



Mercy Ships | Fact Sheet



Ali, Sierra Leone
Cleft Lip Repair



Maomai, Benin
Tumor Removal



Alexis, Nadège, Ricardo,
Benin, Cataract Removal



The Africa Mercy



The Global Mercy
(artist's rendering)



Surgeries & Healthcare



Training of local
professionals



Community Empowerment

About Mercy Ships

Mercy Ships is an international faith-based organization bringing hope and healing to the world's forgotten poor. As many as 5 billion people lack access to safe, affordable surgical and anesthesia services worldwide, and less than 6% of all operations are delivered to the world's poorest countries. Marginalized populations continue to suffer due to a lack of trained healthcare providers, inadequate infrastructure, and disproportionate out-of-pocket healthcare costs. Mercy Ships programs offer holistic support to developing countries, striving to make healthcare accessible for all. Since 1978, Mercy Ships has delivered services to more than 2.84 million beneficiaries. The countries served by Mercy Ships are ranked as the poorest in the world by the United Nations Human Development Index.

The organization has supported its hospital ships through:

- 1. The International Support Center** in Garden Valley, Texas, USA (home of both the **US national office** and **Mercy Ships Operations**). This location houses executive offices, marine operations, human resources, warehousing, finance, logistics and information services, and oversees the work of the **Mercy Ships Africa Bureau** in Cotonou, Benin.
- 2. Mercy Ships Global Association** headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland (international coordination).
- 3. Mercy Ships national offices** in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Norway, New Zealand, Spain, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the USA.

Founder & History

While living in Lausanne, Switzerland, Don Stephens began a journey that led to the founding of Mercy Ships. Don formed and led a team that surveyed suitable ocean liners for the dream of a hospital ship to serve the world's poor. In 1978, the dream became a reality with the purchase of the first ship, the *Anastasis*. Another milestone was reached in 2007 with the launching of the *Africa Mercy*, the largest of the four hospital ships operated by Mercy Ships in its 42-year history.

Don and his wife Deyon and their four children lived onboard the first Mercy Ship for 10 years. Now based in the USA, Don continues to inspire the staff and crew toward the future. The Stephenses have overseen the growth of Mercy Ships from its humble beginnings to an organization in which tens of

thousands of professional volunteers have served. Don is on the Mercy Ships International Board which has 40 active and 2 emeritus members from 10 nations.

Ships and Field Programs

The *Africa Mercy* and the *Global Mercy* are the world's largest non-governmental hospital ships and are dedicated to serving the continent of Africa. Mercy Ships has an average of 1,200 volunteer crew from more than 60 nations, serving onboard its hospital ships each year.

Programs & Services

Mercy Ships works with host nations to strengthen the local healthcare delivery system while serving the surgical needs of the host country. Mercy Ships provides a variety of training opportunities for medical professionals (surgeons, nurses, anesthesia providers, administrators, medical technicians and engineers). Collaborating with qualified local and international partners, the programs Mercy Ships provides offer holistic support to developing countries. Mercy Ships has provided services and materials in developing countries valued at over \$1.74 billion, including the following:

- Performed more than 105,500 life-changing or life-saving surgical procedures such as cleft-lip and palate repair, cataract removal, orthopedic, facial reconstruction, burn contracture release, pediatric, general, and obstetric fistula repair
- Performed over 488,000 dental procedures for over 186,500 dental patients.
- Trained more than 6,600 local professionals, who have in turn trained many others
- Trained over 49,000 local professionals in their area of expertise (anesthesiology, surgery, nursing, biomedical engineering, instrument Sterilization, trauma, leadership)
- Taught over 252,000 local people in basic healthcare
- Completed over 1,110 infrastructure development projects

Finances

Funding for Mercy Ships is provided primarily through private donations, foundations and socially responsible corporations. Volunteers serving on the ships and in the field contribute not only their professional skills but also monthly fees to cover their costs. This enables Mercy Ships to deliver medical and development services for a fraction of the usual cost.