamps reclaimed for rice and sweet potato cultivation, to climate-smart cattle farming and livestock quarantine facilities, the project is a comprehensive investment in community resilience.

Special attention is given to empowering women and youth through training in agronomy, livestock management, and cooperative leadership. These efforts not only boost productivity but also reduce tensions between farmers and herders, bringing peace alongside progress.

During a visit to Sierra Leone and the *Global Mercy*, long-time supporter Margo Hartley, OAM saw first-hand the dual impact of this work:

*“Seeing the Global Mercy’s hospital ward and outpatient centre come to life, knowing it provides hope and healing to so many, is deeply fulfilling. But sustainable change also requires strengthening communities beyond the ship. That’s why I was honoured to support the ‘Cultivating God’s Way’ project in Sierra Leone, which empowers farmers –*

*particularly women, with regenerative agriculture techniques to build food security and resilience. The impact we are making together, from hospital beds to farmland, is transforming lives today and for generations to come,”* said Margo Hartley, OAM

With the Australian and Canadian High Commissioners recently visiting the *Global Mercy*, Mercy Ships Australia continues to elevate both medical and agricultural solutions, healing people and land alike.

As we sow into this fertile ground, we see a future where families are no longer trapped by poverty, but are nourished, equipped, and free to flourish.

**IMAGE (INSET)** Andrew Bate, COO Mercy Ships Australia and Yvonne Forsen, Representative and Country Director for the World Food Program. **(ABOVE)** Margo Hartley, OAM.

# Mercy Ships' Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Initiatives



In 2024, Mercy Ships continued to advance its commitment to delivering long-term impact across sub-Saharan Africa through the deployment of state-of-the-art hospital ships. Working in close partnership with local governments, ministries of health, and community stakeholders, Mercy Ships strives for excellence not only in medical outcomes but also in sustainable, responsible operations aligned with global ESG standards.

## Environmental Stewardship

Mercy Ships is dedicated to minimising its environmental footprint while maximising its medical reach. Both the *Africa Mercy* and *Global Mercy* meet or exceed international environmental regulations, including the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), the key global standard for preventing marine pollution.

The *Global Mercy*, purpose-built for this mission, incorporates energy efficiency and sustainability as core design elements. Her systems include:

- Advanced power management and HVAC systems that reduce overall energy use
- Onboard water recycling technology that repurposes air conditioning condensate, cutting potable water usage by up to 50%
- Solar-ready infrastructure and enhanced waste management systems

These innovations represent a blueprint for future vessels as Mercy Ships deepens its commitment to green operations.

## Social Impact

At the heart of Mercy Ships is a powerful social mission: to bring hope and healing to those without access to safe, affordable surgical care. Since 1978, the organisation has delivered more than 121,900 life-changing surgeries across specialties such as maxillofacial, orthopaedics, obstetrics, and ophthalmology—transforming the lives of patients and their families.

Beyond direct medical services, Mercy Ships is equally committed to building local capacity. In partnership with African governments and institutions, the

organisation has trained over 55,500 local healthcare professionals, contributing to more resilient health systems and enabling lasting, community-led impact.

This work is driven by a diverse and committed team of global volunteers and staff, serving on board ships and across Mercy Ships' international network.

## Governance and Global Structure

Mercy Ships maintains a robust, decentralised governance model. Oversight is provided by the Mercy Ships International Board of Directors, comprising leaders from diverse backgrounds and nations including Australia. The broader Mercy Ships ecosystem includes:

- Two hospital ships (*Africa Mercy* and *Global Mercy*), each led by a dedicated Managing Director and shipboard leadership team
- An Africa Service Centre in Dakar, Senegal
- Sixteen independent national offices, including Mercy Ships Australia, each governed by its own board and operating under the legal and regulatory framework of its country

This globally distributed model ensures accountability, local responsiveness, and compliance with national and international nonprofit standards.

## Looking Ahead

Mercy Ships' ESG journey is deeply integrated with its vision to bring sustainable healthcare solutions to the world's most vulnerable.

From eco-conscious ship design to inclusive workforce development and transparent governance, the organisation is committed to operational excellence and measurable impact – today and into the future.



# LOOKING FORWARD PROJECTS IN 2025

In 2025, Mercy Ships Australia (MSA) continues to broaden its commitment to healthcare access, sustainable development, and system-strengthening in underserved regions.

With a growing global footprint and strengthened partnerships, MSA is poised to drive impact in three key areas:

- Strategic healthcare resilience in SIDS
- Expanded Gifts-in-Kind operations
- Field-based development projects

## GIFTS-IN-KIND (GIK) PROGRAM EXPANSION

### Logistics Innovation & Strategic Aid Distribution

In 2025, MSA will operationalise a new Brisbane Logistics Hub to support the growing pipeline of in-kind medical donations and regional healthcare needs. Building on existing partnerships with Queensland and New South Wales Health, Save Our Supplies, and the PvBlic Foundation FOSD, this facility will enable a smarter, more strategic approach to medical aid delivery and healthcare resilience.

By strengthening supply chains and streamlining distribution across developing nations, this initiative plays a critical role in building long-term healthcare resilience – ensuring that essential medical supplies reach vulnerable communities before, during, and after times of crisis.

## HEALTHCARE RESILIENCE & MEDICAL AID DELIVERY

### Strategic SIDS Partnership

In collaboration with local and international partners, Mercy Ships Australia (MSA) will co-lead a global initiative to strengthen healthcare infrastructure and emergency medical supply chains across the Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

This work is a central pillar of MSA's broader effort to build healthcare resilience in vulnerable island nations through smart logistics, partnerships, and innovation.

#### Key initiatives in 2025 include:

- **Establishment of Medical Supply Chain Hubs** in Antigua & Barbuda and Samoa, serving as regional centres for procurement, storage, and distribution of critical health supplies.
- **Technology-Enabled Logistics:** Real-time medical tracking systems and analytics will be integrated to improve transparency, supply chain efficiency, and healthcare access in remote areas.



IMAGE (ABOVE): 40ft containers being offloaded with the help of the Matron and Nurse Practitioners from Vaiola Hospital, Tonga.



## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

**Sierra Leone | Samoa | Indonesia**

MSA will continue to lead multi-sector development initiatives in partnership with the **World Food Programme (WFP)** and the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**:

- In **Sierra Leone**, the “Cultivating God’s Way” project is transforming agriculture and livestock systems in Falaba District. This includes inland valley rice farming, sweet potato cultivation, improved ruminant breeds, and the establishment of women-led cooperatives. It also addresses intercommunal conflict and food insecurity through climate-smart, regenerative practices.
- In **Samoa**, MSA’s regenerative agriculture program is focused on restoring degraded land, establishing organic farming co-ops, and expanding school garden programs to embed food security education at a grassroots level.
- In **Indonesia**, MSA continues to work with regional partners to scope and deliver medical capacity-building programs, while engaging government and faith-based networks to explore potential for surgical partnerships and logistics support.

## BUILDING CAPACITY THROUGH ACCREDITATION & IMPACT MEASUREMENT

MSA will further scale its development and relief work through strengthened frameworks of accountability and transparency. In 2025, MSA will maintain compliance with ACFID Code of Conduct and ANCP.

## THE ROAD AHEAD

From rice fields in Sierra Leone to medical logistics hubs in the Pacific, Mercy Ships Australia is charting a bold and compassionate course forward.

**With volunteers and collaborations at the helm and partnerships at our side, we remain committed to healing both people and systems – one ship, one shipment, one community at a time.**

IMAGE (ABOVE): Samoan Government Grant: 111 Acres of Land for Our Agricultural Project



We are a Member of ACFID and as such committed to the ACFID Code of Conduct for Australian aid and development organisations. See [www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au)

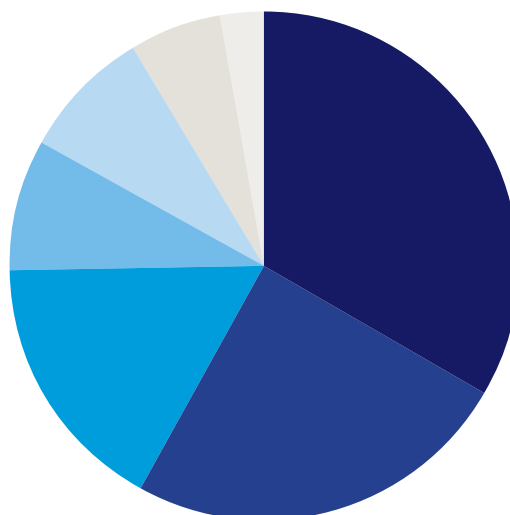
# Income Statement

FOR THE YEAR ENDED (31/12/2024)

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
<b>REVENUE</b>		
<b>Donations and gifts</b>		
Monetary	\$9,646,927	\$7,515,317
Non-Monetary	\$10,160,458	\$3,802,306
Bequests and Legacies	\$2,774,783	\$844,304
<b>Grants</b>		
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	-	-
Other Australian	\$237,689	\$94,654
Other Overseas	\$591,313	\$658,809
<b>Other Income</b>		
Investment Income	\$347,995	\$258,748
Commercial Activities Income	\$1,687	\$1,622
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$23,760,853</b>	<b>\$13,175,760</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>International Aid and Development Programs Expenditure</b>		
Funds for International Programs	\$8,637,148	\$5,248,360
Program Support Costs	\$946,239	\$446,911
<b>Fundraising and Community Education Costs</b>	\$1,578,689	\$1,332,151
<b>Accountability and Administration</b>	\$831,226	\$725,849
<b>Non-Monetary Expenditure</b>	\$10,160,458	\$3,802,306
<b>Commercial Activities Expenditure</b>	\$688	\$1,090
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>\$22,154,448</b>	<b>\$11,556,667</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$1,606,405</b>	<b>\$1,619,093</b>
Other Comprehensive Income	\$23,231	-
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (LOSS) FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>\$1,629,636</b>	<b>\$1,619,093</b>

## EXPENSE BREAKDOWN AS % OF TOTAL INCOME 2024

- 33.5% Program Non-Monetary Expenditure
- 24.7% International Aid and Development Programs Expenditure
- 16.5% Funds for International Programs
- 8.4% Accountability and Administration
- 8.2% Program Support Costs
- 6.1% Fundraising and Community Education
- 2.5% Commercial Activities Expenditure



## BALANCE SHEET AS AT (31/12/2024)

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash & cash equivalents	\$12,481,487	\$7,909,702
Trade and other receivables	\$470,038	\$159,870
Inventories	\$7,718	\$6,606
Other financial assets	\$19,323	\$20,650
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$12,978,566</b>	<b>\$8,096,828</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>		
Trade and other receivables	-	-
Property, plant and equipment	\$18,651	\$33,059
Intangibles	\$12,920	\$19,516
Other non-current assets	\$133,404	\$126,536
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<b>\$164,975</b>	<b>\$179,111</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$13,143,541</b>	<b>\$8,275,939</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	\$7,892,520	\$4,760,993
Other financial liabilities	\$43,373	\$37,257
Provisions	\$272,799	\$194,144
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$8,208,692</b>	<b>\$4,992,394</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>		
Other financial liabilities	\$103,373	\$98,915
Provisions	\$118,335	\$101,125
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$221,708</b>	<b>\$200,040</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$8,430,400</b>	<b>\$5,192,434</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$4,713,141</b>	<b>\$3,083,505</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Retained Earnings	\$4,713,141	\$3,083,505
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>\$4,713,141</b>	<b>\$3,083,505</b>

## STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED (31/12/2024)

	Retained Earnings
	\$
<b>Balance at 1/01 2024 (commencing balance)</b>	<b>\$3,083,505</b>
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$1,606,405
Other comprehensive income	\$23,231
<b>Balance at 31/12/2024 (year end balance)</b>	<b>\$4,713,141</b>

## The work of Mercy Ships is only made possible by the generosity of supporters and volunteer professionals.

Help Mercy Ships continue to provide life-changing surgeries and change the face of healthcare in African nations.

## How You Can Help



### DONATE

Make a regular monthly donation to Mercy Ships. Visit [mercyships.org.au/donate](https://mercyships.org.au/donate)



### NOMINATE US

Nominate Mercy Ships as Charity of the Year partner in your workplace, school, church or organisation.



### COME ALONG

Attend or hold your own event with your local community, church, club or workplace. Visit [mercyships.org.au/partner-with-us](https://mercyships.org.au/partner-with-us)



### REMEMBER US

Remember Mercy Ships in your Will. Visit [mercyships.org.au/give-in-your-will](https://mercyships.org.au/give-in-your-will)



### GET INVOLVED

Run, jog, walk, cycle or swim for Mercy Ships by hosting a fundraising event. Visit [mercyships.org.au/fundraise-with-us](https://mercyships.org.au/fundraise-with-us)



### VOLUNTEER

Volunteer on board a Mercy Ship. Visit [mercyships.org.au/volunteer](https://mercyships.org.au/volunteer)



### SINCE 1978:

**2.88 million+**  
Direct beneficiaries

**122,000+**  
Life-changing surgical procedures

**556,000+**  
Dental procedures

**55,500+**  
Professionals trained in their field of expertise

**6,940+**  
Professionals trained to train others



### Follow us

Stay in touch and find out what you can do to help: [@mercyshipsau](https://www.instagram.com/mercyshipsau)

### FIND OUT MORE

[mercyships.org.au](https://mercyships.org.au)  
1300 739 899



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*Bringing Hope  
and Healing*



[mercyships.org.au](http://mercyships.org.au)