



## **Newsletter**

**Focus on WOC-SICOT hybrid meeting**

**15-18 September 2021**

Website WOC: [www.worldorthopaedicconcern.org](http://www.worldorthopaedicconcern.org)

Linked with: [www.worldortho.com](http://www.worldortho.com) (Australasia), [www.wocuk.org](http://www.wocuk.org) (UK)

*This Newsletter is circulated through the internet, through SICOT and all WOC Regional Secretaries in the hope that they will be able to download and distribute it to those “concerned” who may not be connected through the “Net.”*

*It is addressed to all interested in orthopaedic surgery, particularly those who work in areas of the world with great need, and very limited resource.*

*Distributed by:* Dr Arindam Banerjee [asban444@gmail.com](mailto:asban444@gmail.com) or [arindambanerjee444@gmail.com](mailto:arindambanerjee444@gmail.com)

+91-98300-70846 (Mobile and WhatsApp)

## **From the desk of the Editor**

This newsletter is being distributed just before SICOT 2021. As you know, SICOT 2020 was cancelled but like the Tokyo Olympics the venue was retained for the conference in 2021. Our hopes that 2021 would a better year than 2020 were belied as the pandemic continued unabated and often worse.

My home, India suffered a catastrophic second wave and all our nightmares became a reality. Hospital bed and oxygen scarcity became the new normal. Patients succumbed and the health system gasped.

Fortunately, a lot of people pitched in with finances and resources. The government managed to bring in vaccination in big numbers and finally the wave petered out. We can only hope that the future will be better and our preparation for the third wave will be more proactive, not reactive.



On the WOC front- a lot of virtual and real activity happened:

- Regular meetings were held once a month by the Executive Committee in conjunction with regional advisors as well as other core members.
- The website was renewed.
- The bank account which had become inactive after the death of our previous treasurer was revived.
- Our treasurer Dr Matthew Dobbs brought promises of sponsorship of \$10,000 which will go a long way in boosting our activity and effectiveness.
- Several meetings were held to amend the constitution to remove anomalies and make it more relevant to the current times.
- Succession to the new WOC team will be done after our business meeting on 17/9/21. Since most of us are not travelling to Budapest, the handover this year will be virtual.

The new team from the above date will be:

- ❖ Alaa Ahmad – President
- ❖ Arindam Banerjee – Secretary General
- ❖ Anil Golhar – Treasurer

Advisors from different regions of the world will continue as previously:

- ❖ Amjad Hossain, Bangladesh, South Asia
- ❖ Kiran Agarwal, Harvard, North America
- ❖ Mohammad Fadel, Egypt, MENA
- ❖ Monica Nogueira, Brazil, Latin America
- ❖ Ram Kewal Shah, Nepal, SAARC Region

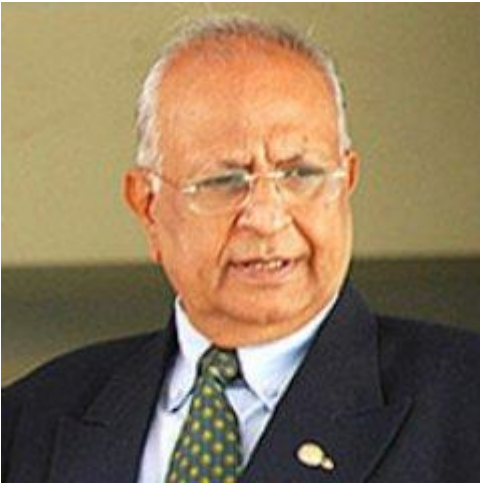
The important agendas which were formulated last time continue to remain important to us. I am repeating some of the key agendas to emphasize their importance:

- ✚ Increase and strengthen the National associations and regional chapters of the WOC which represent the core strength of the organization. Clearly demarcate the relationship between the Central group and the local chapters.
- ✚ Have a uniform membership policy across the world.
- ✚ Many members are untraceable or have changed their emails. We need to find them and document their presence.
- ✚ The mailing lists are incomplete and need to be updated. We also need articles from around the world so that our readers are aware of the activities of the WOC and its members.
- ✚ A regular source of funding is required to run the organization.
- ✚ We must think about holding regular conferences for the organization, independent of SICOT activities and activities of other associated organizations. For this purpose, a proposal for a World Congress at Kolkata, India has been proposed for 2023 but will depend on the Covid situation and the financial health of the organization.
- ✚ In the past office bearers were chosen. But as the organization becomes larger (with more and more country members) a fair way of representation and election must be formulated.
- ✚ WOC must revive its humanitarian projects from around the world so that it can be a truly “caring” orthopaedic organization.

Dr Deven Taneja retires as President of WOC after playing a long innings at the helm of the organization in different roles. He will continue as Immediate Past President to guide us through our activities. WOC Intl thanks him for his selfless services and commitment to the organization.

The Next TKS medal was awarded to Dr Steve Manion of the UK. He has been associated with humanitarian and disaster management efforts worldwide and WOC could not have picked a more suitable recipient.

## **From the desk of the President**



The Coronavirus has slowed down the activities of not only the WOC, but also in other spheres globally. However, we kept moving by holding regular EC meetings and building relations with other countries like Jordan, Egypt, Libya, Iran where we could establish our regional chapters.

Our account was non operable. With the help of Linda of SICOT, the needful was done. Our bank account is now operable. The financial status of WOC is not good as there is no source of income. I have been associated with WOC from the very beginning when the India chapter was formed. Later from 2015 as a Secretary General I enjoyed working with my President, Dr. John Dorman. I fondly remember Geoffrey Walker and Mike Laurance. Their contribution to WOC was immense. From the last 3 years as President, I have tried my best to put things in order and am now completing my term in Sep. 2021. I had a very able Secretary General in Dr. Alaa Ahmad. Many thanks to Dr Alaa for his co-operation and hard work.

I received full support from Dr. Rajashekharan and Dr. Ashok Johari. To them I will remain forever grateful. I pass on the baton to Dr. Alaa Ahmad, wish WOC a bright future and would like to say goodbye to all my EC and the other members.

I wish you all good health in this time of the pandemic.

Deven Taneja

25<sup>th</sup> Aug 2021

## **Volunteer services**

### **Deven Taneja**

In July 1982 and again in 1992 I had the opportunity to go to Malawi in a project called “Malawi against Polio” (MAP) of Rotary international. I was the 5<sup>th</sup> specialty surgeon to serve the project and the first from India.

I was based in Lilongwe (Capital of Malawi) where the main part of the project was going on. I had seen few hundred patients of polio, club foot, neglected trauma and Osteomyelitis. I did more than 60 operations in 3 different hospitals and visited 2 rural clinics. I was also involved in the training of Orthopaedic assistants. My last week was spent in Blantyre. I enjoyed my stay in Malawi and I am happy to put it on record that on my second visit to Malawi I did not see any new Polio patients. My stay and social interaction was very pleasant.

I went to Indonesia as a visiting Prof. under WOC program at Hissamuddin University. My one month stay at Ujung Pandang was very productive. Most of the work was on neglected trauma and infections. I had the opportunity to train the doctors and technicians.

I also went as a TKS visiting professor to Bhutan under the Health Volunteer Overseas, USA which is again under the WOC International Program. Most of my work was on Neglected Trauma, especially the spinal injuries and infections. I was also training young doctors on the basics of Orthopaedics. I participated in an excellent symposium organized by the Army. Working with the Orthopaedic overseas, Rotary International & WOC gave me an immense satisfaction & happiness of having made as much of a contribution as I could to needy and poor patients.

I made many friends with whom I am still in touch with. I thank all the organizations for giving me an opportunity to serve the ailing society in LMIC.

I appeal to the youngsters to come forward to volunteer their services to these countries.

### **Editor's Note:**

Dr. Taneja is the first recipient of Prestigious TKS Gold Medal (2015). This medal is given yearly to one Orthopaedic Surgeon for his/ her outstanding services in LMICS.

## **The Secretary-General's Report**

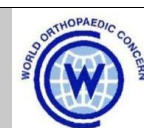


I am enumerating the latest WOC international activities in bullet form:

1. We are organizing a course for foot, ankle and complicated tibial fractures for the Libya chapter that will begin in Oct 2021
2. WOC international is in the final stages for implementing the training program for interlocking nail use for trauma in the Gaza strip through the collaboration with SIGN, Harvard Global Group and MSF
3. Constitutional amendments are to be finalized for final approval in the WOC meeting during the SICOT annual meeting
4. All details about the WOC symposium were discussed in the last meeting and approved. It has been attached in this newsletter
5. Official approval of the WOC Egypt chapter was done under the Presidency of Professor Fadel



# WOC, Symposium - Budapest



**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Hall:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Inauguration

15 Mins	Welcome and about the Symposium	Dr. Deven Taneja, WOC - Int. President	<a href="mailto:deventaneja@gmail.com">deventaneja@gmail.com</a>
	WOC - Int. Activities	Dr. Alaa Ahmad, WOC - Int. Secretary General	<a href="mailto:alaaahmad@hotmail.com">alaaahmad@hotmail.com</a>
	SICOT and WOC	Dr. Ashok Johari, SICOT President	<a href="mailto:drashokjohari@hotmail.com">drashokjohari@hotmail.com</a>

## Session - 1

Sr. No	Time	Topic	Moderator	Speaker	Email
1	15 Mins	Bone and Joint infection in LMIC	Dr. Deven Taneja, India		<a href="mailto:deventaneja@gmail.com">deventaneja@gmail.com</a>
				Dr. Ashok Banskota, Nepal	<a href="mailto:ashokbanskota@gmail.com">ashokbanskota@gmail.com</a>
				Dr. S. C. Goel, India	<a href="mailto:drscgoel@gmail.com">drscgoel@gmail.com</a>

## Session - 2

2	15 Mins	Spine Problems in LMICs	Moderator	Speaker	Email
2	15 Mins	Spine Problems in LMICs	Dr. Alaa Ahmad, Palestine		<a href="mailto:alaaahmad@hotmail.com">alaaahmad@hotmail.com</a>
				Dr. Roger Hartel, USA	<a href="mailto:roger@hartlmd.net">roger@hartlmd.net</a>

## Session - 3

3	15 Mins	Hip Preservation	Moderator	Speaker	Email
3	15 Mins	Hip Preservation	Dr. Anil Golhar, India		<a href="mailto:golharanil@hotmail.com">golharanil@hotmail.com</a>
				Dr. N. K. Magu, India	<a href="mailto:Nkmagu@rediffmail.com">Nkmagu@rediffmail.com</a>
				Dr. Vijay Kane, UK	<a href="mailto:vkane18007@aol.com">vkane18007@aol.com</a>

## Session - 4

4	15 Mins	Neglected Trauma	Moderator	Speaker	Email
4	15 Mins	Neglected Trauma	Dr. Arindam Banerjee, India		<a href="mailto:arindambanerjee444@gmail.com">arindambanerjee444@gmail.com</a>
				Dr In-Ho Jeon, Korea	<a href="mailto:jeonchoi@gmail.com">jeonchoi@gmail.com</a>
				Dr Alvaro Zamorano, Chile	<a href="mailto:azamorano@hcuch.cl">azamorano@hcuch.cl</a>

## Session - 5

5	15 Mins	Recurrent and Neglected Club Foot	Moderator	Speaker	Email
5	15 Mins	Recurrent and Neglected Club Foot	Dr. Monica Nogueira, Brazil		<a href="mailto:monipn@uol.com.br">monipn@uol.com.br</a>
				Dr. Davi Haje, Brazil	<a href="mailto:davihaje@yahoo.com.br">davihaje@yahoo.com.br</a>
				Dr. Dra Annisuddin Bhatti, Pakistan	<a href="mailto:dranisbhatti@gmail.com">dranisbhatti@gmail.com</a>

## Session - 6

6	15 Mins	Training of Ortho Surgeons in LMICs	Moderator	Speaker	Email
6	15 Mins	Training of Ortho Surgeons in LMICs	Dr. M. Fadel, Egypt		<a href="mailto:fadelminia@yahoo.com">fadelminia@yahoo.com</a>
				Dr. Arindam Banerjee, India	<a href="mailto:arindambanerjee444@gmail.com">arindambanerjee444@gmail.com</a>
				Dr. Kiran Agarwal, Harding	<a href="mailto:kiran.agarwalharding@gmail.com">kiran.agarwalharding@gmail.com</a>

## Session - 7

7	15 Mins	T. K. S. Gold Medal awards and closing			
7	15 Mins	T. K. S. Gold Medal awards and closing			

**Note:**

1. Moderator will introduce the subject in the beginning and then moderate the discussion at the end of the session
2. Each speaker will get five mins to present clinical case, which should have minimum 2 years follow up and a clear message.
3. Speaker giving a talk can give his experience and suggestions relevant to LMICs needs.
4. Time allotted to be strictly adhered.



## **Invitation from Dr Mohamed Fadel**



Dear Professors, friends, and colleagues, we are in need of great support for the current WAIOT conference.

If you or your colleagues have time, it is my pleasure to invite you and your trainees to share with us in our LRS.PD continuous professional development. It is in our concern to take care of our orthopedic trainees and residents' community. Many associations and societies are meeting at LRS ITEM Aug 20, 2021

Best wishes,  
Yours sincerely,

Mohamed Fadel

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Free Open Scientific Day  
International Trainee Education Meeting

ITEM

Friday, August 20, 2021 - at 10 am (Cairo Time) - Online on Zoom  
To Share Directly, Just click: [/https://www.facebook.com/LRS.PD](https://www.facebook.com/LRS.PD)  
LRS.PD Trainee Day Model

▼ Part I: LRS Board Lecture

Prof. Ashraf Khanfour, Professor of orthopedic Surgery and Chair. Orth Dept Damanhour Teaching Hospital  
- Blount's disease – an up-to-date insight with contemporary treatment guidelines



## ▼ Part II: LRS International Guest

Ms. Deepa Bose

Consultant in Orthopedic Trauma & Limb Reconstruction

CSL for Fracture-Related Infection

Vice Chair T&O SAC

Chairman of World Orthopedic Concern (WOC) UK

- Orthoplastic management of bone infection

## ▼ Part III: LRS Board Lecture

Prof. Mohamed Fadel, LRS.PD Program Director

- Orthoplastic Ilizarov Assisted Technique in open fracture

▼ LRS Scientific Board & World Orthopedic Concern WOC Egypt Chapter

Egypt WOC Chapter: Hisham Elashry / Mohamed A Lakloul / Ibrahim Abuomira

ITEM

LRS board: Khaled Emara / Ihab Badawi / Ashraf Khanfour / Mohamed Fadel

## Free Open Scientific Day

### Professional Diploma in Limb Reconstructive Surgery, LRS.PD International Trainee Education Meeting ITEM

Friday, August 20, 2021 - at 10 am (Cairo Time) - Online on Zoom

To Share Directly, Just click: [//https://www.facebook.com/LRS.PD](https://www.facebook.com/LRS.PD)

#### ITEM LRS Board, UK & Egypt WOC Chapters



Hisham El-Ashry



Mohamed Lakloul



Ibrahim Abou Omira



Ms. Deepa Bose



Ashraf Khanfour



Mohamed Fadel



Khalid Emarah

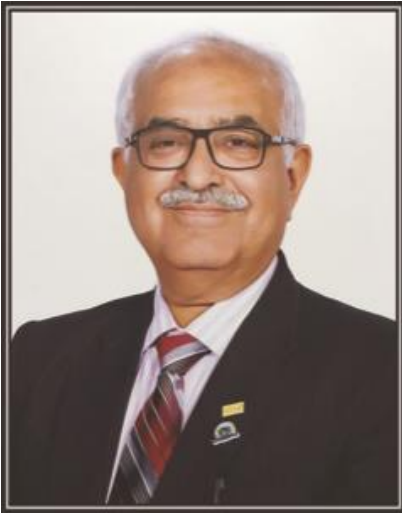


Ihab Badawy

- **Part I: LRS Board Lecture**  
**Prof. Dr. Ashraf Khanfour**  
FRCS (Ireland); MD Orth. Alex.  
Professor & Chairman of Trauma and orthopedic surgery department;  
Chief of Limb Lengthening & Reconstruction and Paediatric Orthopaedics,  
Damanhour Medical National Institute (DMNI); One of GOTH "General  
Organization for Teaching Hospitals and Institutes".  
**Topic: Blount's disease – an up-to-date insight with contemporary  
treatment guidelines**
- **Part II: Chairman of World Orthopedic Concern (WOC) UK**  
**Ms. Deepa Bose**  
Consultant in Orthopedic Trauma & Limb Reconstruction  
CSL for Fracture-Related Infection  
Vice Chair T & O SAC  
**Topic: Orthoplastic management of bone infection**
- **Part III: LRS & Chairman of (WOC) Egypt**  
**Prof. Dr. Mohamed Fadel**  
LRS.PD Program Director.  
**Topic: Orthoplastic Ilizarov Assisted Technique in Open Fracture**

Training program opened for  
the 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation, for living  
abroad, LRS.PD Hybrid Version,  
Registration for the New Year  
2021

- For more information  
and registration, be in  
touch, Facebook page  
and group:
- <https://www.facebook.com/LRS.PD>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/LRS.PD>
- E-mail:  
[lrs.pd@aicpd.org](mailto:lrs.pd@aicpd.org)



**From Training to a Health Policy**  
*an effective way to eradicate non  
treated walking clubfeet: results of a  
national program*



**Anisuddin Bhatti**  
Focal Person Ponseti International Pakistan

Clubfoot Clinic & Ponseti Research Centre  
Dr. Ziauddin University Hospital,  
Karachi, Pakistan

41st SICOT Orthopaedic World Congress – Budapest







## **AO Alliance: Partnering to strengthen care of the injured in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)**

Since 2015, the AO Alliance has trained over 20,000 healthcare workers, including trauma and orthopaedic (T&O) surgeons, operating room personnel, doctors in training (residents or registrars), paramedics, orthopaedic clinical officers, in 24 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and 8 countries in Asia, on the basic principles of fracture management, both operative and nonoperative.

To mark the first six years of existence, AO Alliance board members, under the leadership of Rolf M Jeker, and former members Jaime Quintero and Joachim Prein, elected to document the history and evolution of the AO Alliance. The book explores the contribution of the AO Socio-Economic Committee (AO SEC) in advancing fracture care in LMICs, analyzing the human and economic burden of injury and disability in these countries. The authors describe the process leading to the AO Alliance's creation, map its governance, policies, strategies, funding, and partnerships, charting its progress, and exploring its future.

The book is freely available to read here: <https://bit.ly/3xYrUR1>.

### **AO Alliance Country Initiatives**

The AO Alliance has established four national capacity building programs in Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, and Malawi, addressing gaps in infrastructure, human resources, training, and clinical data.

#### **The Gambia**

With cooperative funding from AO Trauma, the Gambia Country Initiative was launched in 2019 under the leadership of Dr Kebba Marenah, chief of surgery at the Edward Francis Small – Teaching Hospital and CEO, Dr Charles Roberts.

A young T&O surgeon, Dr Mariam Joof, has returned to the Gambia from her residency training in Senegal, supported by the AO Alliance Gambia Country Initiative. The Gambia thus has, in 2020, a second national T&O surgeon to serve the country's population of 2.3 million.

Dr Musa Ka, currently training in Russia, will be returning to the Gambia in 2022 to further increase the number of national T&O surgeons. Dr Mariama Suso, a promising Gambian trainee, is completing a T&O residency at an AO Alliance partner hospital in Malawi, the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital. She is due to qualify as a T&O surgeon in 2026.

### Burkina Faso

In 2021, the Burkina Faso Country Initiative was launched, with five main goals: To improve the technical portfolio of the university teaching hospitals; to improve the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of healthcare workers caring for fractures; to develop trauma registries; to raise awareness of the burden of injuries as a public health issue; and to collaborate with the national trauma and orthopaedic association to build a national community of practice. This is the AO Alliance's first national capacity-building program in French-speaking Africa. The initiative was developed after a thorough needs assessment carried out in July 2019.

### **COVID-19 Response Program**



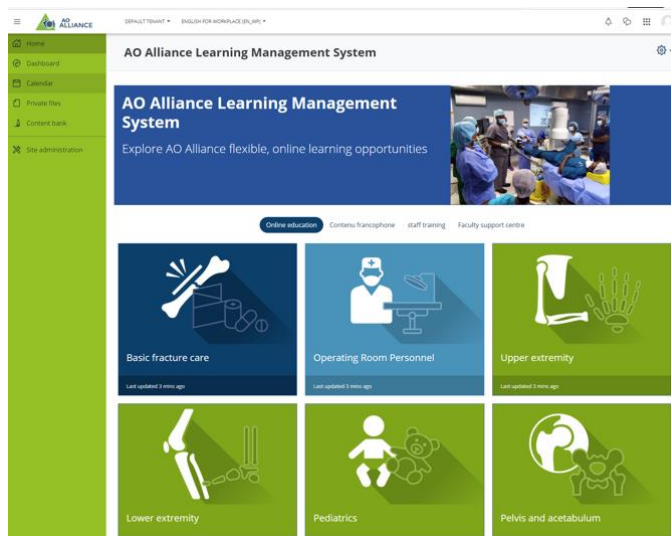
Seamstress at Kids' World Tailoring making reusable PPE sets  
Blantyre, Malawi, May 2020

The AO Alliance's first response in February 2020 to the pandemic was to develop a strategy to keep our local faculty networks safe and healthy. Since then, the AO Alliance has been supporting local projects to procure personal protective equipment (PPE) as those needed for T&O staff in the operating theatres were and continue to be diverted to emergency rooms, leaving our T&O surgeons and operating room

personnel unprotected. The below activities form part of the COVID-19 response:

- a. Local capacity solutions to produce PPE
- b. Procurement and distribution of PPE for surgical teams in AO Alliance countries
- c. Technical support for COVID-19 surgical protocols (return to surgery)
- d. Manpower recruitment (anaesthesia clinical officers) to maintain surgical throughput
- e. Treatment subsidies for paediatric surgical cases (Beit CURE Malawi Hospital)

## **AO Alliance Online: Fracture care education**



The AO Alliance is developing a free online education platform covering injuries to the distal upper extremity (radius) and a comprehensive program for fracture-related infections (prevention, diagnosis, and treatment). The content is designed for low-resources settings. AO Alliance Online will go live in October 2021.

## **We are happy to announce a tie-up between Harvard Global Orthopaedics and WOC**

### **Harvard Global Orthopaedics Collaborative**

The Harvard Global Orthopaedics Collaborative (HGOC) is a group of Harvard-affiliated orthopaedic surgery faculty and trainees who share a passion for improving access to musculoskeletal health care globally. We engage in clinical research, surgical education, care delivery, and health systems development with our global partners in Cameroon, Colombia, Haiti, India, Malawi, and South Africa. We collaborate with the Harvard Program for Global Surgery and Social Change (PGSSC),

the Orthopaedic and Arthritis Center for Outcomes Research (OrACORe), and the Harvard Medical School Orthopaedic Trauma Initiative (HMS OTI).

Founder and Director: Kiran J. Agarwal-Harding, MD MPH  
Board of Faculty Advisors

Paul Appleton, MD – Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center  
Edward K. Rodriguez, MD PhD - Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

Jack Wixted, MD – Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

Collin May, MD MPH - Boston Children’s Hospital

George S.M. Dyer, MD - Brigham and Women’s Hospital

Jeffrey N. Katz, MD MSc – Brigham and Women’s Hospital

Kiran Agarwal-Harding

John Y. Kwon, MD – Massachusetts General Hospital

Chaitanya S. Mudgal, MD - Massachusetts General Hospital



### **Active HGOC partnerships/projects**

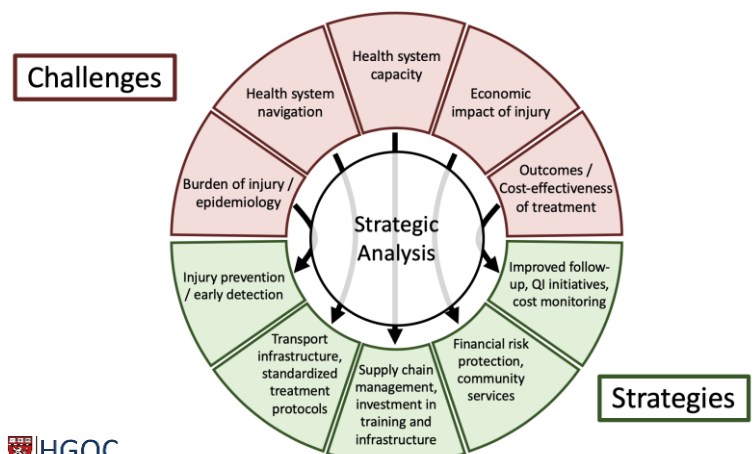
Haitian Annual Assembly of Orthopaedic Trauma (HAAOT), Port-au-Prince, Haiti

HAAOT is an annual conference started in 2013 aimed at improving knowledge and skills of Haitian orthopaedic residents and staff. The conference consists of research paper presentations, case discussions, didactic lectures, and workshops, all of which are presented in both English and French. It is organized every year in conjunction with the Harvard Combined Orthopedic Residency Program alongside all three major orthopedic residency programs in Haiti. For the last two years, the conference has been virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic and political unrest in Haiti. The HAAOT/HGOC network has been put into action by collecting and donating essential supplies to manage patients affected by the 2021 earthquake in Haiti.

Improving access to musculoskeletal trauma care in Malawi

### Our research approach

Guided and in collaboration with our local partners





We are working in collaboration with Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital, Kamuzu Central Hospital, the AO Alliance Foundation, and the Malawian Ministry of Health on a variety of projects aimed at improving access to musculoskeletal trauma care in Malawi, particularly for the rural poor. We have examined risk factors for delayed presentation to hospital, health system navigation by patients with femoral fractures, the financial impact of injury on patients with femur fractures as well as the cost effectiveness of treatment (in collaboration with UCSF IGOT), and the capacity to manage musculoskeletal trauma in the public hospitals. We are translating our research findings into policy recommendations, educational programs for clinical staff, and the development of standardized protocols for clinical care.

#### Low-cost negative pressure wound therapy in Cameroon

Learning from our colleagues in Haiti, and addressing a need expressed by our colleagues in Cameroon, we built low-cost negative pressure wound therapy (NPWT) pumps which are now being used for clinical care by our partners in the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services hospitals. We are investigating the feasibility and clinical efficacy of using these devices in the Cameroonian context to help manage open fractures. Feedback from our Cameroonian colleagues helped us improve our design of the NPWT pumps, and improved versions were recently sent to Cameroon and Haiti in response to the 2021 earthquake.

#### Understanding and addressing the need for hand surgery in sub-Saharan Africa

This study is in collaboration with our partners in Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital, Malawi; Sourou Sanou University Hospital of Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso; CHU Aristide Le Dantec, Sénégal; Omdurman Islamic University, Sudan; and the AO Alliance. We are working with clinical providers across sub-Saharan Africa to identify the most common hand and upper extremity pathologies in each country and the local capacity to manage these conditions. The goal is to develop priorities and core competencies for training in hand surgery by country and region.

#### HGOC educational videos, digital distance learning

We are developing high-yield educational videos on a variety of orthopaedic topics relevant to orthopaedic residents, surgeons, non-physician clinicians, and non-surgeon physicians who manage patients with musculoskeletal injuries or diseases in the low resource setting. We are organizing in-person and virtual conferences on orthopedic trauma management in Haiti, Malawi, Libya, and Colombia.

## Photos



The first SIGN nail performed in a Malawian district hospital using the SIGN traveling kit delivered by HGOC, donated by the Darwin Project. The patient had been sitting in traction for 5 weeks on the wards at Dedza District hospital. Dr. Leonard Banza operating with Kiran assisting.



Dr. Paul Appleton (HGOC) and Dr. Cornelius Mukuzunga (Kamuzu Central Hospital) working on a tough femur fracture.



Dr. Vincent Mkoichi applying a low-cost wound VAC (made by HGOC) to a 12-year-old boy with a devastating open fracture of the proximal tibia

Before signing off, I would like to congratulate the organisers of SICOT who have spent countless hours arranging this mammoth hybrid conference. While most of the emphasis will be on virtual programs there will be a few face to face meetings.

As an active member of that team, I have understood how incredibly difficult it is to plan and execute such a large and complicated program without boots on the ground. I would therefore like to thank and congratulate all members of SICOT starting from the chairs of various committees, the wonderful and super-efficient SICOT support staff as well as moderators, peer reviewers, speakers and other functionaries for putting in their time and effort into this meeting. The team at Budapest led by Dr Bucsi Lazlo has suffered through all the un-certainty. And finally Dr Ashok Johari and Dr Gow Thevendran and their respective teams have set the bar high for future conferences. The conference starts on 15/9/21 starting the Education Day program on the same day and I hope all of you will register and attend.

Thanks

Dr Arindam Banerjee