





Drawings by children of the 3rd Kindergarten of Nea Smyrni

# Contents



Introduction .....	5
Medical care missions .....	6
Medicines missions .....	16
Delivery of expendables .....	16
Distribution of foodstuffs .....	19
Other relief .....	20
Infrastructure .....	21
Activities in Athens-Piraeus area .....	21
Acquisition of medicines, foodstuffs and other items .....	22
Communication with the general public, cooperation with schools.....	23
Team of missions .....	31
Acknowledgements.....	32





# Introduction



“Heart Doctors” is a Greek, humanitarian, non governmental, non profit Organization offering free relief - medical services, medicines, foodstuffs, clothing and footwear etc. Recipients are poor people needing the relief urgently in order to face immediately very serious needs. “Heart Doctors” activities are associated with diseases and epidemics, warfare, starvation, massive violent dislocation of population (external and internal undesirable massive movements of human populations ) and natural disasters ( earthquakes, floods, typhoons and cyclones, tsounamis, great fires, prolonged droughts and long heavy rains etc. ).

“Heart Doctors” in certain cases offer other assistance too: they facilitate the financing of various projects for the construction of buildings for medical centers, schools, orphanages, hospitals, nurses and doctors training centers etc. The Organization has been very much interested in securing drinking water for communities lacking it. Water supply projects and opening of wells for drinking water were successful activities in Cameroon and Burundi.

“Heart Doctors”, from their start (1999) to the end of 2012, have worked in 60 countries of Africa, Asia, Europe ( Eastern and Caucasus ) and America. During this period, in those 60 countries, 650 humanitarian missions have been realized.

In 2012 the Organization worked in 26 countries and accomplished 116 missions. Relatively more missions were accomplished for the delivery of medicines (35 missions) and the distribution of foodstuffs (34 missions). In the year 2012, missions for Greece increased very much indeed (19 missions for the delivery of expendable hospital material to provincial hospitals). Next to Greece is Syria (15 medicines missions), Iraq ( 10 medicines missions), Sudan and Afghanistan (8 missions for the delivery of medicines, foodstuffs, clothing etc.).

Cooperation with schools and visits to schools in Greece and the USA continued in 2012; it is worth mentioning that many schools in Rhodes and other islands of the Dodecanese participated in an attempt to collect expendables for the General Hospital in Rhodes.

All the activities of our Organization are inspired by the power of compassion for the suffering fellow human being; they are accomplished by our dedicated and enthusiastic members and friends and the assistance of the general public of our country. They all contribute selflessly and anonymously offering medicines, foodstuffs, clothes etc. The victims of violence, illness, disaster, hunger and distress receive the relief from our own hands in their countries and remote places they live in where we visit them. Our assistance is always free and without discrimination. Our members and friends are volunteers; they offer without remuneration or reward of any kind.

# Medical Care Missions

During the year 2012 "Heart Doctors" accomplished four missions to offer medical services to four countries in Africa:

Country	Missions
Burundi	1
Cameroon	1
Sierra Leone	1
Tanzania	1
Total	4

A typical medical mission is organized as a medical camp: it is carried out usually in the open air, in remote rural areas, under the shade of trees or in the premises of temples, medical centers or other buildings suitable for the purpose.

The above mentioned missions are now briefly described following the chronological order of their accomplishment.



# Cameroon

## 11<sup>th</sup> Mission ( 21.1.2012 )

A team of 5 members of "Heart Doctors" traveled from Athens to Marua in Northern Cameroon through Zurich and Duala; it moved to Katrang by car and settled at that place in huts locally called "bucaru". Those huts have been constructed by "Heart Doctors" in order to use them as a shelter when they visit that remote and isolated area of the country.

The purpose of the mission was to offer medical services to sick people in Katrang. The inhabitants welcomed the team and were very happy to see "Heart Doctors" visiting them again. Archbishop Gregorios informed the people that "Heart Doctors" were coming to Katrang; thus the local people had made the necessary preparations for the medical camp to work normally. The dispensary was organized in the premises of the Orthodox Christian Church.

Thousands gathered and were treated by the doctors. Most of them suffered from malaria and too many children from scabies and elminthiasis. Other health problems observed were infections of the respiratory system, parasites, schistosomiasis, diarrheas and dysentery. Due to utter poverty and insufficient food, many children suffer from malnutrition.

Some patients came from Chad; among them a pregnant woman with a baby on her arms.

The team moved to Maroua where it worked for one day examining and treating sick people. An official from the Ministry of Health visited the team, observed the treatment and examined the medicines carefully. He was very happy and said he was going to report to his superiors that the work of "Heart Doctors" and the quality of the medicines used were excellent.



Cameroon





# Tanzania

## 6<sup>th</sup> Mission ( 27.3.2012 )

A four member team of "Heart Doctors" flew from Athens to Mwanza through Cairo and Nairobi. The purpose of this mission was to offer medical services to populations living in remote rural areas of the Region of Mwanza. The local organization of the mission and the required contacts with the Authorities of Tanzania were arranged very efficiently by the Reverend Archbishop Jeronymos of Western Tanzania.

The team first visited the Governor of the Mungo Region and the local Medical Officer to pay their respects to them and get the formal permission to work in the area.

"Heart doctors" examined and treated thousands of sick people living in 7 communities and villages ( Magu, Mwanyama, Mwamibanga, Ngashe, Kinango, Nyamatala and Yichobela).

Responsible persons appointed by Archbishop Jeronymos accompanied the team and faced efficiently all the administrative problems met during the mission. Their leader was a man who spoke Greek and had studied theology in Greece.

The people of the region are farmers employed mainly in rice fields and other crops; they are peaceful and polite. All are facing problems from lack of clean water - they gather and use dirty water from open cavities in the ground. This explains why they suffer from parasites, particularly the children.

More frequent health problems were malaria, anemia, parasites, gastroenteritis, problems of the eye, infections of the respiratory system, skin diseases; many people suffered from epilepsy.

"Heart Doctors" express their warmest thanks to Archbishop Jeronymos and the efficient team of his assistants for the successful cooperation in this mission.









# Sierra Leone

## 7<sup>th</sup> Mission ( 3.6.2012 )

A four member team of "Heart Doctors" left Athens for Sierra Leone in order to offer free medical services to people living in Freetown and the surrounding area. The Holly Greek Orthodox Diocese of Sierra Leone was responsible for the preparation and local organization of this mission; the Reverend Archimandrite Themistokles Adamopoulos ( Father Themis ) invited Heart Doctors for this mission and cooperated with the authorities to issue the required visas. This clergyman is an able and very active man. He has managed to construct various compounds in Freetown and the vicinity.

First, the team worked at St. Moses Orthodox Village, a compound in New Waterloo. The whole housing complex has been constructed to house a community of disabled people, their spouses and children. The patients were received at a clinic where they were medically examined and treated. People of all ages including babies and school children visited the clinic. More than one thousand were treated and given the appropriate medicaments.

Then the team worked for one day in the Freetown Orthodox Christian School ( 1500 pupils ). All the school children and some of their relatives were medically examined and given the necessary medicines.

"Heart Doctors" visited the poverty stricken slum of Colvert. A very large number of people came to the doctors and all were properly attended. They were so poor that, under normal circumstances, they could not be able to afford such a medical care in their life, as Father Themistocles said.

The observed medical problems were the usual ones for an African country: malaria, skin diseases, helminthiasis, infections of the respiratory system, skin burns, gastroenteritis, high blood pressure etc.

"Heart Doctors" express their warmest thanks to Father Themistocles and his assistants for their close, sincere and efficient cooperation and friendliness.







# Burundi

35<sup>th</sup> Mission ( 23.6.2012 )

A four member team of "Heart Doctors" moved to Burundi via Brussels. The team reached the capital Bujumbura and met at the airport the Governor of Karuzi province, who had organized the program of the mission. The team moved to Karuzi province and started working at the health center of Gikombe colline (commune of Shombo )- young mothers with their children as well as old women and men were attended.

The following days, "Heart Doctors" worked in medical centers of various communities:

- colline Rusi ( Shombo commune )
- colline Kibuye ( Mutumba commune )
- colline Ruganira ( Gihogazi commun )
- colline Nyarungazi ( Nyabikere commune )
- colline Nyaruhinda ( Gitatamuka commune )
- colline Niabibuye ( Shombo commune ).

In all the above medical centers, the construction of which appeared to be relatively recent with rather identical plans, there were nurses, assistants, pharmacists and generally intense daily medical activities for the attendance of sick people and immunization of children. In most centers there was relative sufficiency of drugs. The collaboration of the personnel with the team was in all visited places excellent.

Everyday, large numbers of people with various health problems were coming to tell their problem and get medicines. Due to the large crowd, it has been decided to attend mainly young mothers with their children and old people and at the end of the day to see the men. There was great pressure by the people to enter the examination rooms and very often small children were in danger to be over-run by their mothers. One day, pregnant women were carried unconscious to the examination rooms due to the pressure exercised by the crowd at the entrance of the medical centers.

"Heart Doctors" wish to address their sincere thanks to the Governor of the Province of Karuzi Mr. Silvester for the excellent programming of the daily work with the local health authorities in the different communes visited.







## Medicines Missions

During the year 2012 medicines were delivered to 4 countries and 35 missions were accomplished for this purpose as shown in the following table:

Country	Missions
Afghanistan	8
Iraq	10
Pakistan	2
Syria	15
Total	35

Unending conflicts or ceaseless warfare in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Syria explain why medicines are needed to help victims of violence in these countries. More than 40% of the missions were offered to Syria where unrest was intensified in 2012.

## Delivery of Expendables

In 2012 "Heart Doctors" put more emphasis on their activities within the country due to the prolonged severe economic recession that hit Greece and caused surprising budgetary restrictions. As a matter of fact, the Organization decided to offer various expendable materials as relief to the provincial hospitals of Rhodes and Drama:

Hospital	Missions
Drama General hospital	1
Rhodes General Hospital	18
Total	19





## The following materials were offered:

Butterflies I.V.  
Catheters ( simple, Folley, Levin, suction, silicon )  
Coloplast  
Test tubes for testing blood units  
Cotton  
Elastic bandages  
Ferrous insolution  
Fucidine intertulle  
Gas tubes  
Examination gloves  
Ibuprofen  
Laparotomy gauzes  
leucoplast  
Needles for syringes  
Discard pots for needles  
Omeprazol  
Operating blades  
Orthoban,  
Paper rolls  
Plaster bandages  
Serum apparatus  
Skin stitching equipment  
Sterilized compresses  
Sterilizing rolls  
Stitches  
Surgical caps  
Surgical uniforms  
Surgical masks (Ventouri, Aerolin, Nebulizer, oxygen )  
Sterilized surgical jackets  
Syringes  
Transfusion apparatus  
Tongue depressors  
Test tubes  
Urine collectors  
Vein catheter taps  
Vein catheters

Istocompatibility test tubes RIA  
Heparin  
Pipettes

Foodstuffs and heating oil

## Distributions of Foodstuffs

"Heart Doctors, in cooperation with friends, offered foodstuffs to needy populations in 11 countries of Africa; for this purpose 34 missions were organized and accomplished during the period of 2012.

The following table depicts the countries which received foodstuffs as humanitarian relief for their starving population.

Country	Missions
Djibouti	6
Eritrea	4
Gabon	1
Guinea Bissau	3
Liberia ( plus shoes )	1
Mozambique	1
Botswana	2
Niger	3
Somalia	4
Sudan (Darfur, Khartoum )	7
Zimbabwe	2
Total	34

Food aid was directed mainly to Sudan, Djibouti, Eritrea, Somalia, Niger and Guinea Bissau. The well known problem of food insecurity in countries belonging to the sahel zone of Africa continues to be very serious (caused mainly by droughts and conflicts).

The food commodities distributed by the Organization are the ones known as basic or staple food commodities. They are transported through continents and countries by international trade – they are purchased and sold in big wholesale markets. The quantity bought is massively transported and rather easily preserved under normal environmental conditions. In 2012 the foodstuffs bought and distributed were: sugar, wheat flour, corn, rice and milk powder for children. In addition to foodstuffs, drinking water is also sometimes distributed.

The problem of hunger and malnutrition is acute in most of the countries mentioned above. Lack of sufficient food is associated with diseases and cachexia, especially among children. The World Health Organization cites malnutrition as the greatest single threat to the world's public health. Improving nutrition is widely regarded as the most effective form of aid.

## Other Relief

Heart Doctors and their friends visited 12 countries in 2012 to offer clothing and footwear mainly to young children attending school; various other useful articles were also distributed to families or individuals. For this purpose 24 missions were organized and accomplished as shown in the following table.

Country	Missions
Azerbaijan	1
Botswana	2
Eritrea	2
Gabon	1
Georgia	8
Guinea Bissau	1
India	1
Kazakhstan	1
Liberia	2
Moldavia	3
Namibia	1
Sudan	1
Total	24

School children and adults received the following articles: overalls, jackets, anoraks, shoes, boots, rubber boots, long robes for women (Sudan, Djibouti, Somalia, Eritrea) , school uniforms ( India ), dresses for orphans (Botswana) and school material (satchels, school bags, writing books, pencils etc.). Families were given various useful goods:

- Blankets, sheets and pillows ( Georgia )
- Kitchen utensils ( Azerbaijan )
- Casks made of baked clay to store or transport liquids ( Guinea Bissau, Liberia )
- Plates-spoons-pots for children ( Gabon, Botswana )
- Bicycles for transportation ( Liberia )
- Sewing machines for families ( Gabon )
- School material: satchels, school bags, writing books, pencils ( Georgia, Namibia )

One mission for the inauguration of an orphanage ( Georgia ) has been classified in this category of humanitarian activities.



## Infrastructure

A medical center is under construction in Burundi ( Karuzi province, Nyabikere village ); “Heart Doctors” are contributing to the costs of this project. As a matter of fact, the building works were inspected by members of the Organization during the last medical mission to Burundi ( 35<sup>th</sup> mission, 23.6.2012 ).



## Activities in Athens - Piraeus area

“Heart Doctors”, reacting to the increased needs for further humanitarian relief due to adverse economic conditions affecting Greece today, examined the possibility to cooperate with the Greek Red Cross ( sectors of nursing and care ), the Athens Medical Association ( Social Mission Dispensary ), the Municipalities of Aigaleo and Halandri and the local Christian Church of Perama and Ilion districts. As a result, “Heart Doctors” started offering their medical services and using their medicines for uninsured patients living in Perama, Aegaleo and Ilion. In Perama, the Organization cooperated with the NGO “Doctors of the World” working at their local installations where a well organized dispensary functions for years. In Aegaleo, “Heart Doctors” offered their services at an excellent local municipal medical center. In the district of Ilion, the dispensary was readily arranged in the premises of Agios Nikolaos church. On the basis of a weekly schedule, doctors of the Organization visited the above mentioned places on specified days and hours; there they received the coming patients. This activity started early in Spring, but declined later and stopped in summer for lack of patients.

Particularly at Perama, an old independent relief program of "Heart Doctors" continues working very satisfactorily; patients are received and examined by the member of the Organization Dr. Vasilis Dimadis, pediatrician. This happens once per month at the premises of Agia Paraskevi church; the work starts at the church – then till the end of the day families are visited at home and assisted ( sick people are attended, young children are vaccinated according to a carefully prepared list and additional urgent needs observed on the spot are faced – foodstuffs, clothes, toys, school materials, pieces of furniture, firewood and kerosene are offered to poor families ).

The same pediatrician is responsible for an additional relief program which works every Friday for sick children at the premises of Saint Apostles, in Marousi (Psalidi).

## Acquisition of medicines, foodstuffs and other items

Students, employed and unemployed people, pensioners, drugstores and various other enterprises, associations, local Christian churches, etc. use to send by post or bring to our offices medicines and other useful articles they offer for the sick and needy.

It is really impressive that a few children, in cases of birthdays and name days, encourage their friends participating in the celebrations, instead of offering personal gifts, to donate medicines to "Heart Doctors" for the sake of sick children and needy people. They are so young and yet, under the guidance of their parents, they act as selfless volunteers!

Foodstuffs, drinking water, blankets and other bedclothes, shoes and clothes, various utensils and household equipment are purchased from local markets. The transportation of such articles is expensive and therefore they are obtained from markets located as near to the recipients of relief as possible. Only in exceptional cases, certain articles are carried by "Heart Doctors" from Greece to the countries visited ( milk powder for sick underfed babies, children's wear ).

Friends of the Organization, who prefer to remain anonymous, participate often in various missions; they purchase food and other commodities and supervise their distribution.

## Communication with the general public

### Cooperation with schools

“Heart Doctors” take good care of communicating with their friends and inform them about current missions and other activities. To those donating medicines or other offerings, a letter of thanks is always addressed with information concerning recent developments. There is also a web site where basic and current information about the Organization is presented ( [www.heartdoctors.gr](http://www.heartdoctors.gr) ). Yearly reports are also prepared and can be found in that site.

During the year 2012, members of “Heart Doctors” visited various schools in Greece and the USA to thank students and teaching staff for medicines offered; they had thus the opportunity to discuss with the school community and present to them certain very difficult conditions prevailing in many regions of the world visited by the Organization.

The schools visited were the following:



**14.6.2012.** Visit to the **Hellenic-German School of Athens** at Vrilissia. Director: Mrs. Maria-Tereza Baum. Posters and various photographs were sent to the school and were placed on walls. The journalist George Georgiadis, a good friend of "Heart Doctors" visited the school; he discussed with the children his own experiences from working together with "Heart Doctors" in countries of Africa and showed them DVDs from his archives. The students offered medicines to the Organization.

**10.10.2012.** Visit to **2<sup>nd</sup> Elementary School of Kalamaria** in Thessaloniki. Responsible for the activity: Mrs. Eleni Stoilidou. Four members of "Heart Doctors" visited the school and talked to the students. In December, the students of this school prepared a bazaar, under the guidance of Mrs. Stoilidou – by the receipts from this bazaar medicines were purchased and offered to "Heart Doctors".



**10.10.2012.** Visit to **Herbaline Center**, in Thessaloniki. A team of "Heart Doctors" talked to the visitors of the Center and projected pictures from a DVD.



**11.10.2012.** Visit to the **General Hospital of Drama**. Coordinator of the event: Mr. Kosmas Vasiliadis. Four members of the Organization visited the hospital and offered various expendable hospital materials ( syringes, catheters, masks, etc. ). The team presented recent activities of "Heart Doctors" and answered questions about volunteering and humanitarian assistance.

**12.10.2012.** Visit to the **3<sup>rd</sup> Lyceum of Polihni**. Four members of "Heart Doctors" visited the school and thanked the students for the medicines they send to the Organization. Many questions about the needs of sick people in poor countries were asked and answered.



**12.10.2012.** Visit to the **Junior High School of Kavasila in Imathia**. Director: Mrs. Panagiota Toka. Coordinator : Mr. Vagelis Antonopoulos. Four members of "Heart Doctors" went to the school and informed the students about the recent activities of the Organization. The students of this school send often medicines to "Heart Doctors" under the guidance of Mr. Antonopoulos. In 2009, "Heart Doctors" visited the school for the first time.



**12.10.2012.** Visit to the **4<sup>th</sup> Junior High School of Veria**. Director: Mr. Bohoris. Coordinator: Mrs. Lamprini Agelidou. "Hear Doctors" visited this school for the first time in 2009. Students of the school use to send medicines to the Organization from time to time.



**5.12.2012.** Visit to the **2<sup>nd</sup> Lyceum of Korydallos**. Director: Mr. Minas Maragos. Coordinator: Mrs. Evagelou. A team of four members of "Heart Doctors" was invited to visit the school and inform the students about volunteering and their humanitarian activities in Greece and in foreign countries.





## Cooperation of “Heart Doctors” with schools in Rhodes and other islands of Dodecanese:

students and young children encouraged by teachers and parents, gathered various expendable hospital materials for the General Hospital of Rhodes: the following have participated in the project:

**1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Kindergarten of Ialissos**, Headmaster: Mrs. Fratzeska Marinopoulou, Mrs. Evagelia Volonaki.



**1<sup>st</sup> Kindergarten of Kalythies, Rhodes**, Headmaster: Mrs. Tsampika Kosta.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Kindergarten of Kalythies, Rhodes**, Headmaster: Mrs. Pagona Argyrou.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Kindergarten of Kalythies, Rhodes**, Headmaster: Mrs. Chrisoula Kydonaki.

**10<sup>th</sup> Kindergarten of Rhodes**, Headmaster: Mrs. Xenia Zachariadi.

**15<sup>th</sup> Kindergarten of Rhodes**, Headmaster: Mrs. Tsampika – Ekaterini Papachristodoulou.

**Protypon Center of Pre-School Education “Dimiourgia”**, Headmaster: Mrs. Vasiliki Arfara.

**1<sup>st</sup> Elementary School of Rhodes**, Headmaster: Mr. Ioannis Tsakiris.



**2<sup>nd</sup> Elementary School of Rhodes**, Headmaster: Mr. Constantinos Kantas.



**2<sup>nd</sup> Elementary Protypon Experimental School of Rhodes**, Headmaster: Mrs. Tina Mantikou.

3<sup>rd</sup> Elementary School of Rhodes, Headmaster: Mrs. Tsampika Stouppi.



5<sup>th</sup> Elementary School of Rhodes, Headmaster: Mr. Ioannis Nisyrios.

13<sup>th</sup> Elementary School of Rhodes, Headmaster: Mr. George Pippinos.





**15<sup>th</sup> Elementary School of Rhodes, Rodini**, Headmaster: Mr. Dimitrios Matzanos.  
(expendables were gathered and offered twice)

**Elementary School of Rhodes “Astiki”**, Headmaster: Mr. Michailidis.

**Elementary School of Asgourou, Rhodes**, Headmaster: Mr. Emmanouil Tsirakakis.

**Elementary School of Maritses, Rhodes**, Headmaster: Mrs. Meropi Tavlamanou.

**Elementary School of Kardamena, Kos**, Headmaster: Mr. Ieromnimon.

**1<sup>st</sup> Elementary School of Simi**, Headmaster: Mrs. Doukissa Leventeri.

**1<sup>st</sup> Junior High School of Rhodes**, Headmaster: Mrs. Ekaterini Sfakianaki.



**6<sup>th</sup> Junior High School of Rhodes**, Headmaster: Mr. Anastasios Tourtounas.

**Gym ( center for physical exercise ) “ELIXIS”**, Rhodes.

## Team of missions abroad

Dr. Xenophon Yataganas, MD, Professor of Medicine

Dr. John Sotiriou, General Practitioner

Mrs. Helen Sotiriou

Mrs. Mary Ypsilanti

Mr. Pantelis Ypsilantis

## Acknowledgements

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Private and public transportation companies or individuals undertake the free transport of medicines and other articles offered to "Heart Doctors". We thank them very much for their contribution to our humanitarian work.

We congratulate certain journalists who continue to present our activities through their journals, radio or television for their readers, audiences and viewers in Athens, Thessaloniki, Rhodes etc. We mention here particularly the journalist Mr. Spyros Tripsas, owner and director of the daily newspaper "Greece of Tomorrow" for the presentation of the activities of "Heart Doctors" and for his economic contribution to financing the purchase of expendable hospital materials donated by our Organization to Greek hospitals. We are grateful to our old friends, the journalists George Georgiadis, John Kanelakis, Petros Katsakos, Alexis Papahelas and Eleni Varvitsioti.

In various cities of the country (Athens, Thessaloniki, Rhodes, Alexandroupolis, Amynteo, Drama, Seres, Imathia), teams of friends collect medicines and forward them to our offices or storehouse in Athens. We thank their leaders and all the participants. We also thank our tireless volunteers who are responsible for collecting, transporting, checking and separating the material we use in our missions.

We are grateful to the top managers and the staff of the air companies Air France, Lufthansa Airways, Aegean Airlines, Brussels Airways, Cameroon Airlines, Egypt Air, Kenyan Airways, Emirates Airways and Turkish Airlines, for their kind and helpful behaviour with respect to our air transportation.

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Warden of Agia Paraskevi in Perama, the chief priest of Saint Apostles in Marousi, of Saint Nikolaos in Ilion and of Agia Triada in Kifisia.

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The Consular Services of Cyprus in certain countries have always been enthusiastic and eager to assist with certain of our missions. We thank them very much indeed.

We are thankful to all our anonymous and generous friends who organize and carry out selflessly various humanitarian missions together with "Heart Doctors".