

# Kids Operating Room

**Impact Report 2022**



**Kids**  **R**  
surgery for children

# Contents

Access to safe surgery is a human right.  
We're fighting to create a world where that right is a reality.

<b>Page</b>	
<b>01 - 02</b>	<b>Contents</b>
<b>03 - 04</b>	<b>A Letter From Garreth &amp; Nicola Wood</b>
<b>05 - 06</b>	<b>Our Impact So Far</b>
<b>07 - 08</b>	<b>Events &amp; News</b>
<b>09 - 10</b>	<b>Child Impact - Maiga Abass</b>
<b>11 - 12</b>	<b>Country Impact - Ghana</b>
<b>13 - 14</b>	<b>Child Impact - Baby Sheymaa</b>
<b>15 - 16</b>	<b>Surgeon Impact - Petronila Ngiloi</b>
<b>17 - 18</b>	<b>World Map - Where We Work</b>
<b>19 - 20</b>	<b>Scholar Impact - Martha Mukonka</b>
<b>21 - 22</b>	<b>Child Impact - Baby Mohamed</b>
<b>23 - 24</b>	<b>Social Responsibility Statement</b>
<b>25 - 26</b>	<b>A Look To The Future - David Cunningham CEO</b>

**Nicola**



**Garreth**

## A Letter from Co-Founders Garreth & Nicola Wood

2022 was an impactful year for KidsOR and we are delighted to present some of our highlights to you in this year's Impact Report. Nicola and I are extremely proud of the incredible achievements and milestones the team have reached this year:

- We installed 13 Operating Rooms across 9 countries. Bringing our total to 59 ORs and yearly capacity to over **35,000** operations.
- We continued to expand and build upon our global partnerships with Governments, Ministries of Health, and Strategic Partners.
- We hosted an Advocacy event in Westminster to campaign for surgery to be at the core of Health System Strengthening.
- KidsOR Operating Rooms now perform over **100** operations every day.
- We have reached over **£2 billion** economic benefit to our partner countries.

2023 will see KidsOR expand to new continents, new countries, and new supporters. Our vision for the future of KidsOR is ambitious and we know we can achieve it. Together, with the support of our donors and the dedication of our board, volunteers, and staff team, we can create a world where **every child** has access to **safe surgery**.

Thank you,  
Garreth & Nicola Wood



# Our Impact So Far

# 102

Life-changing operations  
happen every day in our ORs

# 26,437

Life-changing operations in  
2022

# 525,957

Years of disability prevented in  
2022

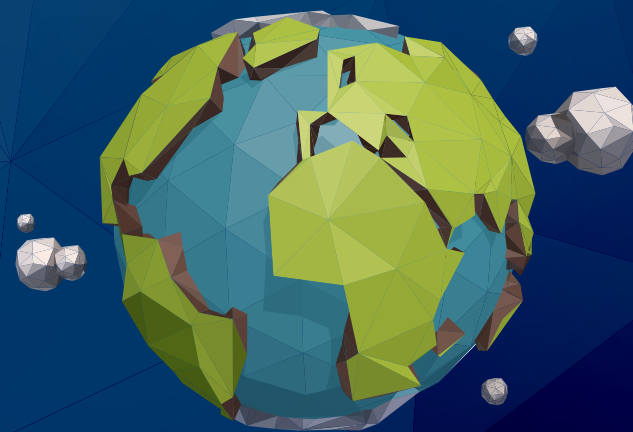
[← Read about baby Mohamed's operation on pages 21 - 22](#)

# Events & News 2022

## Smile Train Partnership

KidsOR are proud to work with Smile Train. Smile Train is the world's largest cleft-focused organisation, with a sustainable and local model of supporting surgery and other forms of essential, comprehensive care. Our partnership has provided real impact, creating paediatric theatres and training paediatric surgeons. Together, we've installed 16 new Operating Rooms and trained 40 scholars in places where demand is critical.

We have even bigger plans to ensure that we reach as many children as possible. Over the next five years our partnership will facilitate more than 30 new Operating Rooms across Africa. These facilities will create capacity for over 12,000 children to receive life-changing surgery each year.



## Kakuma Opening Ceremony

In May, our co-founder Garreth Wood officially opened the first ever children's Operating Room in a refugee setting at Kakuma Refugee Camp. For the first time ever, refugee children will have access to safe and timely surgery when they need it. For the 65,000 children living in Kakuma, this signals an end to suffering years of pain, disability or even death from surgically treatable conditions.

## WACS Conference

In March, Kids Operating Room took part in the West African College of Surgeons (WACS) Conference in Liberia. Over 1,000 surgeons from Africa, U.S, Europe, and Asia attended the event, where we shared our work and re-enforced our continued support for the organisation.

## Westminster

In June, KidsOR gathered influential figures in global health for an event at Westminster, London. Led by co-founder Garreth Wood, the event assessed the state of surgical capacity in the world's lowest income countries. We addressed the role that local surgical capacity, and expertise, plays in strengthening wider health systems, and explored practical examples from across low- and middle-income countries of interventions that have helped build the capacity and resilience of healthcare systems.

## COSECSA Conference

In December, we attended the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA) Conference in Namibia. Our CEO, David Cunningham, gave a speech on the work of KidsOR. We also installed and officially opened Namibia's first paediatric Operating Room, celebrated the graduation of a KidsOR scholar and played a significant role at the conference.

## Third Sector Awards

We were very proud to be nominated for the 'Big Impact' award at the 2022 Third Sector Awards. It was a privilege to receive recognition for our commitment to creating a world where every child can access surgery. We left feeling proud of our impact, and inspired by the amazing work of the other organisations nominated.

## E-Learning

Our award-winning online e-learning platform PAPSEP celebrated its one-year anniversary last summer.

We believe that knowledge knows no borders. The platform is free to use and is enabling surgeons in Africa to have direct access to online lectures and tutorials. This allows the over 100 trainees to learn surgical techniques, pathologies and equipment tips from renowned surgeons around the world.

“I honestly thought he might die from the pain.  
**We felt so hopeless.”**

When Maiga Abass arrived at his local hospital, his throat was so badly burned that he couldn't eat or drink. Maiga, aged just 2, had ingested caustic soda at his home in Youba, Burkina Faso.

The storing of this chemical in old drinking bottles is common in poorer homes in the area as a cost-efficient alternative to soap. Consumed, caustic soda has disastrous effects on the body. Maiga faced the threat of lifelong respiratory issues, gastrointestinal burns, even death.

His parents rushed him to their nearest health centre, who referred them on to the district hospital. Neither facility had the capacity to give Maiga the treatment he desperately needed.

Another referral took the family to the Charles De Gaulle Hospital - where KidsOR had installed 3 paediatric Operating Rooms in 2019.

Oesophagael surgery is a complicated procedure. It takes about five paediatric surgeons and lasts seven to eight hours.

“Only this hospital can handle this surgery as, besides the skill set required by the staff, we are the only hospital with the correct equipment,” said Dr Ouedraogo Francis, a paediatric surgeon at Charles de Gaulle.

Maiga underwent further surgeries to fit him a gastronomy tube, which is what he now uses for feeding, and is now, slowly, on the mend. The life- saving operation Maiga received was possible thanks to the skill of the local team and the resources provided by KidsOR.

**Maiga**



**Abass**

“The facility means we no longer have to **compete** for space at the operating table. We can operate **whenever we want**, promptly, and without delays. The outcomes will be **so much better.**”



We celebrated hitting an incredible landmark in 2022: opening our 50th Operating Room.

The installation of 2 theatres at the Komfo Anoye Teaching Hospital took us over an amazing milestone, and ensured there would be access to safe surgery for those children that need it in Kumasi, Ghana.

The hospital, the largest such facility in the Ashanti region of Ghana with a population of just under 5 million, had never before had a dedicated space for paediatric surgery.

The project also marked the 20th country that KidsOR had installed in. In under 5 years, our work is now creating capacity for more than 35,000 life-changing paediatric operations each year.

Dr. Michael Amoah, Senior Specialist Paediatric Surgeon and the Head of the Paediatric Surgical Unit at Komfo Anoye Teaching Hospital, told us; “I pursued medicine out of a passion to help sick people get appropriate medical care. I will now be able to do that to the best of my ability thanks to KidsOR and these new Operating Rooms.”

Sheymaa spent the first year of her life going **back and forth** between home and hospital.

Sheymaa's health began to decline at just 6 months old. She was bloating and struggling to pass stools. Her parents bought over the counter medicine, which, initially, helped. But Sheymaa's condition soon deteriorated further and her stomach began to balloon.

Worried, her parents took her to their closest district hospital - a facility around 200 kilometres away.

The hospital suspected a simple case of constipation, and Sheymaa was treated for this four times over the next six months. But she wasn't getting any better. Frustrated at a lack of progress, Sheymaa was sent to a provincial hospital.

Unfortunately, the provincial facility was also unable to identify the root of the issue. Sheymaa was put on medication and informed to wait for three weeks when a paediatrician would be available to see her.

But they couldn't treat her there either. The root cause of the painful issue remained a mystery. Sheymaa was given pain medication and told to wait until another paediatrician could see her. Upon inspection, the paediatrician immediately recognised that Sheymaa required specialist care. They were referred to Muhimbili National Hospital, a hospital with a KidsOR Operating Room.

In August 2021, with Sheymaa now a year and two months old, the family finally received clarity on what had been causing the issue. Tests run at the hospital had revealed that Sheymaa was suffering from a vestibular anus. The surgical team at the hospital performed an anoplasty to resolve the problem. However, three days post-surgery a problem arose. Since another anoplasty couldn't be performed again so soon, Sheymaa had to undergo a colostomy to help with waste discharge. This procedure also had complications and Sheymaa and her family had to stay at the hospital.

In January 2022, Sheymaa had recovered properly and returned to Muhimbili to receive, what would be her final anoplasty. Thankfully, this time the operation was a complete success and Sheymaa was finally healthy.

Dr Victor Ngotta, a paediatric surgeon working in the KidsOR Operating Room in Muhimbili explains the importance of the new equipment in enabling them to conduct this surgery.

"...Birth anomalies are most of the cases we receive. Regional hospitals don't have the equipment or personnel to handle them."

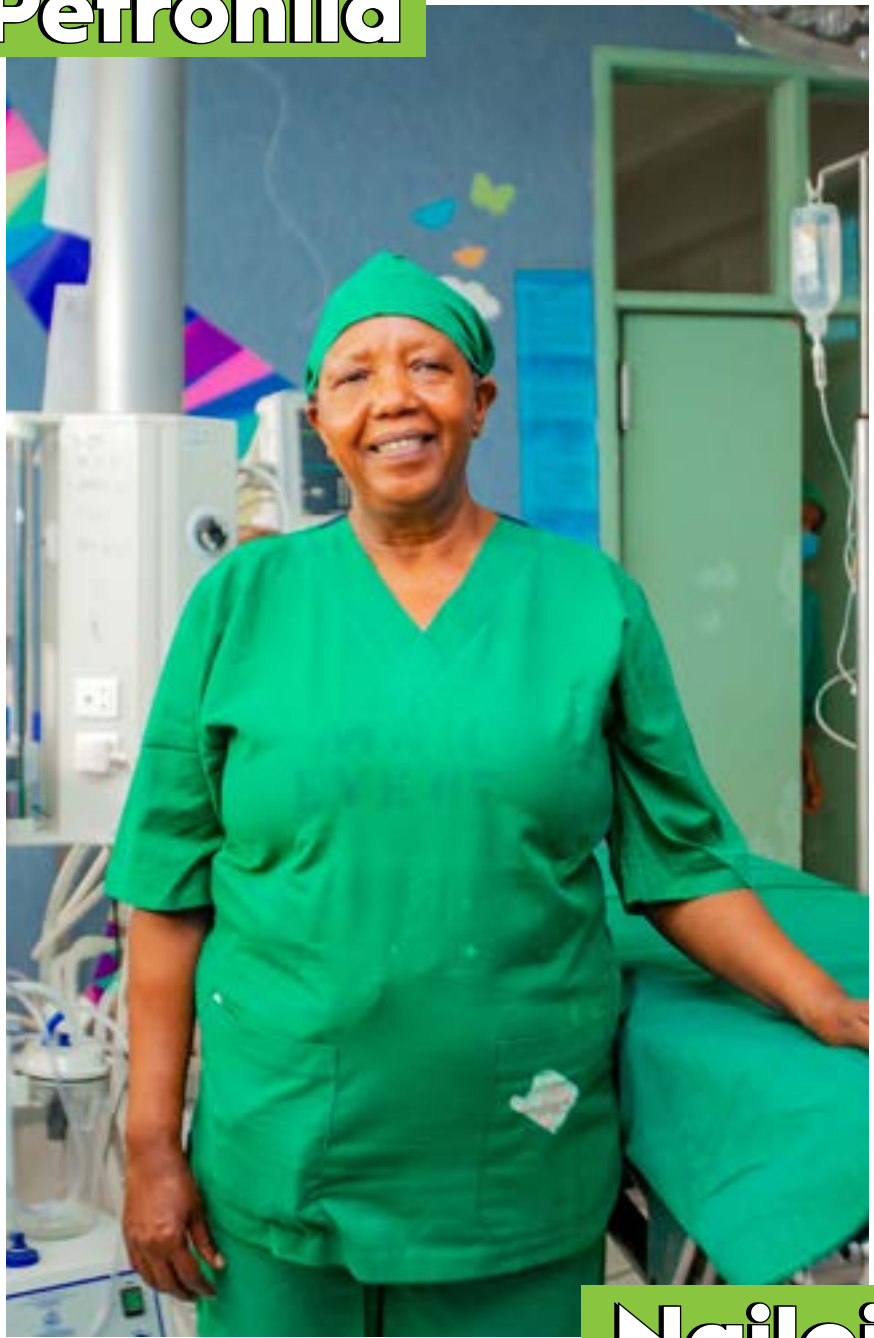
## Baby



Sheymaa



# Petronila



# Ngiloi

Paediatric Surgeon  
Muhimbili National Hospital  
Tanzania

“Do you know how **difficult** it is operating in **dim light!**”

Petronila Ngiloi has been a paediatric surgeon for over 20 years and 30 years as a general surgeon. She completed her first medical degree in 1992 but it was in 2002 that she became a paediatric surgeon on completing a two-year course in South Africa.

**What challenges have you faced being a surgeon?**

When I started my postgraduate in 1988 I had two children. Surgery unlike other specialities is quite intensive. Besides being in theatre, you must do ward rounds and most of the times then, most cases were emergencies. And more often, emergencies are not minor operations hence take long hours and can be complicated. It was challenging balancing work, academia and family but my husband was supportive in taking care of the children.

**What was operating like before the installation?**

It was a tough time operating without proper tools. A simple surgery that should take two hours would end up taking four hours. This was time lost which could have been used on another surgery. We also did not have anaesthesia machine or monitors. The anaesthetist had to sit through surgery as they listen to the heartbeat using a stethoscope. We also had to keep checking the blood for any colour change as it is a guide if the oxygen levels are low.

**What is now possible with the new KidsORs?**

A child with a hernia could stay up to a year before being attended to. Why? We would book in such a child then emergencies happen. In the 90s we had a malaria pandemic which affected spleens. Meaning any little accident could cause a child’s stomach to rupture. We had lots of this. The child with hernia then had to wait. Today, that’s not the case. There is no child who goes more than two months without getting a surgery date. Not unless there are other factors such as they need to optimise their nutrition before being scheduled for surgery among other things like far distance hence, they miss their appointments. Besides the child friendly designs of the artwork on the walls, the operating lights and monitors ease our work.

# Where we Work

**59**  
Operating Rooms

**Latin America**

**HAITI**  
2 Operating Rooms

**ECUADOR**  
2 Operating Rooms

**PERU**  
3 Operating Rooms

In 2022, KidsOR installed 13 Operating Rooms across 9 different countries. Bringing our total number of ORs to 59. These installs will provide an extra capacity of 5,543 for children to have safe surgery.

**West Africa**

**NIGERIA**  
6 Operating Rooms

**GHANA**  
2 Operating Rooms

**BURKINA FASO**  
3 Operating Rooms

**SENEGAL**  
1 Operating Room

**CAMEROON**  
1 Operating Room

**COTE D'IVOIRE**  
1 Operating Room

**SIERRA LEONE**  
1 Operating Rooms

**LIBERIA**  
1 Operating Room

**East Africa**

**RWANDA**  
1 Operating Room

**DRC**  
2 Operating Rooms

**TANZANIA**  
3 Operating Rooms

**ETHIOPIA**  
3 Operating Rooms

**UGANDA**  
6 Operating Rooms

**KENYA**  
7 Operating Rooms

**Southern Africa**

**MADAGASCAR**  
1 Operating Room

**ZIMBABWE**  
2 Operating Rooms

**ZAMBIA**  
6 Operating Rooms

**MOZABIQUE**  
1 Operating Rooms

**NAMIBIA**  
1 Operating Room

**MALAWI**  
3 Operating Rooms

**Scholar Impact**  
**University Teaching hospital**  
**Zambia**

Scholar Dr. Martha Mukonka, whose training was funded by KidsOR and Smile Train, graduated from the paediatric surgical programme at the 2022 COSECSA Annual Conference. Members of the KidsOR team, including Education & Training Officer Samuel (pictured right), were at the conference in Namibia to celebrate Dr. Mukonka's achievement.

Having passed her final exams, she has now returned to Zambia as a fully qualified paediatric surgeon. We spoke to Dr. Mukonka about her training, motivation and ambition for the future.

**Tell us about yourself?**

I am 35 years old and was born in a town called Maamba in the Southern Province of Zambia. I am the last born in a family of 3 and was raised by my single mother. Following school, I attended The University of Zambia School of Medicine. I have a wonderful husband and 3 children: 2 boys and 1 girl.

**Why did you choose to focus on paediatric surgery?**

I have always loved working with children. When I went to medical school I knew that I wanted to work with children somehow. When I discovered my love for surgery, it was a natural fit to choose paediatric surgery.

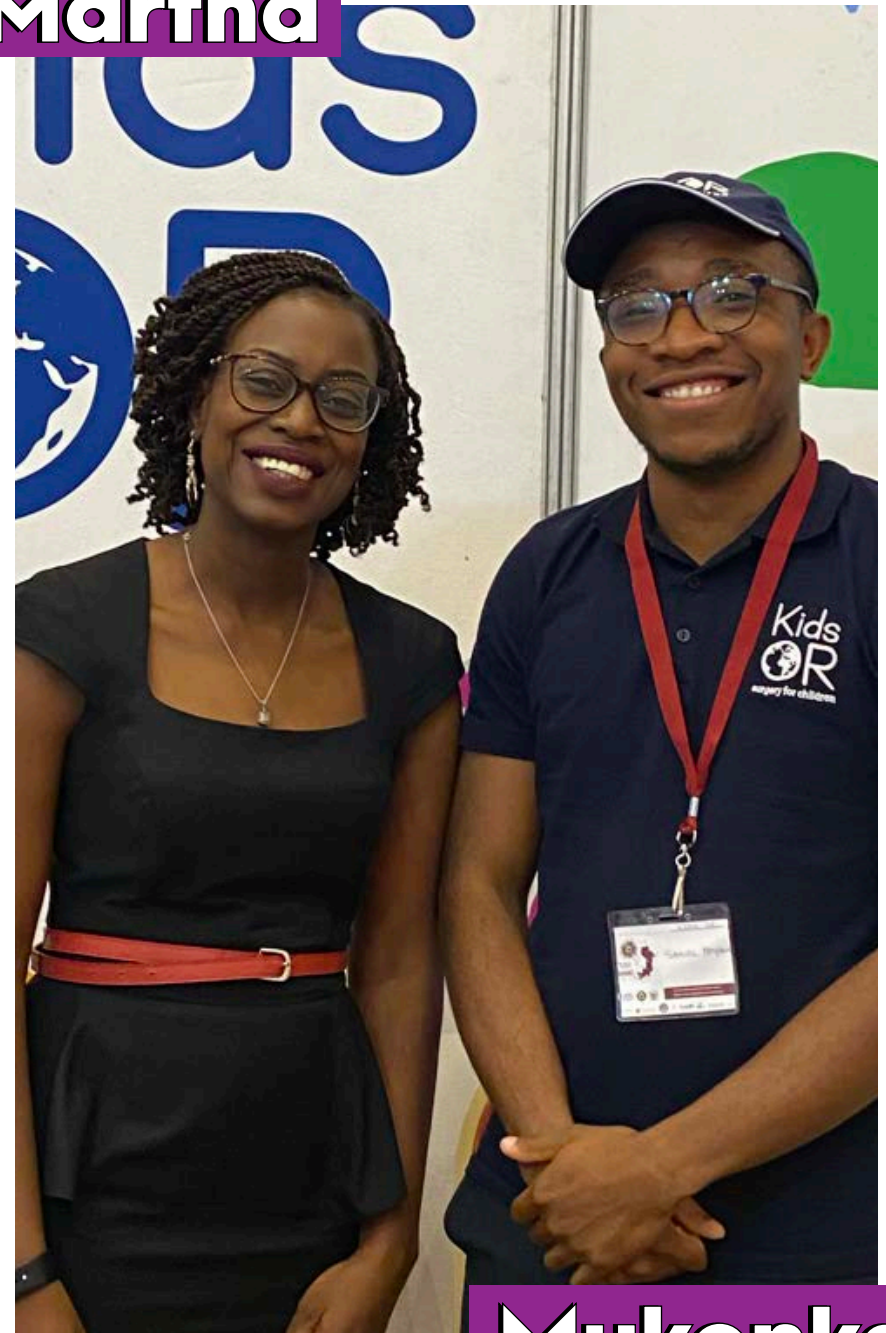
**What were some of the major challenges you encountered?**

During training it's always a challenge to balance work, studying and family. I would say what really helped was the support I got from my husband, my trainers, and KidsOR. Not having to worry about my funding was a huge relief. The other challenge is in resources. The number of paediatric surgeons and anaesthetists are so few. There is also a critical lack of equipment required to enable safe surgery for children. In Zambia, there are still only 8 paediatric surgeons for a country of almost 19 million.

**What motivates you?**

My motivation are the wins. The children who go home and live a normal life. Recently, I met a mother who has a son who's been our patient since he was 2 weeks old. He is now 4 years old and has had several corrective operations. Recently, she told me he is starting school. I was so happy to hear it. Ultimately, I want to provide the much needed surgical care to the Zambian children. We still have a lot of work to do to provide the best care for children and I would love to help bridge that gap.

**Martha**



**Mukonka**

# Baby



## Mohammed

“He was suffering from **so much pain**. I had to **give up work** to take care of him.”

Mohammed was a happy and healthy 2-year-old boy living with his mother in the Ivory Coast, when a sudden, sharp pain developed in his abdomen. He began suffering chronic stomach pain and severe urinary issues.

Worried, she rushed him to the local hospital, where she was told how Mohammed could not be treated. Cripplingly under-resourced, this facility simply did not have the capacity to give Mohammed the care he required. He desperately needed surgery.

With his condition worsening, Mohammed travelled to CHU Treichville - a larger, district hospital with a KidsOR installed dedicated paediatric Operating Room. It was here that Mohammed received his diagnosis. He was suffering from a painful obstruction in his urethra. The blockage, which had become infected, meant urine was not passing through, but instead staying within Mohammed's body. Left untreated, this had potentially fatal consequences.

The surgical team at CHU had to first cure the infection before being able to operate. Treatment was long and required Mohammed to stay in hospital. His mother had to stop working so she could travel between home and hospital to visit her sick child.

One month later, with the infection now cured, Mohammed underwent a life-saving operation. His diagnosis, treatment and surgery would not have been possible without the resources provided by KidsOR.

“I'm so grateful for the operation and excellent care Mohammed received,” his mother said. “Like every parent, I just want to see him living a happy, normal life.”

# Social Responsibility Statement



## Climate Change Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Community

### Our Statement

The effects of climate change and inequality are closely linked to global poverty and health challenges. To achieve our vision, we must therefore endeavour to operate responsibly in all we do, taking into account the potential impact of our activities on the environment and wider society, and to strive to contribute to a sustainable future for all.

KidsOR is committed to operating responsibly. We can make the biggest impact by focussing on positive changes in relation to Climate Change; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion; and Community.

Our Social Responsibility Champions are staff from around the organisation and will take the lead on identifying, delivering and championing social responsibility throughout KidsOR.

To read our full statement go to:

[www.kidsor.org/about-us/social-responsibility/](http://www.kidsor.org/about-us/social-responsibility/)

### Achievements so far

#### Pallet Usage

We have reduced our typical Operating Room shipment from 10 pallets down to 5. Reducing our transportation carbon footprint.

#### EDI Survey

We launched our EDI survey to understand the diversity of our employees and where we can work to make sure that KidsOR is an inclusive employer.

#### Waste Bailer

At our Centre for Global Operations, we have introduced a waste bailer - allowing us to condense our waste packaging and reduce the costs of handling waste.

#### Planet Mark

In 2023, we will work towards achieving our planet mark certification. To receive this recognition we will have to reduce our carbon footprint by at least 2% every year.

# Mulago NRH



# Uganda

## A Look to the future with CEO, David Cunningham

2022 was another incredible year for Kids Operating Room, with so many highlights and much to celebrate. We are immensely proud of what has been achieved and grateful to everyone who has played a part in that success.

Inevitably though, our thoughts turn to the future and in early 2023 we launched our five-year strategy for growth and impact. This exciting new strategy is even more ambitious - promising another incredible chapter in our story.

Our priorities are clear - first and foremost, we aim to create capacity for 200,000 children a year to access safe surgery by providing dedicated, specialist facilities and equipment in low-resource settings.

Secondly, we will support surgical teams to deliver the highest quality of care by providing at least 1,000 advanced training opportunities during the duration of this next strategy.

We strongly believe in evaluating and reporting on our impact. We will therefore ensure we closely monitor what happens after we install a new Operating Room or fund a training programme, allowing our donors and partners to know the difference they have made.

Finally, we'll advocate for children who are denied access to safe surgery. Surgery for children should be a core pillar in national plans and we'll work to ensure that happens in as many countries as possible. Using our evidence base, we'll also continue to make the case for surgery as a high-impact, high-return investment for donor nations, organisations and individuals.

All of that is what we plan to do before the end of 2027. For now though, I'd like to note that we couldn't have made it this far without the wonderful team of people who make Kids Operating Room work. From our staff and volunteers to our partner hospitals, clinicians, donors and partner organisations - everyone involved in this important work plays a key role in bringing urgently needed care to children around the world.

Thank you all for helping deliver that care. I know it is appreciated beyond words by the children and their families who benefit from it.

**David Cunningham**  
CEO



[@KidsOperatingRoom](#) | [www.KidsOR.org](http://www.KidsOR.org)

Charity registered in Scotland: SC048523