



EVENT REPORT

GRAND ROUNDS

Surgical training: Is digital tech here to stay?



THE
GLOBAL
SURGERY
FOUNDATION



unitar
United Nations Institute
for Training and Research



RCSI

INSTITUTE OF
GLOBAL SURGERY

***‘It has made our learning cheaper,
more accessible and more personalised.’***

Dr Mercy Mitei, General Surgery Resident, Kenya

The COVID pandemic accelerated the growth of digital technologies and e-learning in surgical training. While many hospitals and training centres have embraced these approaches, challenges remain in choosing the most appropriate technologies and ensuring equitable and even access for all trainees, especially in resource-limited settings. The event was organised by The Global Surgery Foundation (GSF), the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Institute of Global Surgery (RCSI IGS), and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

Primary event objective

Raise awareness on the use of technologies to enhance surgical training, particularly in low resource settings and also present a call for action to collaborate on an upcoming initiative, the UN Global Surgery Learning Hub.

Main discussion

Understanding the potential and limitations of technologies to improve surgical training and identify new opportunities for integrating technologies to strengthen surgical training.

Speakers



Dr Geoff Ibbotson
Executive Director, Global Surgery Foundation

Dr Ibbotson provided welcoming remarks and emphasised GSF's commitment to building surgical capacity and the role of public-private partnerships to reach common goals.



Mr Nikhil Seth
UN Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director, UNITAR

Mr Seth's address emphasised the importance of the surgical care workforce as a key component to achieving the SDGs and welcomed collaboration to develop the United Nations Global Surgery Learning Hub.



Dr Andrea Park
Consultant Surgeon and Assistant Program Director, Tenwek Hospital and Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery, Brown University

Dr Park shared her experience in developing COSECA'S online surgical curriculum programme. The needs assessment which led to its development identified expense and availability, limited surgical faculty and online resource availability and suitability as key areas for improvement. Dr Park highlighted the consideration of preferences, practices, and practicalities as key components for developing an online curriculum.



Dr Mercy Mitei
General Surgery Resident, Tenwek Hospital

Dr Mitei shared her user experience as a surgical trainee and highlighted key features and benefits of using the platform, including simplified content, a cheaper alternative to accessing standardized textbooks, supporting audio-visual aids, and a highly interactive interface.



Dr Julie Torode
Institute of Cancer Policy, Kings College London

Dr Torode highlighted virtual surgery oncology simulation as an innovative solution to develop the surgical workforce in LMICs. Each student has access to a personalised dashboard showcasing results, and procedure accuracy scores per session improved for students over the training session with high retention of skills.



Dr Arnold Sakala
Zambian Ministry of Health

Dr Sakala shared his user experience with the virtual reality technology for Hysterectomies. He noted great functionality of the platform and noted ease in using the equipment. The interactive mode of learning convinced him that 'VR Surgery is here to stay.'



Dr Esther Njoroge-Murithi
Senior VP, Global Medical Programs, Smile Train

Dr Njoroge-Murithi shared Smile Train's (ST) evolution of digital technology to support training, starting with DVDs in 2003 to the many e-Learning courses and resources accessible today. In 2013, ST developed simulated training which was later adapted for mobile phone use. More recently, ST acquired 3D printing technology and is also exploring more optimized VR functions.



Ms Kimmy Coseteng-Flaviano
VP South-East Asia, Smile Train

Ms Coseteng-Flaviano shared recent global launch of ST's Simulate Bilateral Simulator which was streamed across three different regions in the Philippines. Since the pandemic, ST had over 37'000 telehealth sessions and supported over 29'000 medical professionals in over 90 countries.



Mr Eric O'Flynn
Program Director, Education, Training and Advocacy, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

Mr Eric O'Flynn gave a call for action to support the United Nations Global Surgery Learning Hub – a platform which will provide easy access to education and training opportunities to all cadres involved in the delivery of surgical care as well as relevant stakeholders in research, policy, academia, and industry.

Agenda

Speakers:

15:05 | COSECSA's online surgical curriculum programme



Dr. Andrea Parker
Consultant Surgeon and Assistant Program Director,
General Surgery Residency,
Tenwek Hospital, Bomet, Kenya
Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery, Brown University



Dr. Mercy Mitei
General Surgery Resident,
PAACS- COSECSA,
Tenwek Hospital, Bomet, Kenya

15:20 | Scaling global capacity and capability on cancer surgery through disruptive technology: Virtual reality as an exemplar



Dr. Julie Torode
Visiting Researcher
Global Oncology Group,
Institute of Cancer Policy,
Kings College London



Dr. Arnold Sakala
Zambian Ministry of Health

15:30 | Click and Learn: Providing e-learning opportunities for cleft professionals globally



Ms. Kimmy Coseteng-Flaviano
Vice-President, South-East Asia
Smile Train



Dr. Esther Njoroge-Muriithi
Senior VP, Global Medical
Programs, Smile Train

15:00 | Welcome remarks



Dr. Geoff Ibbotson
Executive Director,
Global Surgery Foundation
Senior Health Advisor, UNITAR



Mr. Nikhil Seth
United Nations Assistant
Secretary-General,
Executive Director,
UNITAR

15:40 | Roundtable discussion and Q&A

15:55 | United Nations Global Surgery Learning Hub



Mr. Eric O'Flynn
Programme Director,
Education, Training & Advocacy
Royal College of Surgeons
in Ireland

Event attendance

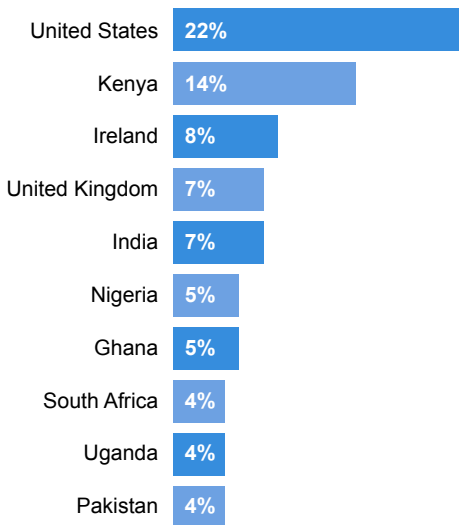


A total of **197 participants** with maximum concurrent views at **143** via Zoom

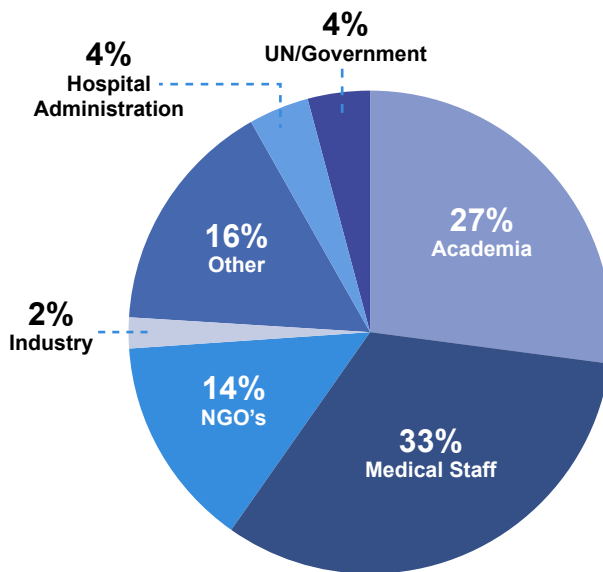


Global reach with **51 countries** represented

Country representation



Affiliation



Notable Government representation by country

Kenya | Tanzania | Zambia | Uganda

Promotion and planning

Combined efforts to promote the event by GSF, UNITAR and RCSI yielded a total of 528 registrations via the Zoom platform and attracted 745 visitors to the GSF event page.

Event outcomes and next steps

- 1) The **event recording** is now available: <https://www.globalsurgeryfoundation.org/events/2022/digital-training>
- 2) **Call to action** for other stakeholders to support with funding, content development and engage with the new initiative – the United Nations Global Surgery Learning Hub, which is currently under development in collaboration with GSF, RCSI and UNITAR.

Thank you to all our partners for such an insightful and engaging session!

