



Driving Nurses Foundation

Annual Report 2023



Driving Nurses Foundation

The Driving Nurses Foundation (SDN) envisions a healthy future for all mothers and children in Tanzania, in which they have access to basic healthcare such as vaccinations and prenatal care, so that this can make a positive contribution to breaking the cycle of poverty. The Foundation achieves this by training local healthcare workers and residents in maternal and child care and health-related topics. By transferring this knowledge, mothers and their children gain access to basic healthcare. The Foundation focuses on the first thousand days of human life (from conception through the second year of life), as this is where the impact of interventions is greatest. This contributes to early detection and a higher referral rate for life-threatening conditions. In the past year, various activities have taken place to achieve these goals, generate ideas, and explore opportunities for expanding our services.



2024 Mission

in 2024 board members Suus Theuws (chair) and Noortje Theuws (secretary) went on mission to Tanzania. The goal was to further improve the MamaBus operating in Lower Moshi, move forward with the start of the second MamaBus and to look for new opportunities for the foundation. During their 9-day visit, Noortje and Suus visited Lower Moshi, Karatu and Himo. The most important findings and actions can be found in the following pages. Suus and Noortje look back with warming thoughts at a very fruitful mission and are happy to have seen and spoken to all the faces involved at the MamaBus again.



MamaBus in Lower Moshi

One of our important interventions is the MamaBus. The MamaBus in Lower Moshi has been serving an area of 80,000 people for 5 years already. The sustainable collaboration with our partners FT Kilimanjaro (FTK) and TPC Hospital (TPC) is yielding results again this year. During the visit of SDN in Lower Moshi we received multiple warming words as ‘the MamaBus is a life saving mission’ and ‘the MamaBus is a must in the community’. The MamaBus has achieved this by serving 11 villages in 2023, of which 3 have been newly added; Mawala, Samachi and Usafani. Each village is visited once a month on average.

The MamaBus in Lower Moshi has checked 5948 children under 5 in 2023, which is a growth of over 10% compared to 2022. Also the implementation of the National Vaccination Program demonstrates to be embraced by the local community, having increased with more than 50% (!) to 1198 vaccinations done. Moreover, 345 pregnant women have visited our outreaches on which 261 ultrasounds have been performed. 16 severe cases have been referred to TPC hospital. Next to the 11 villages the MamaBus has visited in 2023, boardmembers of SDN have visited the village Miwaleni. In collaboration with partner FTK, SDN is aiming to incorporate this village into the schedule of the MamaBus in Lower Moshi.

Among the referral cases was a 6-week-old child who had not received vaccinations prior to visiting the clinic and came in with severe skin rashes. Subsequently, the child was treated at TPC Hospital where it was discovered that he had serious allergies. After receiving appropriate medication, the child resumed regular clinic visits and underwent vaccination. Now, at one year and five months old, he is progressing well.

Additionally, among the pregnant women who were referred, one was identified via ultrasound as carrying a large baby. Consequently, she received a referral from our nurse to deliver at a major hospital. This mother successfully delivered her baby via normal delivery, with the baby weighing 4.3kg. Following the delivery, blood glucose testing and other investigations were conducted, revealing that the baby was healthy. Currently, at 6 months old, the baby weighs 8.4kg. The mother was also educated on how to prepare suitable food for her child.

Furthermore, multiple sessions have been organized from the MamaBus this year to educate women on topics such as family planning and sexually transmitted diseases. Contradictory to previous years, the MamaBus no longer hands out delivery packages. Nurses on the bus have experienced this measurement to be counterproductive in the villages it is currently serving. The focus has therefore been put on education emphasizing the importance of attending check-ups and giving birth in the hospital. In 2024 the board of SDN will discuss further on the use of delivery packages for other areas.



The 6 years of operation are evident in the bus's appearance. The MamaBus has significantly aged and is grappling with numerous issues. Repairing no longer seems feasible. Therefore, SDN, together with FTK is looking for a replacement vehicle for the bus in order to keep our desired level of service for the community.

As stated last year, SDN has collaborated with the Radboud University. Every two months, delegates of the Radboud University will bring a visit to the MamaBus in Lower Moshi to share their knowledge with the nurses on the bus and do checks on the inventory. Besides learning from Dutch colleagues, our nurse and ultrasound technician Veronika is still planning on going back to school to further improve her knowledge. Veronika is still willing to keep working one day a week for the MamaBus while studying. At the end of 2023 the application process has started for a second nurse for the MamaBus for all other days.



MamaBus in Karatu

In 2023, the Memorandum of Understanding has been signed for our MamaBus in Karatu. Meaning we have green light to start operating. Dr. Heriel, project leader of the MamaBus in Karatu has appointed two nurses, Tatiana and Noëlla as nurses for the MamaBus. Both have visited Veronika and the team in Lower Moshi to gain experience and knowledge crucial for working on the MamaBus.

During the mission of SDN, SDN has visited multiple dispensary's and has validated the most important fields for help. Moreover, emphasis was needed that the MamaBus needs to visit those villages distanced the most from the well-equipped dispensaries. The schedule for the MamaBus will be adjusted accordingly. Moreover, SDN has agreed that the MamaBus can also be deployed for the MMama programme, an emergency number that can be dialed when pregnant women need to be transported to the hospital.

During the visit in Tanzania, SDN has had the official opening ceremony of the MamaBus in Karatu. A festive occasion during which the DMO has asked for everyone's dedication to make the MamaBus a success. The endorsement of the MamaBus by such a high-ranking government official is of great importance for its acceptance by the local community in this area.

Thanks to our partnership with the Mount Meru Foundation (SMM), an ultrasound machine is also available for the MamaBus in Karatu. Noëlla has applied for a training on Obstetric Ultrasound at KCMC to be able to perform ultrasounds on the MamaBus. For the meanwhile, the DMO has agreed, that Dr. Simpa, an echoscopist will be available for the Mamabus for one day a week, within his regular working hours.

Himo

In 2023 SDN has, in collaboration with SMM, conducted a field research in the area of Himo to explore the opportunities for a new mobile outreach in this area. Health centers in the region face accessibility issues, particularly in the rainy season due to poor road infrastructure. Patients may need to be referred to nearby facilities, approximately 21 km away for additional care. Therefore, as a next step, SDN has visited the area of Himo and met with the doctor in charge at the Himo Health centre. During this visit, SDN encountered a closed attitude, where SDN felt that there was a lack of transparency. As transparency plays a crucial role in the success of the program of SDN, the foundation has decided to put this project on hold for now.

Other matters

While our main focus in 2023 has been on the MamaBusses in above mentioned area's. There are also other projects and topics Driving nurses has paid attention to:

- SDN has jointly decided to stop supporting a selective group of school children. The reason for this is that SDN believes it does not align with the vision of making a sustainable impact.
- SDN has launched a new website with the aim of enhancing the international visibility of the foundation.
- In 2022, SDN has announced its efforts for the "Pediatric Eye Care Outreach" in collaboration with Kilimanjaro Christian Medical centre. As there's still no signed MOU, there are no notable updates on this project.

Thank You

Looking back at a successful year, the Driving Nurses foundation wants to say a huge thank you to all sponsors and families who faithfully support the Driving Nurses Foundation. Your contributions, whether through sponsorship or other thoughtful initiatives, play a crucial role in our ability to provide essential services to mothers and children in rural Africa. Your dedication fuels our efforts and enables us to make a meaningful and durable impact.

We are very much looking forward to all that 2024 holds for our foundation.

Warm regards,
Board of the Driving Nurses foundation

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