



General Surgery | Program Fact Sheet



Edouard, Togo
Hernia



Claire, Congo
Goiter



Patient Screening



Onboard Surgeries



Recovery Ward

*Lives transformed
through hope
and healing...*

The Surgical Need in Developing Countries

Why is the need so extreme?

For the poor in developing countries, accessing necessary medical and surgical care is extremely difficult due to their remote location, lack of medical facilities and financial constraints. Often, conditions that are treated in earlier stages in wealthier countries, are treated very late in developing countries, resulting in increased severity and debilitation, preventing people from working or attending school.

In the African nations where Mercy Ships serves, healthcare systems struggle to meet the needs of the population, including surgery. For many people, if surgery is available, it is often located in urban areas and cost-prohibitive. According to the World Health Organization, there is a critical shortage of all types of medical providers in developing countries. Because of these limitations, general surgical needs such as hernias and goiters plague this region's adult and paediatric populations.

General Surgery Statistics

- 5 billion people do not have access to safe, affordable surgical and anesthesia care when needed. Access is worst in low and lower middle income countries, where nine of ten people cannot access basic surgical care. (Source: Lancet Commission)
- 143 million additional surgical procedures in low and lower middle income countries are needed each year to save lives and prevent disability. This need is greatest in the poorest regions of the world, including Western, Eastern, and Central sub-Saharan Africa, and South and Southeast Asia. (Source: Lancet Commission)
- An estimated 1.5 million deaths per year could be prevented by providing essential surgical procedures in low and lower middle income countries. (Source: Essential Surgery: Disease Control Priorities, Third Edition (Volume 1))
- In the absence of surgical care, case-fatality rates are high for common, easily treatable conditions including appendicitis, hernia, fractures, obstructed labor, and congenital anomalies. (Source: Lancet Commission)

Transformational Healthcare through Onboard Surgical Programs

Bringing Hope and Healing

Through the deployment of the world's largest, non-governmental hospital ships, Mercy Ships works with host nations to strengthen local healthcare systems and serve the most vulnerable in Africa. Mercy Ships collaborates with local governments and ministries of health to improve national healthcare infrastructure.

Mercy Ships partners with local healthcare workers and nurses to provide training and educational opportunities in appropriate techniques. Mercy Ships programs offer holistic support to developing countries, striving to make healthcare accessible for all.

Mercy Ships seeks to deliver medical care and training excellence with integrity and compassion to countries with medical systems that are striving to build their capacity.

Surgery

Mercy Ships seeks to relieve the burden of disease and affliction among the poor and outcast by providing specialized, corrective surgical interventions for conditions such as hernias and goiters through the General Surgery program. Mercy Ships collaborates with local governments and ministries of health to improve national healthcare infrastructure. Mercy Ships partners with local surgeons and nurses to provide training and educational opportunities in appropriate techniques. In addition, Mercy Ships contributes to the long-term eradication of preventable diseases and resulting extreme conditions by conducting community health education programs.

Recovery & Counselling

Patients recuperate under world-class care in the ship's hospital ward and outpatient care in the HOPE Center, where they are also provided with opportunity for moral and spiritual support. Mercy Ships aims to provide a caring, holistic environment to facilitate patient recovery.

Accomplishment

Through all of the surgical programs, Mercy Ships has performed more than 105,500 life-changing or life-saving surgical procedures, including hernia repairs and tumor removals.