

Interplast Holland mission Burundi

4 - 18 November 2011

Team

Rein Zeeman	- plastic & reconstructive surgeon, team leader (report)
Andrew Posma	- plastic & reconstructive surgeon
Jarl Tielemans	- assistant plastic surgeon
Hans Pöll	- anaesthetist
Vincent van Weerlee	- anaesthesia assistant
Arend Verbaan	- anaesthesia assistant
Elles Loenen	- theatre nurse
Ingrid van Ginkel	- theatre nurse
Andre Nkeshimana	- chairman "Izere" (Burundi Diaspora), The Netherlands

Hospitals

Centre Hopitalo Universitaire de Kamenge, Bujumbura
Kibimba Hopital, Gitega



Team Nov 2011 with patients Kibimba

On November 4th the Interplast Holland team travelled for the fifth time via Nairobi to Bujumbura. On arrival November 5th André Nkeshimana was waiting at the airport and arranged our visa's, transport from C.H.U.K. was waiting .

We checked in at Guesthouse Esperance and started screening at C.H.U.K. at the outpatient department at 2 pm. Unfortunately nothing had been prepared for screening the over 200 waiting patients. We had to prepare two rooms to be able to see the patients. No registration on beforehand was done either.

Of course there were too many patients. We could not operate everyone. Children with cleft lips / palates and patients with post burn contractures were seen first. Later on we saw the patients with tumours (some quite advanced), orthopaedic problems, neurological problems etc. only advice could be given.

Theatre lists were made for the coming days.

Dr Jean Claude was very helpful during screening which lasted until dark.

Sunday

In the afternoon we went to prepare the theatre room in CHUK with two tables, two anaesthesia machines and 2 operating lights. Our boxes were unpacked and everything prepared to make a quick start on Monday possible .

Monday November 7th Start of the theatre program!

The first day we operated on ten patients, mainly with cleft lip and/or palate. In the afternoon more patients for screening arrived at CHUK.

In the evening we were invited by Chargé d'Affair of the Dutch Embassy Cees Roels. We met several Burundi's of whom the head of the chamber of Commerce , everybody was very enthusiastic about our work.

Rest of the week

The theatre programs run quite well this week. However there were still too few free beds available for our patients who had to stay overnight. Jean Claude was very busy organizing this and gave good support on postoperative care!

Finally André Nkeshimana arranged some beds with the Director of CHUK for our hypospadias patients. During the week several film crews and journalists came to see us at work in theatre . We operated on about 50 patients in this first week.

However we had very little support from the local staff. Also other specialists were not available for training. One of Interplast objectives is to train local doctors on the job so eventually they can operate these cases themselves .

We did not see any postoperative problems during this week.



TV crew filming

Saturday November 12th

Packed and ready to leave to for Kibimba district hospital we waited for our transport. Unfortunately the driver never showed up. André Nkeshimana had to go to the Ministry to arrange for another driver. We left hours late.

In the afternoon we started the screening session also much later than planned but here everything was prepared very well. All patients were registrated!! *65 cleft lip/ palate, 40 post burn contracture and 140 patients with tumours.* Some with very advanced carcinomas of the parotic or neck, we are not able to operate on these advanced cases.

But most of the children with cleft lips and PBC were put on our operating lists.

Sunday November 13th

In the morning we visited Gitega Hospital and the local market. Later that day we prepared the theatres for the week. We were very happy with the support of the local staff here!!

14 - 17 November

The start of the operating week in Kibimba went without any problems. With a very busy daily program we managed to speed up things. Local staff was very helpful, especially the two people from the Sterilisation department did their utmost best to get our instruments ready in time for the next surgery.

Director Dr Elise assisted regularly with cleft lip and PBC surgeries. We left a Watson knife behind to enable him to do his own skin grafting.



Dr Elise operating on a lip

The Governor and his entourage payed us a visit in theatre on Wednesday . He was impressed by our work! We operated on more than 50 patients in a couple of days. Here we had no problems with beds for postoperative care.

Evening of November 17th

Farewell party for the staff of Kibimba Hospital at Tamotel. Also present the directors of Kimbimba and Gitega Hospital, the Governor and the local M.P. of Gitega.

Traditional drumming and dancers was impressive, especially for the new team members.



Burundese drummers

November 18th

In the morning we did our last rounds in Kibimba, we handed the postoperative care over to the local staff. A few dressing changes were done.

Transport back to Bujumbura with the bus of the District Medical officer.

At 2 PM we had to do a lot of dressing changes in CHUK and we had to check all our patients mainly on outpatient base there. There were few complications especially with some hypospadias patients and we saw one complete dehiscence of a repaired cleft lip.

The work at Kibimba made a very positive impression; we could give training to the anaesthetists, surgeons and other local doctors. Everybody was very helpful for us to do our work!

Interplast Holland certificates were handed over to 8 staff members.

Total operations:	107	Cleft lip/ palate	65
		Post burn contractures	28
		Hypospadias	6
		Other	8

Complications: 6

Conclusion

Successful mission, however still very little support from local staff at CHUK .

We also need more support from the Government, transport, lodging, doctors for training etc

We would like to thank the directors of both hospitals Kibimba and CHUK for allowing us to work in their theatres. Also we would like to thank our Royal Dutch Embassy for their support and hospitality. Also we like to thank Brarudi, Alexandra Sindehera for support in communicating our mission on radio and press. We would appreciate more cooperation in future if possible .



Cleft lip before and after



Dr Elise with donated skin graft knife



Sterilisation department



Mothers with operated children



Goodbye in Kibimba