

MOI SURGERY REPORT - 30 CHILDREN WITH HYDROCEPHALUS AND SPINA BIFIDA



1st JULY 2025

PROJECT CATEGORY: HEALTH

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LALJI FOUNDATION

Committed to Community Health & Vision,

Health – hydrocephalus and spina bifida Surgeries Report

MOI Muhimbili Hospital- Dar es Salaam Region,

Date: 1st July 2025,

Venue: Muhimbili Hospital

1. Executive Summary

The Lalji Foundation is a charitable organization dedicated to transforming lives across Tanzania through impactful initiatives in healthcare, education, economic empowerment, and social welfare. Guided by a strong commitment to humanity, compassion, and equity, the Foundation has emerged as a key partner in national development efforts that support the most vulnerable groups in society.

The Lalji Foundation has launched a vital health initiative in collaboration with the Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute (MOI) to sponsor surgeries for 30 children suffering from **hydrocephalus** and **spina bifida**, two life-threatening and disabling conditions affecting infants and young children in Tanzania.

Hydrocephalus and Spina Bifida in Tanzanian Children

Hydrocephalus is a condition where excess fluid builds up in the brain, while spina bifida is a birth defect where the spine doesn't form properly. In Tanzania, many children suffer from these conditions due to poor maternal nutrition (especially folic acid deficiency), limited prenatal care, and infections.

These conditions can cause physical disabilities, developmental delays, and even death if untreated. Children often face stigma, are excluded from school, and lack access to healthcare and assistive devices.

Through this program, the Foundation provides full medical sponsorship, including neurosurgical operations, post-operative care, and rehabilitation support, targeting children from low-income and underserved families

The Vice Chairman of Lalji Foundation, Mohamed Damji, said that it is a great humility and pride that we continue our mission to serve the most vulnerable in our communities. The partnership between the Lalji Foundation and Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute (MOI) reflects what we stand for: compassion, commitment, and impact.

On behalf of the Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute, **Dr Khamis Shaban** said, I extend my sincere appreciation to the Lalji Foundation for their generous and sustained support in treating children affected by hydrocephalus and spina bifida.

These conditions are not only medically complex but emotionally and financially overwhelming for families, especially those from low-income backgrounds. Many of the children we receive here come from remote regions, and without sponsorship, timely treatment would be out of reach.

2. Objectives

- To provide life-saving surgical interventions to children with hydrocephalus and spina bifida.
- To reduce mortality and disability related to these conditions among low-income families.
- To support long-term rehabilitation and care services for affected children.
- To raise awareness and promote early diagnosis and treatment.

3. Event Overview

Parameter	Details
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Location:	Muhimbili Hospital – Dar es Salaam - MOI
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Surgeries Date:	from 5 June to 28 June 2025
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Handover Date:	1 st July 2025
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Target Group:	children from rural, underprivileged families
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Organized by LALJI FOUNDATION in Collaboration with Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute (MOI)

4. Partners & Stakeholders

S/N	Partner/ Stakeholders	Role/ Contribution
1.	Lalji Foundation	Project/sponsor
2.	MOI (Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute	project

5. Outcomes & Impact

SN	Key Indicators	Number of patients
1.	Number of surgeries	30
6.	Total	30

6. Budget & Expenditure

SN	ITEMS	BUDGETED (TZS)	REMARKS
1.	Surgeries	10,200,000	Hydrocephalus and spina bifida surgeries
	TOTAL	10,200,000	

7. Impact on the Community

- Improved survival rate and reduced complications for children with hydrocephalus and spina bifida.
- Reduced financial burden for families, many of whom are from rural or low-income urban areas.
- Increased community trust and awareness in health interventions through partnerships with reputable hospitals like MOI.
- Promoted inclusive healthcare services aligned with national health goals.

8. Challenges Encountered

- Late referral of cases leading to complications.
- Shortage of specialized neurosurgical tools and post-operative support in public hospitals.
- Transportation difficulties for patients from remote regions.
- Extended waiting periods for surgery as a result of restricted number of surgeries that can be scheduled daily due to limited resources

9. Media Coverage

SN	Platform	Details	Type	Link / Reference
2.	Television	IBN TV, ITV, Channel 10	Events news features	
3.	Print media	The Guardian Daily News Nipashe Habarileo	Article Coverage	3 July 2025- page 13 3 July 2025 -page 5 3 Julai 2025 ukurasa 18 3 Julai 2025 ukurasa 18
4.	Social media & Blogs	- Instagram - Facebook - YouTube	Photos, live and update	-www.mtaakwamtaa.co.tz -www. Malunde.com -www.langohabari.co tz -www.sayarinews.co.tz -www.michuzi.co.tz -globalpublishers - fullshangweblog.co.tz -www.sautizamtaa

9. Recommendations

- Strengthen early screening programs in regional hospitals.
- Enhance training for healthcare workers on hydrocephalus and spina bifida management.
- Increase collaboration with the government and other stakeholders for scaling up the initiative.
- Continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure sustainability and accountability.

10. Conclusion

The Lalji Foundation remains committed to supporting the most vulnerable in society. The sponsorship program at MOI Muhimbili Hospital is a testament to the Foundation's dedication to improving lives through targeted health interventions. With continued partnership and community engagement, many more children will be given a second chance at life.

Lalji Foundation should continue sponsoring surgeries at MOI.

11. List of 30 children for surgeries

Lalji Foundation
3rd Floor, Morani House
Maktaba Street, P.O. Box 21017
Dar Es Salaam,
E-Mail: info@tanzaniatravellink.com



SURGERIES CONDUCTED AT MOI ON 3RD - 7TH JUNE 2025 SPONSORED BY LALJI FOUNDATION

S/N	INV NO.	PATIENT NAME	AMOUNT
1	4599962	Irene Magesa Nashuni	400,000.00
2	4599880	Haysam Timotheo Kamili	400,000.00
3	4599844	Hasmin Ally Jongo	400,000.00
4	4595359	Takabari Ahmad Ayubu	400,000.00
5	4595337	Emmanuel C Hungu	400,000.00
6	4595385	Marcelino Elias John	400,000.00
7	4595363	Laiyan Joseph Muzagila	400,000.00
8	4595155	Essau Yoel Richard	400,000.00
9	4595601	Swalehe Omary Mwanjano	400,000.00
10	4595315	Hussein Yasin Hamza	400,000.00
11	4595380	Angel Paulo William	400,000.00
12	4595377	Salma Mathias Bundara	400,000.00
13	4595372	Hamis Abdulrazack Mengi	400,000.00
14	4597744	Nabil Ahmad Shabani	400,000.00
15	4602988	Moshi Juma Swedi	400,000.00
16	4599912	Angel Paulo William	400,000.00
17	4599952	Ebeneza Selemani Jumaa	400,000.00
18	4599871	Raphael Lucian Gwasma	400,000.00
19	4595718	Abdulhaman Mohamed	400,000.00
20	4660516	Time Abdallah Kwekwete	400,000.00
			8,000,000.00

list of remaining 10 children will be provided by Muhimbili Hospital (MOI)

12. PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



CHILDREN WITH HYDROCEPHALUS AND SPINA BIFIDA



CHILDREN WITH HYDROCEPHALUS AND SPINA BIFIDA



CHILDREN WITH HYDROCEPHALUS AND SPINA BIFIDA



Lalji Foundation together with Dr Khamis Shaban Department of MOI



Lalji Foundation, together with Dr Khamis Shaban in the Department of MOI



On behalf of other parents thank Lalji foundation

Jamii yashauriwa kuwasaidia watoto wenye vichwa vikubwa

Na Mwandishi Wetu

JAMII imeaswa kujenga utamaduni wa kuwa na moyo wa kujitolea kusaidia watu wenye uhitaji hasa wenye vichwa vikubwa na mgongo wazi.

Hali hiyo ni kutokana na wazazi wengi kushindwa kumudu gharama za matibabu ya ugonjwa huo.

Wito huo ulitolewa jana na Grace Mollel ambaye ni mmoja ya mzazi wa mtoto mwenye changamoto ya vichwa vikubwa, aliye-fanyiwa upasuaji katika Taasisi ya Mifupa Muhimbili (MOI) kupitia ufadhili wa Taasisi ya Lalji Foundation.

Akidzungumza baada ya upasuaji wa mtoto wake, aliishukuru Lalji Foundation kwa msaada huo kwa kuwa hakua na uwezo wa kumudu gharama za matibabu, hivyo kupitia msaada wao umefanikisha kurejesha tabasamu kwani mtoto wake amefanyiwa upasuaji na anaendelea na matibabu.

Aidha, alitoa wito kwa watu wenye uwezo kujitolea kusaidia watu wenye uhitaji maalum haswa watoto wenye changamoto ya vichwa vikubwa na mgongo wazi kwani wazazi wengi wenye watoto wenye changamoto hiyo hawana uwezo wa kumudu gharama za upasuaji.

Pia aliwashauri wazazi wa watoto wenye changamoto ya vichwa vikubwa kuwapeleka hospitalini mapema ili wapatiwe huduma za matibabu kwani kuwafungia ndani kunaweza kuleta athari kubwa zaidi.

Daktari Bingwa wa Upasuaji wa Magonjwa ya Uti wa Mgongo na Mishipa ya Fahamu MOI, Hamisi Shabani, alisema tatizo la vichwa kikubwa na mgongo wazi ni

kubwa kiasi lakini kwa sasa limeanza kuonekana kwa wingi kutokana na uelewa wa jamii kuhusu tatizo hilo.

"Tunawashukuru wataanzania ambao wameweza kutoa elimu mbalimbali kuhusu kuzuia unyanyapaa wa Watoto wenye matatizo ya vichwa vikubwa na mgongo wazi na idadi wa wazazi kuwapeleka watoto hospitali imekua inaridhisha kutokana na uelewa wa jamii kuhusu tatizo hilo," alisema.

Alisema kwa wastani Tanzania inazalisha takribani watoto 4,000 wenye tatizo la vichwa vikubwa na mgongo wazi kwa mwaka kwa ikiwa ni kwa mujibu wa makisio ya sensa ya mwaka 2022 ambayo inafafanua kuwa takribani watoto 10,000 wanaozaliwa watoto watatu wanazaliwa na changamoto ya vichwa vikubwa na mgongo wazi.

Alisisitiza kuwa tatizo la vichwa vikubwa linazuilika kwa mama mjamzito endapo timu ya wataalamu itajiridhisha kuwa mama huyo hana tatizo la upungufu wa madini ya folic acid na

akigundulika ana changamoto ya upungufu wa madini hayo basi atapewa vidonge kwaajili ya kuongeza madini hayo ambayo kwa kiasi kikubwa yana-saidia kuzuia tatizo hilo.

Makamu Mwenyekiti wa Taasisi ya Lalji Foundation, Mohamed Damji, alisema kwa kushirikiana na MOI wametoa msaada huo ili kusaidia watoto hao ambao wazazi wao hawana uwezo wa kumudu gharama za upasuaji ikiwa ni sehemu ya majukumu ya taasisi hiyo kusaidia watu wenye uhitaji.

Aidha, alitoa wito kwa wadau wengine kujitokeza kusaidia watoto wenye matatizo ya mgongo wazi na vichwa vikubwa kwani tatizo bado lipo na wenye uhitaji na msaada huo ni wengi na hawana uwezo wa kumudu gharama za matibabu.

Aliongeza kuwa Lalji Foundation itaendelea kushirikiana na MOI kufadhili upasuaji wa watoto wenye matatizo ya vichwa vikubwa na kusisitiza kuwa zoezi hilo litakua endelevu kwa lengo la kuwafikia watoto wengi zaidi.

Na Mwandishi Wetu

JAMU imeitakiwa kujenga utamaduni wa kuwa na moyo wa kujitaka kuand-
ia watu wenye uhaba hana
watoto wenye dhambi
ya vichwa vikubwa na angu-
go wazi kuhindwa kumudu
gharama za matibabu ya
ugompa huo.

Wito huo ulitakiwa na
Gereza Mella ambaye ni
mimoja wa wazazi wa watoto
wenye dhambi hana
dawa vichwa vichwa
upatiji katika Taasisi ya Mi-
hupa (MCH) kupitia ufadhili
wa Taasisi ya Lali.

Akiingamiza baada ya

'Watoto wenye vichwa vikubwa wapelekwe hospitali mapema'

upatiji wa matokeo waki,
zilizokutika taasisi hii
kwa maada huo akisema
hakuna na (wazi) wa ku-
mudu gharamu za matibabu.

Alisema maada huo
umehusishwa kumepa-
kama kwani matokeo waki
amehanywa upatiji na
amendelea na matibabu.

Alisema wazi
wa watoto wenye vichwa
vikubwa kipeleka huo

pitali mapema ili wapate
hadima za matibabu
kwani kuwafunga ndani
kumwaza kuleta athari
kubwa zaidi.

Daktari bingwa wa
upatiji wa magompa ya uti
wa mgongo na mihupa ya
fahamu wa Mta. Hama Shu-
hara alisema uti wa vichwa
vikubwa na mgongo wazi
ni kubwa lakini kwa sasa
linamwaza kuwafunga kwa

wingi kutokana na ukiwa
wa jani.

Alisema kwa wazazi
Tanzania inazalisha takribani
watoto 4,000 wenye uti wa
vichwa vikubwa na mgongo
wazi kwa mwaka. Hii ni
kwa mababu wa makazi
ya siku ya mwaka 2022
ambayo inafanana kwa
takribani watoto 15,000 wa-
rudatiliwa, walikuwa wazi-
liwa na vichwa vikubwa na

mgongo wazi.

Alisema kwamba taku-
la vichwa vikubwa linatun-
dika kwa njiamato ambapo
tina ya wataalamu inajir-
idhira kwa matokeo huo
hata tawala la upatiji wa
madini ya hali ya hali.

Alisema hata hivyo
kumepatiji na Mta. Hama Shu-
hara wazi wa vichwa vikubwa
na mgongo wazi wazi
na kuongeza matokeo huo
ambapo kwa hali kubwa
wazi zaidi.

umawazi katika hali
hii.

Makamu Mwanachama wa
Taasisi ya Lali, Mwanachama
Dumji alisema kwa kushirikis-
ana na Mta. Hama Shu-
hara alisema wazi wa vichwa
vikubwa wazi wa vichwa
wazi wa kumwaza gharamu
na upatiji, hii ni matokeo
na mapatiji ya hali ya hali
hii kumwaza wazi wazi
shirazi.

Alisema hata hivyo
kumwaza na Mta. Hama Shu-
hara wazi wa vichwa vikubwa
na mgongo wazi wazi
na kuongeza matokeo huo
ambapo kwa hali kubwa
wazi zaidi.



Daktari bingwa wa upatiji wa magompa ya uti wa mgongo na mihupa ya fahamu wa Taasisi ya Tiba ya Mihupa Muhimbili (MDH), Hama Shuhara alifafanua jambo kwa uongozi wa Taasisi ya Lali walipotembelea wodi ya watoto waliokanywa upatiji wa vichwa vikubwa na mgongo wazi Dar es Salaam jazi. (Na Mipigapiche Webu)



Changing lives with every operation at MOI

By DAILY NEWS Reporter

SURELY, in a world often teeming with bad news, there is something quietly powerful happening in the south of the Malindi Old Port. It's the Malindi Children's Hospital (MOI) in the old Sultan Hassan. It does not involve red carpets or viral dance challenges, but it does involve brains, hands and the biggest kind of bravery you will ever see.

In this heart-breaking tale of courage and compassion, 30 children suffering from hydrocephalus (extra fluid in the brain) and spine

issues (a birth defect involving the spine) have received life-saving surgery, thanks to a crucial collaboration between MOI and the generosity of the Lafi Foundation. It is a partnership that is quietly turning heads back in place and restoring hope where it once vanished.

A mother's gratitude

Leading this emotional charge is Genie Mofid, a mother whose every emotion is both struggle and strength. Her child was one of the 30 fortunate young patients who

underwent complex surgery at MOI, sponsored by the Lafi Foundation.

"I could not afford the treatment," she shared, her voice cracking with both relief and disbelief. "But then the Lafi Foundation stepped in. Their support did not just save my child's life, it brought back their smile."

And what a smile it is. If you have never seen a child smile after weeks of worry, sleep and hospital beds, meet us. It's a lot louder than any seven-league boot or World Cup goal.

Genie is not stopping there. She is on a new mission: Urging anyone with the means to consider helping families with children suffering from these conditions. Because let us face it—surgery isn't cheap and not

everyone can afford it.

But are the lives of a thousand patients?

Before we get carried away by emotion (we know we are), let us talk facts. Hydrocephalus is a condition caused by excess fluid in the brain and spine. It can occur when the spine doesn't form properly. These are not rare, isolated cases.

According to Dr. Eranisi

Shabani, spinal and neurosurgical surgery specialist at MOI, these conditions affect about 4,000 children in Tanzania every year. To break it down, out of every 10,000 babies, about three children are born with either or both of these conditions.

"It is a serious issue," Dr. Shabani explained. "But the good news is, treatment is growing. Many parents are bringing their children in for early treatment, which is essential."

The bad news? Many still delay or worse, have their children out of the region, or lack of financial resources. That is not participating in a medical study.

And the signs, said Dr. Shabani, are clear.

Dr. Shabani is quick to explain the effects of everyday Tanzania who are helping spinal issues about these conditions. People are beginning to be

DR. ERANISI SHABANI (in white coat), a spinal and neurosurgical surgeon at Malindi Old Port Hospital, briefs Lafi Foundation leaders during their visit to the children's ward at the hospital in Dar es Salaam, yesterday.

detected that hydrocephalus and spine issues are medical conditions, not bad luck and definitely not reasons to be ashamed.

(Yes, Anwar Ibrahim, the current president of the country, doesn't need an operation.)

When children are brought in, the chances

of successful surgery and long-term health dramatically improve. But for that to happen, people need education, money and more support.

So, can these conditions be prevented?

Dr. Shabani says, absolutely. In many cases, especially with hydrocephalus, prevention begins before the baby is even born.

It starts with folic acid. But surprisingly, research that doesn't show a specific cure shows one. "If pregnant women are screened early and found to have low levels of folic acid, they can be given supplements," he said. "That one simple step could drastically reduce the number of these cases."

So, dear future moms: Ask your doctor about folic acid. And if your doctor doesn't bring it up, ask again. Loudly.

Standing proudly behind these 30 surgeries is the Lafi Foundation, whose mission is not just about saving lives, it is about changing lives.

Michael Dimp, Vice-Chairman of the Foundation, spoke passionately about their mission. "We know that many parents simply cannot afford these surgeries. But we also know that every child deserves a chance. That is why we partnered with MOI."

And they are not stopping at 30. They confirmed the foundation plans to continue this initiative, ensuring more children get access to life-saving care.

"This is not a one-time campaign," he said. "This is a long-term commitment. The need is still large and we want to reach as many children as possible."

While the Lafi Foundation is doing the heavy lifting, Dimp hopes that other individuals, businesses and organizations will step up.

"There is more to this table," he said. "This is not about competition, it's about compassion."

And finally, what better investment could there be than giving a child the ability to walk, learn, laugh and live without pain? It costs money and takes time.

Genie Mofid, who now finds herself a bit of an advocate by default, has some advice for parents who may suspect something is wrong. Act early.

"Don't wait. Don't hide them at home. Go to the hospital," she urged. "The earlier they get treated, the better their chances. And please, don't believe the myths. This is a medical, not magic, situation."

The right early diagnosis and treatment could mean the difference between a manageable condition and a lifelong struggle.

Yes, 30 surgeries are worth celebrating. But they are also just a drop in the bucket compared to the 4,000 children who need help every single year.

The words in Tanzania and many countries like it need more partnerships like this one. More resources, campaigns, more parental support. More folic acid in the spotlight. And, perhaps most importantly, more people willing to lend a hand, a coin or even just a kind word.

Because in the end, it's not just about surgery. It is about dignity, equality and opportunity. Every child deserves that chance, whether they are born with a perfect spine or one that needs extra help.

So, the next time you think about donating, volunteering, or subscribing for a cause you care about, remember Genie Mofid's story. But don't let it be a warning. Let it be a call to action.

And know that sometimes, the best way to lift a child up is by lifting up children.

By Geoffrey Rapone

THIRTY children – suffering from hydrocephalus and spina bifida – have received life-changing surgery at the Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute (MOI), thanks to a compassionate sponsorship initiative by the Laji Foundation.

This vital programme aims to alleviate the immense financial burden on low-income families grappling with the complex treatment of these congenital conditions, which affect thousands of Tanzanian children annually.

The intervention has brought profound hope and relief to parents. Grace Mbezi, whose child benefited from the programme, shared her heartfelt gratitude: "I had no means to pay for the surgery. This support brought smiles back to our family. My child is now recovering well."

MOI urged well-off individuals and organisations to step in and support active donors to assist while also encouraging parents to seek early medical intervention for children with hydrocephalus to prevent severe complications.

Hydrocephalus, commonly known as "water on the brain" and spina bifida, a neural tube defect, are both manageable through early diagnosis and surgical intervention. However, access to

30 children at MOI get life-changing surgeries

such specialised treatment remains a significant challenge for many due to prohibitive costs, he noted.

Dr Hamisi Shabani, a spinal and neurosurgery specialist at MOI, noted a positive trend: an increase in reported cases, which he attributes in part to growing public awareness and a reduction in the stigma surrounding these conditions.

"The number of parents bringing their children for treatment is rising, and this is a positive sign that communities are becoming more informed," he said.

Dr Shabani further emphasised that public education and comprehensive maternal health screening – particularly to prevent folic acid deficiency in pregnant women – are crucial strategies to reduce incidence rates. He cited national statistics indicating that an estimated 4,000 children are born annually in Tanzania with either hydrocephalus or spina bifida, representing about three in every 1,000 live births.

Muhammad Dangi, vice chairman of the Laji Foundation, affirmed that their partnership with MOI is

crucial to a broader commitment to supporting children with critical medical needs. "We are helping children whose families cannot afford surgery. This is just the beginning – we will continue supporting more children across the country," Dangi stated, calling on other stakeholders to join the cause, stressing the urgent need for collective action to address the still-prevalent burden of childhood neurological disorders in Tanzania.

The Laji Foundation's initiative not only provides essential medical care but also plays a crucial role in restoring dignity and hope to affected families.

MOI, as a national referral hospital for orthopaedic and neurological conditions, serves as a key partner in delivering these specialised services to children in need.

This ongoing public-private collaboration underscores the critical importance of such partnerships in addressing significant health challenges and ensuring that every child, regardless of their economic status, has access to life-changing interventions.



Dr Hamisi Shabani (2nd L), a specialist in spinal and neurosurgery with Dar es Salaam's Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute (MOI), makes a point to Laji Foundation officials as a tour of the MOI paediatric ward yesterday. The ward is for the exclusive use of children who have undergone surgery for hydrocephalus and spina bifida. Photo: Guardian Correspondent