



SAVE A  
CHILD'S  
HEART





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## **SAVE A CHILD'S HEART**

Save a Child's Heart (SACH) is an Israeli-based international humanitarian non-profit organization with the mission of improving the quality of pediatric cardiac care for children in developing countries and creating centers of competence in these countries. We were founded by Dr. Ami Cohen in 1995 at the Wolfson Medical Center (WMC) in Holon, Israel.

Since 1995, SACH has treated over 5,500 children suffering from congenital and rheumatic heart disease. Approximately 50% of the children are from the Palestinian Authority and Gaza, Iraq, and Morocco, more than 40% are from Africa, and the remainder are from Asia, Eastern Europe, and the Americas.

As long as children with rheumatic and congenital heart disease around the world continue to suffer without access to care, we will treat children, train medical professionals and raise the level of pediatric heart care worldwide, from our heart in Israel.

From the children and parents with the courage to trust, to the doctors with courage to heal, **we are Save a Child's Heart.**

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## **PEDIATRIC CARDIAC DISEASE**

1 in every 100 children is born with a congenital heart defect (CHD). Approximately 25% of children born with a CHD will need heart surgery or other interventions to survive.

Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) is a preventable form of cardiovascular disease that affects the world's most vulnerable populations. It most often begins in childhood as strep throat and can progress to serious and sometimes fatal heart damage.



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## ACCESS TO CARE

90% of babies born with CHD live in regions where medical care is inadequate or unavailable. Added to the burden of CHD is RHD, which remains a global health problem in many low-income and middle-income countries.

The task is large: There are millions of children around the world in need of access to life-saving care.





# OUR MISSION

is to improve the quality of pediatric cardiac care  
for children in developing countries and create  
centers of competence in these countries

*because every child deserves the best medical  
treatment available regardless of race, religion,  
gender, nationality or financial status.*







Join us and together let us make the network to help children with heart disease globally big enough to be equal to the task. There is work for everybody. There are no dollars and cents in it, but it is worth a fortune.

– DR. AMI COHEN Z'L FOUNDER, SAVE A CHILD'S HEART



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## OUR FOUNDER

SACH exists today because of the vision, passion, and boundless energy of the late Dr. Amram "Ami" Cohen, an excellent surgeon, an inspiring leader and a warm and caring person.

He founded SACH in 1995 while serving as the Deputy Chief of Cardiovascular Surgery and Head of Pediatric Cardiac Surgery at WMC in Holon, Israel.

Ami died in a tragic accident while climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in August of 2001. The goals that he lived for are being carried on by the organization he so successfully created. This is a most fitting memorial to his uniquely productive life.





What we do



## **TREATING CHILDREN IN ISRAEL**

SACH and the medical team at the WMC bring children from all over the world who suffer from life-threatening heart defects to receive free, life-saving care in Israel. All aspects of a child's care, including flight, stay, food and medical costs, are covered by the organization. Approximately half of the children we treat are from the Middle East, including the Palestinian Authority, Gaza, Syria and Iraq. More than 40% are from Africa and the remainder from Asia, Eastern Europe and the Americas.



## **MEDICAL TRAINING PROGRAM**

SACH trains medical personnel from partner sites around the world at the WMC in all facets of pediatric cardiac care. To date, SACH has trained over 120 medical professionals from a host of countries including, China, Nigeria, Moldova, the Palestinian Authority, Gaza, Romania and Russia, as well as the first-ever Tanzanian and Ethiopian pediatric cardiac surgical teams. Medical staff who undergo training return to their home countries better equipped to treat their own children and ready to take on roles as our international partners, referring children for care, providing follow-up and establishing or continuing to work on the development of their own pediatric cardiac facilities.





What we do



## **MEDICAL, SCREENING AND TRAINING MISSIONS**

SACH embarks on several surgical, catheterization and screening missions each year to help screen, follow up with and save more children throughout the world. These missions also help to provide ongoing educational support to medical professionals previously trained in Israel who have returned to work in their home countries.



## **THE PALESTINIAN CLINIC**

Almost half of SACH patients come from neighbouring Arab countries, mainly the Palestinian Authority and Gaza. Palestinian children are referred to the SACH program by more than a dozen cardiologists from throughout Gaza and the Palestinian Authority, many of whom have previously trained with SACH. Children and their families arrive at the free cardiology clinic SACH has been holding at WMC every Tuesday since 1996. Each week, approximately 20-25 Palestinian children are screened. After evaluation, those who need surgery are prepared for it, receive it, and are followed up post-surgery. In addition, SACH has trained 33 Palestinian physicians, including the Palestinian Authority's first pediatric cardiac surgeon, and conducts annual seminars with our Palestinian partners.

## Our impact

 **5500+**


children have received life-saving surgeries and catheterizations through SACH since 1995.

 **130+**

Medical team members from partner countries trained.

 **62**

countries throughout the world from where children who have received care from SACH have come.

 **100**

Medical, screening and training missions conducted in developing countries.



# PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

## JAKAYA KIKWETE CARDIAC INSTITUTE

Jakaya Kikwete Cardiac Institute (JKCI) is a national, specialized and university teaching hospital in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, offering cardiovascular care, training and research services. Since its founding in October 2015, SACH has worked in partnership with the Institute to train an entire pediatric cardiac surgical team, including the country's first pediatric cardiac surgeon, Dr. Godwin Godfrey, who spent five years in Israel to gain the skills that allow him to lead the team.

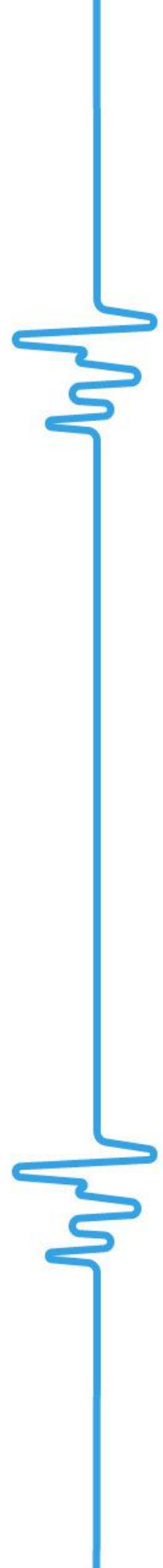
The team currently consists of two cardiologists, three anesthesiologists, three ICU nurses, three perfusionists and one general nurse - all trained in Israel over the past seven years - and will be joined by a second generation of medical professionals who are currently participating in our training program.

Each year, SACH embarks on two missions to the JKCI to treat, train and screen children. While one mission focuses on catheterization procedures, the other includes both catheterizations and surgery.

This ongoing partnership allows for the further development of the cardiac program, which is considered a center of excellence in East Africa.







My hope is that  
Tanzanian children will  
receive the timely  
cardiac care they need to  
be able to return the  
smiles to their faces and  
to their parents' faces.



– DR. STELLA MONGELLA  
SACH ALUMNI TRAINEE FROM TANZANIA  
COMPLETED SPECIALIZATION IN  
PEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGY  
2020



# COUNTRY HIGHLIGHT

## ETHIOPIA

In 2012, Dr. Yayehyirad (Yayu) Mekonnen Ejigu began a five-year pediatric cardiac surgery training program at the Wolfson Medical Center. Dr. Yayu completed his training in 2017, he went on to an 18 months fellowship at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, Australia. He finally returned to Ethiopia - a country of more than 100 million people - in May 2019 as Ethiopia's first fully-trained pediatric cardiac surgeon.

Since returning to Ethiopia, Yayu has been working at the Children's Cardiac Center in Addis Ababa, a non-profit that provides free heart surgery to children suffering from heart disease. Together with his team, Yayu has taken on a surgical trainee, screened hundreds of children for future surgeries, collaborated with medical missions and performed over 100 operations.

Following a successful Save a Child's Heart partner mission to Ethiopia in November 2019, during which 31 children were treated, leftover consumables that the Israeli team brought were used to complete another 12 surgeries.



## PARTNERING WITH PALESTINIANS

Almost half of SACH patients come from neighboring Arab countries, mainly the Palestinian Authority. Palestinian children are referred to the SACH program by more than a dozen cardiologists from throughout Gaza and the West Bank, many of whom have previously trained with SACH.

Children and their families arrive at the free cardiology clinic SACH has been holding at Wolfson every Tuesday since 1996. Each week, approximately 20-25 Palestinian children are screened. After evaluation, those who need surgery are prepared for it, receive it, and are followed up post-surgery.

In addition, SACH has trained 33 Palestinian physicians - including the West Bank's first pediatric cardiac surgeon - and conducts annual seminars with our Palestinian partners.







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## OUR FACILITIES AND OUR FUTURE

Opened in 1980, the Edith Wolfson Medical Center in Holon, Israel, is a major public hospital complex with over 60 departments and some 655 beds, serving 600,000 people from the surrounding cities of Holon, Bat Yam, Rishon LeZion, south Tel Aviv and Jaffa. Demand for the hospital's services has grown rapidly, with over 120,000 patients admitted annually.

Through the SACH program, doctors, nurses, children, parents and volunteers from various countries around the world, co-exist and are joined together for a common cause.

SACH is currently building an international pediatric cardiac center at the WMC. This new, 11,000-square-meter medical facility will house all of the infrastructure and equipment needed to perform pediatric heart surgeries and catheterizations, including all pre- and post-operative care, ensuring that SACH will be able to continue with its medical mission and treat even more children.

This project will also allow for better conditions for Israeli children treated at WMC. All funds for the construction of the seven-story children's hospital were raised by SACH.

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## THE MEDICAL TEAM

SACH is made up of a team of medical professionals from the WMC who give their time and talents to the organization.

More than 100 medical professionals and other hospital staff partake in the day-to-day activities of the organization, from pre- to post-op care, surgeries and catheterizations to the intensive care unit.

These departments are led by individuals who are dedicated to a lifetime of service.





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# **THE SYLVAN ADAMS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL AND INTERNATIONAL PEDIATRIC CARDIAC CENTER**

The project was initiated by SACH in cooperation with the Edith Wolfson Medical Center and Israel's Ministry of Health and supported by donors throughout the world.

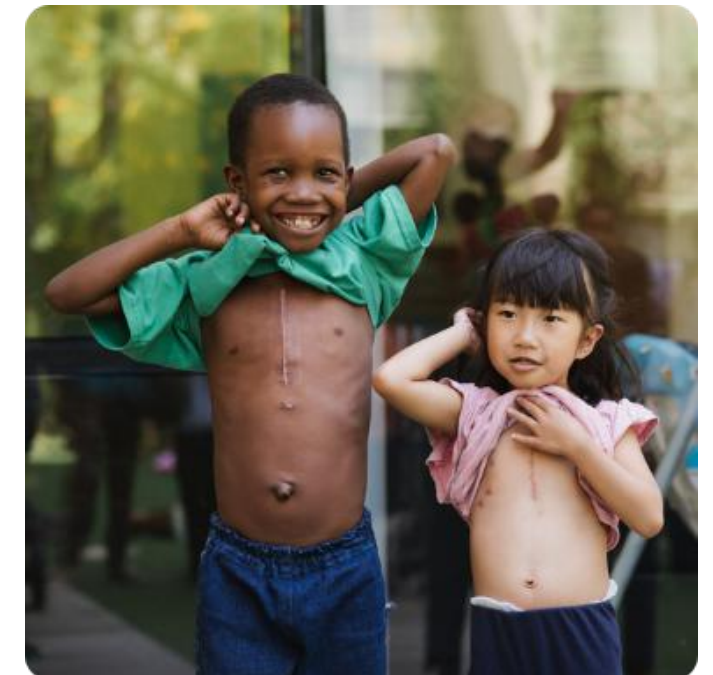


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## THE CHILDREN'S HOME

The Legacy Heritage Children's Home opened in October 2011. The modern, light-filled building is located in Holon, about a 15-minute drive from the WMC. It houses SACH's administrative offices, as well as living quarters for 60 children, mothers, nurses and medical professionals in our training program.

The Children's Home serves as a home away from home for children undergoing life-saving heart procedures.





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## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Close to 200 volunteers from all corners of the globe come to the SACH program in Israel to spend time with the children at the Children's Home.

By providing a familiar face to children upon arrival and throughout their pre- and post-op stay, volunteers contribute not only to cultivating an open environment for children of diverse backgrounds, but to the overall healing process and future success of the children that we treat.







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## GLOBAL SUPPORT

### GOVERNMENT

SACH receives significant support for cardiac care for children from the Middle East from the Israeli Ministry for Regional Cooperation.

Together with Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, consulates and embassies around the world, SACH is able to reach children from all over including those who come from countries that have no diplomatic relations with Israel, and welcome them in for life-saving care.

Working with the Wolfson Medical Center, a government hospital, SACH is able to achieve its mission and with the the Israeli Ministry of Health's support of the new Children's Hospital, expand it.

### OUR AFFILIATES

SACH is made up of a network of affiliates throughout the world, located in the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, South Africa, the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia and Switzerland. These affiliate organizations are responsible for raising awareness and funds for SACH, supporting all aspects of our work including treatments, training and missions.

### GRANTS AND FOUNDATIONS

SACH has been the past recipient of several prestigious grants which have enabled its various projects and activities, including from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the European Union's Partnership for Peace Programme. Of course, without the generous support of many benefactors and donors from around the world, SACH would not be able to continue its life-saving work. For this, we are incredibly thankful.

## AWARDS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2010, SACH was awarded China's National Friendship Medal for its contribution to development of the country's access to pediatric cardiac care. In 2011, SACH gained admission to the United Nations family as an accredited NGO and in the following year, received the 2012 Presidential Award for Volunteerism from Shimon Peres z"l.

Then, in 2018, SACH's lead pediatric cardiac surgeon, Dr. Lior Sasson, was awarded the Israel Hero award from the UK's Jewish News. Also in 2018, for the first time in history, SACH became the first Israeli NGO to receive the United Nation's "Population Award" for outstanding achievements in population and health.





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