

EMPOWERING ABILITY WHILE TRANSFORMING DISABILITIES



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What we do is just
a drop in the ocean,
but if we didn't do it,
the ocean would have
one less drop.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

OUR DROP



We provide life-changing hand surgery and reconstructive operations to disadvantaged children and women in need.

Our patients are the poorest of the poor who would otherwise not have any hope as they cannot afford any surgical treatment.

By restoring manual ability in individuals with congenital malformations, burns, post-traumatic injuries and palsies, our dedicated team of surgeons, anaesthesiologists, nurses, hand therapists and volunteers work together to make a difference in the lives of those who need it most.



RESTORING MANUAL ABILITY



We are committed to bringing hope and healing to our patients.

We understand the immense physical and emotional toll that hand malformations and injuries can have on individuals and their families.

We believe that every surgery we perform, every life we touch, makes a meaningful impact.

Through our work, we provide the opportunity for patients to live a life free from the limitations of physical challenges, and the joy of using the hands to their fullest potential.





OUR STORY

Founded in **1998** as an international NGO, GICAM became a Swiss Foundation in 2023.

Based in Lugano, Switzerland, GICAM has conducted surgical camps in **10** countries (Uganda, Benin, Togo, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, India, Ecuador, Burkina Faso, Ghana).

In 27 years, **261** GICAM's volunteers from 12 different nationalities held **88** surgical missions.

A total of **10.990** patients with hand disabilities underwent surgery, mostly women and children.

In 2007, GICAM built **1** hospital, in Makeni, Sierra Leone, dedicated to hand surgery to help some of the 60,000 children who suffered hand amputations during the guerrilla civil war.

76.863 cases have been evaluated and treated by our teams.



PASSION AND COMPASSION



GICAM's motto "*Passion and Compassion*" encapsulates the ethos and mission of our staff in conducting surgical camps around the world.

Passion represents the unwavering dedication, enthusiasm, and commitment of our medical and paramedical professionals. It embodies their drive to make a meaningful difference to the lives of children.

Compassion reflects the deep empathy, kindness and understanding shown by our staff towards the children and their families. It encompasses the heartfelt desire to alleviate suffering, provide comfort and offer hope. They not only address the physical ailments of the children but also attend to their emotional and psychological well-being, fostering a sense of trust and reassurance.

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GICAM'S CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT



I will transcend the boundaries of politics, religion, culture, race, collaborating with organizations and individuals who uphold these shared values.

I will demonstrate sensitivity towards the moral values, religious beliefs, customs, traditions, and cultural nuances of the communities we serve.

My efforts will prioritise the welfare of others, particularly focusing on impoverished and marginalized children and women.

In delivering my services, I will prioritize the well-being of my patients, using my expertise with both dedication and empathy.

I acknowledge the responsibility to utilise the Foundation's funds judiciously, ensuring that all assets are managed with the utmost integrity as entrusted resources.

I understand that my actions and conduct reflect on the reputation of our Foundation, and we collectively bear the responsibility to uphold public trust.

I will uphold the fundamental human rights of all individuals, recognising that every person is inherently entitled to freedom and equality with dignity.



OUR TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS



Our international multi-disciplinary team of volunteers from different countries have participated in GICAM's missions around the world.

The team of professionals includes orthopaedic and plastic surgeons, anaesthesiologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and nurses.

The multi-cultural of the GICAM's foundation is reflected in the composition of these teams, with volunteers from Switzerland, Italy, Germany, the Czech Republic, Australia, the USA, France, Spain, Belgium, and Uganda.

These humanitarian missions typically last 7 to 15 days spent with our local collaborators and their 40-50 patients.

The staff receive advanced clinical training which uphold international standards of quality, safety, and continuity of care.



OUR SURGICAL CAMPS



100% of donations are spent on surgical camps and to provide free surgery to our patients, including hand rehabilitation after the procedures.

Imagine a mobile operating room, fully equipped with surgical instruments, ready to perform life-changing surgeries on sick, deformed, traumatized, or amputated hands.

Our approach is straightforward. We always keep a suitcase packed, accompanied by all necessary equipment, ensuring swift deployment wherever needed.

On arrival, we set up our operating theater, prioritise surgeries for women and children, and then move on to the next mission. Some time hand therapists remain on site ensuring that reconstructed hands regain full function.

This streamlined approach optimises time, reduces costs, allows for phased interventions, and ensures transparent and easily documented results.





GICAM'S SIGNIFICANT MILESTONES



In **2007** we established the first Hand Surgery Center in Makeni, Sierra Leone, following the tragic aftermath of the civil war in 1999, during which thousands of children suffered the traumatic loss of their fingers and hands due to rebel atrocities.

Over the course of three years, our teams conducted surgical reconstructions and provided ongoing assistance in fitting prostheses for these children, aiming to restore both their physical abilities and their hope for a better future.

In **2015** we celebrated the inaugural GICAM's surgical camp in India. Since then, we have conducted over 25 camps, establishing a sustainable and impactful presence in an area encompassing more than one million people.





GICAM'S INSPIRATIONAL MOMENTS



In **2016** our President had a meeting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in New Delhi. He offered words of encouragement for the impactful work we are dedicated to.

In **2017** our President met His Holiness Pope Francis in Rome. He generously donated a supercar to be auctioned, with the proceeds benefiting GICAM.





GICAM'S FUTURE PLANS



2025-2030

ESTABLISHMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF:

3 dedicated Hand Surgery Units (HSU) in collaboration with medical facilities in South Asia and Africa

HSU SPECIFICATIONS:

15-30 beds

2 operating rooms

an outpatient clinic

access to radiology unit

provision of physiotherapy facility

use of prosthesis workshop

IMPLEMENTATION OF:

local fellowship and training programs





CONTEXT: INDIA

SOCIOECONOMIC AND HEALTHCARE SETTINGS

BURNS

In 2021 the Union Health Minister announced that in India **7,000,000** people suffer from burn injuries annually

INCOME VS COST OF SURGERY

The average hand surgery cost is US\$ **1900**
The average rural Indian household makes US\$ **750** per year

INCIDENCE OF CONGENITAL HAND MALFORMATIONS

Congenital limb deformities in Indian rural areas show a prevalence of **14/10,000** accounting for **23.800** cases/year

IN RURAL INDIA

40% of patients have to borrow money or sell their assets to have surgical treatments





CONTEXT: AFRICA

SOCIOECONOMIC AND HEALTHCARE SETTINGS

BURNS

In 2021 the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that over 1 million burn injuries occur annually in Africa

INCOME VS COST OF SURGERY

The average cost of hand surgery is US\$**2000** per patient, more than three times the annual income of a rural African household, which averages US\$**600** per year.

INCIDENCE OF CONGENITAL HAND MALFORMATIONS

Congenital limb deformities in African rural areas show a prevalence of **1/1,000** accounting for **45,000** cases per year

IN RURAL AFRICA

About **30%** of patients are compelled to borrow funds or sell their possessions to pay for surgical procedures



YOUR SUPPORT



Your **support** is invaluable.

Join us on this journey of **transformation**.

Your **contribution** will make a tangible difference
in the lives of children and women in need.

Help us, and together we can create lasting change.

With **gratitude**.



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Every poor child in Africa and India deserves access to the same level of medical care and hand surgery reconstruction as children anywhere else in the world. Let's make this a reality.

Marco Lanzetta Bertani

Founder and President of GICAM Foundation.

Hand Surgeon and Microsurgeon.

Performed the first and double hand transplantation in history.

Author of 9 books and more than 150 scientific articles.





GICAM'S DEDICATED TEAM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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President



Stefano Lucchina
Vice-President



Flavio Mazzoni
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Francesca Catto
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Member



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Member



Annalisa Elisabetta Cantando
Member

GICAM MANAGEMENT TEAM



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Yesterday is gone,
tomorrow has not
yet come.
We have only today,
let us begin.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta



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