

## GHANA PROJECT

I work with the International Reconstructive Plastic Surgery Ghana project in Accra at the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital. The project was started by Jack Mustarde a Scottish Plastic Surgeon, who when visiting Ghana on a humanitarian project in 1992 realised there was no provision for reconstructive surgery and through the charity raised enough money to build the unit in 1997.



**The Centre**

Since then a number of plastic surgeons from the UK have gone to Accra and Kumasi to mainly teach local surgeons and operate. Ghanaians, who have been trained in the UK and Germany have also returned to Ghana and are now running the two units in Accra and Kumasi.

So what do I do? I teach on practical courses how to repair tendons, how to deal with infections of the hand and birth defects, I help operate on patients and teach local surgeons operations.



**Operating together**

**The problems are many.**

**Buruli ulcer**, a disease caused by infection with *Mycobacterium ulcerans*, is one of the most neglected, but treatable tropical diseases. The causative organism is from the family of bacteria which causes tuberculosis and leprosy, but Buruli ulcer has received less attention than these diseases. Infection leads to extensive destruction of skin and soft tissue with the formation of large ulcers usually on the legs or arms. Patients who are not treated early, often suffer long-term functional disability such as restriction of joint movement, as well as the obvious cosmetic problem. Early diagnosis and treatment are vital in preventing such disabilities.



A small boy who eventually abandoned by his family, but adopted after his Buruli ulcer had been treated.



Many get treated with herbs before they seek medical attention. This lady eventually lost her hand.

**Burns:** Many still use Kerosene lamps in the villages for light and many come very late for the treatment of the burns.



Both this little's girl hands had been burnt and she lost fingers. The remaining fingers had fused through the scar tissue.



Many women are involved in attacks where acid is thrown at their face.