



Projektbericht

Eastern Africa Center for Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Digestive Onology training and service; Dar es Salaam Tanzania



Projektteam

Fig. 1: M. Classen, K. Pallangyo, A.M. Kassem (l to r)



INTRODUCTION

Disorders of the gastrointestinal tract and liver including infections and tumors belong to most frequent threats for the health of the population of East Africa. Thus, a specialization of medical doctors and their staff on gastroenterology including hepatology and digestive oncology is now urgently needed.

In Africa the Gastroenterology Foundation Munich (GF) has already established training centers for gastroenterology in Soweto/Johannesburg, South Africa, and Rabat, Morocco, and initiated another in Cairo, Egypt. A look at the map of Africa will show that two of the three centers are in North Africa and one in Southern Africa. The remaining regions of Africa - Eastern, Central and Western Africa are yet to have such training and service centers. The World Gastroenterology Organization (WGO) controls the quality of training, the service centers and the outreach programs for Gastroenterology (GE) and hepatology in resource poor countries. Such countries are predominantly found in Africa, Middle East, Southeast Asia and South America.

In 2009 Prof. Meinhard Classen of the Munich GF, former President of the world organization OMGE / WGO wrote to the Government of Tanzania to determine if such a center would be of interest and value to Tanzania. Subsequently, Prof. Meinhard Classen and the Vice Chancellor of Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Science (MUHAS), Prof. Kisali Pallangyo MD, met in Bonn in October 2009, exchanged views on the subject and agreed in principle that indeed there was a need for such a training and service center. It was further agreed that when established the center should cater for all countries in the Eastern African region comprising of Burundi Kenya, Uganda & Rwanda and will be called "Eastern Africa Center for Gastroenterology, Hepatology and digestive Oncology Training and Service".

Thereafter Prof. Volker Diehl and later Prof. Classen visited Tanzania in April 2010 and at a joint meeting with the Vice Chancellor of MUHAS, the Executive Director of Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH), Director of the Ocean Road Cancer Institute (ORCI) discussed and agreed on how best to establish and run the envisaged center in Dar es Salaam. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) outlining the roles of each of the participating partners (MUHAS, MNH, ORCI, GF Munich) was prepared, agreed upon and signed in April 2010.



Training

Under this agreement the GF awarded three months training scholarships, to Drs. E Komba (MUHAS) and E. Chamshama (MNH), at the University of Cairo Egypt in 2011 under Prof. A. M. Kassem. The two doctors are back in Dar es Salaam with their newly acquired skills and have joined the endoscopic unit based at the MNH. It is planned to expand further the training to include on advanced endoscopy and ultrasound.

MUHAS was tasked to prepare and get approval for a two tract post graduate training program Master of Science (MSc) in Gastroenterology and Hepatology. One tract will be for surgical specialists and the other for internists. The minimum duration of the course is four semesters. Registration of candidates for the MSc GE, Hepatology and Digestive Oncology is expected to start during the academic year 2011/12.

Home for the Training Center and Clinic

The collaborating partners agreed that the training center with clinic should be located at the Muhimbili National Hospital which is also the main teaching hospital for MUHAS. Subsequently the MNH management allocated space within the New Pediatric Complex to construct the envisaged clinic for GE. Construction works started in July 2011 and is expected to be completed together with fixing of required equipment/facilities by February 2012; and immediately thereafter the center will start offering services.

The Current status of the project at the construction side is as it appears on the following pictures:



MUHAS Vice Chancellor Prof K. Pallangyo, Prof M. Classen, Prof Kassem doctors and nurses from MNH visiting the site on which the GE clinic will be constructed at the new pediatric complex in April 2011



Construction works of the GE Clinic at the top of the new Pediatrics Complex September 2011







The Equipments

Through efforts made by Prof. Meinhard Classen, Munich GF and other partners endoscopes and accessories, ultrasound tool and radiological C-Arm for combined endoscopic-radiological examinations, worth about 700,000 USD have been generously donated by the Else-Kröner-Fresenius Stiftung, GF and the German Society of Metabolic and Digestive Disorders and will be airlifted to Dar es Salaam in January 2012. The technical installation and training of local staff will be done and sponsored by the Munich Gastroenterology Foundation and the local authorities of Dar es Salaam.

Conclusions

An "Eastern Africa Center for Gastroenterology, Hepatology and digestive Oncology Training and Service" is under construction and will train young physicians and surgeons in this speciality of growing importance. The collaboration between the academic and clinical institutions (MUHAS and MNH) and GF Munich has become a friendly and fruitful. I acknowledge the significant donation of the Else-Kröner-Fresenius Stiftung, the GF Munich and the GSMDD. We intend to start the training course already in this semester.

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