

SMILE TRAIN AFRICA QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

July-September 2024

Smile Train provides free cleft surgeries and comprehensive cleft care across 42 countries in Africa, with 230+ active partners and 390+ treatment centres. Since 2002, Smile Train's local medical partners have provided more than 170,000 life-changing cleft surgeries across the continent.

Our Comprehensive Cleft Care (CCC) services include psychosocial support, nutrition, surgery, speech therapy, orthodontics, ENT and dental care.

We elevate local medical capacity, raising the safety and quality of surgical and anaesthesia care by offering curriculum-based educational scholarship programs.

Smile Train leverages strategic and innovative partnerships at the local and international level to anchor advocacy, the capacity of our partners and programs to strengthen surgical systems, and research infrastructure on global health priorities and policies.

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SMILE TRAIN PARTICIPATED IN THE 2ND PAN-AFRICAN SURGICAL HEALTHCARE FORUM (PASHeF) 2024.

This important event, themed "Roadmap To Equitable Surgical Healthcare for Africa," took place in Kigali, Rwanda, from September 16 to 17 and was hosted by the Rwandan Ministry of Health and the University of Global Health Equity (UGHE). It was sponsored by Smile Train, Mercy Ships, and Ethiopian Airlines.

The forum brought together 80 delegates from 40 African countries, including Ministers of Health and State Ministers of Health, to address challenges and share experiences in the pursuit of equitable surgical healthcare for all Africans. The consensus reached on governing PASHeF as an intergovernmental body with robust governance structures and a clear roadmap marks a significant step toward realizing our vision of achieving equitable surgical care across Africa, emphasizing the need to develop and implement policies and frameworks to reduce disparities.

Together, we are paving the way for a brighter, healthier future for all Africans.



SMILE TRAIN, LIFEBOX AND THE WORLD FEDERATION OF SOCIETIES OF ANAESTHESIOLOGISTS ARE LEADING A GLOBAL COALITION TO CLOSE THE CAPNOGRAPHY GAP

During the ALL-Africa Anaesthesia Congress in Johannesburg, South Africa from September 16 – 18, we made significant strides by signing an action letter calling for inclusion of capnography as essential monitoring equipment in anaesthesia guidelines and urging the World Health Organization and national decision-makers to accelerate the adoption of capnography in low-resource settings.

The signing was a collaborative effort, with participation from ministries of health, professional societies, hospitals, and individual anaesthesiologists from across Africa and beyond. This united effort is aimed at ensuring safer anaesthesia practices and significantly improving health outcomes in low-resource settings. Together, we are working to tackle the lack of capnography in low-resource settings, a situation that endangers countless lives.

In addition, Smile Train and Lifebox hosted a panel session featuring esteemed speakers, including Dr. Bertille Ki, Dr. Elizabeth Igaga, Dr. Fetiya Alferid Kemal, Dr. Mary Nabukenya, and Saji Zagha. The panel discussion highlighted how Smile Train and Lifebox are bridging the gap in anaesthesia safety in operating rooms in low-resource settings through our Smile Train-Lifebox capnograph. This innovative device is robust, high-quality, affordable, and has a long battery life, making it well-suited for pediatric patients.

[SIGN THE ACTION LETTER TODAY](#)



SMILE TRAIN PARTICIPATED AT THE ZAMBIAN NATIONAL SURGICAL (PERI-OPERATIVE) HEALTHCARE PLAN REVISION STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP.

Smile Train was part of the Zambia National Surgical (Peri-Operative) Healthcare Plan Revision Stakeholder Workshop, organized by the Ministry of Health of Zambia and the Centre for Surgical Healthcare Research, from September 9 to 13 at the Centre for Digital Health in Lusaka.

The focus of the workshop was to review the 2017-2021 Zambia NSOAP Plan, identify gaps, and develop strategic revisions to continuously strengthen surgical systems reaching the community. Smile Train's role was crucial in shaping a robust and inclusive plan, utilizing our scalable and sustainable model to empower local medical professionals.



SMILE TRAIN RECOGNIZED AT THE ETHIOPIAN SOCIETY OF PLASTIC AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGEONS ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

Smile Train received a certificate of recognition at the Ethiopian Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons Annual Scientific Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from June 26 to 28. The conference focused on the theme "Breaking Down Boundaries: The Dawn of a Paradigm Shift in the Practice of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery in Ethiopia."

Getaneh Assefa, Smile Train's Senior Program Manager, East Africa, highlighted Smile Train's programs promoting high-quality, patient-centered cleft care, emphasizing sustainability and capacity-building.

Smile Train has supported more than 38,500 free, safe cleft surgeries in Ethiopia, with 4,900+ cleft surgeries performed over the past two years alone, demonstrating Smile Train's commitment to transforming lives.



SMILE TRAIN HONOURED AT THE KENYA SOCIETY OF PLASTIC, AESTHETIC, AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGEONS (KSPRAS) GALA DINNER

Smile Train was presented with an appreciation award in celebration of our years of impactful partnership.

This recognition came during the 2024 edition of the Kenya Society of Plastic, Reconstructive, and Aesthetic Surgeons (KSPRAS) Conference in Mombasa on August 28 – 30. The conference, themed "Harmony and Diversity: Advancing Aesthetic and Reconstructive Surgery across Africa," brought together top-flight surgeons from across the continent to discuss ways in which surgical interventions can build resilient health systems.

The evening was made even more special with a surprise cake-cutting ceremony to commemorate Smile Train's 25th anniversary.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to KSPRAS and all our partners for their unwavering support and dedication. Together, we continue to transform lives and bring smiles to countless children across Africa.



SMILE TRAIN AND LIFEBOX, ORGANIZE THE FIRST CAPNOGRAPHY TRAINING IN FRANCOPHONE WEST AFRICA

Smile Train and Lifebox, in collaboration with the Society of Anesthesiologists in Benin, organized the first capnography training in Francophone West Africa at the Faculty of Health and Sciences in Cotonou, from August 9 -10. The training brought together 27 participants, including medical anaesthetists and nurse anaesthetists from five Smile Train partner hospitals across Benin.

It aimed to equip and familiarize anaesthesia providers with Smile Train and Lifebox's capnography device so they would leave with the knowledge and skills necessary to use it to effectively monitor and ensure patient safety during surgery.

The new Smile Train-Lifebox capnograph fills a crucial gap in anaesthesia safety by providing our partners with an affordable, user-friendly, high-quality device that has sturdy construction and long battery life.



SMILE TRAIN AND KIDS OPERATING ROOM INSTALL SOLAR-POWERED THEATRES IN NIGERIA AND CAMEROON.

Smile Train and Kids Operating Room partnered to supply state-of-the-art pediatric surgery infrastructure and expertise across Africa through deploying innovative renewable solar surgery solutions. Since 2020, Smile Train and Kids Operating Room have refurbished 30 pediatric theatres in 21 countries across the continent.

The most recent include standalone solar-powered pediatric theatres at the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital (UPTH), the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital (UIH), and the Garoua Regional Hospital in Cameroon.

Through this investment, Smile Train and Kids Operating Room are solving the dual challenge of unreliable power supply to pediatric operating rooms while reducing greenhouse gas emissions with the aim of transforming 40 theatres by 2025.



SMILE TRAIN AND PARTNERS SUPPORT SPECIALIZED PAEDIATRIC ANAESTHESIA TRAINING IN GHANA

Smile Train, in partnership with the World Federation Society of Anesthesiologists (WFSA) and the Ghana Anaesthesiologist Society, recently sponsored 15 participants in a SAFE Paediatrics in-person course from July 10 to 15.

This specialized training, led by Adele King and Dr. Moses Siaw-Frimpong, focused on providing refresher training for both physician and non-physician anaesthetists in pediatric anaesthesia essentials.

The course emphasized the principles of safe care for children, with a particular focus on assessment, vigilance, and competence in essential skills. Participants had the opportunity to engage in sessions covering pediatric anaesthesia, pain management, fluid resuscitation, newborn and pediatric life support, and pediatric trauma management.



SMILE TRAIN CELEBRATES SUCCESSFUL SPOON TRAINING IN ETHIOPIA

Smile Train is thrilled to share the success of the 4th SPOON training in Ethiopia, which brought together 14 dedicated healthcare professionals from Ethiopia, Somalia, and Somaliland. The training aimed to standardize nutrition care and provision at our partner centres across the region. Among the participants were a nutritionist, a public health specialist, and several nurses working with cleft teams.

The training was expertly facilitated by Dr. Eleleta Surafel, Sr. Tigist Asnakew, and Sr. Tsion Solomon.

The SPOON training is a five-day, in-person, curriculum-based workshop developed in partnership with the global nutrition organization SPOON Foundation, focusing on addressing cleft-related nutritional and feeding challenges.

Together, we are making a meaningful impact on lives and creating brighter futures!





EMPOWERING SPEECH THERAPISTS: SUCCESSFUL CLEFT SPEECH THERAPY TRAINING IN LAGOS AND BRAZZAVILLE.

Smile Train is dedicated to empowering speech therapists and paraprofessionals with strategies to improve the speech of children with clefts. Recently, we successfully organized cleft speech therapy training in Lagos, Nigeria, and Brazzaville, Congo, in collaboration with our partners.

The training in Brazzaville, held on August 28, brought together partners from six surgical treatment centres in the Republic of Congo and DR Congo. M. Armand Ngougou Tchinda from Cameroon facilitated this session.

In Lagos, Nigeria, the training from August 6 - 8, and brought together seven trainees from various Smile Train partner centres across the country to focus on enhancing skills in cleft speech therapy. It covered important topics such as the anatomy and physiology of sound production, resonance disorders, and articulation errors.

Participants actively engaged in hands-on assessments and therapy sessions, gaining practical experience and valuable insights. The program concluded with notable improvements in knowledge and skills, supported by pre- and post-test results.

Together, we are making remarkable progress in empowering speech therapists to make a lasting impact in their communities.

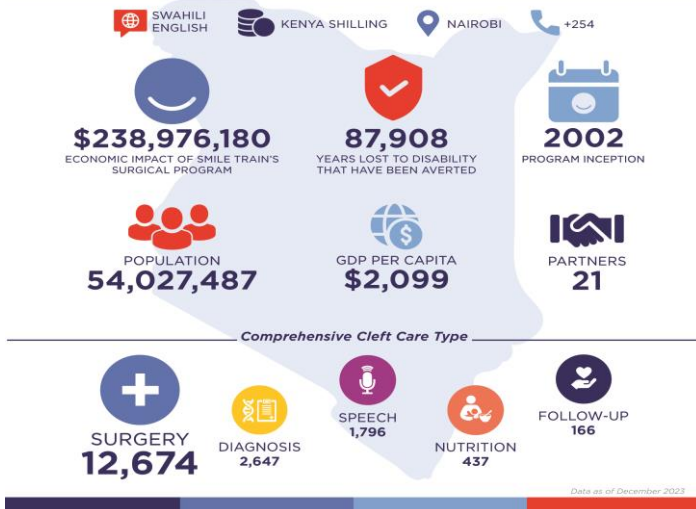
SMILE TRAIN STAFF EMBARK ON INSPIRING JOURNEY OF SMILES TO RWANDA

Recently, a team of six Smile Train staff members embarked on an inspiring Journey of Smiles to Rwanda from August 19 – 23.

Their goal was to witness the direct impact of our programs on the lives of our patients. During the trip, they observed cleft surgeries at one of Smile Train's partner hospitals in Kigali, led by Dr. Georges Ntakiyiruta. Additionally, they visited Smile Train cleft care programs and concluded their journey with meaningful patient home visits.



KENYA



#Didyouknow that more than 12,600 Smile Train-supported surgeries have been performed in #Kenya since 2002? With the support from our 21 local partners, these surgeries and other comprehensive #cleft care services have brought countless smiles and transformed lives with an economic impact of over \$238 million.

Since 2021, Smile Train has partnered with the University of Nairobi, to establish a scholarship program in Kenya that supports 16 resident doctors from across Africa pursuing plastic and reconstructive #surgery, investing \$154,876 annually.

Smile Train has also supported the upgrade of the Microsurgery Unit of the University, provided surgical equipment (loupes), and research grants and leveraged innovation through Simulare Medical simulation workshops which enhances the surgeons' confidence and quality outcomes of cleft surgery.

CONGRATULATIONS TO 9 PATA FELLOWS, 2024!

On August 28, 2024, Africa witnessed the exciting graduation of 9 Pediatric Anaesthesia professionals, under the Pediatric Anaesthesia Training in Africa (PATA) Program. The event saw simultaneous graduations taking place in Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda and Zambia. To address the dire gap in safe pediatric anaesthesia in Africa, PATA, supported by Elma Foundation and Smile Train seeks to prepare future clinician-educators who will train all levels of anaesthesia providers caring for children and neonates, including both physicians and non-physicians. The Program is mainly hosted in Uganda, Nigeria and Zambia. Here is the [video of the PATA Fellows](#) sharing their experiences. Congratulations!



RWANDA



#DidYouKnow Smile Train has supported more than 3,500 FREE cleft surgeries in Rwanda since 2006? Of these, 1,017 were performed between 2012-2016, when we signed a four-year MoU with the Ministry of Health. Our work there has generated an economic impact of more than \$32 million USD!

Together with our five local partners: Best Care Specialists Hospital, Ejo Heza Surgical Centre, Rwanda Military Hospital, Nyarugenge District Hospital, and Humanhood Clinics, we are dedicated to providing cleft care for every Rwandan in need.

Smile Train has also been instrumental in training three more plastic surgeons from Rwanda and helping our two plastic surgeon partners already there attend cleft conferences and receive continuous training and experience.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Save the Date

6TH PAN AFRICAN ASSOCIATION OF CLEFT LIP AND PALATE (PAACLIP) CONGRESS

Cleft Care in Africa: Reorganization and Repositioning for Excellence.

18TH TO 21ST NOVEMBER 2024 ZIMBABWE

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