



Annual report 2019

About us

Simba is a Dutch non-profit organization that provides and develops specialist medical care for the most vulnerable groups in the Tanzania Lake District. We do this in close collaboration with Mission hospitals and local doctors. For example, by means of surgical interventions, providing education, purchasing medical equipment and medicines, and so integrate their and our medical possibilities.

From the motto:

"Changing the world, one person at a time"

From the metaphor: A sustainable medical bridge with a strong foundation in both the Tanzanian Lake Zone and in Western Europe



Mission

Our mission is to help achieve the WHO goals: Safe surgical and anesthesia care for all! SimbaHealth consist of an enthusiastic group of Dutch volunteers with vision for and broad experience in specialist medical care development in Tanzania. For decades we have played a significant role in various Faith-based hospitals in the area around Lake Victoria in Tanzania. Several times a year there are multidisciplinary outreach teams with a mix of different specialists like surgeons, nurses, plaster cast masters, scrub nurses, psychologists and midwives. Several generations of Dutch doctors/specialists have worked in various hospitals. SimbaHealth brings a high medical level of up-to-date knowledge and skills to the population in Tanzania. Based on many years living and working in Tanzania, we can closely attune to local needs, knowledge, resources and possibilities. We worked hard on this mission in 2019, based on the following main goals:

Goals

SimbaHealth is committed to the following goals:

- Orientation on how (from a broader perspective), investments from high income countries (HIC) can efficiently contribute to regional development towards a higher standard of care, available to all people.
- Become a serious regional partner in creating smart organizational forms that do justice to the complexity of international (medical) aid. It wants to explore options that respect local Tanzanian values, needs and ambitions and are worth developing from this side of the bridge between Europe and Africa.
- With a focus on Sengerema Hospital we want to support them in their process of changing into a Regional referral Hospital and training center. Sengerema is a mission hospital in the Lake district of Tanzania with 230 beds that has been serving the district for the last 60 years. Diminishing government subsidies are forcing the Hospital to change. Becoming a Regional Hospital will enable them to offer more specialist care and in the process become more self reliant.

Achievements in 2019

- In March and October of 2019, surgical camps with several specialists and supporting staff were organized in cooperation with Sengerema Hospital. The following photos illustrate this:



- Meetings were held in Tanzania with the Management team of Sengerema Hospital to further explore how we can support their developments. SimbaHealth wants to explore in a more structural manner, how a long-term sustainable cooperation can

arise that benefits from modern Western possibilities, but does not become unnecessarily dependent on it.

- We have initiated the process of filling and shipping two sea containers full of equipment and items as requested by Sengerema Hospital. The content is for patient care, it includes anesthesia equipment and mobile X-ray units. In addition, the containers will be converted into a residence for the volunteer teams of SimbaHealth. It will serve as a base on the Hospital compound with the ability to send teams more frequently and for longer periods of time.
- We are happy to keep working with our befriended foundation "Friends Sengerema Hospital" in all steps, because we support and facilitate some projects together from the Netherlands or locally. We have contact on a regular basis to exchange knowledge and experience.
- SimbaHealth also invests in future health care workers. Our 3 sponsored students have successfully completed their year. Two of them (lab technician and clinical officer) are starting their final year and hope to graduate in 2020.

Background: ongoing developments in our work environment

Health care in Africa is gradually changing. Remarkable gains have been made in global health in the past 25 years, but progress has not been uniform. During that time, health focused mainly on individual diseases. Surgical care has become a low priority in the world's poorest regions, leaving 5 billion people without access to safe, affordable surgical and anesthesia care.

Mortality and morbidity from common conditions needing surgery have grown in the world's poorest regions, both in real terms and relative to other health gains. At the same time, development of safe, essential, life-saving surgical and anesthesia care in low-income and middle-income countries (LMIC's) has stagnated or regressed.

Even with limited data, conservative estimates suggest that surgical conditions account for 15% of the total global burden of disease and 25 million disability-adjusted life years. Population in Africa is still growing and its infrastructure is improving. As a result, the number of road casualties is increasing enormously and there is a lack of necessary care to adequately receive and care for these patients. Many young people are therefore unnecessarily handicapped. They can no longer work, are a financial burden for family and can not fully participate in society. Not to mention the many children with visible deformities, who never receive proper treatment. Both WHO and other parties (G4 Alliance) try to bring this to the attention at a political level.

"Injury kills more people every year than HIV, TB and malaria combined, and the overwhelming majority of these deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries"

To reduce this global disease burden, the efforts of many organizations will be needed. SimbaHealth has been working on the implementing part in the Lake Zone, to help achieve the WHO goals for 2030: Access to safe surgical and anesthesia care for all!

In 2019 SimbaHealth made the choice to scale up!

First of all, by placing local permanent medical expertise and thus creating a solid base to which the voluntary medical teams with surgeons and paramedics are a tailored fit for the local demand. We know that the need for care remains unchanged in this low-income country and we know that the resources are decreasing due to Western crises.

In addition, with the support of a network (under construction), both in our personal environment, and with (medical) companies, hospitals and universities and in the local region, SimbaHealth has the opportunity to build a meaningful bridge between the Netherlands and the Lakezone in Tanzania.

Finally, with a permanent staff and a powerful network, knowledge can be transferred to Sengerema and the surrounding hospitals (through practice and the Universities), materials can be acquired and, in co-creation between our people and the Tanzanians, a lasting development could be built.

Our surgeons and other specialists, nurses and other staff are ready to strengthen the bridge pillars in both continents. We have achieved a close connection with what is needed in the region.

Tanzania counts 0.04 doctors per 1000 inhabitants (Only 9% of whom are surgeons). In comparison, in the Netherlands this is a hundred times that number (4/1000 inhabitants).

The focus on WHO global headline goals for 2030 is ambitious. But without organizations like SimbaHealth, who are on the executive side, we will not make it. By anchoring the pillar deeply here in the western medical and rich world on this side of the bridge, we are dedicated to bring the best from here to the region. Preferably in abundance.

Our resources are still limited. In 2019 we laid the foundation raise more funds and invest in expanding our network. This activity will continue unabated in 2020.

Remuneration policy

The board members of SimbaHealth met five times in 2019. No remuneration has been paid to the board. The trips to Tanzania were paid for by the participants themselves, possibly in the construction via a donation to the foundation. An exception in 2019 was the fact that a camera technician traveled to Tanzania to record our activities, which was done as PR investment.

Gratitude

We look back on 2019 with gratitude : a year in which we were able to work locally for a number of weeks and in which we took steps on the board side. The roles and tasks have been divided better, and we have expanded our board with Bart Boll, a surgeon who has passion for the Africa and has experience with working in Tanzania. His first experience in Africa dates from the time when he was still a medical student and he has been part of several outreach missions. In his present position he is also working on management level. We are glad to have him on board, with his qualification in the network in Tanzania as well as in the Netherlands, since specialist care is the core of our activities.

Future plans

- Stationing a more permanent general/trauma/orthopedic surgeon in the lake Zone of Tanzania, with tropical experience.
- Plan and organize more diverse volunteer specialist outreach teams, tailored to the local demand: to perform operations (ENT, urology, eye, orthopedic etc), spend time in teaching, training and coaching on site.
- Scaling up fund raising to expand and strengthen regional activities.
- In the Netherlands we want to grow in finding more donors and build a medical network to strengthen the bridge pillars on both sides.
- Continuous investment in medical training of people on site.