

Project Update – Nairobi, Kenya

28-30 June 2018

Background

On June 28th-30th, BFIRST was invited to participate in the Kenyan Society of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery (KSPRAS) annual conference by Dr Joseph Wanjeri, the Chairman of the Scientific Committee for the conference. Mr Wee Lam, Chairman of BFIRST and Mr David Bell, Consultant Plastic Surgeon from Liverpool represented BFIRST on this trip.

Plastic Surgery Training in Kenya

We were both extremely impressed by the standard of Plastic Surgery in Kenya. There is a well-established training programme where trainees undergo 5 years of training before graduating as a consultant after passing the final exit examination. In addition to the surgical training, each trainee is required to complete a Research Project leading to a higher degree (Masters).

KSPRAS conference

As a result of this integrated research programme, there were several research projects presented at the KSPRAS meetings. These were very well-conducted and covered a wide range of sub specialties including craniofacial, limb trauma, burns and basic science research. The conference also covered a wide-ranging field of surgical outcomes from the different sections of the department. There was a good mix of free papers and didactic lectures by both national and international speakers. Other than an introduction to BFIRST, we each gave a series of lectures covering upper limb (congenital hands, soft tissue cover, nerve transfer) and lower limb (BOA/BAPRAS guidelines). Among the talks, there were a few personal highlights. We were particularly impressed by the charity work done by the Kenyans themselves among the poorer parts of rural Kenya, especially in cleft surgery. This shows a tremendous level of social awareness and desire to help the underprivileged; for those who cannot afford the trip to the National centre in Nairobi. Another highlight was the nation's first successful hand replant. The success of this case would surely mark the beginning of many replantations in the future.



The Future

After this visit, we both believe Kenya will play a very important part in the future of Plastic Surgery training in Africa. The hosts were very keen for a collaboration with BFIRST although this will be in very specific areas which require higher level of skills such as brachial plexus surgery (adult and paediatric) and possibly free tissue transfer. We would like to thank Dr Ferdinand Nangloe, Chairman of the organizing committee Professor Stanley Khainga, President of KSPRAS and Dr Joseph Wanjeri for their kind hospitality during our visit and look forward to a close partnership between BFIRST and the KSPRAS.

Mr Wee Lam, BFIRST Chairman