

EDITORIAL

For over 10 years, 2nd Chance has been working on developing reconstructive surgery in sub-Saharan Africa. In December 2023, the number of members of the College of Surgeons of East, Central, and Southern Africa (COSECSA) in reconstructive surgery surpassed 100 surgeons.

Born in the heart of Ethiopia with a congenital hand deformity, Simagh and Mesay received treatment at the reconstructive surgery department of Arba Minch, led by Drs. Desta GERBU and Tesfaye GETACHEW. 2nd Chance has been supporting these two surgeons for 7 years. Participating in our workshops, they received support to become members of COSECSA. They then joined 2nd Chance as trainers following our "Train the Trainer" model. In 2023, they took part in a week-long advanced training provided to 17 new surgeons who passed their exams in Addis.

Many countries still lack the capacity to offer children like Simagh and Mesay the care that will transform their lives.

Two young patients underwent hand deformity surgery in Arba Minch, Ethiopia, in November 2023.



VISION MISSION

Reconstructive surgery is an essential component of accessible healthcare for all patients in sub-Saharan Africa.

2nd Chance is a Swiss non-profit organization whose aim is to develop reconstructive surgery in low-income countries and in post-conflict, post-disaster contexts.



WE TRAIN



WE TREAT



WE ADVOCATE

HIGHLIGHTS 2023

Zewo Certification

Validation of all conditions for Zewo certification. This quality label for Swiss aid organizations is a guarantee of transparency and proper donation management.



Goitre Project

Completion of the Goitre project in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi after 10 years of training by 2nd Chance's multidisciplinary teams, resulting in full autonomy for local surgeons and medical teams.

10-Year Celebration

The realization, for the first time, of a charitable and celebratory event marking the **10-year anniversary** (actually 13 years due to Covid) of the Association, bringing together the pillars donors of 2nd Chance, as well as new partners supporting our cause.

Graduates

Success of the Reconstructive Surgery diploma for **17 new students** from East Africa, supported by 2nd Chance after **3 years of specialized studies**.



HUG STUDENTS

Preparation for the participation of **13 medical students** from HUG in the 2024 missions, enabling them to broaden their learning to encompass different pathologies, other needs, according to local resources.



Reconstructive Surgery Program

In 2023, 2nd Chance organized **9 workshops**, including **6 training workshops** in reconstructive surgery:

- In Conakry, Guinea (02.2023)
- In Oshakati, Namibia (04.2023)
- In Tumbi, Tanzania (05.2023)
- In Eldoret, Kenya (09.2023)
- In Kumasi, Ghana (10.2023)
- In Arba Minch, Ethiopia (11.2023)



In 2023, 2nd Chance supported **52 volunteer trainers** during each mission, overseen by the 2nd Chance management team, who mentored **206 participants**, including:

- 102 surgeons
- 28 anesthesiologists
- 76 nurses

Their combined skills enabled surgical care for 100 patients, including 70 children with burn sequelae, congenital malformations, or deforming diseases, as well as accident sequelae. Additionally, 43 patients operated on in 2022 were reviewed, with 33 being children, the majority of whom showed positive results after surgery.

The expertise shared strengthened medical activities in the 26 countries associated with our programs. The teams of trainers involved in our missions are increasingly diverse, with 14 African trainers participating in our workshops. Surgeons' skills on the continent are developing, notably in Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, and Ghana. Professionals from these countries are collaborating with us to support training in other less-resourced countries.

The year 2023 marked a return to pre-COVID activity levels. The organization of 2 training workshops in West Africa is encouraging. The launch of a postgraduate diploma in reconstructive surgery in Senegal will also enhance certification training opportunities.

Dr. Komle Sena AMOUZOU's participation as a trainer in Kumasi from Lomé, Togo, will involve a fourth French-speaking African country (after Senegal, Ivory Coast, and Benin) in the regional network. **The aim is to encourage collaboration across language barriers and ensure better exchanges between different countries. Connecting the many countries with no trained plastic surgeons to the program is crucial.**

For over 10 years, 2nd Chance has been working on developing theoretical and practical teachings in reconstructive surgery in Africa. These activities are essential for improving access to care and for training a new generation of highly competent surgeons.

Practical training in operating theaters presents significant challenges, including infectious risks, breaches of sterility rules, poor visual access, and a lack of access to educational materials. Therefore, we have strengthened our collaboration with Uppsala University in Sweden to develop innovations in surgical training, including a project involving camera systems mounted on helmets to livestream ongoing operations to participants outside the operating rooms.



Finally, **15 surgeons** received financial support in the form of long-term training scholarships (2), short-term internships at accredited centers in the region (1), and specialized reconstructive surgery certification exams (12).

Resumption of the "Women" Project Program

In August 2023, in partnership with the University Hospitals of Geneva (HUG), we resumed our training program in posterior perineal fistula surgery. This project, which began in 2015 at the Hamlin Hospital in Addis Ababa, had been put on hold due to COVID and the civil war in northern Ethiopia. The team members of Prof. Frédéric RIS joined us for a 3-year project. The mission led by Dr. Gonzalo SOTO (Chile) and Dr. Émilie LIOT identified new gynecological obstetricians interested in training in posterior perineal fistula surgery. Three Tanzanian doctors, including two surgeons from Mmazi Mmoja Hospital in Zanzibar, joined two Ethiopian surgeons from Metu and Mekele in the program. The main cause of obstetric fistulas remains the number of women still giving birth at home.

18 patients underwent surgery during the mission at CCBRT in August 2023.

In November 2023, we also made contact with the Urumuri Fistula Center in Gitega, Burundi, opened under the patronage of the First Lady's Good Action Foundation. This visit opens up development perspective for the program in Burundi and Cameroon.





Completion of the Goitre Project

In total, the thyroid surgery training program has enabled the treatment and care of 578 patients over the past 10 years with excellent results, and has trained 15 surgeons in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Burundi. The initial goal of the project was to reintroduce safe thyroid surgery in the endemic region of the African Great Lakes, and this has been achieved!

In 2023, we finalized our Goitre surgery training program initiated in the eastern DRC in 2012 by empowering **5 new surgeons** in Burundi. Burundi and eastern DRC are among the poorest countries with very low human development indices. In this resource-limited environment, the management and prevention of goitres are challenging due to the scarcity of endocrinologists, diagnostic laboratories, and radiology facilities. Patients, the majority of whom are women suffering from goitres, are often socially stigmatized. For them, surgery is often the only treatment option. In a less precarious environment, thyroid surgery rarely leads to complications. At the

beginning of the program, the DRC recorded a very alarming rate of complications with nearly 36% mortality, leading to a strong fear among the population and a loss of practice among surgeons.

Faced with this situation, medical authorities in eastern Congo sought the support of 2nd Chance, known for its surgical training programs, to organize a specific training cycle for surgery on giant goitres. These trainings were conducted in various regions:

- KATANA (04.2013 - 12.2015) // Sud Kivu (RDC)
- BUKAVU (09.2018 - 12.2020) // Sud Kivu (RDC)
- GOMA+ MASSISI (12.2015 - 03.2021) // Nord Kivu (RDC)
- KISANGANI (07.2017 - 11.2020) // Tshoppo (RDC)
- BUNIA (11.2018 - 11.2021) // Ituri (RDC)
- NEBOBONGO+ISIRO (05.2019 - 12.2022) // Haut Uele (RDC)
- BUJUMBURA+NGOZI (09.2019 - 10.2023) // Burundi

Anesthesia and Perioperative Safety

We cannot conclude this operational overview without emphasizing the importance of the Association's commitment to perioperative safety. In most African countries, anesthesia is clearly one of the limiting factors in the development of surgery. It is generally performed by nurses or anesthesia technicians who work under the supervision of surgeons. In a minority of cases, teams have supervision from physician anesthesiologists. Levels of skills and equipment vary widely from one facility to another, and often fall far below international recommendations. The Lancet Global Surgery initiative aims to develop autonomous surgical and anesthesia skills in low-resource countries by 2030. The need for training, mentoring, and support for local African anesthesia teams performing anesthesia on a daily basis is crucial. 2nd Chance's project is fully aligned with the momentum initiated by WHO in 2015.

Since 2013, 2nd Chance has regularly assessed the training needs of various anesthesia teams with which the association has worked.

The needs have been identified at three levels:

- Strengthening the knowledge of African surgeons on perioperative safety
- Enhancing practical and theoretical training of anesthesia personnel working in hospital settings
- Ensuring patient safety during operations and implementing the WHO Surgical Safety Checklist

In 2023, **28 anesthesiologists** went on missions with 2nd Chance. **They accompanied and mentored 29 anesthesia nurses, passing on their knowledge. The 172 operated patients** thus benefited from maximum safety. For the first time, our training teams included African anesthesia professionals, notably in Burundi and Namibia. **Six of them joined our teams.** Their understanding of the daily realities of their colleagues makes them relevant for mentoring anesthesia nurse teams.

Additionally, **six new nurses worked with 78 operating room nurses** who are the discreet backbone of patient care.



University Collaboration

This year, 2023, was a year of rallying around 2nd Chance. Our collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine (UNIGE) and HUG has strengthened enthusiasm for 2nd Chance, resulting in **13 new students** who will prepare their Master's thesis with us. They will be mentored during their research and will join a mission for a week in 2024.

On November 28th, we also presented 2nd Chance's activities at a conference organized by the Movement of Students Working Against Health Access Inequities (M.E.T.I.S) at the Faculty of Medicine, UNIL, Lausanne.



Activities in Geneva

In October 2023, two events brought together the people who have supported us for so many years and celebrated 2nd Chance's 10th anniversary.



On October 7th, the Pickwick evening once again demonstrated how the energy of Association members manages to mobilize support for 2nd Chance and the Nicolas Pechère Fund. It has already been 10 years since Nicolas left us, but his memory and smile encourage us to continue moving forward.

On October 12th, the event was even more glamorous as the Mandarin Oriental Hotel hosted a memorable fundraising evening featuring two renowned artists: pianist Florent Albrecht and the Azania Noah ensemble.

These two evenings raised over 80,000 CHF, which will support the continuation of our projects.

Zewo Certification Your donation in good hands

In April 2023, we received Zewo certification. The Zewo quality label guarantees transparency of donations according to 21 standards, including integrity, public utility, management and organization, services, finances, international and national networks, fundraising, and communication. www.zewo.ch



The members of the 2nd Chance Association

Executive Committee Members:

- Dr. Pierre QUINODOZ (President)
- Dr. Marc PECHERE (Vice-President)
- Dr. Ali MODARRESSI (Secretary General)
- Mr. Jean-Claude ESAKI (Treasurer)
- Dr. Yodit SEIUM (Advisor)
- Mrs. Marianne DE ROSSI (Advisor)
- Mr. Mathieu MOLLARD (Advisor)

Management:

- Mrs. Anne ZEIDAN (Director of Operations)
- Dr. Lionel DUMONT (Medical Director)
- Mr. Olivier MATHIER (Administrative and Financial Director)

Additionally, there are 126 members in total.

Thank you to the donors

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the following for their financial support:

The Edmond de Rothschild Foundations - The Canton of Geneva - The City of Geneva

The University Hospitals of Geneva (HUG) - The Beaulieu Medical Cooperative Society (SCMB)

Vitol Foundation - Nice2Care Foundation - Richemont International SA

Ledunfly Philanthropy (Dona Bertarelli) - Foundation for Anesthesiology-Resuscitation - Teoxane SA

The City of Onex - The City of Lancy - The Municipality of Bellevue - And other private foundations

And to all private donors and loved ones who have continued to support us.



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