



MEDACROSS
FREE CARE AND COACHING



REPORT ACTIVITIES 2023

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WHO WE ARE



MedAcross is a non-profit association founded in **2016 in Turin, Italy**, with the aim of providing medical assistance in less developed countries by building healthcare facilities, increasing access to healthcare and health education, and promoting the fundamental right to health.

MedAcross envisions a future in which everyone, even the world's most remote communities, **has access to disease prevention, treatment and safe, nutritious and sufficient food**, which is a necessary condition for good health.

Our distinctive approach is based on three fundamental pillars:

1. **Training Local Health Personnel:**

We believe that community empowerment comes through the training and development of local resources.

In collaboration with communities, we work to train in site healthcare personnel so that they can provide basic care and improve health at the local level.

2. Planning with Communities: We do not impose pre-packaged solutions. Instead, we work with communities to identify their specific needs and develop tailormade healthcare projects. We believe that only through this approach can we achieve sustainable and relevant results.

3. Dialogue with local health systems: We actively collaborate with health systems in emerging countries to ensure that basic care is accessible to all. Our mission is to integrate into the existing structure and work together to improve the health of the populations most in need.

WHAT WE DO



We provide free medical examinations and medicines to patients who are treated in our facilities.

We operate in contexts where healthcare costs represent a burden falling directly on the citizens' shoulders, thus preventing the poorest part of the population from accessing to basic care.



We reach communities living in the most isolated areas that cannot go to hospitals due to logistical and economic reasons.



We treat anyone who needs help, regardless of age, gender, religion, ethnicity.

We guarantee confidentiality to our patients and help them manage social stigma, in the case of socially unaccepted diseases.



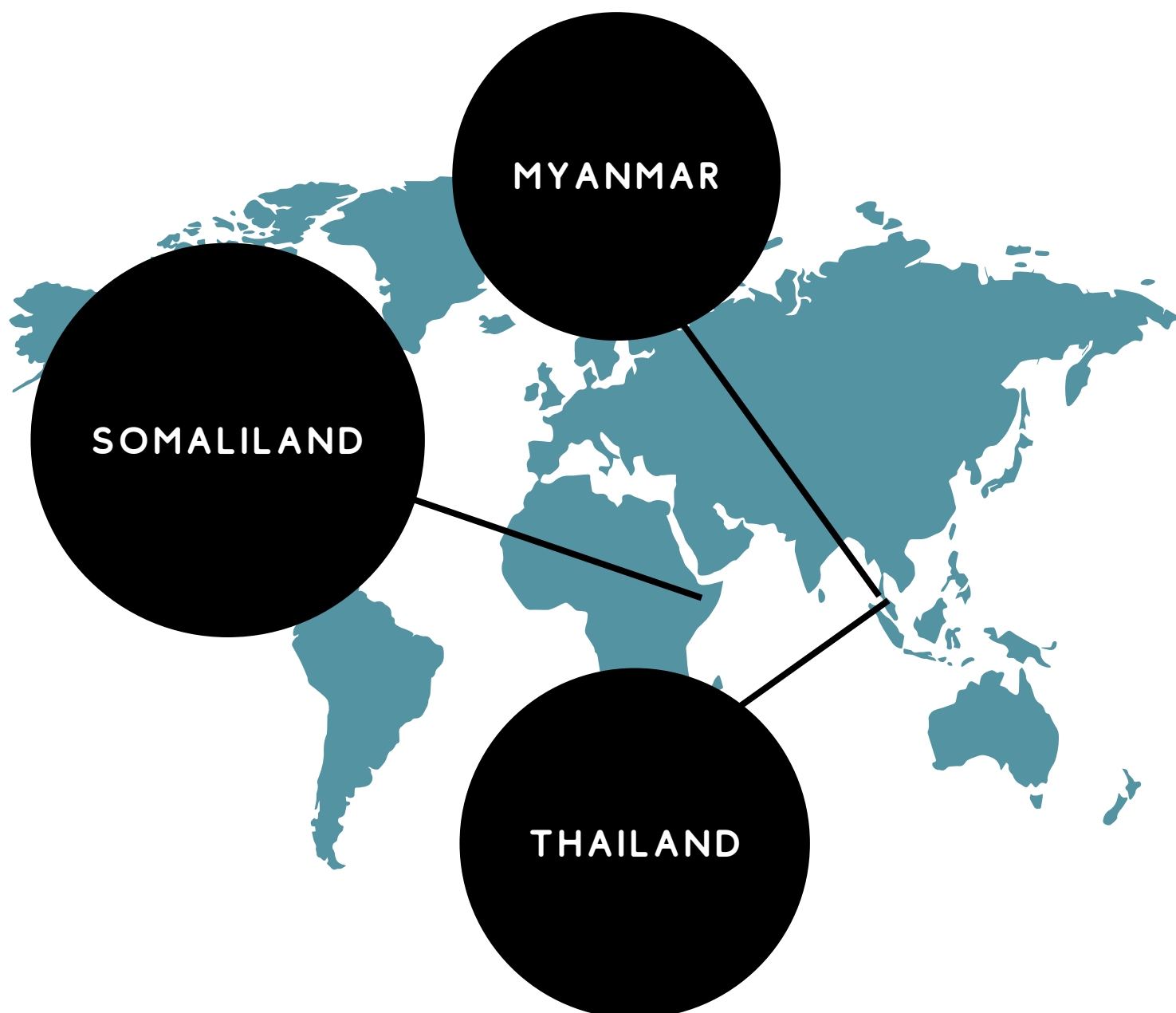
We hire local staff, preparing them with training and courses designed by medical professors and volunteer nurses. In this way, we contribute to the development of the country in which we operate.



We create partnerships with local and international organizations operating locally to maximize the impact of our work.



WHERE WE ARE



In 2023, we consolidated our activities in Somaliland and Thailand, where we provide assistance to displaced persons without access to basic healthcare. MedAcross continues to operate in Myanmar, where international cooperation is limited, and we provide assistance to the population during the ongoing widespread conflict. In all contexts in which we implement our projects, we have strengthened our network with non-governmental organisations with which we share international development goals and cooperation methods.

MYANMAR

Since the Burmese military junta declared a state of emergency following a coup d'état in which it regained power (21st February 2021), Myanmar has been in a downward spiral of political and social unrest. Currently, the country is in a state of open civil war, a complex conflict between the national army and ethnic militias that spreads like wildfire and is particularly violent in the rural and border areas of the country, including the Kawthaung area where MedAcross health projects have been active since 2016. Civilians have been living in a state of emergency for more than three years now: more than 700,000 people have been displaced by the conflict, 40 per cent of the population is living in poverty and more than 18 million people are estimated to be in humanitarian need.

Today, more than a third of the villages in which MedAcross has activated health support services over the years no longer exist. Seeing their land displaced, burnt, bombed and turned into a war zone, thousands of Burmese flee daily to neighbouring Thailand, where they are not recognised for their refugee status.

In spite of this, during 2023, MedAcross health staff continued their health programmes, providing support in particular to women, children and patients with chronic diseases.

MYANMAR PROJECTS



MOBILE CLINIC

Mobile clinic activities provided free care to 5,090 patients from 21 rural villages, remote islands and plantations in Kawthaung district. The conditions of the inhabitants in rural areas are steadily worsening, partly due to the increasingly scarce healthcare facilities in the country, the lack of materials and health personnel in the hospitals and the low availability of medicines in the pharmacies due to the many disrupted roads as a consequence of the conflict which cause difficulties in procurement.

SEXUAL HEALTH

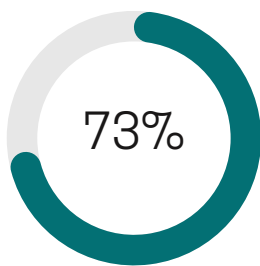
The sexual and reproductive health project launched in November 2021 and financed by UN Women with funds from the WPHF, was completed in 2023. The results of the project totalled 18 months of activities and they included 6,818 free medical visits, the distribution of 7,484 hygiene and contraception kits containing soap, sanitary towels and condoms, and the training of 57 Community Health Volunteers on sexual and reproductive health issues.



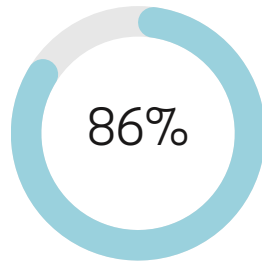
COMMUNITY TRAINING

The training of community volunteers is aimed at the recognition and management of major communicable and chronic diseases (such as diabetes and hypertension), as well as first aid training, thereby increasing community awareness and autonomy. In addition, this allows the health team to stay in touch with patients requiring regular check-ups and treatment, even during periods of disruption due to civil war and/or monsoon season. Thanks to the network of volunteers who take the patients' vital parameters and communicate with the health team, from which they receive the therapies to be distributed to the patients, it has been possible to provide constant support to more than 400 diabetic and hypertensive patients.

MOBILE CLINICS IN MYANMAR



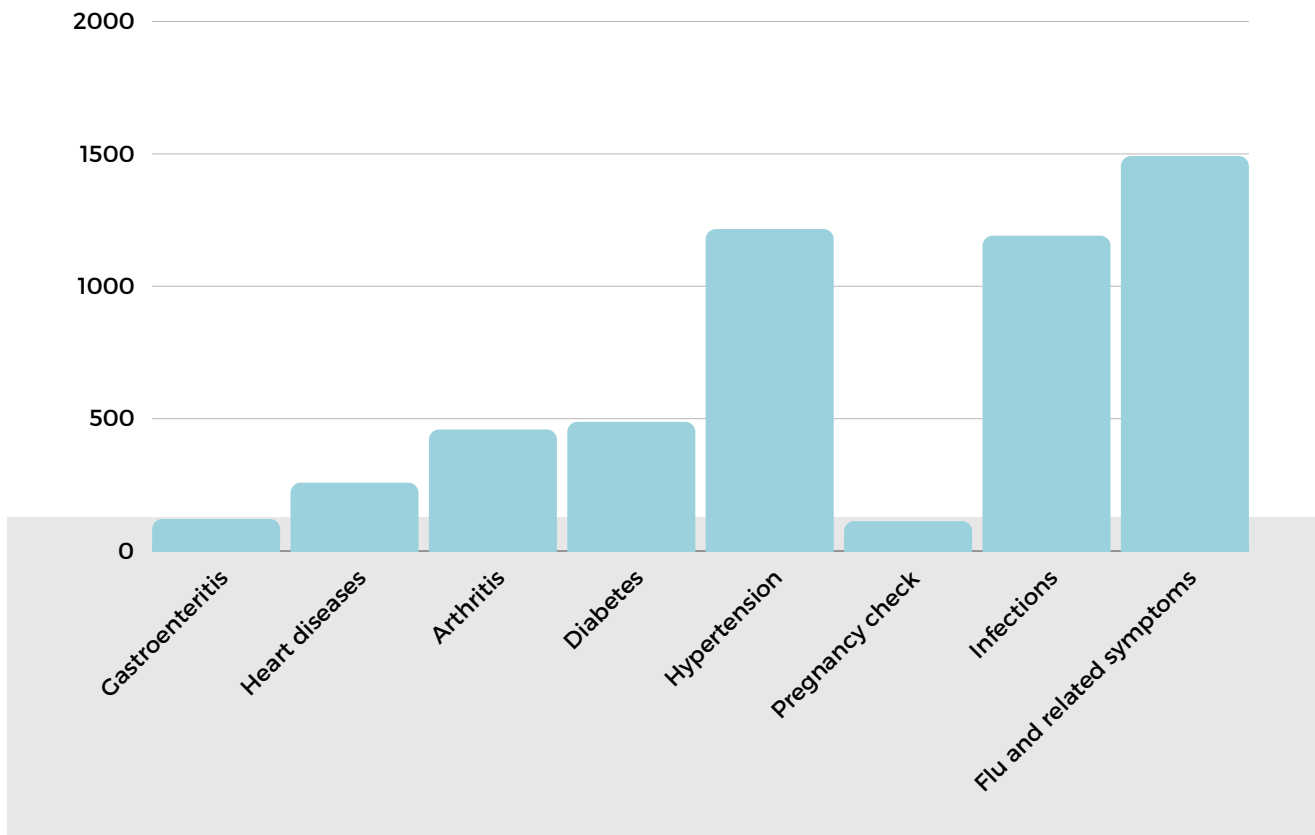
**FEMALE
PATIENTS**



**ADULT
PATIENTS**

From the internal clinical analyses in 2023, we gathered basic information on the composition of the patients we met during the Mobile Clinics in Myanmar. It emerges that more than half of the people treated are female and that most patients accessing healthcare services are between 20 and 60 years old.

MAIN DISEASES TREATED



OUR STAFF IN MYANMAR



DR. SHAWNN NO NO KO - MEDICAL DOCTOR

Many people in the country are facing a great burden in various aspects. We, our medical team, provide every person, regardless of their location or circumstances, to receive the healthcare services through our mobile clinic, site clinic and specialized women's health projects. We aim to empower individuals with the knowledge and resources they need to lead healthier lives by health awareness raising sessions.

MR. MYO MIN THIT - HEAD NURSE

From the previous UN women project, we have been providing support in many ways, such as through the distribution of medicines, sanitary packages, and trainings for the community. In Myanmar, the population strongly needs this kind of support. I would like to pray to get this kind of projects in future.



MRS. ZIN MAR SOE - COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER



At my place, there are many elderly patients with hypertension and diabetes. Some depend on their offspring for support, while others have to work for a small income. Since non-communicable diseases require long-term treatment and incur high costs, they often struggle to afford their medications. I am now serving as a volunteer to help them access the treatment they need. Reducing the cost of medicine would provide significant relief for them.

TURIN BURMA

Three hundred years of friendship.

Relations between Italy and Myanmar have a long history: from the Barnabite religious, who worked in Myanmar in the eighteenth century, to the Congregation of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary who left Piedmont to reach this distant land in the early nineteenth century.

Among the Italians who worked in the Burma, the figure of the Cuneo-based Father Paolo Abbona deserves to be mentioned, whom the Burmese scholar Vivian Ba de fi ned “the greatest and most Burmanized of the Oblates of Turin”.

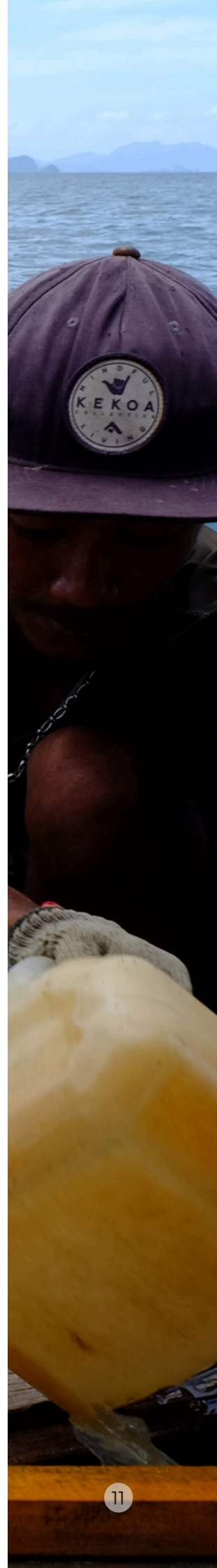
As a missionary, Father Abbona had built schools, hospitals, churches; he was also an able diplomatic managing relationship between the English and the Burmese court.

In the economic field, Father Abbona prepared the Treaty of Commerce and Friendship between the Kingdom of Italy and the Burmese Empire. The recent establishment of the Italy Myanmar Business Council and the Italy-Myanmar Chamber of Commerce strengthens the cultural and economic link between the countries.

THAILAND

Following the 2021 crisis, Burmese migration to Thailand intensified exponentially. In 2022, around 3.7 million migrants lived in Thailand, of which 79.28% were Burmese, excluding all Burmese migrants staying in the country illegally. These numbers were increased to over 1.3 million Burmese migrants in 2023, 17% of whom intend to stay in Thailand permanently. Most migrants enter Thailand through illegal channels because of the high cost of obtaining a work permit and the difficulties in obtaining refugee status. In addition, Myanmar's ethnic minorities often lack identity documents, without which legal migration is impossible. The high travel costs required to cross the border often drain the entire income from the sale of all their property in Myanmar. For this reason, many migrants incur debts to reach Thai territory and fall victim to moneylenders and trafficking at the border. An estimated 2 million migrants currently work in dangerous environments and without access to basic services, for themselves and their families.

Burmese migrants and their children born in Thailand do not have access to the national health service, so they only go to hospital in extreme emergencies, albeit the costs can run up to the entire average monthly salary of an illegal worker.



THAILAND PROJECTS



MOBILE CLINIC AND TRAINING

To reach the Burmese migrant population living and working in Thailand, particularly in the neighbouring province of Ranong, we have extended the model of the Burmese Mobile Clinic. Here, Burmese communities live in compounds adjacent to construction sites, harbours or within palm oil and rubber plantations, separated from the local population.

Together with the local partner Diocesan Social Action Center (DISAC), we provided free check-ups to 202 Burmese patients without basic medical care in Thailand.

At the same time, 20 members of the same communities were trained as Community Health Volunteers on topics such as HIV, STDs, prevention of communicable and non-transmissible diseases, along with nutrition lessons.

MAPPING OF COASTAL COMMUNITIES

In 2023, a feasibility study was carried out in Thailand by mapping the Thai and Burmese communities present in Phang Nga and Ranong provinces, as well as the organisations operating in the area.

This study, financed by Landesa, was undertaken with a view towards medium/long-term planning of MedAcross activities in the region, and in Thailand in particular, with a One Health approach, on issues concerning food security and nutrition for vulnerable communities in collaboration with organisations and partners with specific environmental expertise.



SOMALILAND

In recent decades, Somaliland has been affected by climate emergencies and food insecurity, causing significant internal migration to urban centres. In 2023, some 2.9 million people lived in IDP camps in Somalia/Somaliland, including 557,000 in 183 camps in Somaliland itself. The prolonged drought has pushed the population from rural areas to urban centres in search of food and water. In addition, the region has the second-highest prevalence of malnutrition in the world (48.7% for the period 2020-2022) and the second-highest infant mortality rate (11.2% in 2021). Six consecutive seasons of sub-normal rainfall have made agricultural production and animal farming almost impossible.

The context of Somaliland is characterised by multidimensional humanitarian crises caused not only by natural disasters but also by conflict. Indeed, emergencies caused by climate shocks, drought and recent conflicts in the Sool region have increased the scale and effects of humanitarian needs, as well as boosted the number of displaced persons.

Between September and November 2023, Somaliland faced a severe outbreak of Dengue fever, which affected over 30% of children in the Hargeisa area. In Somaliland, the infant mortality rate is 40 per 1,000 live births. The main risk factors contributing to stunted growth in children are poor maternal health, lack of access to prenatal care facilities, inadequate feeding practices and insufficient health infrastructure and facilities. MedAcross provides support in this context with its activities involving a mobile paediatric clinic in refugee camps and the strengthening of the Neonatology department of Somaliland's main paediatric hospital.

SOMALILAND PROJECTS



MOBILE CLINIC

The mobile clinic service reaches four IDP camps on the periphery of the city of Hargeisa (Digaale, Malowle, Qalax and Nasa Hablood C), all of which are between a 30-45 minute drive from the country's only paediatric hospital, the MAS Children Teaching Hospital. The service guarantees medical visits twice a month, with free treatment and - if necessary - transport of the most critical patients to the MAS Hospital. In one year, we visited more than 4,900 boys and girls, activating 20 emergency transports. In the same year, we made significant improvements to the storage of medicines for the mobile clinic.

PROJECT FINANCED BY FONDAZIONE SPECCHIO DEI TEMPI

AWARENESS-RAISING IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS

In 2023, we implemented 4 awareness-raising campaigns on common refugee camp diseases (diarrhoea, respiratory diseases, scabies, dengue), handing out 3,302 leaflets to reduce their incidence, through the identification of prevention methods, recognition of symptoms and communication with our doctors and/or camp health centres.

The information and awareness-raising campaigns reached more than 3,300 people in the IDP camps.

PROJECT FINANCED BY FONDAZIONE SPECCHIO DEI TEMPI



SOMALILAND PROJECTS



DISTANCE LEARNING

In 2023, we implemented the first module of the distance learning training thanks to the contribution of 15 Italian doctors and nurses. The first module of the course - which included 12 lectures - was held for Somali medical and nursing staff on neonatology intervention procedures used in Italian hospitals that were adapted to the context of Hargeisa and the MAS-CTH.

PROJECT FINANCED BY FONDAZIONE SPECCHIO DEI TEMPI

MAS-CTH PAEDIATRIC HOSPITAL SUPPORT

In 2023, the project 'Upgrading Somaliland Paediatric Health Care Services Quality' ensured the hospitalisation and care of more than 4,000 boys and girls through the funding of 17.5% of the medical and nursing staff at the MAS paediatric hospital in Hargeisa.

PROJECT FINANCED BY FONDAZIONE SPECCHIO DEI TEMPI



PURCHASE OF MEDICAL EQUIPMENT FOR THE NEONATOLOGY WARD

In 2023, the strengthening of the neonatology ward was realised through the delivery and installation of 3 neonatal islands, 1 otoscope, 4 monitors, 1 ophthalmoscope, 3 ambu bags with masks of different sizes, 1 double phototherapy unit, satururimeters and neonatal sensors for the Neonatology ward of the MAS-CTH hospital.

PROJECT FINANCED BY FONDAZIONE SPECCHIO DEI TEMPI

OUR STAFF IN SOMALILAND

DR. SHIINE - MEDICAL DOCTOR

In 2023, serious epidemics such as dengue fever occurred in Somaliland. One of the main hospitals that took in children affected by dengue and provided adequate treatment, particularly in Hargheisa, was the MAS hospital.

As for the distance learning promoted in cooperation between Medacross and the MAS hospital authorities, we planned to update the skills and knowledge of the hospital staff (doctors and nurses). After one year since the start of the lectures, the knowledge and skills of the healthcare staff at MAS have changed positively and patients are enjoying good quality healthcare services in the neonatology department.



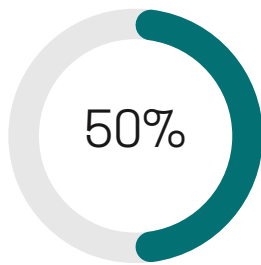
APDIRACHED APDISALAM - LOGISTICIAN

The IDP camps in Hargheisa have poor health services and food shortages resulting in malnutrition, especially among children.

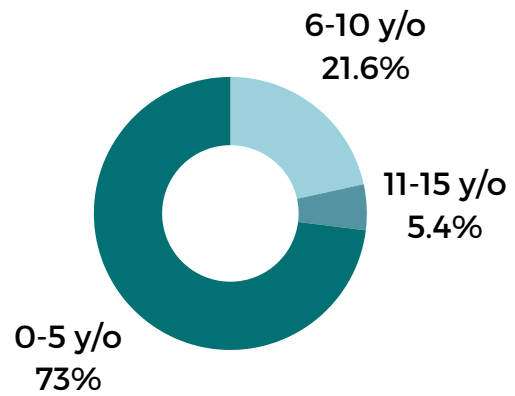
MedAcross provides free healthcare to children in four camps to improve access to medical care for all children in the IDP camps. In 2023, we assisted 450 vulnerable children living in the Hargheisa IDP camps each month.



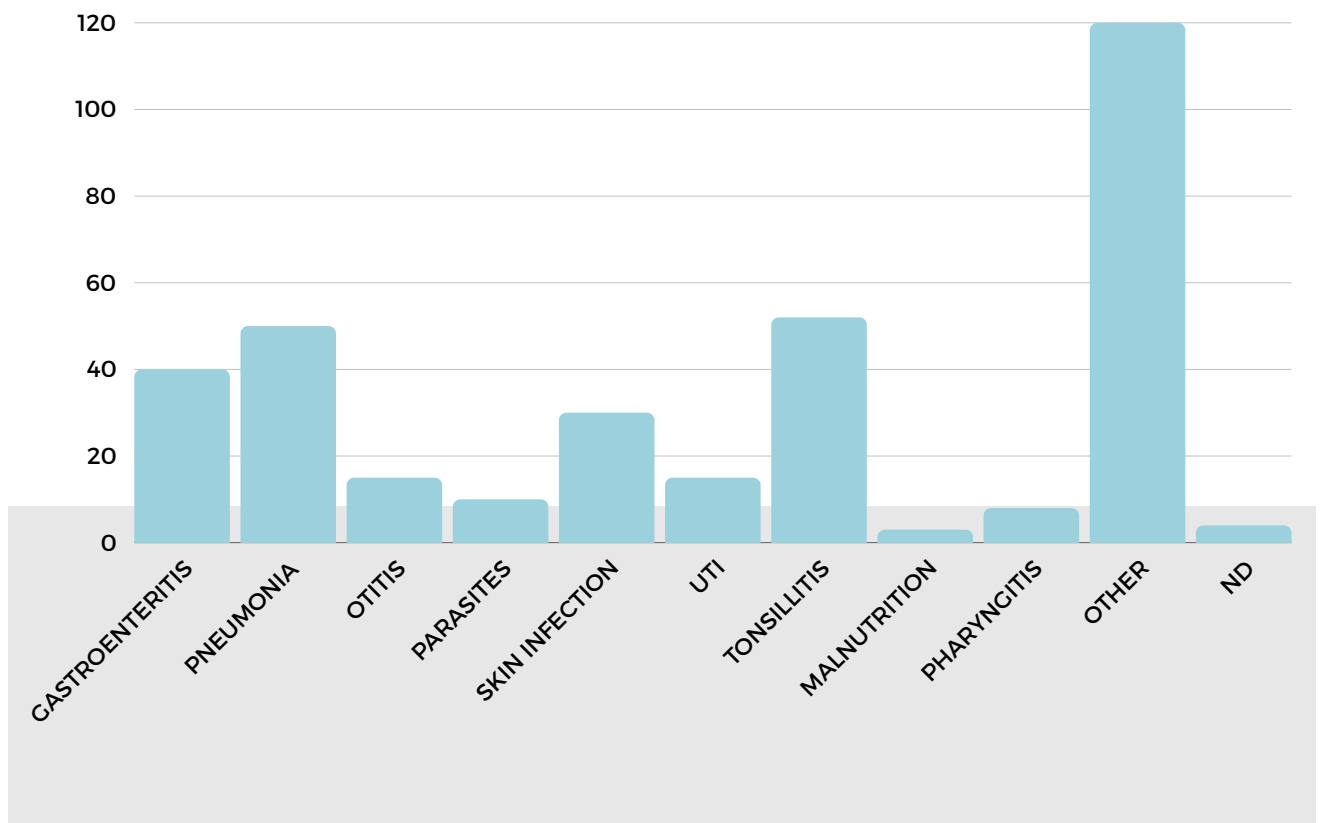
MOBILE CLINICS IN SOMALILAND



FEMALE
PATIENTS



MAIN DISEASES TREATED



UNIVERSITY SEMINAR

MedAcross is active in strengthening the relationship between the academy and the world of international cooperation with the aim of creating a bridge for future professionals who are motivated and prepared to face global challenges.

For this reason, we again collaborated with the University of Turin in 2023 by organising a seminar for 10 students of International Cooperation.

The seminar focused on Myanmar, concluding with a two-day planning workshop.

Together with lecturers from the University of Turin, we provided background information on the country, focusing on the role of NGOs in providing assistance in situations of extreme vulnerability.

During the workshop, the students had the opportunity to put their acquired knowledge into practice by working on project design in groups.

This practical exercise was rated as particularly effective by the students, who were able to apply their theoretical knowledge, sharpening their skills in the design and management of international cooperation projects.

For MedAcross, this collaboration represents a valuable opportunity for a continuous confrontation with new perspectives and innovative ideas, stimulating reflections on our operational methodologies.