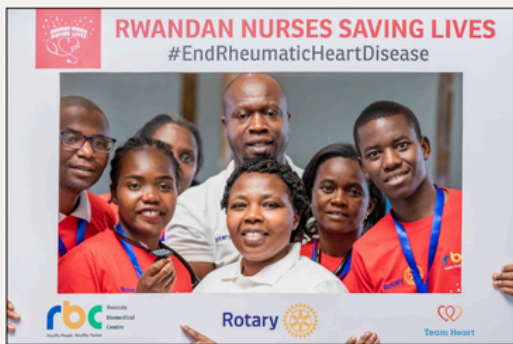


TEAM HEART HIGHLIGHTS

Saving Young Hearts, Building Bright Futures

MARCH 2025



CARDIAC SCREENINGS

229

Total patients screened across 5 Districts

146

Abnormal heart structures found during screening

TRAINING AND MENTORSHIP



9 OUT OF 10

Healthcare providers improved techniques in performing and interpreting echocardiograms and CVDs case management

220

Number of Healthcare professionals trained over the 5 week project

59

Health Center facilities benefiting from professional training and mentorship

RWANDAN NURSES SAVING LIVES



USAID FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

Many of our supporters have inquired whether the uncertainty around USAID and the changing funding restrictions will impact Team Heart.

The answer is yes.

Although Team Heart does not receive any direct federal funding from the U.S., we benefit significantly from the USAID funding Rwanda receives, as it strengthens the healthcare system across the board.

Our partners at the Rwanda Biomedical Center and the Ministry of Health are already experiencing anxiety and the effects of substantial budget cuts, which have led to program pauses and efforts to find solutions to bridge the financial gap to support critical programs. During our visit in February, Chip and I witnessed layoffs that are already hindering efforts to expand care. Rwanda is unique to many countries receiving aid, as the aid goes first to the COUNTRY to decide how it needs to be disbursed, and not to for-profits or nonprofits who might try to control the agenda into a different path. As a result, the Ministries of Health, Education and Agriculture which all benefit from aid, are more vulnerable at the loss of immediate funding.

Currently, we do not know if the funding cuts will be completely reversed. However, we do know that if the cuts proceed, they will significantly impact the lives of individuals with tuberculosis and HIV. This will, in turn, affect those suffering from non-communicable diseases such as cancer, cardiac disease, renal disease, and maternal and child health issues. Positions for physicians and nurses are among those being eliminated. In a country like Rwanda, where the number of healthcare providers is still very low, the connection between these human resources and care delivery is critical.

Can we step up to help?

Until we have more information, we are doing what we can within a limited budget, but it is essential that we strive to do more. Donations can help us fill the gaps, allowing us to expand cardiac care in the community and train nurses to deliver improved care for patients at all levels. Ultimately, this will benefit individuals in other areas as well, creating a positive ripple effect.

farewell

After 5 years as the Team Heart Country Director, Leslie Kaze will be moving on to new employment opportunities. We are incredibly grateful for her contributions towards the growth of Team Heart during her tenure. We wish her much success in her next adventure.

"Dear Team Heart,

I have grown alongside each of you, and I couldn't be prouder of our progress as an office. The sky isn't even the limit! I am excited to witness your continued growth and, in turn, the growth of our organization. Thank you for your unwavering support and your patience as we worked together on numerous projects. I truly appreciate your dedication to our shared mission and the important work we do together." -- Leslie Kaze

UPDATES FROM KIGALI!

KFH OPERATING THEATERS: King Faisal Hospital continues to expand its surgical capabilities and impact. During the late 2024 shutdown due to the Marburg Virus, the hospital completed new operating theaters. These theaters are now in daily use, providing essential surgical care. This has been a long-held dream.

Team Heart has delivered three gently used perfusion systems (also known as heart-lung machines) to Kigali to help advance the program. Long-time volunteer Daniel Anderson will travel this week to reassemble the machines and see them being used as they are needed replacements.



New KFH operating theater



Maurice and team in the theater

MAURICE MUSONI: Maurice is currently operating and coordinating the Cardio-Thoracic Fellowship, which is scheduled to begin in March 2025 with two Rwandan trainees who have returned from one year in India at Narayana. Team Heart played a crucial role in developing the curriculum in collaboration with our partners. Maurice is also engaged in research as the Principal Investigator on a Team Heart-led project aimed at improving surgical patient follow-up and outcomes in the community. This project utilizes a mobile app developed by Team Heart volunteer and cardiologist, Dr. Craig Wehrli, from Olympia, WA.

None of this progress would have been possible without the support and collaboration of Team Heart volunteers and leaders in Rwanda, as well as the generous donations from people like you!