

Giving a future
to children with
heart disease







Surgery is vital for children with a congenital heart defect. But unfortunately, not every region in the world can provide such an operation. The pilot project of the children's hospital *kinderherzen*, under the medical direction of Prof. Schlensak, is a solution to this problem.

In Santa Ana, a town in El Salvador, the mobile rescue unit is to be used for the first time in the winter of 2022/2023. This will allow young children to undergo life-saving surgery despite the poor medical infrastructure in their home country.

A heart that beats passionately for the pilot project in El Salvador

With around 7 million inhabitants, El Salvador is the smallest country in Central America. Every year, 1000 children are born there with a heart defect. There are only two heart surgeons and five paediatric cardiologists in the entire country.

Currently, in the capital city of San Salvador alone, a maximum of 50 children with heart defects can be treated. The conditions are also very poor. It lacks an adequate infrastructure, but also hygienic standards and sufficient equipment. As a result, more and more qualified staff are actually leaving the country. The Mobile Children's Heart Clinic wants to fix that!





kinderherzen e.V. has been operating for over 30 years

In 1989 *kinderherzen* was founded as a non-profit association and part of the Fördergemeinschaft Deutsche Kinderherzzentren e.V. and has since been 100% financed by donations.

The aim is to significantly improve the treatment options for children that have congenital heart defects – no matter where they are born. To this end, *kinderherzen* acts independently, transparently and at all times in the best interests of the patients, both nationally and internationally. A team of medical experts travels to different regions of the world, such as Eritrea or Romania every year, and carries out valuable work there.

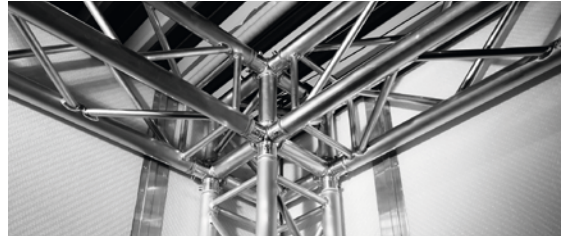
The welfare of every child is close to their heart

The medical management of the Mobile Children's Heart Clinic is the responsibility of Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Christian Schlensak. Actually, Prof. Schlensak is Medical Director for Thoracic, Cardiac and Vascular Surgery at the University Hospital of Tübingen. Since 2001, together with a team of various medical experts, he has been committed to improving the situation of children with heart disease in El Salvador.





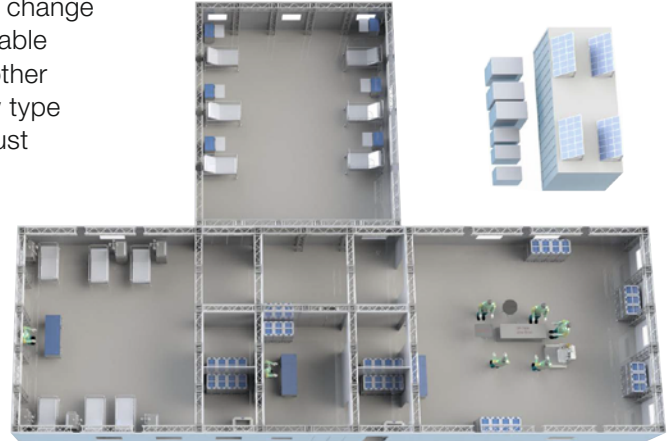
So far, he and his team operate here twice a year on a voluntary basis in the capital. But that is not enough. The pilot project aims to make it possible for the first time to perform operations on children's hearts in areas with extremely weak infrastructure, such as at the Hospital de San Juan de Dios in Santa Ana. It is simply not possible to treat patients at this location.



No more rusty heart-lung machines

Everyday life in other regions of the world is hardly imaginable to people in Germany. The world's first mobile children's heart clinic aims to change this. A self-sufficient and modular operation system, the transportable rescue unit functions independently of the local power supply or other energy sources. Made of lightweight yet robust elements of a new type of plastic, the individual modules can be quickly assembled with just a few people helping. The operating theatre with intensive care unit and nursing station is thus immediately ready for use.

Another special feature is that apart from the sustainable production of this rescue unit, it is also suitable for education and training programmes. It can thus make a lasting contribution to improving medical care all over the world.



El Salvador is only the beginning

Planning for the project in El Salvador started in 2019 already. The Mobile Children's Heart Clinic will be used for the first time in the winter of 2022/2023. Approximately 30 children's heart operations are to be performed in a period of three weeks with the help of three teams of doctors and nurses. Two more heart missions are scheduled for 2023. First in El Salvador again and then secondly in another selected country. Six teams of doctors and nurses will be performing operations in four week periods already. The long-term goal is to complete operations with up to 20 teams of doctors and nurses on four heart missions and on different continents, each comprising five weeks, starting in 2025.



A matter of the heart for seca

- + Any child can be born with a heart defect, but in El Salvador only 50 children can currently be treated each year.
- + With the pilot project of the Children's heart hospital, the *kinderherzen* organisation wants to make life-saving interventions possible all around the world, first and foremost Santa Ana in El Salvador.
- + Starting with 30 operations by three teams of doctors and nurses in El Salvador in the winter of 2022/23, the goal is to have up to 20 teams of doctors and nurses operating on four continents by 2025.
- + The designed rescue unit is not only particularly sustainable in terms of its construction. It also includes sufficient space for training and further education of medical specialists on site in addition to surgical capacities.



Further information available at [kinderherzen.de](https://www.kinderherzen.de)

We sincerely wish Prof. Schlensak and the entire *kinderherzen* team all the best and much success for the further implementation of their plan for the global treatment of children with heart defects.

seca germany

Hammer Steindamm 3–25
22089 Hamburg
Germany

T 0800 20 00 005
F +49 40 20 00 00 50
E info@seca.com

[seca.com](https://www.seca.com)