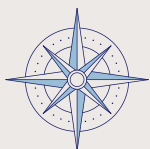




2024

Annual Report

Charting a Course
Together



Contents

3	LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER
4	LETTERS FROM THE CHAIR AND INTERIM CEO
6	OUR APPROACH TO IMPACT
8	2024 IN REVIEW
12	GLOBAL MERCY FIELD SERVICE: SIERRA LEONE
18	AFRICA MERCY FIELD SERVICE: MADAGASCAR
24	SUMMER APPEAL SUCCESS
26	UGANC PARTNERSHIP: GUINEA
28	ACROSS AFRICA
30	CREW STORIES
35	UK ENGAGEMENT AND EVENTS
36	ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND GOVERNANCE (ESG) INITIATIVES
38	LOOKING AHEAD
40	FINANCIAL REVIEW
42	CORPORATE STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE
44	ANNUAL ACCOUNTS



MISSION

Mercy Ships follows the 2,000-year-old model of Jesus, bringing hope and healing to people facing poverty.



VISION

Mercy Ships uses hospital ships to transform individuals and serve nations.



VALUES

- Love God
- Love and serve others
- Be people of integrity
- Strive for excellence in all we say and do

IMAGES: (cover) A joyful celebration for 14-year-old Tera, as he leaves the *Africa Mercy* after successful reconstructive surgery on his foot – see Tera's full story on pages 22–23; (above) Ali Herbert, volunteer operating room nurse maxillofacial team leader from the UK, mentors Adonis Rajaonarivony from the University of Toamasina.

Letter from the Founder

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on another year full of hope and healing, I am filled with gratitude and awe for the incredible journey. Our ships run on the hope of our patients, the kindness and care of our volunteers, and the generosity of friends like you.

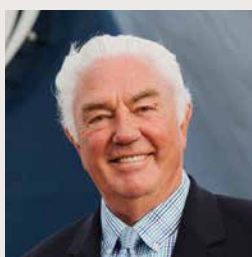
Every time one of these vessels of hope and healing dock in a new port, it represents not just a physical arrival but the beginning of a ripple effect – an outpouring of transformation that extends far beyond the individual patients we treat.

Our volunteers hear story after story of the transformational impact you've helped create. Stories from children like Tera whose burn scars kept him in pain and isolated, or those like Marie Elisa whose struggle with a tumour meant a future of uncertainty. The healing these patients experienced doesn't stop with them; it spreads to parents, siblings, children, friends, and neighbours, creating a ripple that fosters hope throughout their villages and communities.

This year we have seen first-hand how our mission echoes the timeless model of Jesus – a model built on compassion, service, and love for one another. Each and every one of the patients featured in this report (and the thousands more helped this year) means a healed life that inspires hope and creates a legacy that may well extend to future generations.

Together, we've brought healing to the hurting, hope to the hopeless, and created new possibilities for thousands. Thank you for being an integral part of our journey and making a difference one surgery at a time.

Following the model of Jesus,



Don Stephens

Don Stephens
Founder & President Emeritus

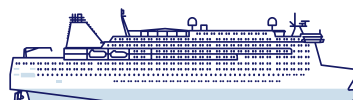


IMPACT

In 1990, Mercy Ships turned its attention to sub-Saharan Africa where at least 90% of the population lacks access to safe, affordable and timely surgery. Since then, Mercy Ships has conducted 45 field services in 14 African countries, most of which are ranked by the United Nations Development Index as the least developed in the world. In addition to surgical care, Mercy Ships creates lasting impact by providing education and training across the surgical ecosystem.

SINCE 1978:

- 122,000+** Life-changing surgical procedures
- 556,900+** Dental procedures
- 55,500+** Professionals trained in their area of expertise
- 2.88 million+** Direct beneficiaries



The Global Mercy

- 6 operating theatres
- 199 patient beds
- 640 crew capacity
- 37,856 gross tonnage



The Africa Mercy

- 5 operating theatres
- 85 patient beds
- 470 crew capacity
- 16,572 gross tonnage



Letter from the Chair of Mercy Ships UK

It is a joy to look back on this year and see how Mercy Ships has helped patients to transform their lives.

Patients like 10-year-old Fudia, who can walk, run and play on newly-straightened legs. Patients like farmer Marie Elisa, who can return to the job she depends on, now that she is free of a facial tumour. And patients like seven-year-old Mamadou, who can finally open his cataract-free eyes and see his mother's smile.

These are just a few of the incredible stories that shine a light on Mercy Ships' life-changing surgical care. It is a privilege to be part of an organisation that puts Jesus' command to love one another into action every day, as we share hope and healing with our inspiring patients.

2024 was a landmark year as, for the first time in our history, our two-ship fleet served both the east and west coasts of Africa simultaneously, helping so many more people transform their lives. With the *Global Mercy* serving in Sierra Leone and the *Africa Mercy* in Madagascar, we welcomed patients who have longed for healing from difficult health conditions for years, and finally found it on board.

Our healthcare education programmes are going from strength to strength, equipping clinicians with the knowledge and tools they need. From specialised rotations in reconstructive surgery to nurse anaesthesia training, our education programmes help medical professionals to improve their countries' healthcare. This training creates a lasting impact, helping future generations for years to come.

This year has been a time of change, and in July we said farewell to Joanne Balaam as she moved on from her role as Mercy Ships UK's Chief Executive Officer. We are grateful to Joanne for her leadership, bringing together a strong and passionate team, and driving forward Mercy Ships UK's fundraising, volunteer recruitment and public awareness. We are glad that Jo is continuing to serve with Mercy Ships International, and we wish her the best in her new role.

I am deeply grateful to contribute to our mission alongside the Board of Trustees. With the expertise of our staff, the dedication of our volunteers, and the steadfast support of our donors, we have hope and confidence that many lives will be changed through Mercy Ships' vital work in 2025.

I'm sure you will be encouraged and inspired by the following pages, as you read about hope and healing in action.



M Spence

Dr Michael Spence
Chair, Mercy Ships UK

IMAGE: Orthopaedic patient Fudia, recovering after surgery on board the *Global Mercy*.



Letter from the Interim CEO of Mercy Ships UK

It is an honour to fulfil the role of Interim Chief Executive Officer for Mercy Ships UK. During my time as Finance Director, I have seen first-hand the impact of our generous supporters, as gifts are sent directly to fund safe surgeries and training for medical professionals across Africa.

This past year has been a time of wonderful growth. With two floating hospitals in operation, we have brought life-changing surgery to many more people. Across sub-Saharan Africa, we've performed 4,684 surgical and 13,312 dental procedures, as well as training 923 healthcare professionals from eight African nations, bringing lasting change to communities.

I am very grateful to our generous donors, who make all of this life-changing work possible. I am also continually inspired by our volunteers, like Dr Tim Lavy from Glasgow who oversaw cataract removal surgery so that seven-year-old Mamadou can now see clearly. Or like Ruth Cooper from Exeter, who volunteers as headteacher of the Academy on board the *Africa Mercy*.

We are thrilled to see how people are making a difference, and we have more than doubled the number of UK volunteers serving on board in 2024. We look forward to more growth in 2025 and will work closely with Mercy Ships South Africa to better process and welcome volunteer applicants.

In the UK, we've been active in sharing the good news of Mercy Ships and gaining new supporters, whether through an appeal on BBC Radio 4, fundraising events or summer festivals. One of the highlights of my year was joining the Big Church Festival during the summer – the camaraderie and passion of our supporters and volunteers was a joy to experience.

IMAGES: (left to right) Joelle Horace, training participant surgeon from Madagascar, is mentored by volunteer surgeons Dr David Chong, from Australia, and Dr Sofia Tykhomyrova, from Ukraine; ophthalmic patient Mamadou with his mother before his cataract removal surgery.

Mercy Ships UK has been through a season of change, and it is with love and respect that we said farewell to Joanne Balaam, our former CEO, in July.

It was a difficult decision for Jo, as she cares deeply for the work in the UK, and is passionate about helping to transform lives. I am confident she is continuing to make a difference in her new role with Mercy Ships International.

In a world full of troubling news, many of us strive to live lives that are both useful and meaningful. For me, having a life worth living comes from those small, everyday actions that collectively make a real difference.

Actions like the courageous first step of a patient on our gangway, trusting us to bring them healing. Actions like the surgical care, cooking or teaching of selfless volunteers on board. Actions like the £10 donation of a faithful supporter, who knows their gift will help change lives. Together, we share hope and healing through our actions every day.

As you read the stories in the pages ahead, I hope you'll find them life-affirming, as you, too, are a crucial part of this meaningful work.



Clive Mitchell
Chief Executive Officer (Interim),
Mercy Ships UK



Our approach to impact

In many parts of the world, especially low-resource countries, the burden of untreated surgical conditions is felt more deeply than anywhere else. In parts of sub-Saharan Africa, the situation is dire: at least 90% of the population has no access to surgical care, and those who do are twice as likely to die from complications than in more developed regions.

Mercy Ships recognises these critical gaps and partners with African nations to help bridge disparities. Our multi-faceted approach begins with collaborative assessments to understand local needs and continues through direct medical services, education and training, and impact evaluation. This strategy aims to heal patients and strengthen local healthcare systems.

The focus extends beyond individual surgeries to education and training for healthcare professionals. By empowering providers with the skills and knowledge they need, this ensures that healing lasts years after a Mercy Ship departs, creating long-term sustainable change.

At the heart of these efforts is a belief in the power of transformation. When lives are transformed, so are communities and nations. Mercy Ships is actively building a future where healthcare is accessible and sustainable for generations to come.

DIRECT MEDICAL SERVICES

Direct Medical Services are designed to meet patients where they are, deploying hospital ships to African nations to provide free surgeries and dental services. The specialty procedures offered are typically unavailable in the countries we serve, or there is a backlog of cases due to a limited surgical workforce or unaffordability for patients.

Mercy Ships takes a whole-person approach to surgery, developing thorough pre- and post-operative care based on the patient's condition and specific needs. The design of the surgical schedule and selection of patients aims to ensure care is curative, independent of the local healthcare system.

IMAGE: Naserry, reconstructive plastic patient, with her schoolmates after the free surgery to release extensive burn contractures on her arm.



EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND ADVOCACY

Mercy Ships fosters long-term partnerships with nations by developing programmes where there's a need for increased specialised training, such as:

- Offering surgical training and fellowship rotations in reconstructive plastic surgery, maxillofacial/head and neck surgery, anaesthesia and perioperative nursing.
- Using the ship's hospital as a clinical rotation in the partner country's established training programmes for surgery, anaesthesia and nursing.
- Developing long-term partnerships and investments, such as Université Gamal Abdel Nasser de Conakry in Guinea and Connaught Hospital in Sierra Leone.

Mercy Ships strives for a world where all people have access to quality, affordable medical or surgical treatment and whole-person care so they can reach their God-given potential.

Whether it's being able to return to school, having the ability to provide for their families or simply being accepted by others, the impact extends far beyond surgery into families and entire communities.

IMAGE: Dr Fabruce Ramaherimamonjy, former Mercy Ships trainee, at the hospital he founded in Toamasina.



Beyond the horizon

In 2024, Mercy Ships returned to Madagascar and reconnected with former patient Muriella, now a thriving businesswoman, wife and mother. But her story didn't begin that way. Growing up, she faced years of isolation due to a facial tumour. In 2015, Muriella underwent surgery on the *Africa Mercy* and the results were life changing. She met her husband and they started a grocery shop business, and she is also studying business management.

The increased accessibility of safe surgery not only provides hope for individual futures like Muriella's, but it transforms families and entire communities as well. Communities like that of Dr Fabruce Ramaherimamonjy (pictured left), a passionate Malagasy medical professional. After an eye-opening experience with Mercy Ships in 2016, Dr Fabruce returned home with a renewed sense of purpose. Inspired by his time on board and discussions with Emeritus Chief Medical Officer Dr Gary Parker, he chose to remain in his home country to serve his fellow citizens, and to advocate for medical training and improving the nation's healthcare standards. In 2018, he founded the Bethany Hospital Centre in Toamasina. What started as a warehouse is now a thriving hospital with 35 beds and a team of 70 staff. Through his work, Dr Fabruce is dedicated to shaping the future of healthcare in Madagascar.

IMAGE: Now 26 years old, Muriella holds a photo of herself as a teenager, before her free surgery with Mercy Ships.

Charting a course together

2024 in review

2024 was a year of significant milestones for Mercy Ships. For the first time, we operated as a two-ship fleet in Africa simultaneously, bringing hope and healing to both the east and west coasts.

The year began with the *Global Mercy* docked in Freetown, Sierra Leone, continuing to provide free and safe surgeries that began in August 2023. Today, we're reflecting on a season of service that changed so many lives. Lives like Fudia's, a 10-year-old girl with severely bowed legs who could barely walk. After six years waiting for Mercy Ships, her legs were finally straightened, giving her new joy for life.

Our Education, Training, and Advocacy (ETA) programmes equipped healthcare professionals with the tools they need to improve their local healthcare systems. In Sierra Leone, this effort launched the Nurse Anaesthesia Diploma programme and a partnership with Connaught Hospital, bringing essential education to students through their Safer Surgery programme.

In East Africa, the newly-refitted *Africa Mercy* set sail for her fourth field service in Madagascar to bring life-changing surgeries and renewed hope. Local healthcare professionals were also trained in several areas to help improve availability and access to safe surgical care in Madagascar.

Mercy Ships' presence was also felt on the ground. In Guinea, a new clinical training centre opened at Université Gamal Abdel Nasser de Conakry (UGANC). This will more than double the school's previous capacity to train dental students. Mercy Ships is also sponsoring dental graduates to obtain specialised degrees at a partner university in Morocco.

In addition to surgical care, our ETA programmes invest in a new generation of healthcare professionals to have positive, far-reaching effects across Africa for generations to come.

Thank you for being part of a monumental year. We couldn't do it without you.

Scan to watch
the 2024 Thank
You video



IMAGE: Hailemariam Kasim, Mercy Ships Instructor, with Nurse Anaesthesia Diploma participants at Connaught Hospital in Sierra Leone.





2024

by the numbers

Direct Medical Services



4,746

TOTAL SURGICAL
PROCEDURES



2,904

TOTAL UNIQUE
SURGICAL PATIENTS



13,312

TOTAL DENTAL
PROCEDURES



2,829

TOTAL UNIQUE
DENTAL PATIENTS

Total Surgical Procedures by Surgical Specialty



1,897
OPHTHALMIC



917
GENERAL



913
MAXILLOFACIAL/
HEAD AND NECK



391
PAEDIATRIC



351
ORTHOPAEDIC



277
PLASTIC
RECONSTRUCTIVE

NOTE: A patient often has multiple procedures as part of a single surgery or dental visit and may also have multiple surgeries or dental visits.

Education, Training, and Advocacy



923

TOTAL HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS
TRAINED FROM 8 AFRICAN NATIONS



456
GUINEA



215
SIERRA LEONE



189
SOUTH AFRICA



49
MADAGASCAR



6
BENIN



6
GUINEA-BISSAU



1
CAMEROON*

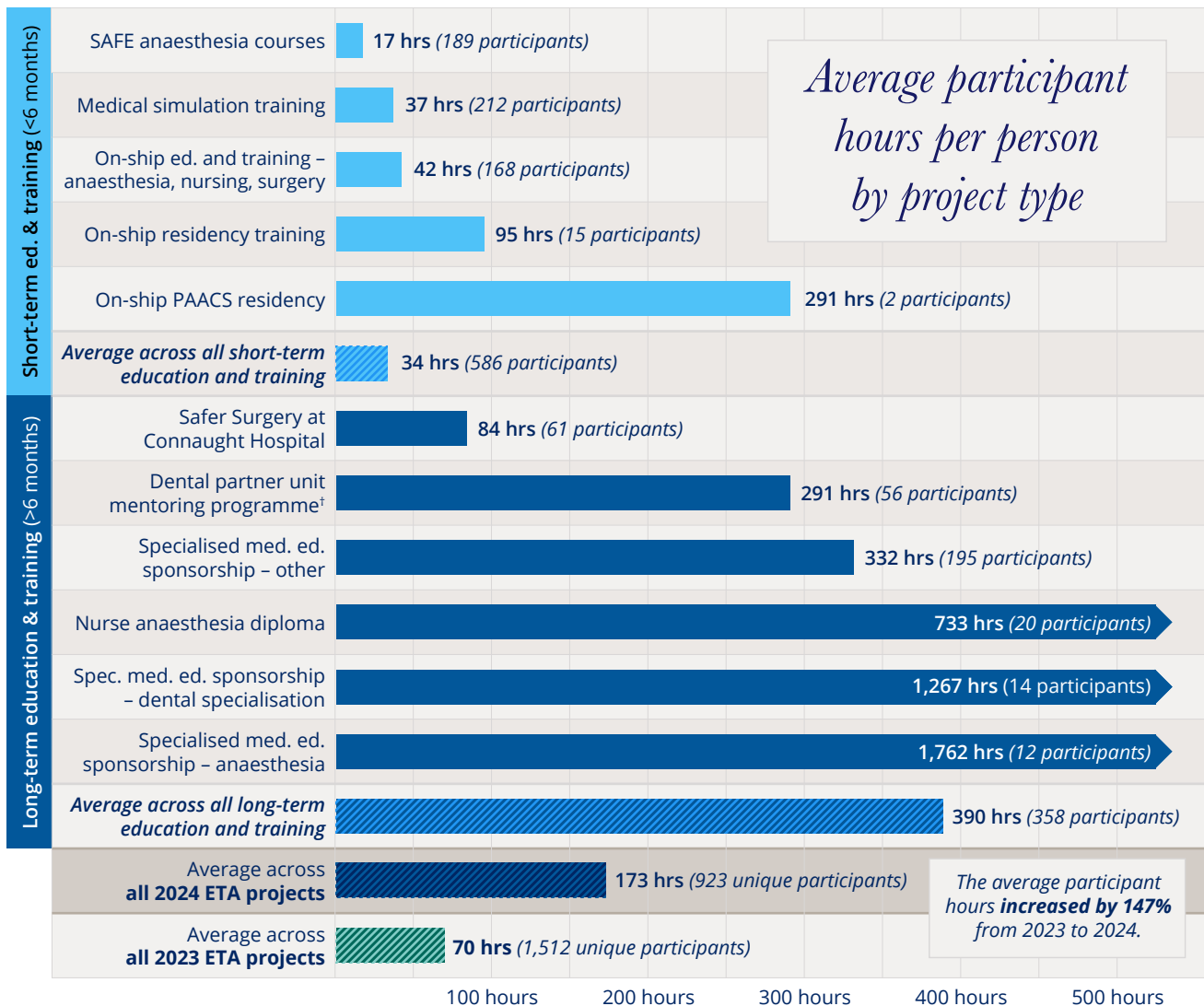


1
LIBERIA*



159,727

TOTAL HOURS OF
HEALTHCARE EDUCATION
AND TRAINING



*The participants from Cameroon and Liberia were trained as part of the Sierra Leone field services.

†The UGANC clinic was closed from Jan to Sep for renovations, resulting in lower than typical participant hours.

NOTE: A participant may be involved in more than one education and training project.

Sierra Leone



Freetown,
Sierra Leone
8° 29' 27" N
13° 12' 46" W

2,707

TOTAL SURGICAL
PROCEDURES

1,488

UNIQUE SURGICAL
PATIENTS

4,628

TOTAL DENTAL
PROCEDURES

1,062

UNIQUE DENTAL
PATIENTS

38,617

TOTAL ETA
PARTICIPANT HOURS

217

UNIQUE ETA
PARTICIPANTS*

*Includes participants
from Sierra Leone (215),
Cameroon (1), and
Liberia (1).

In 2024, the *Global Mercy* continued her 10-month field service in Sierra Leone, which began in August 2023. This was the sixth Mercy Ships visit to the country over the course of 30 years, a testament to the long-standing partnership between Sierra Leone and Mercy Ships.

The need in Sierra Leone continues to be great but despite the challenges, the country remains undeterred in its commitment to helping improve the healthcare system.

To assist in this effort, Mercy Ships provided Education, Training, and Advocacy programmes along with the Ministry of Health, the University of Sierra Leone and Connaught Hospital. Emerging medical professionals received mentorship on board, the Nurse Anaesthesia Diploma programme started and our partnership with Connaught Hospital brought critical education to students through the Safer Surgery programme.

During this extended field service, it was inspiring to see hope and healing brought to so many people undergoing their long-awaited surgeries in areas such as maxillofacial, reconstructive plastic, paediatric, general, orthopaedic and ophthalmic.

Following an extended season of incredible impact, Sierra Leone's President, His Excellency Julius Maada Bio, invited the *Global Mercy* to extend her stay for a third consecutive field service, to continue sharing life-changing surgical care and education into 2025.

We pray that our work will not only bring healing, but also provide long-lasting, positive change for future generations that will reverberate through the entire country.



IMAGES: (above) Fiona Morgan (left), a physical therapist from South Africa, mentors Mohamed Dauda Faroh (right) in Rehab; (opposite page) Mamadou can return to school after a free cataract removal surgery restored his sight.



“I’m extremely happy that Mercy Ships honoured the President’s call to stay longer to provide life-changing surgeries and train our healthcare professionals. I am excited about this possibility and very proud of the partnership with Mercy Ships.”

– Dr Austin Demby, Minister of Health, Sierra Leone



Six years to a new life

By the age of 10, Fudia had grown used to the challenges of being born with severely bowed legs, enduring ridicule from peers and curious stares from others. Despite seeking out traditional treatments, Fudia's condition didn't improve. She became an orphan when she was only seven years old, leaving her to face physical, emotional and social struggles.

Fudia's uncle, Joseph, stepped in as her guardian and moved to Freetown in hopes of finding a solution. Despite attempts at local treatments, they were advised to wait for Mercy Ships. Joseph remained hopeful, recalling how he had previously seen a family member receive surgery on the hospital ship.

Six years later, the *Global Mercy* returned to Sierra Leone and Joseph eagerly brought Fudia on

board for treatment. "I want her to be okay," he said, expressing his excitement when Fudia was selected for surgery.

Dr Belen Carsi, a volunteer paediatric orthopaedic surgeon, diagnosed Fudia with Blount's disease, a condition that causes severe leg deformities. Fudia's surgery, which lasted over four hours, successfully straightened her legs.

Following her surgery, Fudia's transformation was remarkable. Fudia gained 14 centimetres in height and her confidence blossomed. She no longer felt ashamed. "She plays with her friends always. She is better than before," said her aunt.

With new-found hope and a zest for life, Fudia now walks freely and looks forward to returning to school. "I want to be a doctor, so I can help other people," she shared, excited for her future.

"She plays with her friends always. She is better than before."

IMAGES: (clockwise from above) Fudia at home after surgery; Fudia before surgery; Fudia works to regain mobility after surgery with Declan Osborne, a volunteer physical therapist from Australia.



Health and hope restored

Bobor, a farmer from Port Loko, Sierra Leone, spent years searching for treatment to remove a large goitre on his neck. The growth, which had been developing for a decade, caused him physical pain and social isolation. As a result of his condition, his wife left him and he struggled to care for his three children, let alone afford any medical treatment.

Eventually, he made the journey to Freetown, leaving his children with their grandmother. After consulting with Dr Mark Shrimme on the *Global Mercy*, Bobor was cleared for surgery. The five-hour procedure was successful, removing the goitre and providing life-changing results.

After the surgery, Bobor expressed his happiness. "I do feel like a new man," he said, "I'm very happy. I'm really very happy now." He looked forward to returning home because he was now free from the pain and the social stigma that had long affected him. The operation not only restored his health but also gave him hope for a brighter future with his children.





Elevating surgical care in Freetown

Matron Betsy Deen is the surgical matron at Connaught Hospital in Freetown, Sierra Leone, where she oversees surgical services.

During Mercy Ships' 2023-24 field service in Sierra Leone, Matron Deen participated in ETA programmes, aimed at strengthening local healthcare networks. As one of 145 medical professionals trained on board the *Global Mercy*, she helped bridge the gap between Mercy Ships and Freetown's largest government hospital.

Her surgical nursing training and collaboration with Mercy Ships have allowed her to refine her leadership skills and broaden her knowledge in areas like patient safety, team building, and surgical administration. Matron Deen spent several days shadowing the *Global Mercy* team, gaining insights into hospital operations, surgical processes, and patient flow.

Her newly-acquired skills have had a direct impact on her team in Freetown. She has shared lessons on surgical scheduling, managing cancellations and improving patient care. Her efforts also include encouraging her team to participate in simulation training on the ship, giving local nurses valuable hands-on experience.

Matron Deen believes the partnership between Mercy Ships and Sierra Leone's Ministry of Health is crucial for improving access to quality surgical care and training healthcare professionals.

"We can focus on acquiring skills to implement at our facility level to strengthen our capacity. Training like this indirectly saves thousands of lives. And that is what Mercy Ships is doing and I just think it's great," said Matron Deen.





Filling the gap: Nurse Anaesthesia Programme to improve surgical care in Sierra Leone

In partnership with the Sierra Leone Ministry of Health and Sanitation and the University of Sierra Leone, Mercy Ships launched the Nurse Anaesthesia Diploma Programme. This initiative aims to address the critical shortage of trained anaesthesia providers and improve surgical care in Sierra Leone, which has only 0.1 anaesthetists per 100,000 people.

Sierra Leone's healthcare system faces significant challenges, with 90% of surgeries performed without trained anaesthetists, resulting in high risks and mortality rates. The programme, which began in April 2024, offers specialised training for experienced nurses, equipping them with theoretical knowledge and practical skills in anaesthesia.

Dr Sandra Lako, Mercy Ships Country Director, noted that Sierra Leone has a significant need for anaesthesia providers. "The estimated need is at least 200 anaesthesia providers," said Dr Lako. "By training an initial cohort of 20 nurses and planning for additional ones, we aim to make a substantial impact on the surgical workforce."

Health workers from across Sierra Leone are trained both on the *Global Mercy* simulation

centre and through in-person lectures at the School of Nursing in Freetown. The goal is to produce qualified nurse anaesthetists who can support the country's surgical capacity long after Mercy Ships departs.

"Our partnership with the Ministry of Health and the University of Sierra Leone is crucial for developing long-term solutions to the healthcare challenges here," said Suzanne Thomas, Director of Education at Mercy Ships. "The Nurse Anaesthesia Diploma Programme was specifically requested by our partners at the Ministry of Health, recognising the urgent need for more trained anaesthesia providers in government hospitals."

The programme also helps empower participants like Mohammed Bangura, "This programme will have a huge impact on my career because I'll no longer be an ordinary medical practitioner at the end of this training, but someone with a specific specialty. This is going to have a huge impact on our country's health sector."

This initiative is part of the broader Mercy Ships mission to build healthcare capacity in the countries we serve, leaving a lasting, positive impact.

IMAGES: (clockwise from above) Mohammed Bangura; Nurse Anaesthesia Diploma participants practise skills in the simulation lab on the *Global Mercy*; Nurse Anaesthesia Diploma participants checking patients in the wards of Connaught Hospital.



“The actions and operations that Mercy Ships is undertaking in Madagascar are commendable and we should continue in this direction to help our neighbours, particularly those in difficulty and suffering from illnesses.”

*– His Excellency
Andry Nirina Rajoelina,
President, Madagascar*

Madagascar

The newly-refitted *Africa Mercy* sailed to Madagascar for her first field service following extensive renovations. This was the fourth Mercy Ships visit to the country since 1996.

During her 10-month field service, hundreds of surgeries were performed over the course of six months, in areas such as maxillofacial/head and neck, ophthalmic, reconstructive plastic, paediatric orthopaedic and general surgery.

An early arrival and later start of surgeries this year allowed time to train all new crew and fully prepare the newly-refitted hospital ship to open at the end of May 2024. It also allowed the crew on board the *Africa Mercy* to launch the dental programme in March 2024, and focus on patient registration and selection prior to surgeries.

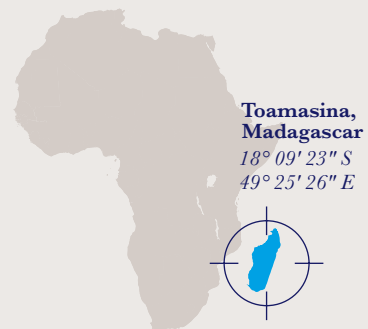
Local healthcare professionals also received instruction in areas including anaesthesia monitoring, comprehensive cleft care, nursing student training and surgical and anaesthesia resident training. These programmes will help increase the availability and access to safe surgical care in Madagascar.

Mercy Ships' work wouldn't be possible without the support of the President of Madagascar, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Finance. We look forward to deepening these partnerships in 2025 during a second consecutive field service.

We are thankful for the opportunity to build upon the current momentum, and to continue bringing hope and healing to the Malagasy people.



IMAGE: (opposite page) Annica celebrates her new mobility after surgery to release burn contractures on her arms; **(above)** A University of Toamasina nursing student learns sterile processing techniques during an ETA programme onboard the *Africa Mercy*.



1,096

TOTAL SURGICAL
PROCEDURES

645

UNIQUE SURGICAL
PATIENTS

4,472

TOTAL DENTAL
PROCEDURES

989

UNIQUE DENTAL
PATIENTS

7,821

TOTAL ETA
PARTICIPANT HOURS

49

UNIQUE ETA
PARTICIPANTS



A mother's joy

After a decade of waiting to conceive, Anjara, whose name means “destiny”, was a gift from God. “She’s a very funny and wise baby. She will get to know you first before she smiles or plays with you,” her mother Lalaina said, fondly.

But Anjara’s bilateral cleft lip had made her mother long for the help of Mercy Ships, which had visited Madagascar before. Lalaina was overjoyed when the ship returned in February 2024.

The *Africa Mercy* arrived in Toamasina, Madagascar for its fourth field service, and on 28th May, Anjara became the first patient. With her mother’s prayers and the support of the ship’s crew, she underwent surgery, marking the beginning of a new chapter.

“I thank God for sending Mercy Ships to be used as an instrument to do her surgery so that she will be like other kids,” said Anjara’s father. “So, I hope that Mercy Ships’ work will continue not only for Anjara but also for other kids who are still out there.”

Lalaina, who had long carried the weight of her daughter’s condition, was filled with gratitude for the transformative work of the volunteer crew. Anjara’s surgery not only offered hope for her, but for many children in Madagascar in need of life-changing care.





Unwavering faith in healing

At 40 years old, Marie Elisa developed a toothache that swelled and grew to the point where she could no longer do daily activities, including the farming she depended on. Her youngest daughter even had to drop out of school because Marie Elisa could no longer pay the fees.

Marie Elisa turned to traditional healers hoping for any relief from the growth on her face, but to no avail. The tumour continued to grow and a local doctor said that surgery was her only option, but the cost was far too great.

Then, a miracle occurred. During the patient selection process, Mercy Ships team members saw Marie Elisa standing on the side of the road and felt compelled to stop. Her prayers were answered as

she embarked on a three-day journey to Toamasina for free surgery on board the *Africa Mercy*. "I believe in God, and I believe He answered my prayers, so they found me that day, and here I am," she said.

"... love one another, there is nothing more precious than love and prayer."

After her successful surgery, she returned to her village with a grateful heart. And just a few months later, she returned to the ship as a caregiver for her husband, who had surgery to remove a small cyst from his left eye.

Claude has advice for others in a similar situation: "My message to other couples would be to love one another; there is nothing more precious than love and prayer."

IMAGES: Marie Elisa holds a photo of herself before surgery; Marie Elisa and Claude pray together at their church; Marie Elisa and Claude work together on their farm.



From isolation to jubilation

Fourteen-year-old Tera lives in a fishing village near Manakara, Madagascar, where homes are built from traveller's trees, a local plant. At the age of one, the trajectory of Tera's life changed drastically after an accident with hot water left him with severe burns, causing his foot and ankle to fuse together.

His family couldn't afford medical treatment and turned to traditional healers, but the burns left him with a painful contracture, severely limiting his movement. For 13 years, Tera walked barefoot, facing rejection and unable to fully participate in the activities he loved, like playing football with his friends.

When his family heard about Mercy Ships providing free surgery to people facing need, Tera's mother took him on a multi-day journey to the *Africa Mercy*. There, Dr Tertius Venter performed reconstructive surgery, freeing Tera's foot and

giving him the ability to walk and play like other children. Tera's transformation was not just physical – he formed strong friendships with volunteers like nurse Natasha Short and another reconstructive plastics patient, Martino.

With support from his family and therapists, Tera focused on recovery, motivated by his dream of playing football and wearing shoes for the first time. After surgery, he joined his friends on the field, no longer sidelined. Tera's joy was evident as he played goalie in

a spirited match, cheered on by his community.

"We all play together now. The things that my friends can do, I'm also able to do them," said Tera. Today, Tera's future is full of promise. He can play football, wear shoes, and even learn to fish with his father. For Tera, a life once defined by limitations is now full of new possibilities.

"We all play together now. The things that my friends can do, I'm also able to do them."

IMAGES: (clockwise from above) Tera watches other boys playing soccer on the beach; Tera during rehab with Theo Jacot, volunteer physical therapist from Switzerland; Tera plays goalie while his village watches.



Inspiring the future

For 23-year-old Diane, nursing is more than a profession – it's a calling to serve others with compassion. Diane, a third-year nursing student at the University of Toamasina, first encountered Mercy Ships when her little cousin received life-changing surgery for a club foot on the *Africa Mercy* in 2015. This profound experience sparked her interest in healthcare, and when it was time to decide what to do after high school, she enrolled in nursing school.

When the ship returned to Madagascar in 2024, Diane was one of nine nursing students from the university selected for mentoring and training on board the *Africa Mercy*. This was part of Mercy Ships' Education, Training, and Advocacy programme, where students get the opportunity to observe, learn and practise clinical nursing skills in a peri-operative setting and non-technical skills, such as communication, bedside manner and teamwork. During a three-week clinical rotation on board, Diane shadowed and worked with volunteer health professionals from across the world and was exposed to diverse medical scenarios, patient populations and surgical procedures.

"I've gained so much experience here," Diane shared. "The way the crew treats patients is unlike anything I've seen before... they care with love and without discrimination."

For her, the time on board highlighted the importance of human connection in healthcare. "I've learned to value every patient as a person, to recognise their worth," she said. "This training has given me hope and motivation to bring this approach into my future practice."

IMAGE: Diane, nursing student and ETA participant, with a patient on board the *Africa Mercy*.

Summer appeal success

The Mercy Ships UK summer appeal saw great success, thanks to a supporter who matched every pound donated. This generous offer meant that each of our donor's gifts was doubled, at no extra cost to them.

Focusing on the story of Mamadou in Sierra Leone, the appeal raised £322,027. With the match funding, this doubled this to an incredible £644,054, increasing our ability to share hope and healing with more children and families.

Seven-year-old Mamadou was born with a condition that slowly stole his sight. As he grew, his world became darker and darker, until he could barely see at all.

Like any seven-year-old, Mamadou loves to play with his toys and explore the world around him. But because of the cataracts in his eyes, he found the sun's glare painful, limiting his chances to play outside.

His mum, Salematu, brought him to their local hospital, but when the doctor said Mamadou was too young for surgery, she felt helpless.

When the *Global Mercy* hospital ship sailed into Freetown, they heard the news they had dreamed of – Mamadou could have free surgery. The hospital ship is fully-equipped, with state-of-the-art operating theatres, sanitary ward rooms, and expert surgical teams.

When Mamadou boarded the ship, his eyes were examined – there was no time to waste. Dr Paulius Rudalevicius, the specialist eye doctor who operated on Mamadou, explained, "If the cataracts are not removed soon enough, the brain can never learn to see, even if the cataracts are removed."

Assisted by a team of medical volunteers, Dr Rudalevicius performed the two-hour cataract procedure. The operation was overseen by Dr Tim Lavy, who worked for 25 years at the Royal Hospital for Children in Glasgow.

"In the UK, babies are about six weeks old when they receive a cataract operation," explains Dr Lavy. "But in sub-Saharan Africa, children like Mamadou can be left for years without medical intervention."

The next day, Mamadou opened his eyes in wonder – he could finally see clearly. It was a moment of pure joy for everyone who witnessed it, but most of all, for his mum. "My son can see me!" she beamed. A few hours later, Mamadou was colouring-in with the other children on the ward.

Now, Mamadou's world is so much brighter. Instead of hiding from the sun, he can run and play with his friends. But being able to see his mum's smile is the best gift of all.

This wonderful healing is possible thanks to our supporters. Every pound donated matters, because it means the gift of life-changing surgery for patients just like Mamadou.





INCOME
TOTAL
£644,054



NUMBER OF
DONATIONS
5,421



AVERAGE
GIFT
£59.40



RECURRING
DONATIONS
169



NEW REGULAR
DONORS
**9x MORE
THAN LAST
YEAR'S SUMMER
APPEAL**



Scan to watch
Mamadou's story.

*"When his bandages
were taken off, his
smile was indescribable.
Everyone in the room
started clapping."*

*— Anneli Persson, eye
nurse and Mercy Ships
volunteer*

IMAGES: (left to right)
Mamadou at home before
surgery; Mamadou sees for the
first time post-surgery; Mamadou
and his mother, Salematu.

Guinea



4,212
TOTAL DENTAL
PROCEDURES

778
UNIQUE DENTAL
PATIENTS

103,115
TOTAL ETA
PARTICIPANT HOURS

456
UNIQUE ETA
PARTICIPANTS

Scan to watch the
dental expansion
dedication video.



IMAGES:

(right) Students treat a patient under the guidance of staff in the new clinic;
(opposite page) A biomedical student services dental equipment.

Lack of access to affordable, safe dental care is a critical health issue in Guinea, and there are very few dentists or training opportunities.

In 2018, Mercy Ships saw an opportunity to launch a long-term partnership with Université Gamal Abdel Nasser de Conakry (UGANC) dental school. The partnership has since expanded to include additional surgical specialty training, sponsoring international students, broadening the scope of training beyond Guinea, and creating a network that will improve dental care across Africa for years to come.

An exciting development this year was the opening of the new clinical training centre at UGANC. The expansion was made possible through funding and oversight from Mercy Ships, and more than doubles the school's previous capacity for dental students to learn, practice, and treat patients.

As part of this expansion, Mercy Ships has proactively worked in the region to serve more students. In 2024, the Mercy Ships dental programme at UGANC included students from Benin, Madagascar, Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone. As of September 2024, there were 26 international students enrolled in various programmes in the university, including 11 dental students from neighbouring Sierra Leone.

The recent expansion increased capacity from six simulation stations to 30 stations, along with 22 dental chairs for patient care, as well as adding labs for practical training and dental prosthodontics.

Mercy Ships is also sponsoring dental graduates to obtain specialised degrees at a partner university in Morocco. When they return home, they'll become educators and pass on their knowledge and skills to the next generation.





“If we have good health professionals, the level of health of the population will certainly be better. It’s true that the partnership model that we have with Mercy Ships is unique. This is the first time I have seen this type of partnership for specialists, and I hope this partnership will not stop there.”

*– Ihsane Ben Yahya, President,
FDI World Dental Federation*

"I'm going home to serve my country and help young people like me, who dream of becoming dental surgeons, to progress in this field."

– Ruth Catraye
UAC/UGANC student

Across Africa



3,392
TOTAL ETA
PARTICIPANT HOURS

6
UNIQUE ETA PARTICIPANTS

IMAGE: Ruth Catraye (left), a UAC student studying at UGANC, and a UGANC Dental School staff member treat a patient.

Benin

Mercy Ships has invested significant efforts with Benin over the years and in 2024, continued to support the nation through funding and education initiatives. In collaboration with UGANC, our Medical Education Sponsorship with the University of Abomey-Calavi's (UAC) Faculty of Health Sciences addressed the medical training and healthcare needs of the people of Benin. Students from Benin were selected to participate in a clinical and simulation internship in Guinea and dental specialisation training in Morocco, following the completion of their internship. We also collaborated with UAC toward re-establishing their dental programme and planning for the long-term development of simulation and clinical training.

Mercy Ships provided student support and further NGO development to Phaz Compassion, an agricultural NGO in Benin founded by former long-term Mercy Ships volunteer Eliphaz Essah. Mercy Ships also provided funding to the Mission Internationale d'Évangélisation et de Réveil Spirituel's MIERS Clinic, allocated towards construction of a perimeter wall, solar system upgrades, and staff salary support.

Guinea-Bissau

In 2024, Mercy Ships and UGANC partnered with the Universidade Jean Piaget da Guiné-Bissau (UNUPIAGET) aimed at advancing dental education and improving care in Guinea-Bissau. Over the next few years, this Medical Education Sponsorship will provide a full dental sponsorship for four cohorts of six medical students from Guinea-Bissau to attend UGANC in the pursuit of their Doctor of Dental Surgery. This programme aims to enhance the nation's healthcare workforce, address disparities, facilitate networking and invest in participants on a holistic level. These efforts mark a significant step forward by providing a critical foundation for dental care in Guinea-Bissau.

South Africa

In 2024, Mercy Ships offered a series of Safer Anaesthesia from Education (SAFE) courses in obstetrics and paediatric anaesthesia. These exist to help improve critical areas through sustainable training for anaesthesia providers alongside partner hospitals around the country. The courses taught participants specific skills and information on improving standards of care and personal medical practice. They also utilised a combination of lectures, simulations, and workshops. Several courses included a Training-of-Trainers component, which is a mentorship initiative that equips course participants to pass on their knowledge and train others in the same material.

Togo

Mercy Ships' relationship with Togo spans many years and in 2024, continued building upon strategic partnerships focusing on ophthalmic surgery and training. This included continued support of Togo-based NGO Sight.org and Lumière Divine, the cataract surgical training institute of Togo's leading ophthalmic surgeon and former Mercy Ships trainee Dr Abram Wodome. This year, Mercy Ships funded many procedures at both of these organisations, particularly less invasive procedures, such as manual small incision cataract surgery.



Guinea-Bissau

11° 55' 11" N
15° 35' 4" W

3,480

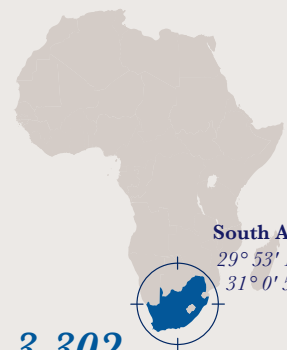
TOTAL ETA

PARTICIPANT HOURS

6

UNIQUE ETA

PARTICIPANTS



South Africa

29° 53' 14" S
31° 0' 5" E

3,302

TOTAL ETA

PARTICIPANT HOURS

189

UNIQUE ETA

PARTICIPANTS



Togo

6° 11' 51" N
1° 11' 18" E

943

TOTAL SURGICAL PROCEDURES

771

UNIQUE SURGICAL PATIENTS

*“Now, I’m serving
my own people.
There is no joy
greater than that.”*

*– Ishaka Sesay
assistant bosun*



Serving with purpose

Volunteers making a difference

A decade of dedication: Ishaka Sesay

Ishaka Sesay, a volunteer assistant bosun on the *Global Mercy*, proudly represents his home country of Sierra Leone. With a constant smile, Ishaka believes in being an ambassador for his country, which is why he always approaches his work with positivity.

Ishaka's journey with Mercy Ships began in 2014 when he was drawn to the organisation by a friend's stories. Although he initially sought to join the *Africa Mercy* in Sierra Leone, the Ebola epidemic shifted Mercy Ships' course. Undeterred, Ishaka worked with Sight.org in Togo, where he sterilised medical equipment for eye surgeries and later earned a diploma in agriculture.

In 2018, Ishaka obtained maritime safety training and joined the *Africa Mercy* in Guinea. His skills in the deck department quickly earned him respect and he has since progressed through five positions in six years. Known for his hardworking nature and openness to learning, Ishaka aims for an officer title while embodying the mantra, "Life is like a camera – develop from the negatives."

In August 2023, Ishaka had a momentous experience when he personally docked the *Global Mercy* in Freetown, marking the launch of the ship's field service in Sierra Leone, a significant milestone for both the ship and Ishaka himself.

"It was a big experience," Ishaka shared. "Now, I'm serving my own people. There is no joy greater than that."

Ishaka isn't the only Sierra Leonean on board committed to serving his fellow countrypeople. In 2024, the *Global Mercy* had 34 Sierra Leoneans among its crew, with a passion to serve.

Growing up during the Sierra Leone civil war, Ishaka learned the importance of caring for others, a principle he brings to his work on board. Today, he continues to inspire his fellow Sierra Leonean crew members, encouraging them to broaden their perspectives and embrace the global Mercy Ships family.

"Open your mind," encouraged Ishaka. "When you stay in your house, you only know the things about your house. But Mercy Ships has exposed me to the world. My thinking and worldview is different."

IMAGES: (*opposite page*) Ishaka on the deck of the *Global Mercy*; (*below*) Ishaka (right) docking the *Global Mercy*, alongside Taylor Perez, volunteer captain from the USA (left).





A shared purpose: Dr Marijke Westerduin & Dr Salématou Camara

Dr Marijke Westerduin and Dr Salématou Camara's partnership began virtually. In 2020, Dutch dentist Dr Westerduin trained Dr Camara, a dental student from UGANC in Guinea, via Zoom.

"[At] that time, we started doing many things online... meetings and teaching. So, for me, it was an easy step to continue teaching," said Dr Westerduin.

Their online mentorship evolved into a real-world collaboration aboard the *Global Mercy* hospital ship in Sierra Leone, where they worked side-by-side in the dental clinic, blending their expertise to provide care to patients and crew.

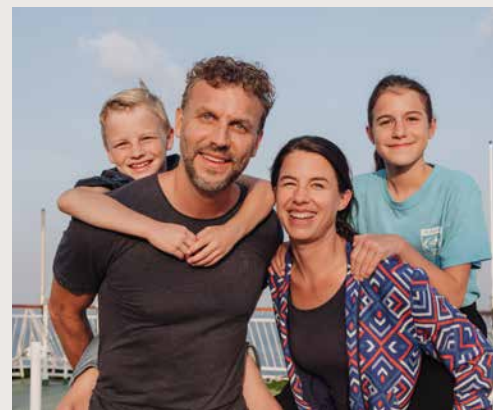
"She says we are colleagues, but to me, she's still my teacher," said Dr Camara. "Any time I want to discuss something, she always has time, and we discuss very well."

Dr Westerduin, inspired by her visit to Mercy Ships' first vessel as a teenager, had always dreamed of volunteering. After delays caused by COVID-19, she used her skills to train dental students in Guinea.

In 2021, she joined the *Africa Mercy* as lead dentist along with her husband and two children, before transferring to the *Global Mercy* in 2023. Working in resource-limited settings has honed her decision-making skills, particularly in diagnosing and treating dental issues like swelling, often misdiagnosed as tumours.

Dr Camara was motivated to pursue dentistry after witnessing the lack of awareness and care for dental health in her community. After graduating from UGANC, she joined the *Global Mercy* as a volunteer, inspired by the ship's innovative dental clinic. Her experience there has expanded her vision to improve dental care in rural Guinea, where access remains limited.

Together, Dr Camara and Dr Westerduin represent the power of mentorship, collaboration and a shared mission to transform global dental care.



IMAGES: (top to bottom)
Dr Westerduin and Dr Camara work together in the dental clinic;
Dr Salématou Camara;
Dr Marijke Westerduin and her family onboard the *Global Mercy*.

A servant's heart: Merryl Mackenzie

Merryl Mackenzie began her journey with Mercy Ships in 2007 when she left Australia to serve as an operating room nurse in Ghana. Inspired by a childhood dream and driven by her faith, she worked alongside volunteer surgeon Dr Gary Parker on maxillofacial surgeries. Despite her desire to stay longer, Merryl returned to care for her daughter, Anna-Claire, who was born with severe congenital deformities.

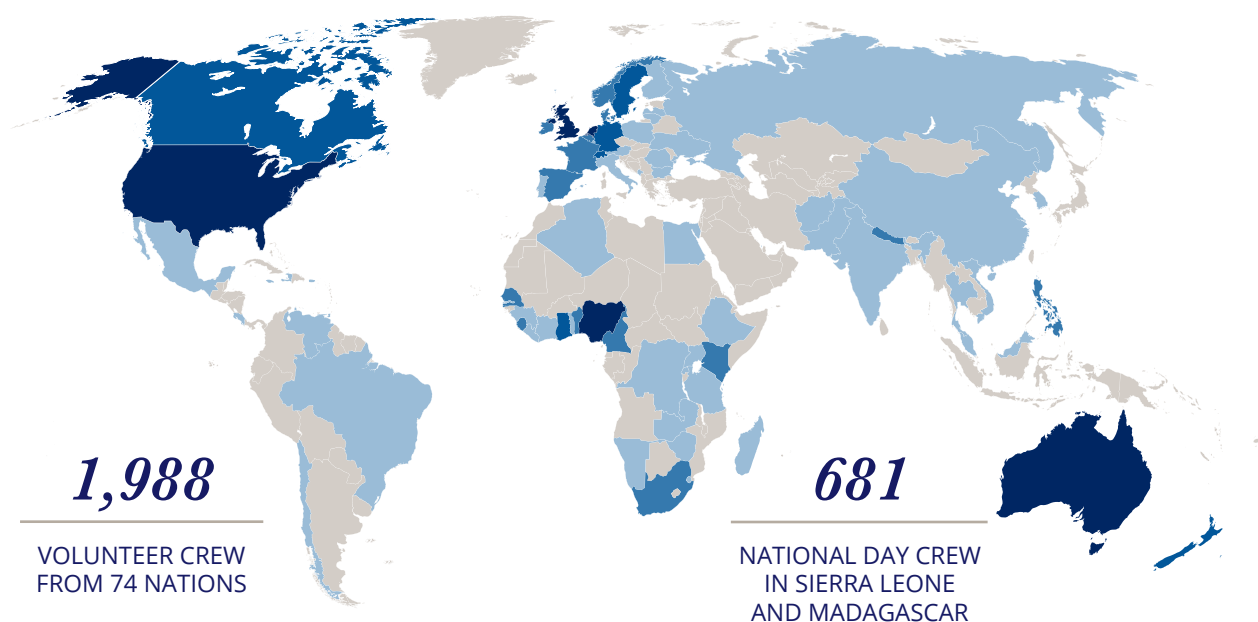
After multiple short-term volunteer trips, including in Togo and Liberia, Merryl became increasingly passionate about providing surgical care to children, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where millions of people lack access to safe surgery. Having experienced the challenges of obtaining medical care for her own daughter, Merryl was determined to help bridge the gap.

In 2017, she became a full-time operating room clinical supervisor on board the *Africa Mercy*. In 2021, she moved to the *Global Mercy*, overseeing the set-up of six operating rooms. Merryl's leadership, which includes mentoring staff and empowering medical teams, has been a source of



fulfilment. Her daughter, Anna-Claire, now an adult, supports her mother's work, saying, "I'm super proud of her and want her to keep doing it."

Today, Merryl serves as the hospital director on the *Africa Mercy*. She shares, "This has been one of the most fulfilling roles of my career."



Mercy Ships volunteers are the heartbeat of the organisation. They come from around the world, selflessly donating their time and expertise to provide life-changing medical care to those who need it most. Without them, the hospital ships wouldn't be able to operate. Volunteers are crucial to Mercy Ships' work and year after year, they lead by example. Mercy Ships is deeply grateful to our generous, determined and compassionate volunteers.



Find out more about
volunteering on board.



UK volunteers

Giving their time and talents on board

We are deeply inspired by the volunteers who generously give their time and skills to make a difference for our patients, and in 2024, we more than doubled the number of UK volunteers serving on board.

The Latham family took the plunge when they left their home in Manchester to live on board the *Global Mercy* for two years. Simon and Amélie Latham moved into a family cabin with their daughters Zara, 14, Héloïse, 12, and Sophie, 10.

Simon started work as the ship's doctor, using his skills as a GP to provide vital care on board. Amélie leads the Low Care Unit (LCU) team, working with patients after surgery, and uses her skills as a PE teacher. The girls attend the accredited academy onboard, with Zara also helping in the LCU for work experience.

"All three of the girls now want to do a job where they can help others and give something back," says Amélie. Simon added: "Life will never be the same again for any of us, and that's a good thing."

"Life will never be the same again for any of us, and that's a good thing."

As well as the volunteer medical staff, there are many other crew members who contribute. "We have every role on board that you need to run a small city," said Ruth Cooper, who volunteered as

headteacher of the school on board the *Africa Mercy*. Ruth left her home in Exeter to join the hospital ship while it was docked in Madagascar, to provide education to the 15 volunteer families with children.

Ruth said that the children's "world view is so much more open wide than I had at school." With more than 25 years' experience in teaching, Ruth's invaluable experience has helped enrich the education of the children living on board.

"In some ways you give up a lot to be here, away from family and friends," says Ruth. "But it's such a huge privilege to be welcomed into countries and see lives changed."

Without the passion and dedication of people like the Latham family and Ruth Cooper, none of Mercy Ships' life-changing work would be possible.

Sharing our good news stories

Reaching audiences far and wide

One of the things people say when they first hear about Mercy Ships is, "This is amazing. Why haven't I heard about these ships before?" We've been working hard to change that, by sharing our stories with new audiences in new ways.



BBC RADIO 4 SUCCESS

Mercy Ships UK ran a radio appeal on BBC Radio 4 from Easter Sunday 2024, having won a bid to broadcast a free charity appeal over the airwaves. Our spokesperson was Dr Rachel Buckingham, a children's orthopaedic surgeon from an NHS hospital in Oxford, who regularly volunteers her skills onboard.

Rachel shared about the life-changing surgery she provided to Amadou, a four-year-old boy from Senegal. Amadou's legs curved outwards due to rickets, making it painful for him to walk.

"I had the privilege of operating on Amadou last year," said Rachel. "After surgery, I saw him smile as he looked down to see his now-straight leg healing in a plaster cast... Now, he can run, play and go to school with his friends."

Together with generous match funding from three donors, the appeal raised £75,447, welcomed new supporters, and shared the good news of Mercy Ships with many in the UK.

IMAGES: (opposite page, left to right) The Latham family during the *Global Mercy's* arrival to Freetown, Sierra Leone; Ruth Cooper, academy headteacher; (this page, left to right) Dr Rachel Buckingham at the BBC Radio 4 recording studios; a newspaper advert for the *Because of you* brand campaign.

MERCY SUNDAYS

Mercy Ships UK continued a flourishing partnership with Premier Christian Radio to air the *Mercy Sundays* programme, featuring dozens of church leaders and volunteers speaking about our work.

GOOD NEWS ON THE BIG SCREEN

We took our portable cinema to more Christian festivals this year, including Spring Harvest, Big Church Festival & New Wine, showing festival-goers the everyday miracles that happen on board.

BECAUSE OF YOU

Our first-ever brand campaign shared the stories of our incredible patients and volunteers far and wide. The *Because of you* campaign appeared in newspapers, social media, emails and more. This led to 43 times more people signing up to our newsletter than during the same period the year before, and helped to boost our fundraising.







Mercy Ships' environmental, social and governance initiatives

In 2024, Mercy Ships continued building upon its commitment to leaving a lasting impact on the health of people and communities in sub-Saharan Africa, using its state-of-the-art hospital ships and in close collaboration with local partners and stakeholders. In the spirit of the core values to strive for excellence across all areas of operations, Mercy Ships is committed to upholding the highest environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards.

Each Mercy Ships vessel meets or exceeds all international environmental standards and regulations, including those relative to the environment, in particular the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), the main international convention covering prevention of pollution of the marine environment by ships from operational or accidental causes.

Mercy Ships' newest hospital ship, the *Global Mercy*, was purpose-built with energy efficiency as a major component of her design. It lays a roadmap for Mercy Ships' commitment to designing future eco-friendly vessels with energy efficiency in mind, expanding the organisation's positive impact on African partner nations while minimising the impact on the environment. To maintain optimum safety and efficiency levels, ship operations are surveyed annually by Lloyd's Register. Key features on board the vessel include modern and efficient systems that provide reliable power, clean water and air-conditioning for the hospital and crew, all of which reduce the ship's total energy consumption relative to earlier generation vessels. Additionally, filtering and treating air-conditioning condensate water for technical uses on board reduces total potable water use by approximately 50 percent.

From a social perspective, the core of Mercy Ships' mission is tangibly improving the lives of individuals and communities through the delivery of direct surgical services and education, training, and advocacy programmes to its partner African nations. Since 1978, the organisation has used its

model of hospital ships to provide more than 121,900 life-changing and lifesaving surgical procedures across a range of surgical specialties that are often inaccessible, unaffordable, or unsafe in the countries Mercy Ships serves. In tandem with these direct medical services, Mercy Ships has trained over 55,500 local professionals in their area of expertise, leading to stronger surgical care systems in the long term.

This transformative work is made possible by a crew of volunteers serving on board as well as staff working around the world, all of whom Mercy Ships is dedicated to supporting as they bring the organisation's mission to life. In 2024, Mercy Ships continued to focus on workplace culture and inclusion through a global initiative. A personal development programme was also launched with an external partner. Focusing on leadership strategy and execution skills, this programme will be rolled out globally in 2025, with regular monitoring of participant engagement and progress.

Mercy Ships' governance model includes oversight from the Mercy Ships International Board of Directors consisting of men and women with diverse profiles from around the world. The Mercy Ships brand represents the headquarters in Garden Valley, Texas, the hospital ships operating in host countries in Africa, 16 affiliated independent charities around the world under the name Mercy Ships that raise funds and recruit volunteers to staff and run a fleet of hospital ships and related operations, and an Africa Service Center headquartered in Dakar, Senegal. Each national office is an independent charity organised under the laws of its respective country, has its own Board of Directors, and complies with each country's specific legislation for non-profit NGOs. Mercy Ships currently operates a two-ship fleet consisting of the *Africa Mercy* and the *Global Mercy*, each of which is led by a Managing Director and management team that reports directly to Mercy Ships' executive leadership.

IMAGE: Alya Lopez, volunteer paediatric ICU nurse from Australia, with an orthopaedics patient on the veranda of the *Global Mercy*.

Looking ahead

Bringing Hope and Healing



Sierra Leone

08/2024 - 06/2025

08/2025 - 06/2026



Madagascar

02 - 12/2025

After another year blessed by hope and healing for thousands of patients, Mercy Ships is charting the course toward 2025 with the mission of touching even more lives.

After her annual maintenance period, the *Africa Mercy* returned to Toamasina, Madagascar in February 2025 for a second, consecutive field service. Mercy Ships remains committed to partnering with the Malagasy government and will also be contributing to the growing strength of their medical ecosystem by supporting institutions, initiatives and organisations focused on surgery, such as Freedom from Fistula.

The *Global Mercy* is currently serving in Sierra Leone and will take a short break in June 2025, before returning in August 2025 to continue providing life-changing surgeries alongside training programmes for local healthcare professionals. Following an extended season of incredible impact and transformation, Mercy Ships has reaffirmed our partnership with Sierra Leone's Ministry of Health and the ship is expected to remain in Freetown until June 2026. In addition, an extension to the protocol agreement has been signed reflecting a deepened collaboration with the Sierra Leonean government to support lasting change in the country's healthcare system until 2030.

We will also continue our work on the ground in countries where the ships aren't docked. This includes maintaining a commitment to investing in full professional training at partner universities. We also plan on advancing our ETA efforts across Guinea through supporting the continual development of surgical specialty programmes at UGANC to further educate and train local healthcare workers.

We invite those of you who pray to join us in seeking guidance for the upcoming year, both for the plans we have and the volunteers and supporters who will take us there. Let us also pray for peace as we determine the next steps in our five-year country engagement plans and how best to bring hope and healing to the people who need it most.

IMAGE: Crew line the decks of the *Global Mercy* as they arrive in Freetown, Sierra Leone.



Financial Review and Strategic Report

SUMMARY

In what was another challenging year for fundraising Mercy Ships UK, 2024 income held up at £9.9m compared to £9.8m the previous year.

The charity saw a further increase in regular supporters and continued success, with donors committing to support our future work. This was underpinned by integrated campaigns and events including a successful BBC Radio 4 appeal sharing the good news of Mercy Ships.

2024 expenditure of £8.8m, compared to £7.2m the previous year, reflects MSUK's commitment to our international programmes, ship's crew and volunteers, together with investment towards future growth in our ability to support these activities. This commitment includes a total of £6.2m in grants (2023: £5.2m), an increase of 19%.

INCOME

Total income for the year of £9.9m was 2% up on the previous year (2023: £9.8m), with Legacy income of £2.2m (2023: £1.9m) representing 22% of income (2023: 20%).

In 2024, our fundraising campaigns were successful, with increases in the number of regular donors giving a stable base to our income. Our two matched appeals, in the summer and winter, grew in both response and income, reaching almost £750,000. We had solid supporter retention rates along with higher than average response rates to our campaigns.

Philanthropy income saw increased interaction with Trusts and Foundations and Major Donors, resulting in increased income. By bringing our outreach mailers in house, the team saved £30,000 on expenditure and doubled the income that we had previously with this initiative. Stewardship of one of our donors resulted in an unexpected second multi-year gift of £750,000, £250,000 of which was received in 2024. The team also made a trip to Scotland to attend the National Prayer Breakfast and meet with some of our key stakeholders, including Tymor Marine, which has been offering 'services in kind' to the Marine Operations team since 2016 and has signed an agreement to continue.

EXPENDITURE

This year, total charitable expenditure increased by 22% to £8.8m (2023: £7.2m) and was used primarily for supporting our hospital ships, crew and volunteers in delivering vital free healthcare to people facing desperate need in some of the world's poorest countries. This expenditure includes £6.2m of grants (2023: £5.2m). Within this amount, the following were noteworthy: grants for Mercy Ships programmes of £5.4m (2023: £3.7m); crew support of £210k (2023: £115k); and financial aid to crew of £278k (2023: £24k). Expenditure also included £1.1m for staff working directly for Mercy Ships International and Mercy Ships Global Association.

RESERVES POLICY

The Directors review the reserves policy annually. In recognition of the increased responsibilities the UK is undertaking towards the expanded fleet, the Directors require Mercy Ships UK to hold reserves to cover a minimum of six months' total expenditure, based on the annual budget as agreed by the Board (these should be covered by unrestricted reserves). Restricted funds are not included in the reserves policy, as the Directors have no discretion over how they are spent. If the Directors choose to designate funds, these will not be included in the reserves policy, as they are held for a designated purpose.

FUNDS

At the end of 2024, total funds stood at £5.9m (2023: £6.7m). Restricted funds amounted to £9k at the end of 2024 (2023: £29k) and are subject to conditions imposed by donors or the nature of the appeal.

On 31 December 2024, unrestricted funds are £5.9m, of which £5.5m are free reserves. This represented 6.3 months' operating costs for the 2025 total budget.

GOING CONCERN

We have set out above a review of the financial performance during the financial year and our reserves position at the year end. We have adequate financial resources and have the

structures in place to manage the business risks. In addition, our budgeting and forecasting processes have taken into consideration the current economic climate and its potential impact on both our various sources of income and our expenditure. We have a reasonable expectation that we have adequate resources and control mechanisms to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Further, we believe that there are no material uncertainties that may cast doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. Therefore, we continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the annual financial statements.

RISK MANAGEMENT

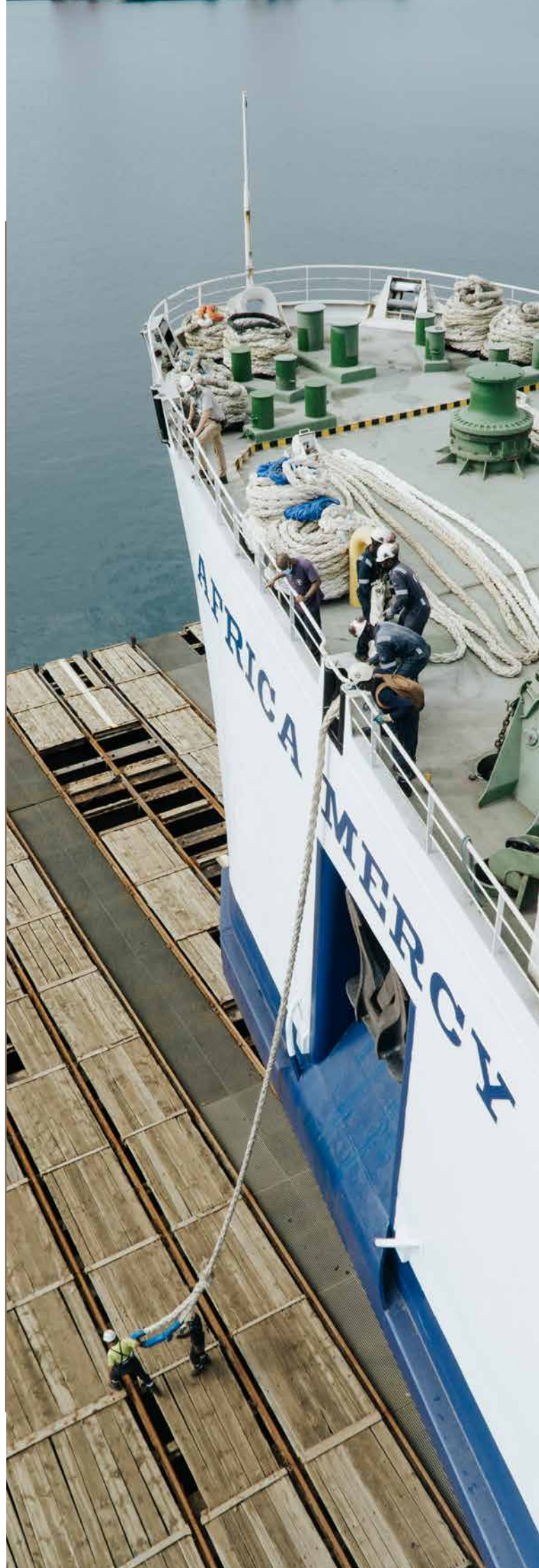
The risks which face the charity are detailed in its consolidated risk register, which the Directors keep under active review. Headline Risks in 2024 include:

1. Uncertainty brought about by the current insecure economic and political climate and the potential impact on donors and donor acquisition.

Mitigation: Uncertainty has been factored into our planning and budgeting process for 2025. Regular monitoring of actual expenditure against budget is undertaken by the management team, with corrective action plans, as necessary, overseen by the relevant Board Committee.

2. Cyber security continues to be a significant risk, especially in relation to online activities – of which MSUK has a full range, including our website, donor database, online donations and accounting systems.

Mitigation: MSUK employs a third-party IT service to provide specialist expertise. All staff receive training, with frequent reminders to promote an attitude of 'everyone is responsible'.



Corporate Structure and Governance

Mercy Ships UK is part of the global family of charities under the Mercy Ships banner and values. The International Support Centre of Mercy Ships Operations manages the charity's marine and medical operations internationally. Alongside the UK, 15 other nations have a registered Mercy Ships charity. These partnerships are governed by an Association Agreement, which defines the operational and strategic links between the organisations, safeguarding the independence of the UK charity and its responsibilities for data protection, financial management, safeguarding and strategic operation.

Mercy Ships UK, company number 03147724 (England & Wales), is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. Our registration number with the Charity Commission for England and Wales is 1053055 and with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator SC039743. The charity is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 11 December 1995, and it was incorporated on 17 January 1996. The Memorandum and Articles of Association were revised in 2007. Under the conditions of the guarantee, members' liability is restricted to £1 each. The number of members at 31 December 2024 was 9 (2023:11).

MERCY SHIPS UK'S CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

The Board has ongoing regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission when reviewing the charity's activities and future plans. Mercy Ships continues to make a significant impact in numerous communities and on thousands of individual lives in Africa, through surgical interventions carried out on the *Global Mercy* and the *Africa Mercy*, in onshore facilities, and through the lasting legacies left behind through extensive training and capacity building, and as such funding provided by the UK is utilised exclusively to this end. Regular monitoring and reporting of projects is carried out to ensure that

Mercy Ships continues to deliver world-class healthcare and is utilising funds in line with the wishes of donors in the UK.

SAFEGUARDING

Mercy Ships UK has a Principal Safeguarding Officer who oversees the implementation of safeguarding measures across the whole organisation. Alongside this, we have a Safeguarding Lead on the Board, as well as external support from a specialist Safeguarding organisation. The Safeguarding Policy and procedures were reviewed regularly and updated, across the UK operation and globally. The Board are confident these measures will continue to maintain the high standards of protecting vulnerable people and putting quality of care at the centre of all we do.

BOARD AND MANAGEMENT ROLES

The Mercy Ships UK Board of Trustees is legally responsible for the overall control of the charity and for ensuring that it is properly managed.

The Board's principle roles are:

- Approving the mission, vision, strategies, high-level policies and annual business plan
- Appointing and overseeing the Chief Executive Officer
- Monitoring performance and risk management
- Reporting performance with integrity and transparency
- Ensuring compliance with UK law and Charity Commission regulations
- Managing its governance processes
- Adding value by advising management
- Representing the interests of Mercy Ships UK's stakeholders.



The Board delegates responsibility for operational management to the Chief Executive Officer (the Principal Officer), who is responsible for developing the organisation's plans, policies and processes, following Board advice and approval. The Executive Leadership Team, made up of Finance Director, Director of Engagement, Director of Philanthropy and the Chief Executive Officer, supports the leadership of the organisation's strategic growth. Salaries of key personnel are benchmarked annually with external research and agreed by the Board of Directors.

Mercy Ships UK complies with Fundraising Standards Board requirements and is registered with the Fundraising Regulator, only utilising agencies that are compliant with these standards.

Mercy Ships does not solicit gifts by door-to-door acquisition methods, has received no complaints from any regulator and ensures that all donors receive only the communications they request.

BOARD COMPOSITION

The Board comprises independent, unremunerated, non-executive directors (trustees) who have a broad range of skills and experience. Recognising the international collaboration of charities, Mercy Ships UK provides two Board members to the Mercy Ships International Board (total 34 members), and in return receives up to two members from the International Board as full

Mercy Ships UK directors. As the Board continues to be strengthened and expanded, the directors are committed to the highest standards and encouraging applications from a diverse range of individuals.

Director recruitment, induction and training are overseen by the Nominations and Governance Committee.

BOARD EXPENSES

No fees or remuneration are paid for serving as a Mercy Ships UK Board member. Mercy Ships UK reimburses reasonable expenses incurred while acting as a director. This includes travel and accommodation expenses required to attend meetings, training and orientation costs. Every effort is made to ensure costs are at a minimum.

BOARD MEETINGS

The Board meets four times a year, with additional meetings as required. The Board has three subcommittees:

- Finance, Audit and Risk
- Nominations and Governance
- Income Strategy
- People and Culture.

IMAGE:

Francis, maxillofacial patient, and his mother, Hawa.

Statement of Directors' Responsibilities

The Directors are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law, the Directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in the UK (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law, the Directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company, and of the profit or loss of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue its activities.

The Directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions, and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and that the assets are properly applied in accordance with charity law hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Directors have taken all steps that they ought to have taken in order to make themselves aware of any information relevant to the audit, establish that auditors are aware of that information and that there is no information relevant to the audit of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware.

The Directors have prepared this report in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

By order of the Board of Directors,



Dr Michael Spence
Chair of Trustees

Statement of Financial Activities

for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Income from generated funds							
Donations and legacies	2	8,868,468	795,633	9,664,101	8,791,946	837,308	9,629,254
Income from charitable activities							
Trading Income		-	-	-	-	-	-
Other income							
Investments	3	20,888	-	20,888	16,168	-	16,168
GIK		14,661	-	14,661	1,833	-	1,833
Interest		243,213	-	243,213	113,965	-	113,965
Total income		9,147,230	795,633	9,942,863	8,923,912	837,308	9,761,220
Expenditure							
Cost of generating funds	4	2,215,207	-	2,215,207	2,344,071	-	2,344,071
Cost of trading		-	-	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities	5,6	7,954,564	815,394	8,769,958	5,651,593	1,549,247	7,200,840
Total expenditure		10,169,771	815,394	10,985,165	7,995,664	1,549,247	9,544,911
Net income/ expenditure before other recognised gains and losses		(1,022,541)	(19,761)	(1,042,302)	928,248	(711,939)	216,309
Net realised gains/(loss) on investments	15	(6,876)	-	(6,876)	(5,761)	515	(5,246)
Net movement in funds before transfers		(1,029,417)	(19,761)	(1,049,178)	922,487	(711,939)	211,063
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(1,029,417)	(19,761)	(1,049,178)	922,487	(711,424)	211,063
Total funds brought forward		6,883,684	28,576	6,912,260	5,961,197	740,000	6,701,197
Total funds carried forward	19	5,854,267	8,815	5,863,082	6,883,684	28,576	6,912,260

Balance Sheet


for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Intangible assets	13	-	-
Tangible assets	14	13,419	12,127
Investments	15	319,880	308,868
		333,299	320,995
Current assets			
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	16	687,657	406,184
Cash at bank and in hand		5,135,311	6,613,910
		5,822,968	7,020,094
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(293,185)	(428,829)
Net current assets		5,529,783	6,591,265
Net assets		5,863,082	6,912,260
The funds of the charity:			
Unrestricted funds	19	5,854,267	6,883,684
Restricted funds	19	8,815	28,576
Total charity funds		5,863,082	6,912,260

The financial statements of Mercy Ships UK, company number 03147724, were approved by the Board of Directors on 20 March 2025.



Dr Revd Michael Spence, Director



Paul Ramsbottom, Director

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 31 December 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net cash provided by operating activities	(1,728,591)	361,911
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Purchase of fixed assets	(10,883)	(10,612)
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	278,762	131,967
Purchase of investments	(127,786)	(22,572)
Disposal of investments	109,899	9,409
Net cash provided by investing activities	249,992	108,192
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period	(1,478,599)	470,103
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	6,613,910	6,143,807
Change in cash and cash equivalents due to exchange rate movements	-	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	5,135,311	6,613,910
Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities	2024 £	2023 £
Net income for the reporting period	(1,049,178)	211,063
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	9,592	8,392
Unrealised gains in investments	6,876	5,246
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(278,762)	(131,967)
Loss/(profit) on the sale of fixed assets	-	-
Decrease in stocks	-	-
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(281,473)	51,547
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(135,645)	217,630
Net cash provided by operating activities	(1,728,590)	361,911
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents	2024 £	2023 £
Cash in hand	5,135,311	6,613,910
Total cash and cash equivalents	5,135,311	6,613,910

Notes to the Accounts

for the year ended 31 December 2024

1. Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the charity's financial statements are as follows:

a. Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

After making enquiries, the Trustees have reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue its activities for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the Financial Statements.

b. Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is entitled to the income, has certainty of receipt and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Donated goods and services of medical equipment which are intended to be used to further Mercy Ships objectives are valued at market value and included in income when distributed or utilised.

Legacies are included as income when the charity is notified of an impending distribution or the date of receipt. Receipt of a legacy is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where a legacy has been notified to the charity and the criteria for income recognition has not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

c. Expenditure

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and is recognised when there is a legal or constructive obligation to pay. Where expenditure cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, it is allocated on a basis consistent with the use of the relevant resources measured by reference to staff time.

Costs of generating funds relates to activities that are intended to generate income. The cost of fundraising campaigns is expensed in the year in which it is incurred although income derived from the initiatives may arise in future years.

Charitable activities comprise of the following:

- Grants payable from restricted and unrestricted funds for Mercy Ships' programmes
- Direct costs and programme support costs incurred by UK-based staff in assisting programmes overseas, including staffing, volunteers and procurement
- Governance costs relate to the direct management functions and support costs inherent in the activities of the charity. They provide the governance infrastructure which allows the charity to operate and to generate the information required for public accountability, and include the strategic planning processes that contribute to the future development of the charity.

d. Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Except for laptops and computer peripherals which are expensed on acquisition, tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000 (exc VAT) are capitalised.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset evenly over its estimated useful life as follows:

- Leashold improvements 33%
- Office equipment and computers 33%
- Fixtures & fittings 20%
- Motor vehicles 20%.

e. Intangible fixed assets and amortisation

Amortisation is provided on all intangible assets at 33% per annum to write off the cost evenly over its estimated useful life.

f. Investments

Investments are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently stated at their fair value at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. Income arising from investments is recognised as it arises. The statement of financial activities includes the net gains and losses arising on revaluation throughout the year.

g. Funds

Restricted funds are subject to conditions imposed by donors.

Designated funds are amounts which have been put aside at the discretion of the Trustees.

The General fund comprises of accumulated surpluses less deficits after transfers to designated funds. It allows the charity to budget for anticipated commitments in the short- and medium-term and to provide adequate working capital.

h. Pensions

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities as they become payable in accordance with the rules of the scheme.

i. Stock

Merchandise stock is stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

j. Foreign exchange

Transactions denominated in foreign currency are translated into Sterling and recorded at the exchange rates ruling at the date of the transactions. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in a foreign currency are translated into Sterling at the exchange rates at the balance sheet date. Translation differences are dealt with in the Statement of Financial Activities.

k. Leasing commitments

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to income as incurred.

l. Irrecoverable Value Added Taxation

The company is unable to recover the majority of Value Added Taxation charged on its purchases which is included in the related expense or asset in the accounts.

m. Judgements in applying accounting policies and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In applying the charity's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions in determining the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities. The Trustees' judgements, estimates and assumptions are based on the best and most reliable evidence available at the time when the decisions are made, and are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be applicable. Due to inherent subjectivity involved in making such judgements, estimates and assumptions, the actual results and outcomes may differ. The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised, if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods, if the revision affects both current and future periods. The key estimate and assumption made in these accounts are considered to be the recognition of legacy income as set out in note 1.b.

2. Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted 2024 £	Restricted 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted 2023 £	Restricted 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Gifts and grants	6,682,013	780,633	7,462,646	6,897,751	837,308	7,735,059
Institutional funding	5,000	–	5,000	9,965	–	9,965
Legacies	2,181,455	15,000	2,196,455	1,884,230	–	1,884,230
	8,868,468	795,633	9,664,101	8,791,946	837,308	9,629,254

Gifts and grants include related Gift Aid.

3. Other income

	Unrestricted 2024 £	Restricted 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted 2023 £	Restricted 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Investments	20,888	–	20,888	16,168	–	16,168
GIK income	14,661	–	14,661	1,833	–	1,833
Interest	243,213	–	243,213	113,965	–	113,965
	278,762	–	278,762	131,966	–	131,966

4. Cost of generating funds

	Cost of generating funds £	Cost of trading £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Staff costs	639,605	–	639,605	779,296
Direct costs	1,333,897	–	1,333,897	1,377,202
Support costs (see note 7)	241,705	–	241,705	187,573
	2,215,207	–	2,215,207	2,344,071

5. Charitable activities

	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Staff costs	1,644,699	1,385,415
Direct costs	456,257	384,894
Support costs (see note 7)	499,856	266,225
Grants (see note 6)	6,169,146	5,164,306
	8,769,958	7,200,840

The cost of the statutory audit was £17,650 (2023: £16,800) which is shown within direct costs.

6. Charitable activities (grants breakdown)

Grants made for Mercy Ships International programmes	Unrestricted 2024 £	Restricted 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted 2023 £	Restricted 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Mercy Ships programmes	5,353,752	49,403	5,403,155	3,615,059	69,747	3,684,806
Crew support	–	210,700	210,700	–	115,298	115,298
Financial aid for crew	–	278,437	278,437	–	24,089	24,089
Medical	–	60,105	60,105	–	26,046	26,046
Community	–	749	749	–	562	562
Capacity building	–	216,000	216,000	–	284,625	284,625
New ship	–	–	–	–	1,028,880	1,028,880
Total grants made	5,353,752	815,394	6,169,146	3,615,059	1,549,247	5,164,306

All grants made for Mercy Ships International programmes are made directly to Mercy Ships International or Mercy Ships Global Association.

7. Support costs

	Fundraising for donations	Charitable activities £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Staff costs	95,411	224,928	320,339	163,583
Training	6,844	17,600	24,444	10,491
Travel and subsistence	26,234	30,424	56,658	24,527
Motor vehicle	792	2,035	2,827	2,484
Facilities and supplies	57,005	146,585	203,590	167,007
Communications	7,361	18,928	26,289	9,912
Equipment maintenance and rental	847	2,179	3,026	1,700
Bank charges	43,492	47,615	91,107	53,157
Legal and professional	1,033	2,656	3,689	12,544
Depreciation	2,686	6,906	9,592	8,393
	241,705	499,856	741,561	453,798

Charitable expenditure includes total governance costs of £33,238 (2023: £31,943).
This includes the cost of the statutory audit which was £17,650 (2023: £16,800).

8. Net income for the year after charging

	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation of owned assets	2,326	1,631
Amortisation of owned intangible assets	–	–
Directors' indemnity insurance	8,036	7,733
Operating lease rentals – land and buildings	55,070	42,395
Operating lease rentals – plant and machinery	–	–
Operating lease rentals – motor vehicles	–	–
Auditors' remuneration – audit	17,650	16,800
Auditors' remuneration – non audit services	5,751	5,174

At 31 December 2024 the charitable company had commitments under non-cancellable operating leases for buildings which expire:

	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
	Within one year	Between two and five years	Within one year	Between two and five years
Land and buildings	44,873	–	53,678	44,854
Plant and machinery	–	–	–	–
	44,873	–	53,678	44,854

9. Directors' remuneration

The Directors received no remuneration for their services.

No directors received payment for professional or other services provided to the charitable company.

Directors were reimbursed for travel and related costs totalling £83 (2023: £472).

10. Staff costs

	2024 £	2023 £
Gross wages and salaries	1,981,668	1,874,239
Employers' NI	217,627	201,523
Pension costs	103,115	98,116
Redundancy payment	-	-
SMP reclaimed	(18,771)	(10,316)
	2,283,639	2,163,562

The number of employees whose actual emoluments (including benefits in kind, but excluding pension contributions) fell in the following bands:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
£60,001 – £70,000	4	3
£70,001 – £80,000	2	0
£80,001 – £90,000	0	2
£90,001 – £110,000	1	0

Key personnel salaries for 2024, as per the table above, totalled £505,315 for 7 people (2023: £378,871 for 5 people).

Mercy Ships full-time equivalent UK salaries include 19 staff who are classed as 'seconded,' working directly for Mercy Ships International and Mercy Ships Global Association totalling £1.1m (see note 12). A number of these staff occupy senior positions contributing to the wider remit of the global organisation.

The average number of employees in 2024 was 45.2 (2023: 45.5).

The number of employees, calculated on a full time equivalent basis, analysed by activity was:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Fundraising	12.8	16.8
Charitable programmes – UK	11.5	8.8
Charitable programmes – direct	19.9	19.0
Governance	1.0	0.9
	45.2	45.5

11. Volunteer costs

	2024	2023
Total number of UK volunteers	47	47
Contributed services valuation	£3,494,211	£2,720,832

Volunteer roles valued at £248,682 for MSUK have been excluded from the 2024 contributed services calculation above in alignment with accounting guidelines for contributed services. This figure is shared so as to facilitate previous year comparison.

12. Related party transactions

Mercy Ships International Board members: Dr Michael Spence, Lois Boyle, Dr Michelle White.

MSI transactions: MSUK recharged costs amounting to £1,050,511 (2023: £1,013,942) in respect of salaries for seconded staff; and £166,981 (2023: £131,621) was recharged by MSI. Total grants given to MSI Programmes £6,169,146 (2023:£5,164,306).

Mercy Ships Global Association (MSGA): Clive Mitchell, Delegate to the General Assembly

MSGA: Grants made to MSGA amounted to £74,806 (2023: £51,389)

Personal donations amounting to £10,751 (2023: £14,835) were received from five directors (2023: seven) in the year.

13. Intangible fixed assets

	Software £
Cost	
At 1 January 2024	30,000
Additions	–
At 31 December 2024	30,000
Accumulated amortisation	
At 1 January 2024	30,000
Charge for the year	–
At 31 December 2024	30,000
Net book value	
At 31 December 2024	–
At 31 December 2023	–

14. Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold improvements £	Furniture, hardware and equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 January 2024	45,832	24,850	13,825	84,507
Additions	8,385	2,499	–	10,884
Disposals	–	–	–	–
At 31 December 2024	54,217	27,349	13,825	95,391
Accumulated depreciation				
At 1 January 2024	39,332	19,223	13,825	72,380
Charge for the year	6,659	2,933	–	9,592
Disposals	–	–	–	–
At 31 December 2024	45,991	22,156	13,825	81,972
Net book value				
At 31 December 2024	8,226	5,193	–	13,419
At 31 December 2023	6,500	5,627	–	12,127

15. Investments

	2024 £	2023 £
Market value at 1 January 2024	308,868	300,947
Additions	127,786	22,576
Transfers	(262)	1,948
Disposals	(109,637)	(11,357)
Gain on revaluation	(6,875)	(5,246)
Market value at 31 December 2024	319,880	308,868

The investments held are in British government stocks and collective UK and global investments. They are managed by Rathbone Investment Management Ltd.

16. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Income tax recoverable	291,945	132,203
Other debtors	69,621	24,838
Prepayments and accrued income	326,091	249,143
	687,657	406,184

17. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	195,739	331,775
Taxation and social security	72,446	64,702
Accruals	25,000	32,352
	293,185	428,829

18. Analysis of charitable funds between net assets

	Fixed assets £	Net current assets £	Total £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	333,299	5,520,968	5,854,267
	333,299	5,520,968	5,854,267
Restricted funds			
Mercy Ships programmes	-	-	-
Crew support	-	8,815	8,815
Financial aid for crew	-	-	-
Medical programmes	-	-	-
Community programmes	-	-	-
Capacity building	-	-	-
Vehicles	-	-	-
	-	8,815	8,815
Total charitable funds	333,299	5,529,783	5,863,082

19. Analysis of movements in charitable funds

	Balance at 01-Jan 2024 £	Income (including gains on investments) £	Expenditure (including losses on investments) £	Balance at 31-Dec 2024 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	6,883,684	9,140,354	10,169,771	5,854,267
	6,883,684	9,140,354	10,169,771	5,854,267
Restricted funds				
Mercy Ships programmes	-	49,403	49,403	-
Crew support	28,576	190,939	210,700	8,815
Financial aid for crew	-	278,437	278,437	-
Medical programmes	-	60,104	60,104	-
Community programmes	-	750	750	-
Capacity building	-	216,000	216,000	-
	28,576	795,633	815,394	8,815
Total funds	6,912,260	9,935,987	10,985,165	5,863,082

20. Taxation

As a registered charity, Mercy Ships UK Limited is exempt from taxation on its income and gains to the extent that they are applied for its charitable purposes.

Independent Auditor's Report

to the Members of Mercy Ships - UK Limited

OPINION

We have audited the financial statements of Mercy Ships UK Limited (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 December 2024, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 December 2023 and of its Income and Expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

BASIS FOR OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the "Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements" section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO GOING CONCERN

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

OTHER INFORMATION

The other information comprises the information included in the Strategic report and Report of the Trustees, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

OPINIONS ON OTHER MATTERS PRESCRIBED BY THE COMPANIES ACT 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the strategic report and the Trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the Trustees' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

MATTERS ON WHICH WE ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT BY EXCEPTION

In light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the Trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- 1 adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- 2 the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- 3 certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- 4 we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 44, the Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

AUDITOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

Based on our understanding of the charity and its industry, we considered that non-compliance with the following laws and regulations might have a material effect on the financial statements: employment regulation, health and safety regulation, anti-money laundering regulation.

To help us identify instances of non-compliance with these laws and regulations, and in identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect to non-compliance, our procedures included, but were not limited to:

- Inquiring of management and, where appropriate, those charged with governance, as to whether the charity is in compliance with laws and regulations, and discussing their policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations;
- Inspecting correspondence, if any, with relevant licensing or regulatory authorities;
- Communicating identified laws and regulations to the engagement team and remaining alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout our audit; and
- Considering the risk of acts by the charity which were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the preparation of the financial statements, such as tax legislation, pension legislation, the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011 and the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice.

In addition, we evaluated the Trustees' and management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements, including the risk of management override of controls, and determined that the principal risks related to posting manual journal entries to manipulate financial performance, management bias through judgements and assumptions in significant accounting estimates, revenue recognition (which we pinpointed to the cut-off assertion), and significant one-off or unusual transactions.

Our audit procedures in relation to fraud included but were not limited to:

- Making enquiries of the Trustees and management on whether they had knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- Gaining an understanding of the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud;
- Discussing amongst the engagement team the risks of fraud; and
- Addressing the risks of fraud through management override of controls by performing journal entry testing.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities including fraud rests with management. As with any audit, there remained a risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations or the override of internal controls.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

USE OF THE AUDIT REPORT

This report is made solely to the charity's members as a body in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's members as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Jonathan Marchant (Senior Statutory Auditor) for and on behalf of Forvis Mazars LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor
30 Old Bailey, London, EC4M 7AU
Date: 20th March 2025

Trustees, Principal Officers and Advisors

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Lois Boyle - Vice Chair

Dr Leo Cheng

Bernard Hickman - Treasurer
(joined 1 January 2025)

Justin Humphreys

Angharad Milenkovic

Paul Ramsbottom OBE

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Dr Juliette Tuakli (resigned
4 September 2024)

Dr Michelle White

David Mel Zuydam (Treasurer,
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Mercy Ships UK

The Lighthouse
12 Meadway Court
Stevenage SG1 2EF

Auditor

Forvis Mazars LLP

30 Old Bailey
London EC4M 7AU

Banker

Bank of Scotland

The Mound
Edinburgh EH1 1YZ

Solicitor

Clyde & Co LLP

St Botolph Building
138 Houndsditch
London EC3A 7AR

Investment adviser

Rathbone Investment

Management Ltd

8 Finsbury Circus
London EC2M 7AZ



Company No: 3147724 (England & Wales)
Registered Charity No: 1053055
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Mercy Ships Locations

International Support Centre
PO Box 2020
Garden Valley, TX 75771-2020
USA
mercyships.org

Africa Service Centre
Cité Keur Gorgui
Villa no. 106
Dakar, Senegal
mercyships.africa

Mercy Ships Global Association
Chemin de la Fauvette 98
1012 Lausanne
Switzerland

NATIONAL OFFICES

Mercy Ships Australia
PO Box 1080
Caloundra, Queensland 4551
Australia
mercyships.org.au

Mercy Ships Belgium
Excelsiorlaan nr 8
1930 Zaventem
Belgium
mercyships.be

Mercy Ships Canada
Unit 5 - 3318 Oak St.
Victoria, BC, V8X 1R1
Canada
mercyships.ca

Mercy Ships Denmark
Fjeldhammervej 15
2610 Rødovre
Denmark
mercyships.dk

Mercy Ships France
6 Place des Terreraux
69001 Lyon
France
mercyships.fr

Mercy Ships Germany
Rudolf-Diesel-Str. 5,
86899 Landsberg am Lech
Germany
mercyships.de

Mercy Ships Netherlands
Ridderkerkstraat 20
3076 JW Rotterdam
The Netherlands
mercyships.nl

Mercy Ships Korea
#2-338 Mercy Ships Korea
345, Ahasan-ro,
Gwangjin-gu, Seoul 05026
South Korea
mercyships.or.kr

Mercy Ships New Zealand
P.O Box 74283, Greenlane
Auckland 1546
New Zealand
mercyships.org.nz

Mercy Ships Norway
Markensgate 48
4612 Kristiansand S
Norway
mercyships.no

Mercy Ships South Africa
71 Sunrise Villas
St David's Street
Muizenberg, 7945
South Africa
mercyships.co.za

Mercy Ships Spain
C/Segre, 14, 2º
28002, Madrid
Spain
mercyships.es

Mercy Ships Sweden
Box 7008
402 31 Göteborg
Sweden
mercyships.se

Mercy Ships Switzerland
Chemin de la Fauvette 98
1012 Lausanne
Switzerland
mercyships.ch

Mercy Ships United Kingdom
The Lighthouse
12 Meadway Court
Stevenage, SG1 2EF
United Kingdom
mercyships.org.uk

Mercy Ships USA
PO Box 2020
Garden Valley, TX 75771-2020
USA
mercyships.org

IMAGES: (opposite page, top to bottom) Fatoumata Bah, hospital chaplain day crew from Sierra Leone, dancing with patient on the veranda on the *Global Mercy*; the *Global Mercy* crosses the Suez canal; Ibrahim Bangura, deck officer student; (above) Africa Mercy volunteer crew gathered on the deck.

The work of Mercy Ships is only possible because of the generosity of our supporters and volunteer crew.

*It's **because of you** that the lives of the people you see here, as well as so many others, are being **changed forever**.*

Thank you so much.



IMAGES: (left to right) 10-year-old orthopaedic patient, Fudia, is looked after by crew on board the *Global Mercy*; Mamadou plays at home after successful surgery to remove cataracts from his eyes.





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The Lighthouse
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Stevenage SG1 2EF

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