



# *Asante*

AUSTRALIAN VOLUNTEERS SUPPORTING TANZANIA

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*Rafiki Surgical Missions*



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*Jumane had his cleft lip repaired by Rafiki when he was 18 months old*

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### **RAFIKI SURGICAL MISSIONS**

*Rafiki Surgical Missions, a registered charity in Australia and Tanzania, is the name for our volunteer group based in Perth, Western Australia.*

*'Rafiki' is the Swahili word for 'friend' and an appropriate way to describe the essence of Rafiki Surgical Missions.*





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## *Our Reach*



*Although Rafiki is a small NGO, we have managed to reach many different areas in Tanzania. Surgical missions have been held in a number of hospitals in Dar es Salaam and Mwanza, where we have helped patients from many other parts of the country.*

*Rafiki has donated hospital and medical equipment throughout Tanzania, from Bukoba in the North-West to Mtwara in the South, and many regions in between.*

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## Rafiki Surgical Missions

Since our first mission in 2004, we have been changing the lives of Tanzanian children and adults with conditions such as cleft lips, cleft palates and burns injuries.

While Australian children born with disfiguring facial deformities will have them repaired while they are still babies, and those who suffer terrible burns will be treated immediately, in Tanzania's remote rural areas sufferers can be forced to endure a lifetime of pain and alienation. In fact, it can lead to the shunning of entire families by their communities and debilitating health problems.

Our volunteer surgical teams are giving these people the chance to live a normal life. Treated babies will grow up never knowing the alienation they may have been subjected to; children can go back to school with new confidence, completely accepted by their peers; and adults may go on to find work, marry and even take on important leadership roles in their villages.

Our teams of volunteer surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses and therapists perform up to 80 operations during each two-week mission, all free of charge to the patients. Local doctors and nurses benefit from our collaboration with the host hospitals, working with our medical teams and building their own skills. We are also training Tanzanian surgeons to become the country's first ever fully-qualified Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons. The two-year Master's Degree program we are introducing for existing general surgeons will have a huge flow-on effect and is a vital step to help Tanzania become self-sufficient in this surgical specialty.

In addition to the surgeries and training, Rafiki sends shipping containers of donated medical equipment to Tanzania. Since 2010, we have packed and shipped dozens of containers for distribution to hospitals and medical centres across the country. The replacement cost of this equipment runs into the many millions of dollars.

### Rafiki

IS A 100% VOLUNTEER-RUN ORGANISATION.

*With the administrative costs being absorbed through our volunteers, every dollar raised goes back in to making life better for people who would otherwise have no chance of a new start.*

*Our funding comes from a variety of sources, including sponsorship from organisations in Australia and Tanzania, personal and corporate donations, and through our fundraising events, the biggest being the annual Rafiki Ball.*

## Rafiki's Origin



Surgeon, Tony Baker, and Anaesthetist, Ross Boulter, in the early days

Right page: Tony Baker, and Nurse, Gillian McCallum, who was our mission coordinator until 2011.



### THE EARLY DAYS

Our first surgical mission to CCBRT Hospital in Dar es Salaam took place in 2004. This mission was led by Dr Tony Baker, who continued to have a huge involvement with Rafiki and acted as our chief surgeon for many years. Dr Baker was joined by plastic surgeon, Dr Tony Connell, anaesthetists, Dr Tim Mann and Dr Ross Boutler, and nurses Wilma Dunne, Natasha Haines, Meg Twine and Michelle Carthew.

Nurse Gillian McCallum took over as our mission coordinator in 2006, and continued to organise our surgical missions until 2011 when Taka Wild took over this responsibility. Since then, Taka has continued to volunteer her time as mission coordinator and team leader, a role she has now undertaken on more than 20 missions.

## *The Missions*

Surgeon Brigid Corrigan in theatre.  
Right page: Surgeon James Savundra.



### RAFIKI MISSIONS

We have undertaken more than 30 surgical missions in Mwanza and Dar es Salaam working with hospitals including CCBRT, Mission Mikocheni Hospital, Bugando Medical Centre, Sekou Toure Hospital and Muhambili National Hospital.

A typical mission includes 10 medical volunteers, operating in two teams in the same theatre, supported by a recovery nurse, a ward nurse and a therapist. The operations range from 45-minute cleft lip repairs to burns releases that take many hours.



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Team work!  
Nurse Michelle Kelleher,  
Surgeon Andrew Crocker,  
Anesthetist Andrew Wild,  
Physiotherapist David Crocker,  
Nurse Cathy Lubrano,  
Surgeon Barry O'Sullivan  
& Anesthetist Stephen Crocker

Right Page:  
Nurse Alice Haydon  
with Robi



*“Our teams of volunteers  
perform up to 80 operations  
during each two-week mission.”*

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## *Preparation*

### HOW IT COMES TOGETHER

A huge amount of planning goes into each mission, from selecting the team, organising travel, obtaining professional registrations for Tanzania, securing consumables and making sure that every item that may be needed for the mission has been sourced.

Each mission is a grueling two weeks of long days for our team. It starts on arrival with unpacking and sorting stored equipment and transported consumables.

Day one is the clinic where the team may assess more than 100 patients, choose those suitable for treatment and schedule the surgeries.

Patients are admitted to hospital, then it's a nervous wait for them while the team gets through as many surgeries as possible.

## Local Support

Geita Gold Mine Senior Stakeholder Engagement Officer, Musa Shunashu, with Justin who had his lip repaired by Rafiki



*“Two of our biggest supporters on the ground, Geita Gold Mine & Acacia Mining help make our missions possible.”*

### HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS

Tanzania is a big place, and what makes travelling around the country even harder is its remote communities and lack of infrastructure.

Two of our biggest in-country supporters, Geita Gold Mine and Acacia Mining, play a vital role on the ground in helping people in remote communities get the surgeries they desperately need. These mining companies find a large number of our patients in the remote areas in which they work, assess them at pre-clinics and send those suitable for surgery to us.

The rest of our patients are people from the local communities who have heard about Rafiki and make their own way to the hospital for clinic day.



A group of past Rafiki patients with Musa and Acacia Communications Officer, Blandina Munghezi.



Pre-mission screening clinic in Geita



Physiotherapist David Crocker with Robi  
Right Page: Nurse and Mission Coordinator, Taka Wild,  
who has completed more than 20 missions for Rafiki.

## *Volunteers*

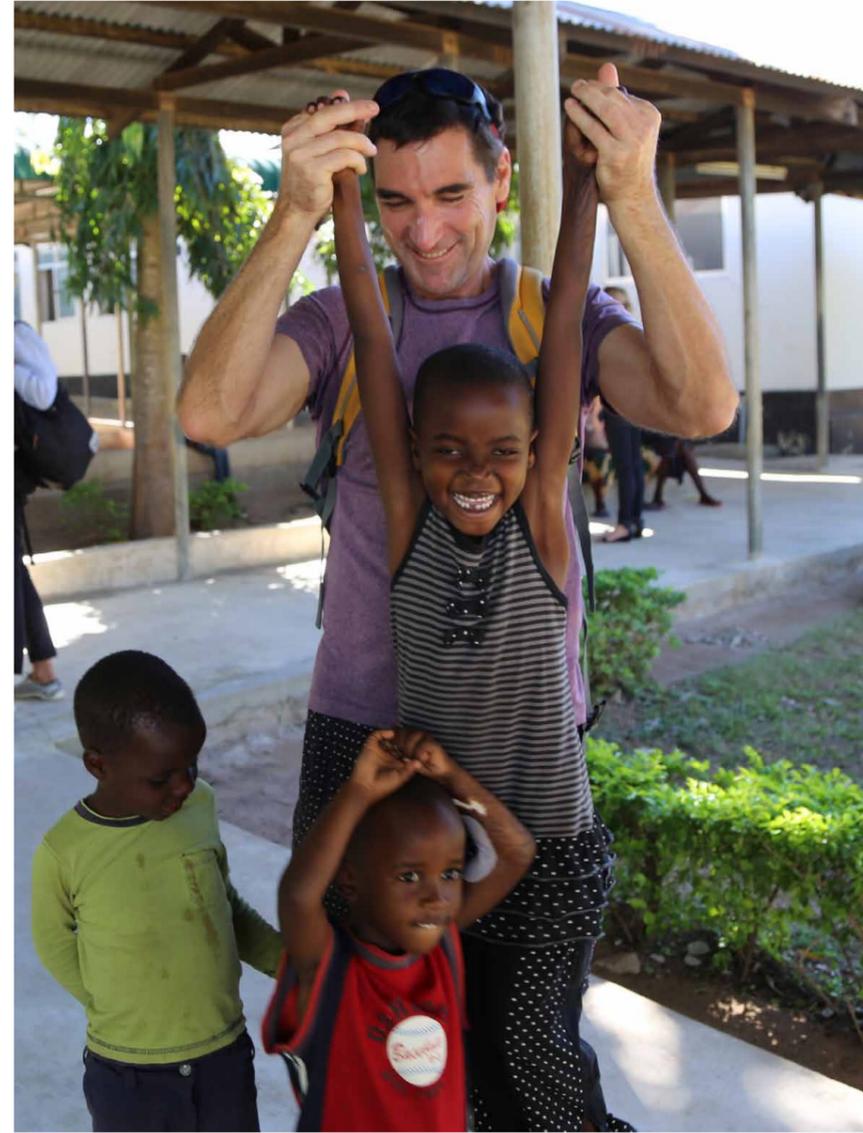


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### **ASANTE TO OUR VOLUNTEER MEDICAL TEAMS**

Our teams of surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses and therapists volunteer their time for each mission. Since 2004 we have had more than 100 people make up our teams, and some of our volunteers have been on more than 20 missions: a huge achievement!

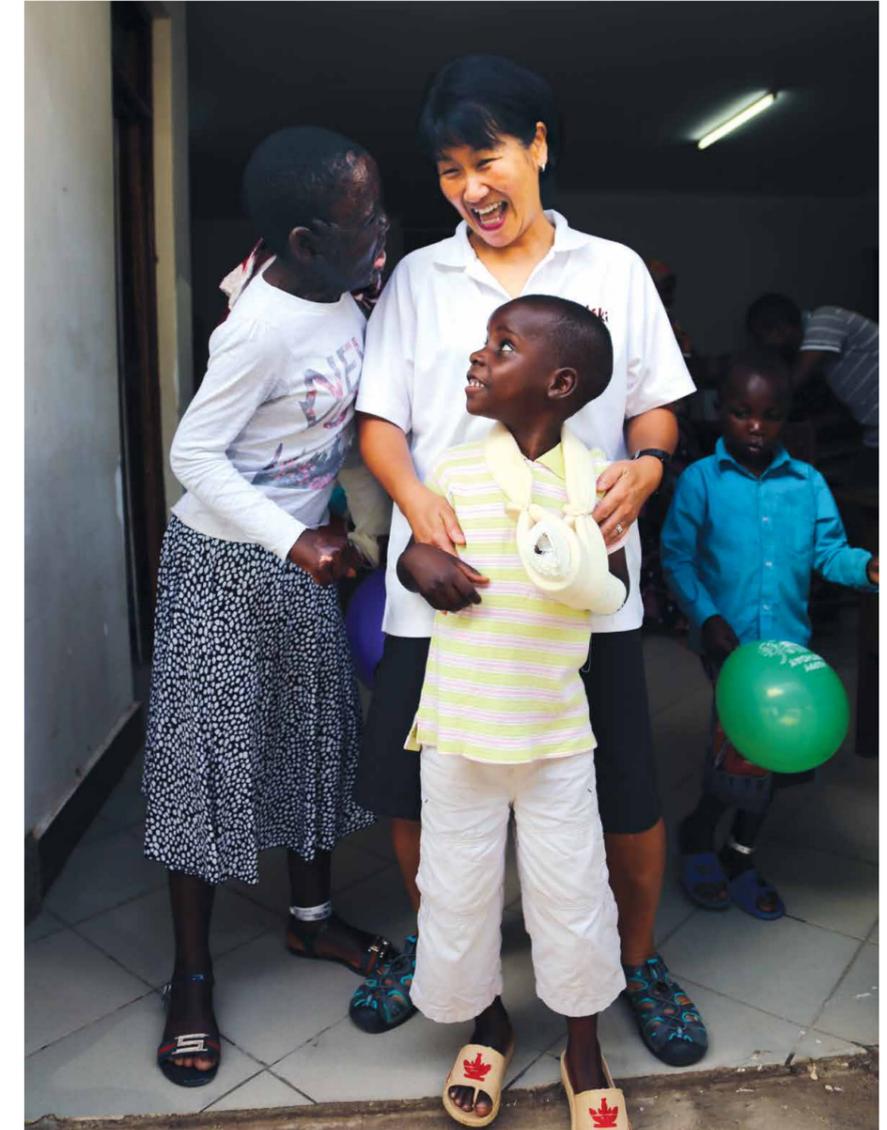
Taka Wild, our Mission Coordinator and Team Leader works tirelessly before, after, and during the missions to make sure everything runs as smoothly as possible.



We have had more than 100 volunteer medical team members. Right Page: Nurse Shannon has been on 10 missions to Tanzania with Rafiki.



James Chialo, one of our  
Tanzanian Directors, with David  
Right Page: Physiotherapist David Crocker,  
Surgeon Brigid Corrigan and Nurse Taka Wild





*Nurse Alice Haydon, who has been on more than 10 missions for Rafiki*  
**Left Page: Therapist, Lisa Browne; Anesthetist, Andrew Wild giving the thumbs up; and Surgeon James Savundra and Andrew hard at work moving our equipment**

Nurse Lindy Crocker  
Right Page: Mission Team 28,  
Anaethetist Andrew Miller  
& Nurse James Smith



*“The little kids sit patiently on their parents’ laps all day, they don’t complain.*

*They’ve got no TV to watch or games to play, they just sit patiently.*

*It’s amazing.”*

*Vij Vijayasekaran, Surgeon*



## *Patient Transformations*

### OUR PATIENTS

While treatment is almost immediately available for Australians with such conditions, in Tanzania, sufferers can be forced to endure a lifetime of alienation, pain and suffering. People simply don’t have the money for an operation, and in many cases, local medical treatment is not available or is insufficient.

Our patients often travel far from their rural villages to the hospital, and for many, it’s the furthest they’ve ever been from home.

### BEFORE & AFTER

*The before and after pictures are amazing and the transformation the teams see in just a few days is very rewarding.*

*But perhaps even more stunning has been the response from patients we have managed to track down a few years after their surgery.*





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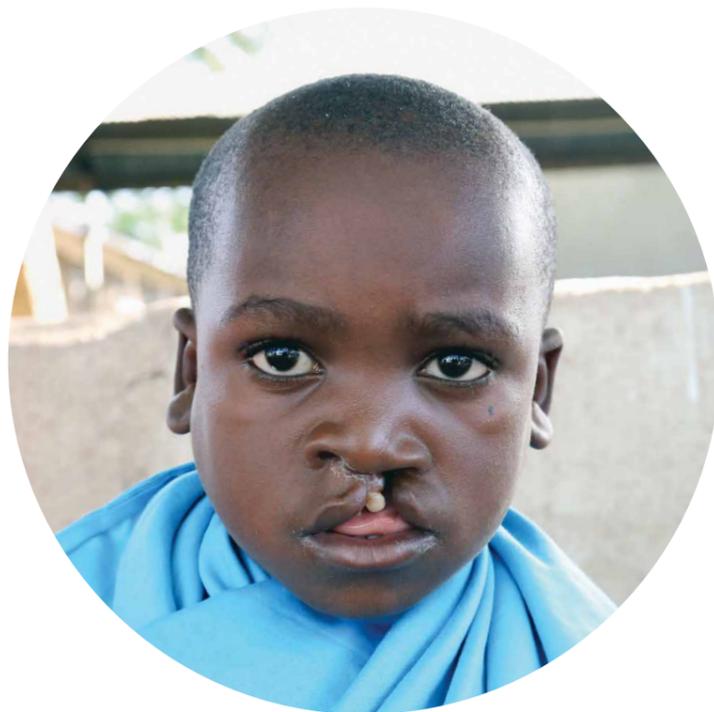
### BAHATI

In 2011 Bahati rented a bicycle to make the four-hour ride to the Rafiki pre-mission clinic in Kahama. Selected for surgery, he then had a 12-hour bus ride to Dar es Salaam, where he underwent an amazing transformation. Operated on as an adult, Bahati had endured a childhood of taunting and marginalisation. The surgery gave him the chance of a new life, free from the stigma of deformity.

Today Bahati is happy and healthy and married with three young children. He's growing his business and says he now finds it easy to make friends.



*Bahati*



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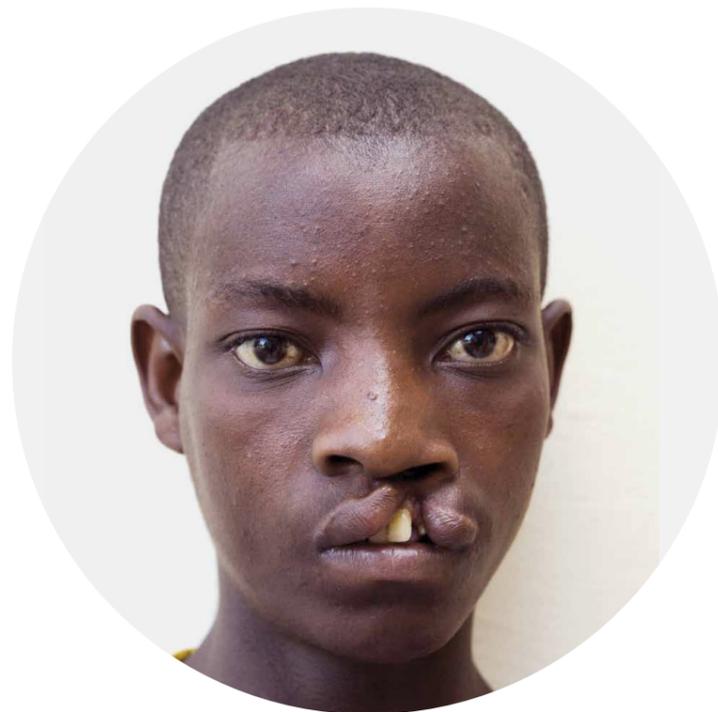
**VERONICA**

Veronica had her lip repaired in November 2017. Her father, Lazaro, told us that he hated the way people used to gossip about her in the village, but now she's totally accepted by her community.

She's perhaps too young to understand the full significance of her treatment now, but Lazaro said she told him she's happy she doesn't look the way she used to in pictures.



*Veronica*



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**DAUDI**

We first met Daudi in a Geita Gold Mine clinic in 2012. He was very shy and hardly spoke a word during his hospital stay.

Today, it's not just the change in Daudi's features that make him so different. He's certainly not shy any more, in fact its hard to get him to stop talking! He told us he used to find it very difficult to talk to girls, because they called him ugly but now he feels confident because he's just as handsome as the next guy.

*Daudi*





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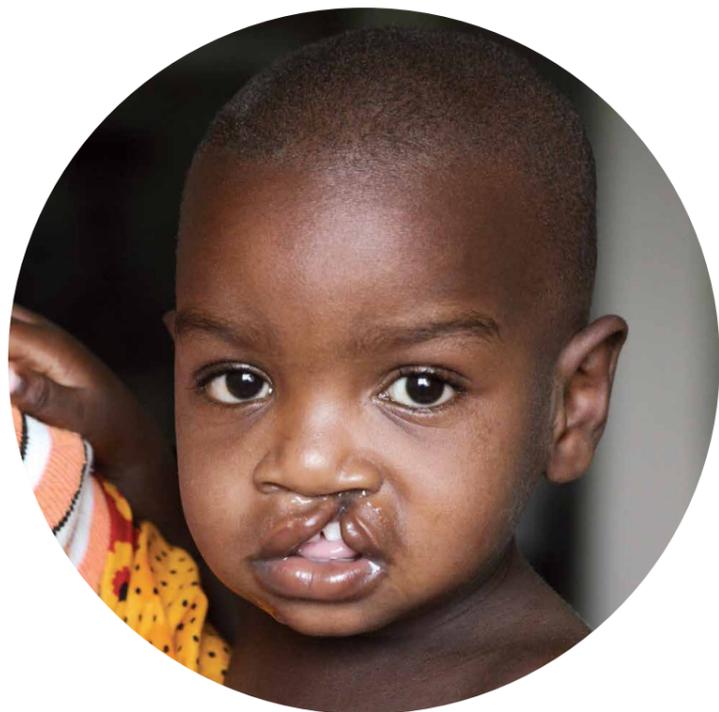
### LEAH, MASALU & JACKSON

This family has eight children and the three middle children, one after another, were all born with cleft lips. The mother told us she thought a witch must have visited their village and it distressed her greatly. Jackson and Masalu were operated on in one mission and the youngest, Leah, on a later mission.

It's made a dramatic difference to the family, who can now put their fears behind them and move on with their lives.



*Leah Masalu Jackson*



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**JUMANE**

Jumane was just two years old when he was selected and taken to Dar es Salaam by his young mother for surgery in 2011.

A couple of years later, his lip looks fantastic, and he is lucky enough to live his life unaware of a deformity that would have had a major impact on both his and his mother's futures.



*Jumane*

## Sharing Skills

Chairman Didier Murcia with Surgeons Matthew Hansen & Edwin Mrema being congratulated by the Regional Commissioner



### LEAVING A LEGACY

We want to make a sustainable difference in Tanzania and the way to do that is through training local people. Local doctors, nurses and surgeons benefit from the collaboration with the Rafiki team members and the flow on effect of their up-skilling is significant.



*“I love coming here and doing the operations. It’s rewarding, but it’s a drop in the ocean, and we can really only do a small proportion, so in the long term there’s no substitute to training local people.”*

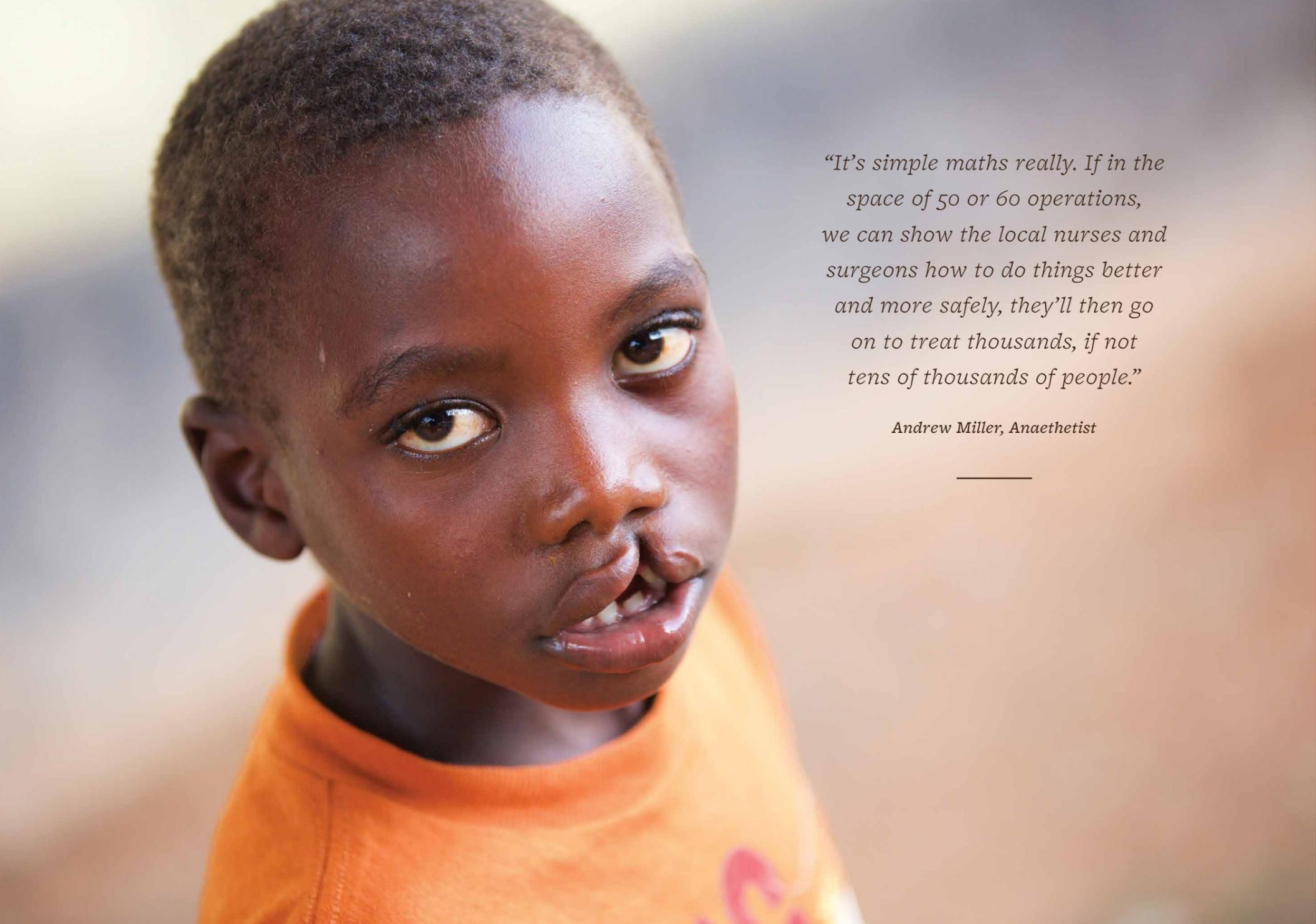
*Brigid Corrigan, Surgeon*

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## *Our Legacy*

WE ARE TRAINING TANZANIAN SURGEONS TO BECOME THE COUNTRY'S FIRST EVER FULLY-QUALIFIED PLASTIC & RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGEONS.



*“It’s simple maths really. If in the space of 50 or 60 operations, we can show the local nurses and surgeons how to do things better and more safely, they’ll then go on to treat thousands, if not tens of thousands of people.”*

*Andrew Miller, Anaesthetist*

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## *Making a Difference*

With a population of more than 50 million people, and a high incidence of clefts and burns, Tanzania has no qualified Plastic Surgeons, so many people are forced to go without life-changing or even life-saving treatment.

**We hope to help change that.**

*In a very ambitious project, Rafiki is collaborating with Tanzania’s National Hospital and National Medical University to deliver a two-year Master’s Degree course for surgeons.*

*Rafiki’s volunteer surgeons will support the course and train the country’s first ever fully-qualified plastic and reconstructive surgeons.*

*Once qualified, Rafiki will continue to support them to train the next intake of students.*

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## Medical Equipment



Volunteers pack the equipment in Perth, which can include wheelchairs, hospital beds, walkers and consumables. We've even arranged for second-hand ambulances to be shipped to Tanzania from Japan.

**Right Page:** One of the beds being used in Tanzania, a hand over ceremony with Rafiki Director Ambassador Chialo & heavy lifting!



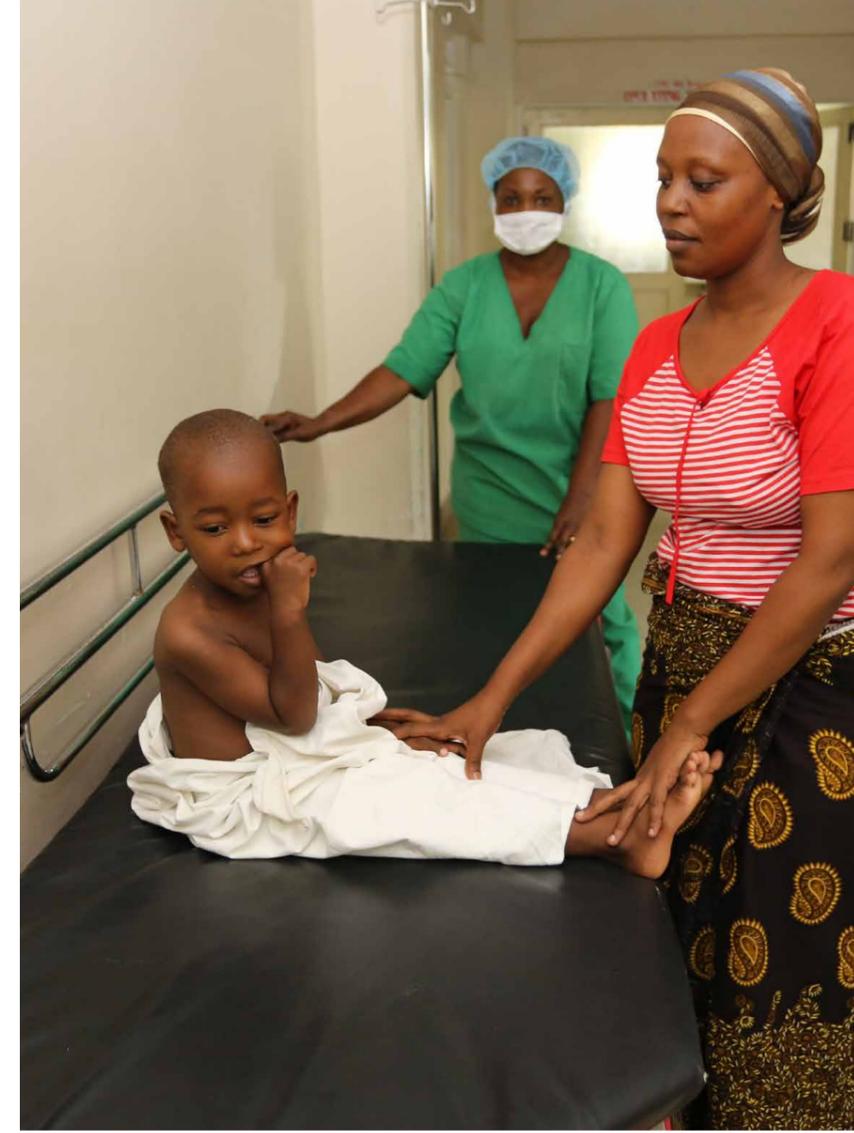
## DONATED EQUIPMENT

In addition to surgeries and training, Rafiki also sends shipping containers of medical equipment to Tanzania that would otherwise go to waste in Australia. The medical equipment is treasured in Tanzania and is being put to good use.

Since 2010, we have packed and shipped more than 40 containers for distribution to hospitals and medical centres. The replacement cost of this equipment exceeds \$8,000,000.



Equipment ready to be loaded in Perth





*Asante Rafiki*