

# Foundation of Children's Hospitals Kantha Bopha

Dr. med. Beat Richner



## Annual Report 2023

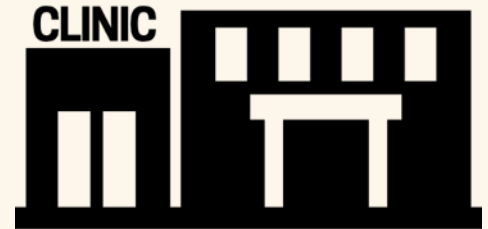
# Balance 2023

## from our five paediatric hospitals



899,692 children treated as **outpatients**

of which 184,055 children were admitted as **inpatients**



949 open **heart** surgeries or via cardiac catheterisation



27,700 **surgical interventions**



16,160 cases of **dengue fever**



14,683 **blood donations**

2,500 **employees**



21,644 **births** and 108,719 **check-ups** for pregnant women

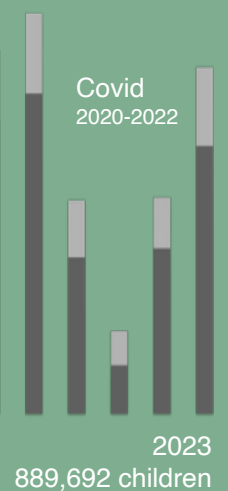


### Development of patient numbers 1993 to 2023

outpatient treatment  
 admitted as inpatients



1993  
180,000 children



# Medical help for almost 900,000 children



## Dear readers

On 31 January 2023, the Foundation Board elected me as President of the Foundation of Children's Hospitals Kantha Bopha, Dr. Beat Richner. **It is a great honour and pleasure for me to take on this role.** I would like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues of the board for the trust they have placed in me and for their tireless personal commitment to the sustainable continuation and further development of the magnificent work of our founders Dr. Beat Richner and Dr. Peter Studer.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to my predecessor, Dr. iur. René Schwarzenbach. He was at the helm our Foundation for ten challenging years, and we are delighted that he continues to support us as an active member of the Foundation Board.

After the years of the pandemic, 2023 was another busy year for Kantha Bopha in Cambodia. Details can be found in the relevant sections of this report. Our five paediatric hospitals in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap and our maternity clinic in Siem Reap were almost back to full capacity, we treated around **900,000 children and assisted in more than 21,000 births.**

The medical missions, which ensure the transfer of knowledge, were also fully resumed. This enabled us to further develop our range of therapies, which has now been expanded in oncology to include the treatment of solid tumours. Our local staff were also able to continue developing their experience and skills, which resulted in numerous promotions at all levels, including



that of Prof Dr. Tek Lyvannara, who was promoted to Vice Director in Phnom Penh in November 2023.

As we do every year, we made **substantial investments in our hospital infrastructure** in 2023. For instance, we acquired a new MRI machine in Phnom Penh and built an additional 120-bed maternity ward for mothers and their newborns at our maternity clinic in Siem Reap, which was officially opened in February 2024.

As a result of the high occupancy rate at our hospitals and the considerable investments, we recorded an excess spending in 2023. We were able to cover it from our reserves. However, as the number of patients is expected to remain at least at the 2023 level or be even higher in the coming years, we



are more dependent than ever on the generosity of donors in Switzerland – and also in Cambodia.

*Furthermore, the reporting year saw some truly exceptional milestones, which I am proud to share with you:*

In terms of support from the Swiss Confederation, we were able to extend the contract with the **Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)**, which has supported us with significant annual contributions since the 1990s, for a further five years until 2027. We are also receiving firm commitment from the Cambodian government. The new Minister of Health, Prof. Cheang Ra, who has been in office since the summer of 2023, and various key persons from his ministry have visited our hospitals several times, and His Excellency has consistently expressed his high regard for the work of our hospitals and has assured us of the government's full support.

The musical event organised by our Public Relations Committee to commemorate the fifth anniversary of Beat Richner's passing was memorable, with the **young musician Selma Aerni taking part** alongside nine other cellists: **She played on Beat Richner's cello**, which our Foundation lent her during her training.

Finally, following the election of Dr. med. Silvia C. Richner to the Foundation Board, we once again have a doctor from Beat's family on the Foundation Board.

Overall, 2023 has once again shown that the «**Kantha Bopha model**» is a **success story**, which remains sustainable and continuously developed by the local management team and its approximately 2,500 employees even after the death of the founders.

The Foundation of Children's Hospitals Kantha Bopha, Dr. med. Beat Richner, is working in increasingly close collaboration with the relevant authorities in Cambodia to ensure the continued development and implementation of this model, while maintaining the same quality standards and financial resources.



I am deeply moved every time I visit our hospitals in Cambodia. Each time I visit, I learn about aspects of everyday hospital life that I hadn't been aware of before.

In November 2023, for example, as I walked through one of the wards at the maternity clinic in Siem Reap, I was introduced to four sets of twins, all born the day before – along with about 60 other newborns. After a short stay in hospital, all eight little twins were healthy and ready to go home with their parents. What a testa-

ment to the extraordinary work our employees do every day!

Many thanks to all those who support this magnificent work and help to ensure that the legacy of Beat Richner and Peter Studer is properly maintained and promoted.

**Philip Robinson**

President of the Foundation Board



# Medicine and further training



Helping people to help themselves: This has been our guiding principle since we started in 1992. Our medical experts travel to the hospitals in Cambodia to provide training and education to the local teams. Together, they look for the best strategies and processes to provide the best medical care. This gives local people the knowledge and skills they need to run the hospitals independently. The teams of experts are also available to provide advice outside the missions through online tools.

## MEDICAL MISSIONS

Following the Covid-related break, a two-year plan for the resumption of medical missions was drawn up in February 2022. Together with the senior doctors, the delegation of the Foundation Board defined the main focus of the next **training programmes**. Accordingly, in 2023, the second part of the training programme took place in the following fields:

- Oncology
- Pathology
- Gastroenterology
- Neonatology (NICU)
- General intensive care unit (PICU)
- Nephrology
- Gynaecology
- Cardiology
- Cardiac surgery
- Radiology

Training missions are based on the needs of local doctors and are coordinated to be as evenly spread as possible throughout the year. Depending on the area of specialisation, the missions take place once a year or once every two years. Most of the doctors involved are experts from the University Children's Hospital Zurich. Other specialists from Switzerland and abroad are also involved.

Training takes place not only during missions, but also throughout the year via telephone meetings, videoconferences, and e-mail exchanges.



Opening of the new cancer ward in September 2023 in Phnom Penh.

We expect 500 treatments per year.



## NEW CANCER WARD

Blood cancer treatments have been available in our hospitals for almost twenty years. 40 per cent of children with life-threatening diseases survive. In September 2023, we opened a new oncology unit in Phnom Penh. «We can now also treat solid tumours here», explains **Prof. Dr. med. Felix Niggli**, member of the Foundation Board and former Head of Oncology at the Children's Hospital Zurich. Together with PD Dr. Peter Bode, Head of the Institute of Pathology at Winterthur Cantonal Hospital, he has trained staff in Cambodia and modernised the laboratory for the precise examination of diseased tissue. «**We expect to treat around 500 children a year**», says Felix Niggli. Without treatment, they would have little chance of survival. There is a lively exchange of expertise between Cambodia and Switzerland: A tumour board is made up of experts from the fields of surgery, pathology, radiology, and oncology. They discuss and evaluate new cases online and then decide how to treat them.

## EXPANSION OF THE MATERNITÉ

Mothers in our maternity ward in Siem Reap always received the best medical

care, but the unit was bursting at the seams - some women had to lie on mats on the floor with their newborns after giving birth. **Construction work to expand the Maternité** therefore began in spring 2023. A new ward block with 120 new places for mothers and their babies was built, including a neonatology ward (inauguration and opening in February 2024).

## RENEWAL

In November 2023, a new **magnetic resonance imaging scanner (MRI)** was purchased in Phnom Penh. Since then, it has been possible to view the images scanned in Cambodia simultaneously at the University Children's Hospital Zurich.

## OCCUPANCY RATE

After the drop in patient numbers during the pandemic years (2020 to 2022), bed occupancy in 2023 was almost back to pre-Covid levels. Every day, around 3,000 sick or injured children come to our hospitals. Special thanks go to the staff on the ground who do an incredible job.

# Finances and Investments



## ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2023

The annual financial statement for 2023, approved by the Foundation Board at the meeting on 14 May 2024, closed with assets of CHF 58,659,884.69 and a surplus in expenditures of CHF 9,677,306.64.

The organisation capital (equity) therefore decreased by approx. CHF 9.7 million to CHF 58.1 million. This reserve ensures the funding of hospital operation in the medium term.

As in the previous year, the annual financial statement 2023 was carried out according to the requirements of Swiss GAAP FER 21. The audit report by PwC of 14 May 2024 contains no limitations or details and recommends that the Foundation Board approve the annual financial statement.

In our accounting, the following should be noted in particular: Due to the special political situation and the lack of legal security in

Cambodia, the investments are debited directly from the expenditures.

## NOTES ON INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTING HEADINGS

After a revenue surplus of around CHF 0.15 million in the last year of operation, the annual financial statement for 2023 closes with a high expenditure surplus of CHF 9.7 million. **In essence, the following factors** contributed to this development:

- The operating income decreased by CHF 4.8 million from CHF 37.6 million to CHF 32.8 million. The ordinary donations in Switzerland amounted to approx. CHF 22.1 million and decreased by approx. CHF 4.5 million. This decrease is due to lower income from bequests (approx. CHF -3.9 million).
- **Ticket contributions from the Angkor Wat temples** amounted to around CHF 1.4 million in 2023 and were significantly higher than in the previous



We only use 3.43 per cent of our income for administration and marketing.

Over 96.57 per cent of donations go directly to the children.





year (approx. CHF 0.5 million). There was a slight increase of CHF 0.4 million in large donations and a decrease of CHF 3.9 million in bequests to CHF 4.3 million.

- **The federal contribution (SDC)** for 2023 amounted to CHF 4.0 million. We received the same amount for 2022, with CHF 0.8 million already prepaid to our Foundation at the end of December 2021. No accrual was made in the previous year.
- The expenditures for the **operation of the hospitals** in Cambodia («Recurring operating costs») were 2.4 million higher than in the previous year at CHF 36.8 million, in particular due to higher costs for medication (CHF 1.3 million) and higher operating costs (CHF 1.1 million).
- Furthermore, **investments** in medical equipment and building extensions totalled CHF 4.0 million (previous year CHF 2.1 million).
- The «**infrastructure expenses Switzerland**» (expenses for fundraising, general advertisement expenditures and administrative costs) amounted to approx. CHF 1.1 million and is approx. 0.3 million lower than in the previous year.
- Due to the strongly negative USD **currency development**, the «financial results» were CHF 1.0 million lower.

### **SUPPORT FROM CAMBODIA**

The Kantha Bopha hospitals also receive considerable support and donations from Cambodia – from Cambodian individuals and institutions. The **Cambodia Kantha Bopha Foundation**, whose statutory purpose is to provide financial support for our hospitals, is also based there. All of the Foundation's activities and endeavours contribute to securing the hospital's operation sustainably and in the long term.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES DECREASED**

The part of our administrative costs confirmed by PwC, **has averaged 3.43% over the last 3 years** (previous year: 3.54%), which is an efficiently low ratio and is linked to our lean and efficient organisation.

The administrative costs mainly comprise public relations including advertisements, IT, administration of donations, thank-you letters, bookkeeping and auditing costs.

# Foundation Board and Management



## FOUNDATION BOARD

### President

Dr. phil., lic. oec. Philip Robinson, Zurich

### Vice-President

Prof. Dr. med. Michael Grotzer, Zurich

### Treasurer

Tiziano Tuena, Rafz

### Members

Geneviève F. Cattin-Studer, Birrwil

Susanna Cohen Straka, Küssnacht

Prof. Dr. med. Oliver Kretschmar, Zurich

Dr. med. Alfred Löhner, Zurich

Prof. Dr. med. Felix Niggli, Uerikon

Dr. med. Seraina Prader, Zurich

Dr. med. Silvia C. Richner, Zurich

Dr. iur. René Schwarzenbach, Herrliberg

Prof. Dr. med. Felix Sennhauser, St. Gallen

Dr. iur. Florian von Meiss, Zurich

Christine Zwygart, Lauerz

The Foundation Board held two meetings in Zurich on 31 January and 9 May 2023, dealing with statutory matters. **Philip Robinson** was elected as the new President of the

Foundation Board on 31 January 2023. He

succeeds René Schwarzenbach, who will

remain on the Foundation Board. Dr. med.

**Silvia C. Richner** was elected as a new

member of the Foundation Board. She works

as a general practitioner and is the niece of

founder Beat Richner.

## HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT

### General Director

Dr. Biol. Denis Laurent, Phnom Penh

### Hospital Directors

Prof. Dr. med. Ky Santy, Phnom Penh

Prof. Dr. med. Yay Chantana, Siem Reap

### Vice-Directors

Prof. Dr. med. Iv Malène, Phnom Penh

Prof. Dr. med. Nguon Yaneth, Phnom Penh

Prof. Dr. med. Khun Leang-Chhun, Siem Reap

Prof. Dr. med. Tek Lyvannara (elected in November 2023)



«We look back on 30 years of successful partnership and we want to achieve even more.»

Patricia Danzi,  
SDC Director General



## PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Christine Zwygart (Chair), Geneviève F. Cattin-Studer, Susanna Cohen Straka, Dr. phil., lic. oec. Philip Robinson, Dr. iur. René Schwarzenbach

The Public Relations Committee reviews and discusses all **key messages** that are communicated to the outside world – such as fundraising mailings, advertisements, and newsletter articles. The team also organises various events such as concerts and the Knie Gala. The committee regularly exchanges information via WhatsApp conferences and e-mail.

## REMUNERATION AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Dr. iur. Florian von Meiss (Chair), Dr. med. Alfred Löhrer, Dr. phil., lic. oec. Philip Robinson, Dr. iur. René Schwarzenbach, Tiziano Tuena

The Remuneration and Audit Committee meets once a year and acts as the **Foundation's internal financial control**. In this role, the following areas are carefully examined and critically reviewed:

- all compensation and salaries in Switzerland
- the proposals of the General Director Denis Laurent regarding salaries of employees in Cambodia
- the annual financial statements
- the overall investment policy of the Foundation and preparing proposals to the full Foundation Board

## NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Prof. Dr. med. Michael Grotzer (Chair), Prof. Dr. med. Oliver Kretschmar, Dr. med. Alfred Löhrer, Prof. Dr. med. Felix Niggli, Dr. med. Seraina Prader, Dr. phil., lic. oec. Philip Robinson, Prof. Dr. med. Felix Sennhauser

The Nominations Committee deals with **personnel issues** – in Cambodia and Switzerland. In 2023, the members focused on the strategic and professional strengthening and rejuvenation of the hospital management. They also examined the election of Silvia C. Richner to the Foundation Board and supported the selection process to fill the newly created fundraising position in Switzerland from 1 January 2024.

«I want to learn languages and become a teacher.»

In 2011, two holes in Non Sokta's heart wall were discovered and surgically closed. Since then, the girl has been living without any physical complaints and is making plans for the future.



### STRATEGY COMMITTEE

Dr. phil., lic. oec. Philip Robinson (Chair), Prof. Dr. med. Michael Grotzer, Dr. med. Alfred Löhrer, Dr. iur. René Schwarzenbach, Tiziano Tuena, Dr. iur. Florian von Meiss, Christine Zwygart

This committee discusses visions and strategies relating to the future of the Foundation and the further development of the five children's hospitals. It deals with topics such as financing, succession planning and cooperation.

### ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING

The Foundation Board would like to thank **Intercontrol AG** for their accurate and transparent accounting and monthly financial statements. We are also grateful for the competent handling of transactions relating to legacies, bequests, and correspondence with donors.

**PricewaterhouseCoopers AG (PwC)** audited the annual financial statements in 2023 (see appendix).



# Public Relations online und offline



## EVENTS

In 2023, the Public Relations Committee organised **three events**. In particular, Susanna Cohen Straka, Geneviève F. Cattin-Studer and René Schwarzenbach spent many hours organising these events.

On 5 March 2023, the Foundation Board hosted an information event at the Helferei Zurich, which was accompanied by classical music from **Trio Fontane**.

The traditional **Knie Gala** took place on 9 May 2023 on Sechseläutenplatz in Zurich. The tent was packed – and, as always, the net proceeds from the evening went to our hospitals.

9 September 2023 marked the fifth **anniversary of the death of founder Beat Richner**. The Foundation Board organised a memorial concert in his honour in the lecture hall of the Kunsthaus Zurich. A specially assembled cello ensemble,

under the direction of Jonas Kreienbühl, paid tribute to the doctor and musician with a variety of pieces and compositions. One of the musicians at the event was Selma Aerni, who played Beat Richner's cello. The Foundation has lent her the instrument for a few years now.

## NEW WEBSITE

The Foundation's **newly designed website** went online at the beginning of March 2023. The design has been modernised and the content structured in a more convenient way. In addition, the website [www.beat-richner.ch](http://www.beat-richner.ch) now has a modern donation platform. Christine Zwygart was at the forefront of all these innovations.

## DONATION MAILINGS BY POST

Touching stories about everyday life in the hospital, information about the development of our hospitals and information about events in Switzerland – our donors received



Today, music student Selma Aerni is playing Beat Richner's cello.

The Foundation has lent her the instrument.



**three letters** in the post in 2023: in March, June, and November.

The majority of our donations still come from private individuals. These letters are therefore an important fundraising tool for the Foundation. With the KünzlerBachmann agency, we have a strong partner at our side.

#### **NEW: NEWSLETTER**

In summer 2023, the Foundation sent out a newsletter for the first time in its history. For this purpose, we asked donors to **complete their details** and register their email address to receive the newsletter.

We would like to use this new service to keep in touch with those interested and to tell them more about our day-to-day work at the clinic. The articles are a mixture of medical background stories, touching children's stories, portraits of staff and information on current events in Cambodia and Switzerland. We prepare the content in many different ways: in video, text, or photo reports. In 2023, one newsletter was sent at the beginning of June and one at the beginning of October. And we are very pleased

with the initial results. The articles have been well received, the number of visitors and clicks on the website has increased and new registrations are coming in continuously.

If you are interested in our newsletter, you can sign up here:

**[www.beat-richner.ch/en/newsletter](http://www.beat-richner.ch/en/newsletter)**

#### **MEDIA RELATIONS AND ADVERTISEMENTS**

Various newspapers reported on us in 2023, there was a TV report on SRF 1 in the programme «Gesichter und Geschichten» and the radio programme «Treffpunkt» devoted a special focus to us.

The Foundation also placed several advertisements to keep donors informed about current developments.

# The history of our children's hospitals

Our five Kantha Bopha hospitals are exemplary, they are free of corruption, and no one is discriminated against – making them an island of justice and social peace in Cambodia. **85 per cent of all sick and injured children in the country are treated here – free of charge.** As many locals can barely afford to go to the hospital, access is open to all.

In terms of historical context, the significance of the Kantha Bopha hospitals is enormous: In 1962, the first children's hospital was built by **King Norodom Sihanouk** (1922-2012) in Phnom Penh. He named it Kantha Bopha in honour of his daughter, who died of leukaemia at infancy.

In the 1970s, assistant doctor Beat Richner worked in this hospital for the Red Cross. When the Khmer Rouge invaded Phnom Penh, he fled and returned to Switzerland. After the reign of terror, the healthcare system was destroyed and most of the doctors fell victim to the Pol Pot regime. And so, the Zurich native was asked if he would rebuild Kantha Bopha. In spring 1992, Beat Richner set up the Foundation and returned to Cambodia.

## MILESTONES

### **Kantha Bopha I in Phnom Penh**

Opened in 1992, refurbished in 2015 to include a museum, inauguration of the replacement building with cardiac surgery centre and two intensive care units for newborns (NICU) and older children (PICU) in 2019, Cancer ward opened in 2023

### **Kantha Bopha II in Phnom Penh**

Opened in 1996, on the grounds of the Royal Palace, continuously developed

### **Jayavarman VII in Siem Reap**

Opened in 1999, Maternité inaugurated in 2001, new extension in 2008, cardiac centre with interventional cardiac catheter examinations opened in 2011, extension of the maternity ward in 2024

### **Kantha Bopha IV in Phnom Penh**

Opened in 2005

### **Kantha Bopha V in Phnom Penh**

Opened in 2007



Kantha Bopha is an unparalleled success story. Since its launch in 1992, **over 22 million children** have received outpatient treatment. More than 2.7 million of them were seriously ill that they needed to be hospitalised. And 370,000 babies were born in our Maternité. In 2003, Beat Richner (1947-2018) was voted by the public as **the very first «Swiss Personality of the Year»** at the «Swiss Award» TV gala - a tribute to his commitment. Throughout the years, paediatrician Peter Studer (1947-2020) was at Richner's side, supporting him and making a significant contribution to the development of the hospitals. Today, the operations are run by a local team in the spirit of the founders, in close collaboration with the Foundation Board.



## Foundation of Children's Hospitals Kantha Bopha, Dr. med. Beat Richner

### Contact

[www.beat-richner.ch](http://www.beat-richner.ch)  
[info@beat-richner.ch](mailto:info@beat-richner.ch)

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### Bank details

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Illustrations  
Photos

**Beat Richner**  
**Monika Flückiger**  
**Christine Zwygart**