

THE BURDEN OF FIREARM INJURIES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

“The Bullet Stories begin Here ”

Presentation at the IPPNW -Germany Human Target Conference

by

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Introduction

Since the inception of “Aiming for Prevention” Campaign in Helsinki in September, 2001 members of IPPNW have actively kept the tempo of the campaign to regulate the proliferation and abuse of firearms.

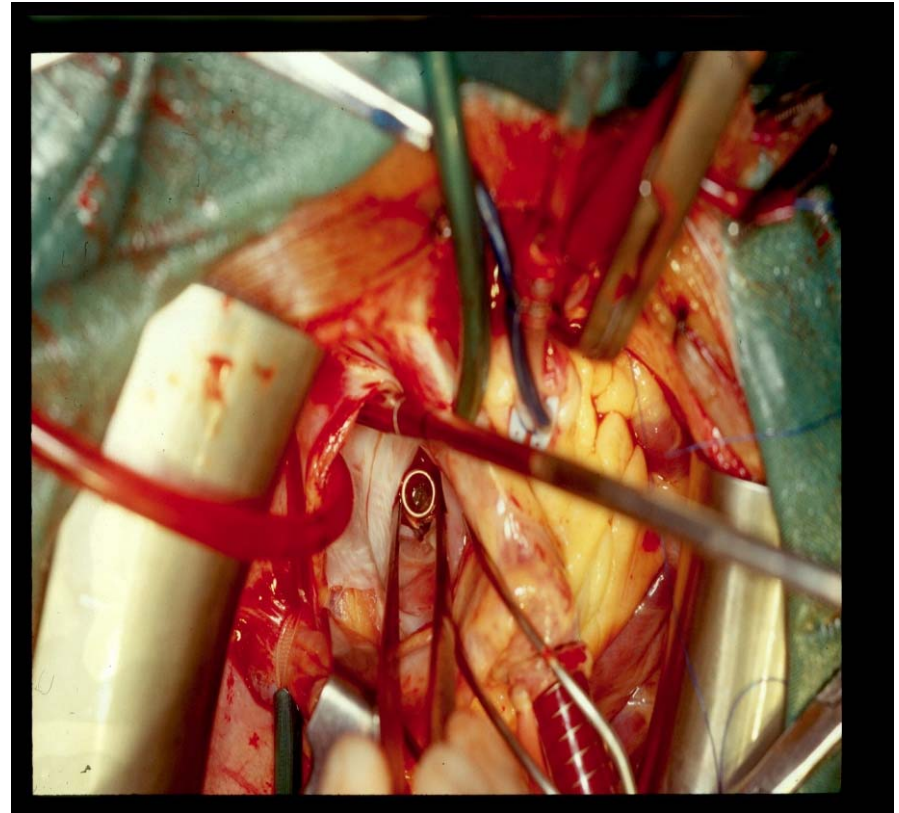
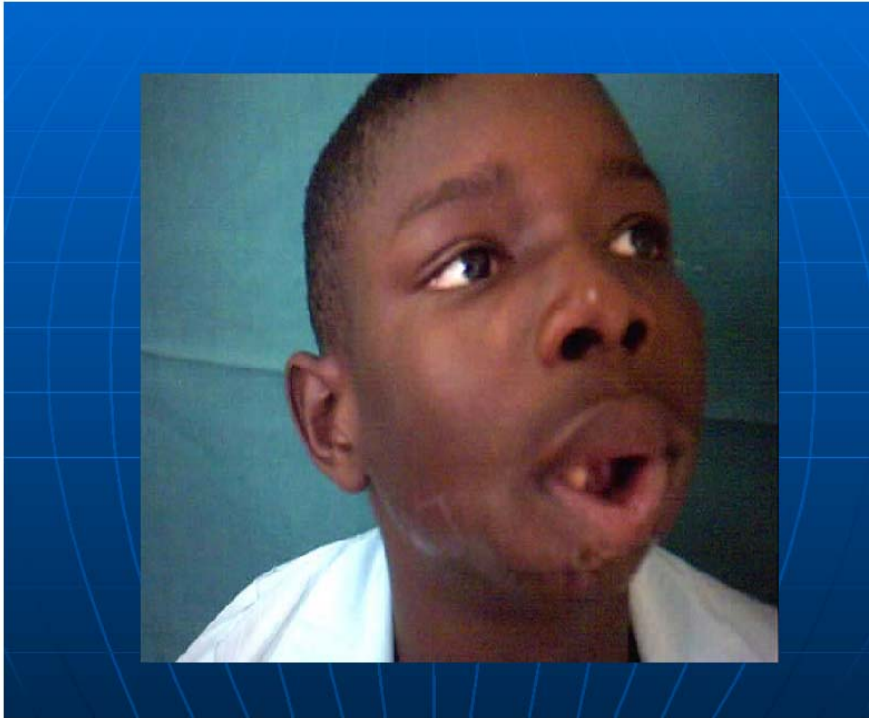
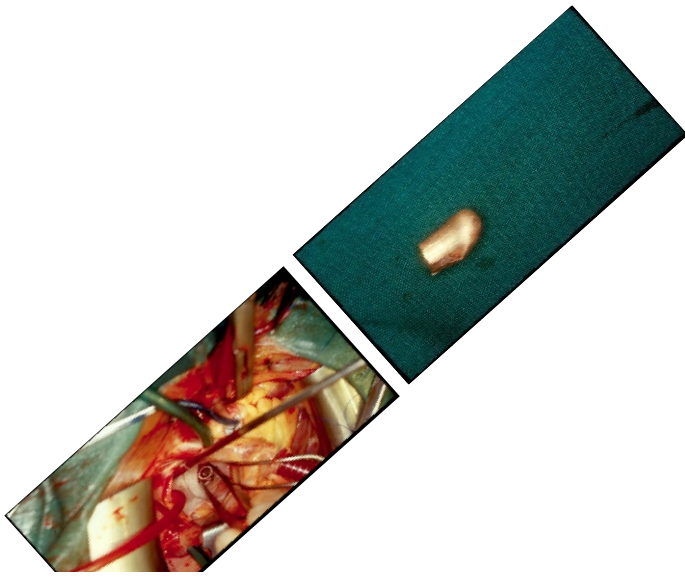
We congratulate our colleagues whose tireless efforts and dedication have made ATT a reality at last.

Introduction

This campaign has been conducted using the IPPNW traditional approach of research, education and advocacy. Our greatest strength as physicians has been and remain our direct contact with the evidence. We are an eye-witness to the pain, human suffering and deaths occasioned by this man-made disease.

The Bullet Stories

It is more than 10 years since we presented the first '*One Bullet Story*' – the story of a 17-year old Congolese boy who traveled thousands of miles from Congo to seek treatment in Nairobi after his face was disfigured by a single gunshot.



The One Bullet Stories

The sad story of Patamule is replicated daily all over the world. Many are those who do not live to tell their stories but even more continue to suffer in silence...either too scared or traumatized to talk or simply ignored by their cruel gun infested environment.

THE VICTIMS/SURVIVORS!

PASTOR ON RESCUE MISSION TURNED VICTIM



The Bullet Stories begin Here!

Today in this beautiful city of black forest our IPPNW- German colleagues have brought us close to one of the centers where the disease causing germ is bred or cultured, packaged and then transported far and wide to wreck havoc on hapless and helpless human beings globally. *The bullet stories begin here!*

...The gun is hatched here.

ASSORTMENT OF FIREARMS



Impact is Global

.... but with disproportionately greater devastation in sub-saharan Africa where poverty and other disease conditions are a major drain on life and resources.

**ITCHO ITO THE SLAIN
MAYOR OF NAGASAKI**



**17 YEAR OLD BOY IN RURAL
CONGO**



VIRGINIA TECH SHOOTING

The Human Target

We have been determined to control the 'vector' or peddlers of the bug. Today we come to the breeding ground determined to nip the bud of the bug at the source. This is the home of G3 a gun whose fame is only outdone by the AK-47.

- Yes we know that guns are used for hunting and target shooting as well... but their main objective is human, their main target is human.... *'The human target'*

THE TARGERT

13 YEAR OLD WHO CAME FOR CHRISTMAS IN NAIROBI



THE TARGET

4 - YEAR OLD GIRL SHOT IN THE HEAD WHILE IN BED AT HOME!



Gunmakers Voices emerge

International Herald Tribune

Wednesday, 29th May 2013 pg2

Picture of President George W Bush signing a law shielding gun merchants from liability

“We believe that guns do not pose any risk at all. It is people using them that pose risk”

The Shadow World

I am greatly privileged to share this plenary platform with Andrew Feinstein who in his book the “Shadow World” has vividly and graphically described the character and the tactics of the peddlers of the explosive bug.

It is this kind of red evidence gathered so courageously and fearlessly displayed that we require in confronting the world that has become a slave to armed violence. *“Never whisper in the presence of a wrong” - Prof. Bernard Lown.*

The home of Mercedes!

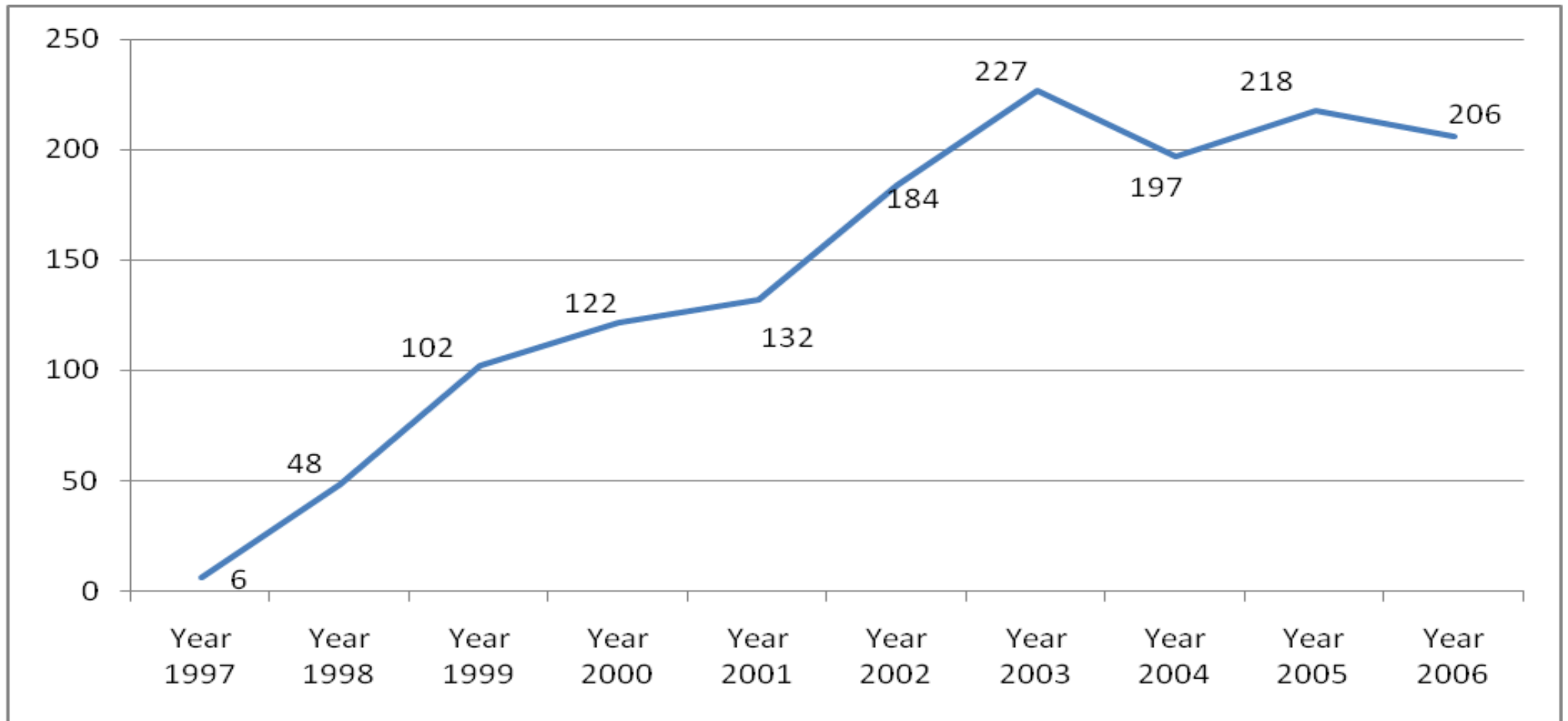
That people in this peaceful home of the world celebrated Mercedes Benz which accords the best luxury to World leaders also put together and package guns that are shipped in containers to the war front in some of the poorest regions of the world is a painful paradox that calls for your soul searching.

“It may make business sense....but is that all? Does not trade in drugs make business sense?”

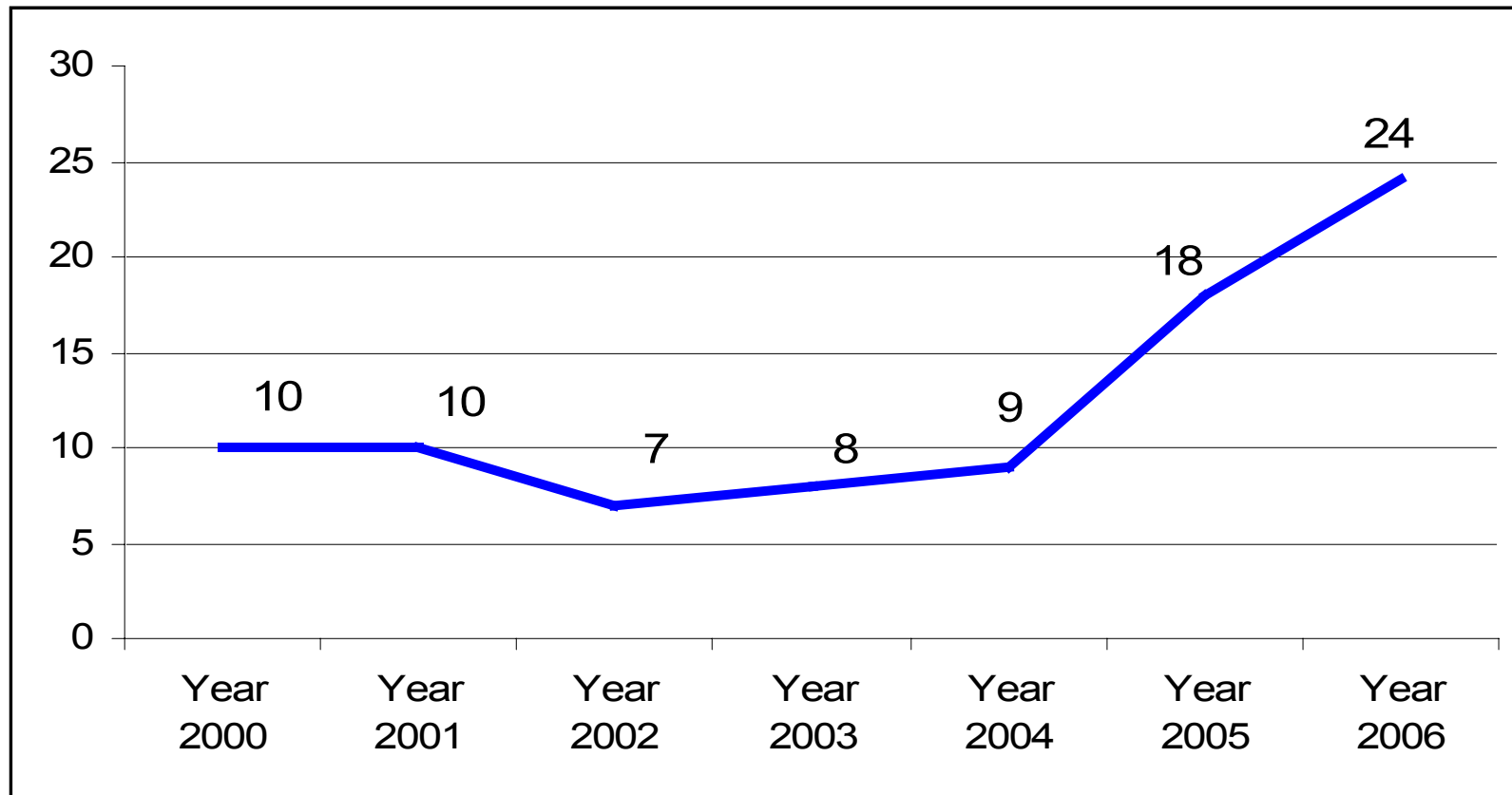
Overwhelmed Health facilities and Personnel

Medics in Africa and indeed the world over, have enough health problems to grumble with if not overwhelmed...Firearm injuries especially in non-war situation that are simply driven by the illicit desire for mega-profits is a crime against humanity for which responsible culprits should be held accountable.

Annual trend of firearm Injury cases seen at KNH



Annual FAI Hospital Mortality trend



KNH Figures n= 1,804

81% suffered severe to very severe injuries

89% admitted to the general surgical wards

7% Straight to emergency theater then ICU

1% to ICU

81% temporary physical disability

6.3% permanent physical disability (paraplegia, amputations and others)



Specialists attending to FAI patients

68% managed under GA

20% under LA

64% treated by general surgeons

33% Orthopaedic surgeons

12% Cardiothoracic surgeons

7% Neurosurgeons

7% Maxillofacial surgeons

ENT and Ophthalmologists 3% each

Who brought the Injured to the Hospital?

45% relatives, friends or acquaintances

23% referral from other hospitals

15% police

2% ambulance

Days Spent in Hospital

Average period spent in hospital was 18days

1 – 340 days

- Among those who succumbed to their injuries while in hospital, average survival period was 11days

1 – 111 days

Cost of treatment

The average hospital bill for FAI-survivors of KSh18,488 (USD230) was on average seven times more than the monthly urban poverty line .

For the fatal FAI cases the average hospital bill of Ksh. 57,045 (USD 713) was twenty one times the monthly poverty line or twice the annual level of poverty.

KNH being a government hospital, these bills were significantly subsidized.

Cost of treatment

Hugenburg et al found that the average bill was 6.2 times the poverty line which is comparable to the findings in this study.

In that study individual patient bill Ranged from KSH 120 -KSH 94,040 with an average of KSH 16,401 per firearm injury patient

USD 8000

This was the average total monetary cost of managing a single gun shot injury patient.

- Malaria requires USD 2 per patient
- HIV/AIDS requires USD 200 – 880 annually
- 20 primary school children education for a year
- 1.5 years tuition for a medical student at UON

44% of Kenyans survive on less than 2 dollars a day!

Road Traffic crashes



Lack of access to medical facilities and personnel



Challenging Work environment



Slums in Nairobi



The struggle to heal the World



Making good use of limited but well managed
Resources – *“less guns better medical facilities”*



YOUNG VICTIMS!



Training future colleagues is a wise investment



Good outcome is pride to the patient and the surgeon too! *A peaceful World makes it Possible.*

