



## Kumi Uganda 15 – 26 June 2024



### Team:

Margot Lemmen: Plastic Surgeon  
Peter Houpt: Plastic Surgeon (report)  
Titus Opegu (Ug): Plastic Surgeon  
Joel Wandabwa (Ug): Plastic Surgeon  
Floor Schuitema: nurse anaesthetist  
Marc Simon: anaesthetist  
Fatima Ben Bouazza: theatre nurse  
Lisette Razenberg: theatre nurse  
Stephen Kato: logistics

This is a summary of the mission of Interplast to Kumi hospital Uganda from June 15 to June 26 2024.

There is a long-standing relationship with Dr Titus Opegu and his wife Maria who run the MIDAS Touch Medical Services. A centre where patients and family are cared for in the pre-and postoperative trajectory. Almost all the care Titus and Maria give to these poor patients are for free.



Kumi Hospital has a reach of approximately 4 million people. Kumi Hospital is a member of the Uganda Protestant Medical Bureau (UPMB); it is therefore a private non-profit (PNFP) institution. Kumi Hospital has undergone a transformation from a centre for the disabled to a general hospital with 300 beds.

After a 10-hour flight we arrived in Kampala. The next day we drove in two cars to Kumi. Stephen Kato and Henri, the second driver, organized everything very well.

Titus and his wife Mary welcomed us in Kumi with a nice dinner at their place, a one room house without running water. Titus is a passionate general and plastic surgeon. His wife is a midwife but easily converts in her role as nurse, caretaker, and mother. Both radiate hospitality and friendliness.

The outpatient clinic started on Monday at the MIDAS centre. Patients were selected and screened for operation. Marc decided about the risks for general anaesthesia. A few babies with cleft lip and palate were rejected because of their early age and medical condition. They were invited to come back for the next team. One common denominator was the extreme poverty of those nice and friendly people.



The next day, operations started at the Kumi hospital. The theatre was, to African standards clean and well equipped. More importantly the people working at the theatre were motivated and experienced. In the next 5 days and the Monday after the weekend 38 operations were performed in 31 patients. Titus and Joel (a plastic surgeon from the West) were actively involved in the various operations like children with cleft lip and palate, burn contractures, tumours, infected fractures etc. Especially the burn contractures were, as always, dramatic because of their grotesque malformations. One cannot imagine how much pain these patients have experienced. There is a great need to educate the doctors in immediate treatment of burn injuries and the prevention of it by the people in the villages.



*The operation room with 2 tables*



*Severe burn contractures*

All the operations were successful. The patients were, depending on their condition, transferred to the MIDAS centre for after care (together with their family). Titus will inform us about the results of our operations. A ZOOM meeting is planned in 3 months to evaluate the results. The last day of our visit an evaluation meeting was planned with Dr Raymond Joseph Malinga, the medical director. But he was unable to participate because of urgent matters. Instead, we had a talk with James Okweny, the Senior Hospital Administrator. He was interested to know about our experiences. After emphasizing the enthusiastic attitude of the people working in the theatre, we talked about some technical problems involving the electricity and some safety issues like the unstable oxygen cylinders, the need for a normal air cylinder and the need of a clear inventory of the stock in the theatre.



*Operating together with the 2 Ugandan plastic surgeons*



*Child before and after cleft lip surgery*

On June 27 we arrived at Amsterdam, looking back to an almost live changing experience. We hope that we, at least to a small number of patients, could have made a difference.

With many thanks to Annemarie Maas, Operations Manager Interplast foundation, for her efforts in organising this mission.





