



Operation Smile Morocco Activity Report

Operation Smile's mission is to help children suffering from facial deformities by performing essential surgery as well as providing the after-care needed to allow them to fulfil their potential. Operation Smile aims to train and educate the general public, recent graduates and local medical volunteers alongside our international volunteers we provide them with all the tools and infrastructure needed to continue their work, so more children can be treated.

Children that suffer from facial deformities such as cleft lips and palates are frequently taunted and hide away. This results in a lack of education and social opportunities. Often they are considered to bring bad luck to their community and therefore are seen as cursed. These children are condemned to a lifetime of malnourishment, speech issues and a higher susceptibility to respiratory diseases.

Our current focus is on the children of Casablanca, where we recently opened a Comprehensive Care Centre.

Operation Smile Morocco is one of the most active Operation Smile's partner foundations, having been established 13 years ago. They benefit from a team of over 200 dedicated volunteers from Morocco and over 5000 International volunteers through the Head Office in USA, who have provided surgery for more than 7,900 children with cleft lips and palates.

Our most recent project was Safi, from the 8th till 14th July 2012 to which a large multi-national team was present from Morocco, USA, Sweden, Tunisia and Egypt.

165 children received free medical evaluations and, 117 received life changing surgery.
147 Chirurgical Procedures, 40 Dental Procedures

The Morocco Care Centre in Casablanca was created to address the need of aftercare for children who have undergone surgery and to provide general dental care for poverty stricken children. It was also created to address the need of education and training in the area for medical and non-medical practitioners. It is staffed



entirely by volunteers except 4 Assistants and 1 Guardian, as OS Morocco has more than 100 professional dental volunteers. It aims to be a joint logistic and planning centre, whilst also hosting local projects and providing comprehensive out patient care. Since its official opening in October 2008 the centre has **provided more than 18,000 dental procedures per year to patients.**

Millions of children do not have access to basic dental care in Morocco because it is too expensive. This can cause severe effects. Even basic amenities like tooth brushes are unavailable to thousands of children





because of the poverty, as parents would prefer to buy some food instead of tooth brushes for their children, and this lack of dental hygiene can lead to serious problems including gum disease, teeth decay and heart disease. Recently several studies have shown a startling correlation between gum health and atherosclerosis, a condition underlying much heart disease.

The centre itself was built on land donated to Operation Smile Morocco by the local Government authorities and that was meant before to be a baby sitting school but turned out to a such great centre facilities. OSM chose Casablanca because it is the economic hub of Morocco, and therefore often attracts the poorest people, hoping to find work in the country's biggest city. Designed and built specifically for OS Morocco's purpose, the Centre was constructed to help the patient population with

'[In Moroccan people] the prevalence of tooth decay is 86.9%, the DMFT [decayed, missing or filled teeth] is 13.2% and the periodontal disease represents 83.9%. These results show an ignorance of the rules of oral hygiene and increasing need of preventative treatment' A Descriptive Study of the Oral State of a Sample of the Moroccan Population (Belhad, Hamdani, Miquel & Zaoui 2008)

The following criteria:

- Is close to the main bus station so it is accessible to all.
- Has a central location which allows the access for many people
- Has three floors – one for dentistry; one for training, speech therapy and screening; and one for offices and meetings.
- Is adjacent to the hospital where Operation Smile Morocco provides surgery for children with cleft lips and palates.
- The close proximity to the hospital means that OS Morocco is able to utilise certain medical and non medical staff from the hospital, which in turn generates joint-working, learning and sustainability.

As well as children with cleft lips and palates, the care centre also provides help for:

- Orphans – partnerships with orphanages include the large SOS Village orphanages, and local popular orphanages. OS Morocco actively seeks partnerships with impoverished charities looking after children. When the children arrive it is usually the first time they have ever been seen by a dental professional.
- Poor people – dentistry is not provided by the state, leaving millions in pain or susceptible to serious problems caused by poor dental hygiene. Those who are classified as poor by the state have their identification stamped to mark them as such. Upon showing this to staff at the Care Centre, these people are then offered care for their children rivalling that of their richer neighbours.
- Slum dwellers – there are thousands of people living on the fringes of Moroccan society. Often they are migrants from the rural areas or deserts who scratch a living in the slums of the major cities. These people are not recognised by the state at all, and as such have no access to any services or support. OS Morocco actively seeks to help children of slum dwellers as well as street children, in order for them to understand that there is help available for them regardless of their status.

The need for the Centre was determined on the basis of the demand for a comprehensive care. The surgery for children with cleft lips and palates may be relatively successful, but there are other effects of this disfigurement in terms of dental follow up that can last for years. Orthodontist is especially important, as often teeth are misaligned or problematic. These issues can be rectified, but only with



long-term care. Similarly speech therapy, counselling and post-surgery checkups are all an essential part of full care and it is in these areas where the Casablanca Care Centre excels.

The centre offers the following services to the patients

- Screening for surgery, dentistry and orthodontics care and follow ups, as well as speech therapy. All these services are offered for free.
- Caters for patients who have severe deformities that cannot undergo surgery during the short-term projects as they require a great deal of time and attention.
- Allows patients who have been turned away from the medical missions due to malnutrition or any other health problems to still undergo surgery when they are healthier.
- Babies with cleft palates are often severely malnourished and as a result are unable to undergo surgery to correct their disfigurement, leading to a catch 22 situation. The special paediatric orthodontic braces that OS Morocco's volunteers make allow babies to feed properly, so that when they are strong enough they can undergo surgery to correct this problem permanently.



- Provides children with free toothbrushes, toothpaste and free dental evaluations.
- A professional and permanent centre where that families are confident in bringing their children back for continuing care.
- Benefits from so many volunteer dentists and orthodontists, they are each able to treat their own patients, providing for continuity and stability for the child.
- Has the capacity to care for children who need it for years.
- Supplies treatment and care all year round.

All the above treatments are allowed thanks to the generous donors:

A generous donation from the Angus Lawson Memorial Trust, Jeremy GreenLahg and Skirball Foundation, that allowed a state-of-the-art dental wing to be created. This included the purchase of **five dental chairs** with full accessories. This offers most poverty stricken children in Morocco to have access to the same level of dental care those children as Europe.

As well as standard dentistry, the centre has facilities for the complicated orthodontic work, which is essential to the full care of children with cleft lip and palates.

This extraordinary care centre is providing dental treatment for over **5,000 children each year**, and has already provided nearly 18,000 procedures for many children with complicated dental procedures each year since its opening in 2008. The dentistry needed for children with clefts may last for months or even years, and the Casablanca Centre can provide this level of ongoing care.

The aim of the Centre is sustainability. OS Morocco's Casablanca Care Centre is staffed entirely by volunteers, who are offering their time and their knowledge in this field to help disadvantaged children. One of the



incentives for the volunteers, and also a means of recruiting new volunteers, is the significant training and ongoing education opportunities provided. Operation Smile Morocco’s academic and professional goals are the following:

- Provides training for less experienced volunteers as well as registrars (undergraduate and postgraduate students) who are later recruited into the Operation Smile team once credentialed by at least 3 credentialed professionals in dental care.
- The centre organises and hosts conferences to educate and inform medical staff on topics such as sterilisation, anaphylactic choking and medical ethics.
- In May 2009 a two-day conference on a revolutionary new technique for people with cleft palates took place, resulting in Operation Smile Morocco becoming a pioneer in its field. This technique allows babies to wear a special type of obturators; prior to surgery which will help them feed and allow for safer surgery and a speedier recovery. This is also suitable for older patients, who are unable to undergo surgery, as it allows them to speak and eat as normal. This technique is only practised in the Centre, and opportunities like this enthuse our dentistry professionals with the spirit of volunteerism.

The Centre is also used for teaching those outside the medical realm.

OSM has designed and implemented a comprehensive training package which allows a yearly training for over 400 local professionals in Basic Life Support (BLS). This training covers mouth-to-mouth and other resuscitation techniques. Provided for the police force, fire fighters and customs officials, it serves many purposes:



- To ensure that those who are likely to be at the scene of an accident first are able to medically assist anyone who needs it.
- These professions meet many people on a regular basis, and are likely to encounter children with facial deformities. Being trained at the centre they will be aware of OS Morocco’s work, and orienting these children to OS Morocco.

Babies need treatment at a young age in order to minimise the impact on development.

We are confident that Operation Smile Morocco will continue to employ all its resources in a bid to raise funds in-country and from abroad. However, the donations that OS Morocco may solicit are currently not sufficient to fully run the Centre for a year, and therefore, **Operation Smile, Inc.** continue their fundraising efforts to support their work both in the centre and with the local missions.

Fundraising has begun for the Morocco Care Centre’s in early 2008 under the program of activities well before the start date in order to secure the funds in good time. We intend to initiate a comprehensive fundraising program which will include various community fundraising efforts and applications to a number of Trusts, foundations and association.

OSM needs as of today

Taking into consideration the number of children treated in the centre and the high usage of the dental chairs, OSM is looking for funding to cover the costs of the dental chairs maintenance and continuity. Or to completely change the 2 remaining chairs to be changed in Casablanca Centre.

This application requests the **donors or trusts** to consider a grant of \$ **15,970** to sponsor one dental chair for a year. One dental chair provides dental treatment for 1,000 children each year, so the grant will make a huge impact on the children of Morocco.





Co-Founder of OS Morocco, Fouzia Mahmoudi, has freely given up her time for decades to make sure that Morocco is one of the most prosperous foundations Operation Smile works with.

Her personal commitment and drive has ensured that she has sourced donations and discounts for all aspects of their work. Even the full-time security guard and 4 dental assistants at the Centre is donated by well-known supporter who runs a security firm called G4S. This year, she has managed to get a waiver to the VAT for the equipments purchased for OSM, which is translated in large economies of money to the organization. She has managed also to get a Mobile Dental Unit for OSM which will help enormously with the Dental Missions.

So far OSM works to secure grants through any Foundation, Trust, Association or Corporate, which will cover the costs of one or more of the dental chairs for the year.

Thus, OSM has five chairs needing support, in order to maintain the number of children treated to remain at around 5,000 and 18,000 procedures a year.

This application requests that the donor Foundations consider a grant of \$79,850 to sponsor one dental chair for a period of five years or to sponsor all five dental chairs for a period of one year. One dental chair provides dental treatment for 1,000 children each year, so your grant will make a huge impact on the children of Morocco: 5,000 children will benefit.

These chairs cost \$15,970 each one to run under safety conditions, and these costs cover absolutely every element necessary for the care of 1,000 children each year. This includes consumables such as masks, dental putty and scrubs and maintenance, as well as any essential equipment and medicines.

I hope your Trustees and foundations feel able to support our essential work for disadvantaged children in Morocco.

'The worse a person's gum disease, the narrower that person's arteries due to a build up of plaque. This holds even for young, healthy people who have no other symptoms of heart disease... The American Association of Pediatric Dentistry recommends that all children have their first visit at the time of the eruption of the first tooth and no later than 12 months of age.' **The Washington Post**

Your assistance will cover the following:

Medicines

All pharmaceuticals & products that are required

Consumables

Supplies, including needles, dental paste, gloves, syringes, dental resin, amalgam, composite, etc.

Equipment

Dental apparatus including dental braces and all orthodontic equipments to follow up on all the kids that were operated in our missions.

Maintenance

Ensuring the condition of the dental chair is kept up to standard

Insurance

Damage and breakage cover for the dental chairs

Dental missions outside the Centre



For this purpose, we need to buy 4 to 5 mobile dental chairs. I suggest, that if we have a donor that can buy them and submit them to OSI to be sent with the next cargo of the International mission.

Skills Training in Morocco

Trainings and Conferences:

The Health Professionals that can come from abroad to Morocco, will be welcome to make presentation to our local volunteers, accompany the local team for the missions out-side the centre and contribute in their way to develop the trainings in Morocco through our organization.

The need for innovative and sustainable infrastructural programmes in Morocco is great. Operation Smile Morocco identified a real lack of resources essential for a culture of 'lifelong-learning', including ongoing education for healthcare practitioners and training for those potentially responsible for community health.



The present situation:

In order to support the overall improvement of basic emergency response to life-threatening issues and to provide the necessary training for its volunteers and other healthcare communities, Operation Smile has been taking American Heart Education training in **Basic** and **Advanced Life Support** to countries where such courses are not available or are too costly to be accessible to healthcare providers. The Life Support courses are designed to provide a wide variety of healthcare professionals with the ability to recognise several life-threatening emergencies and handle them in a safe, timely and effective manner.

Due the nature of the Moroccan educational infrastructure, it is often the case that officials who serve the community often lack even basic life-saving knowledge. OS Morocco's training addresses this issue.

From May 31st through June 5, 2010 a Colombian team of trainers was invited to the Centre, to train medical professionals in PALS and ACLS, over 35 participants were certified at the presence of the AHA representatives. Moroccan faculty trainers have also been trained and certified.

In addition to its regular educational projects which provide training in different fields to volunteers and also to the Life Support courses currently provided, OS Morocco strives to provide education in the communities it serves through training in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). They also serve staff in the hospitals where projects are held through Basic Life Support (BLS), Paediatric Life Support (PALS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) courses delivered to all personnel, particularly those involved in the care of patients during projects. These programmes are also used by the organisation to strengthen relationships and cooperation with academic institutions, for example local nursing and medical schools.

Taking into consideration the history of the programme and the current local needs and requests, OS Morocco is planning to conduct training to certify 300 members of the community in CPR, including police and firemen, and instruct 600 in BLS healthcare providers from partner hospitals. We also intend to provide courses in PALS and ACLS to 48 physicians a year. Furthermore in an effort to identify potential leaders for implementing this training in the future, the plan includes certification of at least 6 instructors in each of the Life Support disciplines. These instructors will go on to train hundreds of local people in these disciplines.

More than 17,000 babies died each year in Morocco and therefore, Operation Smile Morocco decided to contribute considerably to reduce this mortality scaring rate. Consequently, we have sent 2 members from our volunteers to acquire a training of HBB "Help Babies Breathe" from USA and since their return late 2011 they have been able to



train over 100 Mid-Wife in Morocco (between, Casablanca, Marrakech and Tangier) as of Feb. 2012. Therefore, OSM will certainly reach its goal of reducing the rate of baby mortality in Morocco in the up-coming years.

Operation Smile Morocco will maximise funding to make this work as effective and sustainable as possible. Once initiated, the training and the partnerships will be self-perpetuating; no further funding will be necessary. After our scheduled activities, we believe that there will no longer be a need for our intervention for this type of training in Morocco. The courses will be run by in-country trainers, with OS Morocco overseeing the process. They will continue to increase the skills-base of the Moroccan medical community for years to come. Moroccan professionals will be able to help themselves through the work OSM has initiated.

Do not forget we are looking forward to sustainability and continuity of all our programs:

Surgery, Follow ups on surgery, Orthodontist Follow-ups, Speech Therapist Follow-ups, Trainings and missions... and we are looking forward to hearing from you...

Thank you for your kind support in helping to change the lives of Moroccan children and adults!

