Our projects

Among sub-Saharan Africa countries, Mercy Ships focuses programmatic delivery on 17 different coastal nations in a 15-by-15 window in western Africa: 15 degrees north and south of the Equator and 15 degrees east and west of the Prime Meridian. These countries rank among the poorest nations of the world as tracked by the 2010 Human Development Index.

First based in Lausanne Switzerland since 1978, Mercy Ships now has offices in 17 countries and works in partnership with local and national governments and local physicians in the country, to provide specialized surgeries to facilitate life-enhancing and, in many cases, life-saving transformation.

Since 1978, Mercy Ships has directly served 1.7 million people. As an international NGO, Mercy Ships collaborates with local agencies to target the nations listed by the UN Human Development Index (UNHDI) as some of the world’s poorest countries.

Commissioned in May of 2007 to serve Africa – and in particular sub-Sahara West Africa – the 498-foot Africa Mercy is a state-of-the-art floating hospital containing six operating rooms, a 78 bed recovery ward, an intensive care unit, cat scanner and accommodation for 474 multi-national crew and personnel.

The Africa Mercy is expected to serve this region for the next 30 years addressing fragmented health and infrastructure systems, lack of trained professionals, inadequate resources preventing millions of children and adults from receiving life-saving treatments and vital medical services. Specialized surgeries carried out on board include cataract removal, tumor removal, cleft lip and palate repair, orthopaedic operations, and the treatment of obstetric fistula.

The volunteer professionals onboard pay their own way to help defray costs of maintaining this world-class hospital setting from which to provide 7,000 curative surgical interventions annually, and 6,000 dental interventions per year in the developing nations of Africa. As a result of its initiatives, Mercy Ships has provided services in developing nations valued at more than $250 million and strengthened healthcare infrastructure by:  
♣ Performing more than 23,000 operations such as cleft lip and palate, cataract removal, straightening of crossed-eyes, orthopaedic and facial reconstruction.   
♣ Treating more than 450,000 people in village clinics.   
♣ Educating 5,000 local health care workers, who have in turn trained others in primary health care.   
♣ Training local medical professionals in modern health care techniques.   
♣ Completing 800 construction, water and agriculture projects.

Goal:   
The goal of the Africa Mercy is to strengthen the capacity of the least developed countries in the Western Africa region to increase access to health care.

Objectives:  
• Maintain a world-class hospital setting that increases local capacity by providing medical training in surgical techniques, hospital management, and other health care areas.  
• Maintain a world-class hospital setting to provide thousands of curative surgical and dental interventions annually.  
• Strengthen the capacity of local organizations, clinics, hospitals, and other stakeholders through community development projects and infrastructure support.  
• Increase the cost efficiency of the Africa Mercy program delivery by providing ship operational costs, further increasing the number of beneficiaries that can be served each year.