Message from Global Strategies

Dear Friends,

Every so often a story from the field captures the impact of your support. In May 2013, our partners at HEAL Africa Hospital in eastern Congo welcomed a set of quadruplets. Four girls. Born six weeks early, the babies needed every single aspect of the program you have made possible — a highly trained medical team, equipment specific for preterm newborns, a dedicated neonatal unit and a comprehensive follow-up program. Four birthdays, ten years in the making.

This has been a remarkable year for Global Strategies. Our work to stop gender-based violence in the eastern Congo with Nobel Peace Prize laureate Dr. Denis Mukwege has expanded to cover 45 hospitals and clinics. Through partnerships with Doctors without Borders and UNICEF, our Children’s AIDS Program now serves vulnerable children attending Centre Chez mari du Lac Kivu. Seventy-one Congolese nurses have completed our intensive training program in advanced newborn care. Throughout, we have made deep investments in the education of local leaders through scholarships and mentoring.

We could not do this without your trust and support.

Thank you,

Nicole Rubin  
Global Strategies Chair

Joshua Bress, MD  
Global Strategies President

From the Field: Making a Difference for Rape Survivors in DRC

It is May 2013 and I am on a long drive over rough roads to Langala Clinic with my colleagues from Panzi Foundation. Our data manager, Darius Kiledwa, and I step down from the jeep. Darius walks over to the clinic entrance and pulls out his phone. After a few minutes he announces, “I got it.” He has successfully logged the GPS coordinates of this clinic, as he has at every clinic we’ve visited.

We enter into the clinic and meet the medical staff. There are a few nurses delivering care under enormous constraints, including no electricity. We tell them that we are bringing medication that can help prevent pregnancy, HIV infections and other sexually transmitted infections after rape. We ask if they ever receive cases at the clinic and they nod knowingly.

We teach them who is eligible to receive the medication. They are pleased to finally have these supplies in a pre-packaged kit. We also ask them for a phone number, explaining that we will contact them daily to make sure they always have enough medication. They look skeptical, but the head nurse gives me her cell phone number. We keep driving to the next clinic.

Six years later, we have Prevention Pack kits in 45 sites, with 30 clinics added to the project this year alone. In my office in Bukavu, I can view real-time data on our digital dashboard complete with a GPS map, showing where women are accessing post-rape care across my home province. And, we can see the data since 2015: Langala — 269 rape survivors; Lukanka — 194; Ndegu — 247. Together with Panzi Foundation, we have reached over 12,000 women and published our findings in the British Medical Journal Global Health. Dr. Denis Mukwege, leader of Panzi Foundation, received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2018. I am proud to stand with him to end sexual violence.

I zoom the map out. I know that in the coming years we will shine more light on this epidemic of violence. Then I notice that medication is low at a clinic along the western edge of Lake Kivu. I call Darius. We keep driving.

Dr. Givano KASHEMWIA  
DRC Program Manager

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Four Birthdays, 10 Years in the Making

On May 8th, 2019 HEAL Africa Hospital welcomed its very first set of quadruplets — four girls: Keren, Ketsia, Kenaya and Kendra. Today they are home, growing and developing, while being followed closely by HEAL Africa’s expert physicians and nurses.

“When I first heard that there were quadruplets born at 34 weeks gestation in Goma, my first thought was, these babies have no idea that we’ve been getting ready for them for 10 years.” - Global Strategies President Joshua Bress, MD.

2009
American volunteers partner with Dr. Jo Lusi and his team at HEAL Africa to start the newborn care project.

2014
Global Strategies and HEAL Africa form a partnership with the British non-profit, Birthlink. The alliance commits itself to being the first to introduce comprehensive newborn care for preterm infants in eastern Congo.

2017
HEAL Africa recognized as a Neonatal Center of Excellence.

2019

2019
Quadruplets at home, 5-months old, healthy and happy.

2011-12
HEAL Africa designates a group of nurses to become neonatal care specialists. The Congolese nurses receive two years of mentoring from volunteers. Many of these same nurses will attend the quadruplet birth eight years later.

2015-2016
HEAL Africa inauguates the first neonatal respiratory care program in eastern Congo. The locally led neonatal nurse training program enrolls its first students.

2018
With support from Jones Day Foundation, HEAL Africa starts first high-risk newborn follow-up program in eastern Congo.
Understanding Malnutrition in the Kivu Province
An interview with Dr. Vindu Mwanaweka, Director, Children’s AIDS Program, Goma

Q: Why are you using your Master’s thesis to study malnutrition?
Analyzing data across our three projects—pediatric HIV, malnutrition, and neonatal care—I realized that malnutrition cuts across all of my clinical work. It is a serious problem in my province of North Kivu, but also in my country in general.

Q: Describe the state of malnutrition at HEAL Africa and the surrounding North Kivu province.
Our hospital is an urban referral center connected to 20 small suburban facilities in the city of Goma. Many people are surprised that there is so much urban malnutrition, but you must remember that there is massive population displacement. My focus has been on the Nyinagongo Health Zone where we know there are a large number of malnourished children.

Q: Why do you think so many children arrive in such critical condition?
My hypothesis is that there is a failure to implement the clinical guidelines combined with poor detection of cases in the community. I cannot say for certain yet—it is the reason I am studying this question for my Master’s dissertation.

Q: How do you think malnutrition can be eliminated?
We need a local solution that uses local foods. While imported high-calorie foods can help in an urgent humanitarian crisis, it is not a long-term solution. We also need to educate parents and caregivers on how to identify malnutrition early. I see a similarity between my work in HIV and malnutrition—in both cases, the earlier you identify and treat, the better for the child.

“I see a similarity between my work in HIV and malnutrition—in both cases, the earlier you identify and treat, the better for the child.”

Income FYE 2019

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Expenses FYE 2019

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Complete audited financial statements can be found at globalstrategies.org