



**ETHIOPIAN  
MEDICAL PROGRAM  
2022 REPORT**



DECEMBER 2022



## GREETINGS!

### Dear friends and supporters:

Our world changed drastically after COVID appeared in 2020. 2021 was even rougher for Ethiopia, because the pandemic combined with civil war. This continued in 2022. At least 2 patients lost mothers to COVID, and 1 patient died in the conflict. Patients were displaced and patients were caught behind fighting lines. Fortunately, in November, 2022 a peace treaty was signed.

Despite this, our program is continuing and even expanding. We are evaluating patients, operating, and training Ethiopian health professionals. Our ultimate goal is to have a comprehensive spine center in Ethiopia, run by Ethiopians.

We began spine outreach in 2021. We expanded this year. We travel by car or plane to a more remote area, and spend several days teaching local doctors about spine deformity by lecture and examining patients. We advertise on local media, and have a driver with a car and microphone travel through the city announcing that we are looking for patients with deformed spines.

This has been a great success. There is greater understanding of spine deformities by local doctors, and we have identified many patients we can help. Doctors have contacted us to continue spine training. We are amazed that different areas have different problems predominating: the Worabe area was filled with neurofibromatosis patients, while Debre Berhan has severe scoliosis.

Our own team has expanded, and we now have Dr. Eskinder a fully-trained Ethiopian orthopedic surgeon and Dr. Abraham, an attending neurosurgeon, working with us. We are now able to address spinal cord problems such as split cord (diastatomyelia) and tethered cord in Ethiopia. Dr. Eskinder will travel to Coimbatore, India for spine training in 2023.

We moved our Saturday clinic to CURE, a Christian pediatric orthopedic hospital in Addis Ababa. We are working with CURE doctors to establish a pediatric spine program. There is an abundance of patients, and we are planning our first surgeries in 2023.

Our partners from FOCOS-Ghana travelled to Ethiopia in May, and evaluated over 125 patients, as well as operated on our “growing rod” population. Half of the FOX Study of the most severe spine deformities in the world are our patients, and they underwent reevaluation. This year:

- We have operated on 38 patients in Ghana and 107 in Ethiopia, as part of our capacity building.
- And we've sent 5 doctors and nurses to FOCOS-Ghana (including an anesthesiologist) for training.
- We held Ethiopia's first Spine Summit in Addis Ababa.
- 577 medical professionals participated in training.

We are looking forward to a great year ahead, and wish you all strength and blessings for happy holidays and a wonderful 2023.

Please consider continuing to support us.

With appreciation,

Rick Hodes, MD, MACP and the JDC-Ethiopia medical team



THANK YOU FOR CREATING ENDLESS  
POSSIBILITIES FOR OUR PATIENTS.

# SUCCESS THIS YEAR!

 **145**  
Surgeries

 **821**  
New patients

 **1,365**  
patients screened in 6 Cities



9 Surgeries by Dr. Ted



577 Medical Professionals

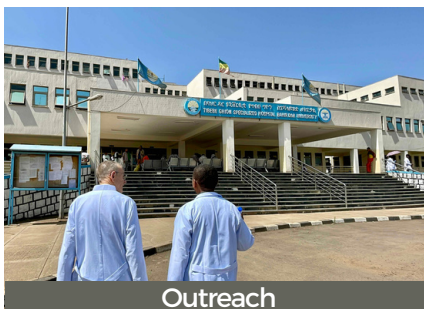


38 patients sent to FOCOS, Ghana

Dr. Ted Belanger of Texas Back Institute came to Ethiopia in May 2022 and operated on 9 patients, his 10th mission since 2010 and first time after COVID. Dr. Ted has operated on 165 of our patients! We plan a major mission in 2023.

In partnership with the Ministry of Health, we traveled to 5 different towns in Ethiopia and trained 577 Ethiopian health professionals. Our trainees are awarded certificates upon completion.

We sent 38 patients to FOCOS Hospital in Accra, Ghana for life-saving traction and surgery.



Outreach



Visiting surgeons



Spine Summit

Despite war and pandemic, We traveled to 5 different cities in Ethiopia to screen, evaluate patients and create awareness.

During the pandemic, visiting surgeons were unable to travel to Ethiopia. This year the FOCOS team arrived to operate on our growing rod patients and lengthen rods with an electromagnet.

JDC held a Spine Summit, the first in the country. In partnership with the Ministry of Health, we are building momentum in spine deformity and spine surgery.



The Ethiopian Ministry of Health awarding Dr. Rick Hodes commendation, cape and headgear for saving lives for over three-decades.

# WHY DID THIS MALARIA PATIENT ESCAPE THE HOSPITAL AGAINST MEDICAL ADVICE?

Kasahun is a 17-year-old, 12th grade student in Gondar, 400 miles northwest of Addis Ababa. Bright and inquisitive, he has ranked #1 in his class since first grade! Let's let him speak for himself:



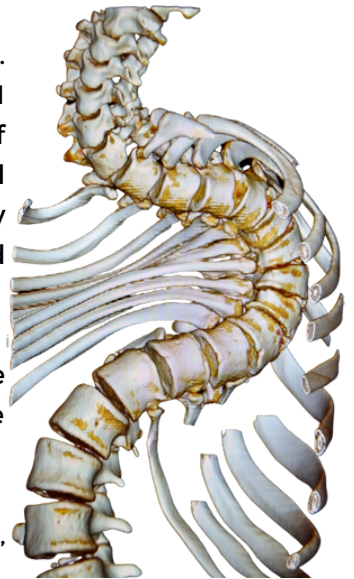
"My name is Kasahun. I have suffered both physically and mentally from my spine deformity, which is called kyphoscoliosis. I have been taunted and insulted by students and neighbors.

Last week, I was reading about my deformity online. I found Dr. Rick's Facebook page. I saw the notice that he and his team are coming to Bahar Dar to teach doctors and examine spine patients. That's only 110 miles from our home in Gondar. I told Beyene, my elder brother, about this.

But my brother was in the hospital, suffering from malaria, getting IV medication. He pulled out his IV, walked out of the hospital, and we took a bus to Bahar Dar. I did not know where to find the hospital, so I used Google Maps. After hours of waiting, I met Dr. Rick and his team. After talking for 10 minutes and a physical exam that included over 20 photos, reflexes, bending, and x-rays, I was told to apply for a passport. Now I have hope that I will become straighter, breathe easier, and become pain-free."

We were shocked to hear this story; malaria patients need full treatment. But we were amazed by the love and dedication that Beyene showed his brother. We advised Beyene to report back to his hospital as soon as possible.

Kasahun's CT scan is shown here. We sent Kassahun to FOCOS hospital in Accra, Ghana in November 2022 for months of traction, followed by a major spine surgery.



## INTRODUCING ANTENEH:

Anteneh and Dr. Rick have spent hundreds of hours together doing CT scans and 3-D reconstructions on spine patients. Dr. Rick believes that Anteneh is the best CT operator in Africa, and he has taught many other Ethiopian radiographers to do spine imaging during our trainings.

## ABOUT

### DR. RICK HODES:

After graduating from University of Rochester Medical School and training in internal medicine at Johns Hopkins University, Dr. Rick first travelled to Ethiopia as a relief worker during the famine of 1984. A Fulbright Fellowship brought him to Addis Ababa University Medical School to teach and practice in 1985. In 1990, he was hired by JDC to care for 25,000 displaced Ethiopians seeking to immigrate to Israel.



Dr. Hodes opened JDC's medical program in 2006 at Mother Teresa's Mission. He now runs clinic from the basement of a crowded public hospital, treating patients, mostly youths, with spinal deformities, and rare medical issues.

On a personal note, Dr. Hodes met his first two children, abandoned orphans with TB of the spine (Pott's Disease) at Mother Teresa's Mission in 1999. He adopted them and brought them to Dallas for complex surgery. This sparked his interest in spine.

Dr. Hodes is a CNN Hero, holds five honorary doctorates, and was awarded Mastership by the American College of Physicians. He is the subject of four documentary films, including HBO's "Making the Crooked Straight" and "Zemene," as well as Marilyn Berger's book "[This is a Soul: The Mission of Rick Hodes.](#)"

[www.rickhodes.org](http://www.rickhodes.org)

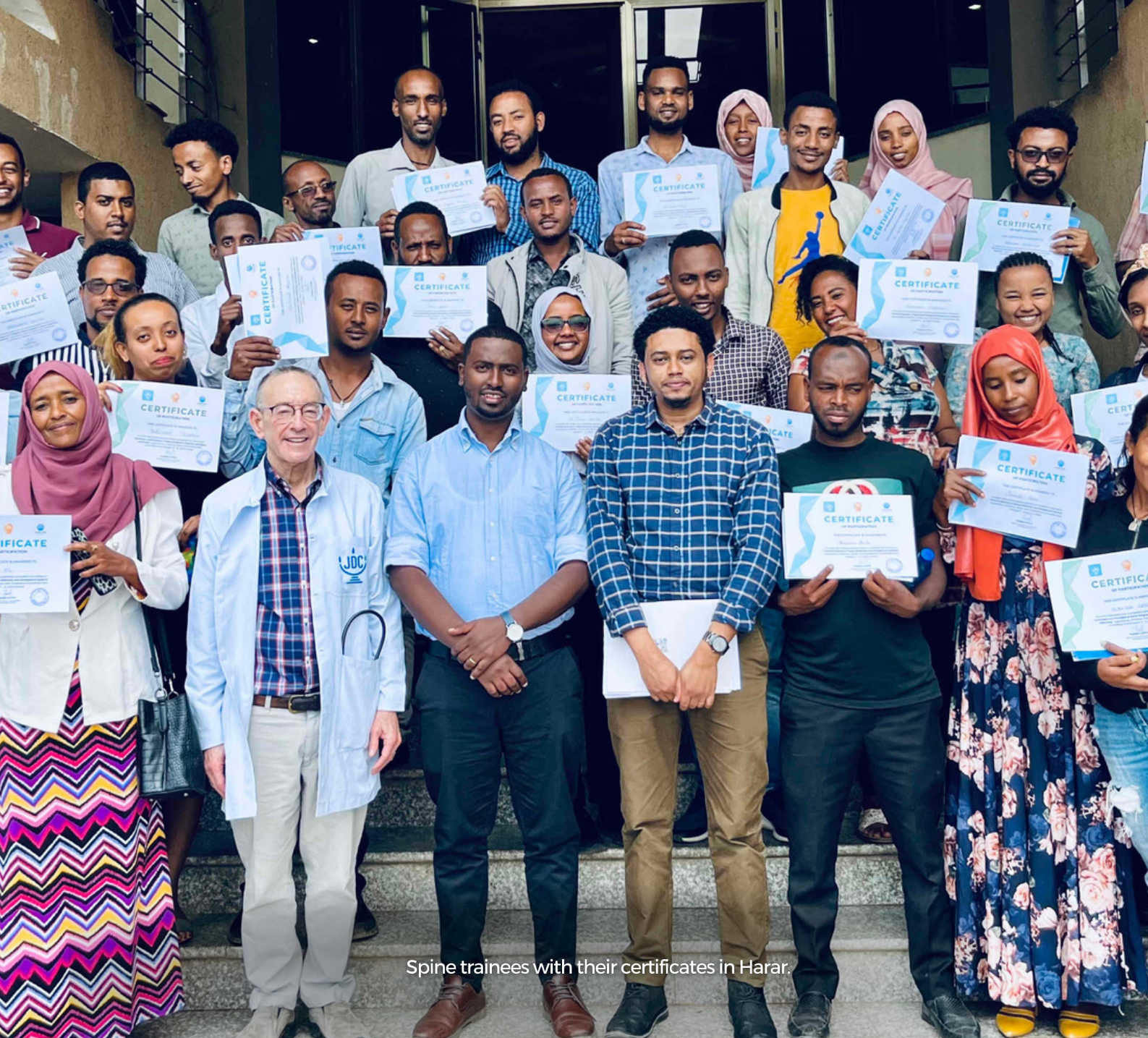


**JDC** is the world's leading Jewish humanitarian assistance organization, impacting millions of lives in more than 70 countries today. JDC leverages a century of experience confronting poverty and crisis around the world to make the world a better place for all.

[www.jdc.org](http://www.jdc.org)

## OUR MAIN PARTNERS





Spine trainees with their certificates in Harar.

**\$26,000**

WILL SUPPORT 1 COMPLEX  
SPINE SURGERY IN GHANA

**\$100,000**

WILL SUPPORT 50  
SURGERIES IN ETHIOPIA

**\$750,000**

WILL BUY MEDICAL & SURGICAL  
EQUIPMENT TO ESTABLISH A SPINE  
CENTER IN ETHIOPIA

**Please help us! Money is our limiting factor in saving lives.**

Gifts are tax-deductible. Contact us about wire transfers, planned giving, bequests, stock transfer and corporate matching gifts. JDC is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization for tax purposes.

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**Contact us:**

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**Mailing:**

Payable to "JDC"

220 E 42nd St. #400, NY, NY 10017

Must be marked "Ethiopia Medical" to get to us.





[WWW.RICKHODES.ORG](http://WWW.RICKHODES.ORG)

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