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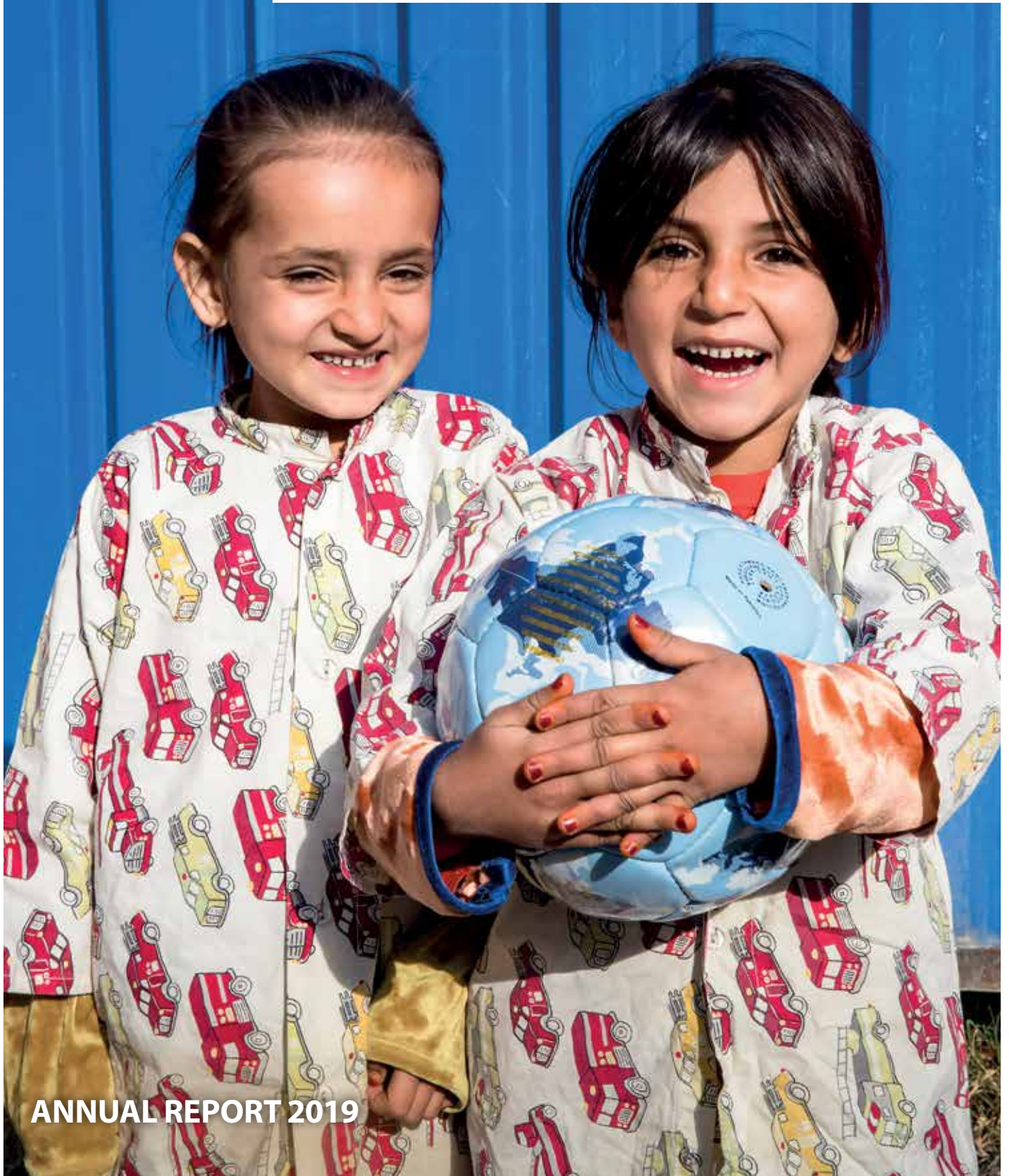


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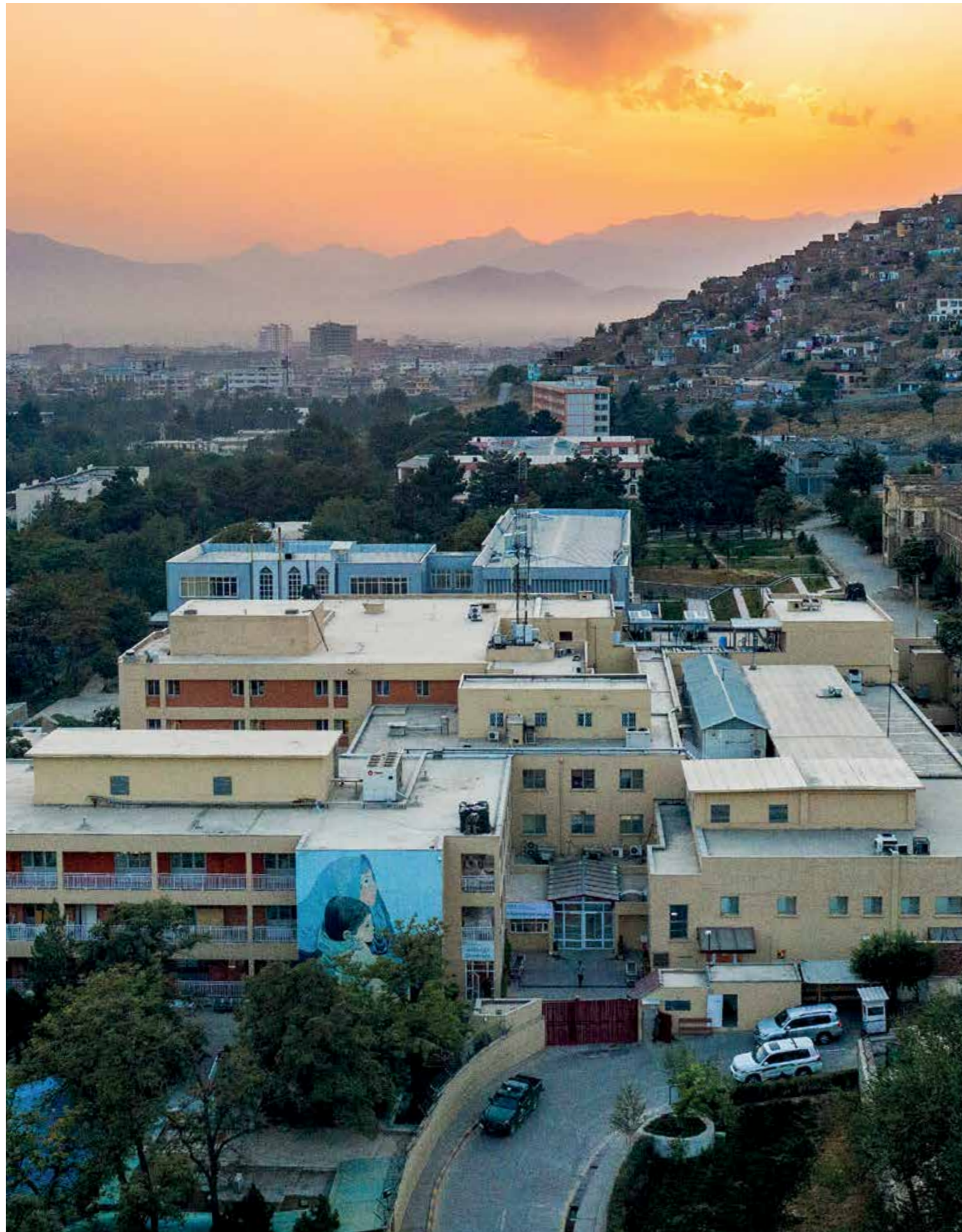
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**French Medical Institute for  
Mothers and Children**



**ANNUAL REPORT 2019**



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# Our Milestones



## Leading the Way in Afghanistan

- 1st to perform open-heart surgery (2006)
- 1st successful oesophageal atresia repair (2006)
- 1st to launch a telemedicine programme (2007)
- 1st Afghan cardiac surgeons to perform closed-heart surgery (2008)
- 1st hospital awarded ISO 9001:2008 certification (2009)
- 1st Afghan cardiac surgeons to perform open-heart surgery (2010)
- 1st annual international scientific conference and quality convention organized at FMIC (2011)
- 1st to conduct residency training in anaesthesiology, cardiology, pathology and radiology (2013)
- 1st 128-slice CT scanner (2013)
- 1st to successfully separate conjoined twins (2015)
- 1st state-of-the-art neonatal intensive care unit (2016)
- 1st successful surgical closure of patent ductus arteriosus, a heart condition, on a baby weighing less than 1 kg (2.2 lb) (2017)
- 1st minimally invasive thoracoscopic repair of a congenital diaphragmatic hernia (2018)
- 1st to conduct residency training in cardiovascular surgery (2019)



# Chairman's and CEO's Message

The French Medical Institute for Mothers and Children is the product of a unique four-party international partnership that includes the Governments of Afghanistan and France, the Aga Khan University (an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network), and the French humanitarian organisation La Chaîne de l'Espoir. That partnership is the defining characteristic of FMIC, and one of its greatest strengths. Essential to a successful partnership is trust among the partners, open and transparent communications, a shared vision and a willingness to commit resources to that vision. These are the hallmarks of the FMIC partnership. All the partners invest in FMIC and have an ownership stake in it. All have input into its governance and management, its priorities, strategies and programmes.

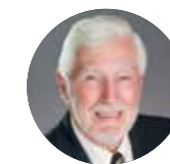
FMIC's mission of Afghan capacity development is accomplished through the partnership. An example is our Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME) programme. In March 2019, 13 residents completed four years of postgraduate training in six medical specialties. The PGME programme is the result of collaboration among FMIC, the Aga Khan University, and the Afghan Ministry of Public Health. From inception through 2019, 45 physician specialists have been trained. Some specialty training programmes

offered at FMIC are not offered anywhere else in Afghanistan, specifically, radiology, pathology, anaesthesiology, cardiology and cardiovascular surgery. FMIC's PGME programme also benefits from the support of the French and Canadian governments, which have generously helped to pay the capital and operating costs associated with training residents.

FMIC's success in enabling Afghan patients to access international quality care, regardless of their ability to pay, is another result of the partnership. FMIC's high quality and unique services are utilized by patients from all of Afghanistan's 34 provinces. The partners' and donors' contributions to FMIC's Patient Welfare Programme and La Chaîne de l'Espoir's Women's and Children's House ensure that patients with limited means to pay, including the very poorest, have access to FMIC's services.

While we take satisfaction in FMIC's accomplishments, we are well aware of the need to remain vigilant and innovative. These are times of great uncertainty, not only in Afghanistan, but around the world. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose a tremendous challenge to health systems everywhere. We are proud of the role FMIC has played in Afghanistan's response to the pandemic. The hospital has conducted

COVID-19 testing in partnership with the Ministry of Public Health and the World Health Organization, established a COVID-19 treatment facility, trained staff at government hospitals and educated the public. We look forward to continuing to work with the Government of Afghanistan and non-governmental organisations to address the pandemic and the many other health challenges facing Afghanistan.



**Lee Hilling**  
Chairman, FMIC Board



**Aziz Jan**  
Chief Executive Officer, FMIC

# Highlights

## New Cytogenetics Laboratory

Cytogenetics involves testing blood and other samples for changes in chromosomes. It helps in the diagnosis of various genetic diseases such as Down syndrome and cystic fibrosis. In 2019, FMIC established a cytogenetics laboratory, which is being run by a haematologist and expert technicians.

## Pacemakers Now Available

Heart disease is a major problem in Afghanistan, accounting for one-fifth of all deaths annually. FMIC is known as a leader in cardiac care in Afghanistan and has performed nearly 3,800 heart surgeries. In 2019, the hospital began inserting pacemakers in patients for the first time. A pacemaker is a small device that is placed in the chest and uses electrical pulses to help control abnormal heart rhythms. AKU helped make this new service possible by training staff at FMIC.

## Another PGME First

In 2019, FMIC became the first hospital in Afghanistan to train specialists in cardiovascular surgery. Two residents, one man and one woman, are enrolled in the four-year programme. The programme is one of five Postgraduate Medical Education programmes that FMIC is the only hospital to offer in Afghanistan.

## Another Clinical First

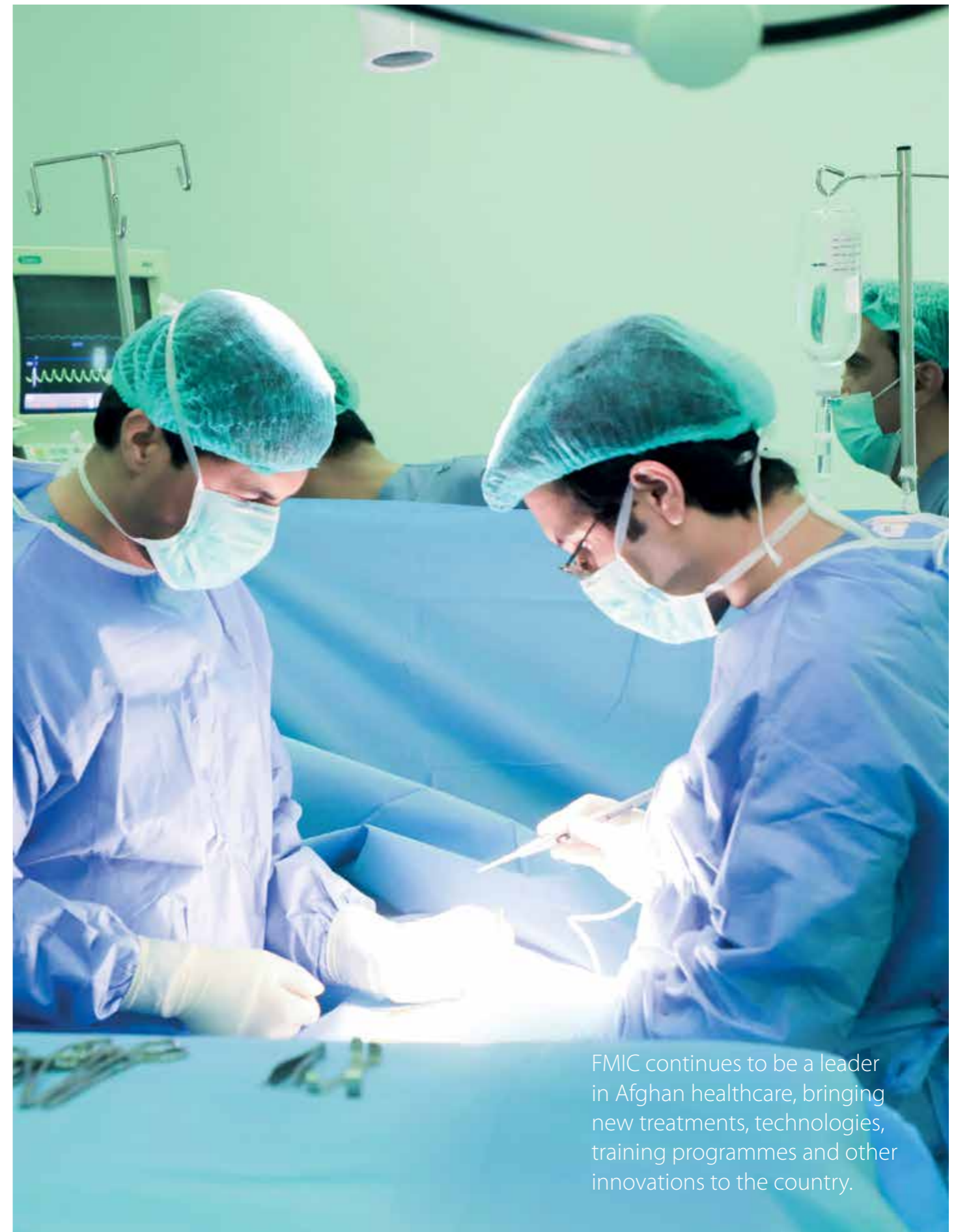
FMIC has been the first in Afghanistan to perform a number of surgical procedures. The tradition continued in 2019, as the hospital performed the country's first successful complete hip-joint replacement (see pg. 8 for details).

## Expanding Telemedicine

The hospital's telemedicine programme has expanded. FMIC is now providing online learning sessions to Baharak District Hospital in Badakhshan Province. It is also providing teleconsultations to patients at the Aga Khan Medical Centre in Baghlan Province. New tele-ophthalmology services were also initiated between FMIC and the Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi.

## Going Green

FMIC is going green: the hospital installed solar panels on its roof in an effort to cut costs, diversify its energy sources and reduce its environmental impact. The panels currently generate roughly 15 per cent of the energy the hospital uses. The panels are a pilot project. If they function as hoped, more could be added in the future. Other institutions in the region could also draw on FMIC's experience as they seek to reduce their environmental footprint.



FMIC continues to be a leader in Afghan healthcare, bringing new treatments, technologies, training programmes and other innovations to the country.

# Our Patients



## Mahdi

Nine-year-old Mahdi was suffering shortness of breath, weight loss, extreme jaundice and uncontrolled nasal bleeding. Local hospitals refused to treat him and advised his parents to take him to Pakistan. They borrowed money to do so and took him to a facility in Quetta, but his condition did not improve. Finally, they took him to FMIC, where he was diagnosed with acute anaemia and received appropriate treatment, including blood transfusion and medication. After repeated visits to the hospital, his condition has greatly improved.

## Alifa

Alifa's parents were overjoyed when she was born, but distressed to discover that she had a cleft lip, a congenital condition that can cause problems with feeding and speaking, as well as dental and hearing problems. Doctors in Tajikistan, where the family lives, told them to delay treatment, despite the fact that surgery is recommended in a child's first 12 months. Eventually, the couple made their way to Khorog Oblast Hospital, which has a telehealth connection to FMIC. After an online consultation with a surgeon at FMIC, they decided to come to Kabul, where Dr Mohammad Tareq Rahimi performed Alifa's cleft lip repair. Greatly relieved at the outcome of the procedure, Alifa's mother Furough made a point of calling the hospital after she returned home to express her satisfaction with the care her daughter received.

## Modasir

After 7-year-old Modasir from Kabul suffered a traumatic brain injury from a fall, FMIC surgeons performed a decompressive hemicraniectomy. The complex procedure, which is rarely performed in Afghanistan, involves temporarily removing a portion of the skull to relieve pressure on the brain and prevent brain damage. Fifteen days after the procedure, Modasir opened his eyes for the first time, to the joy of family members and doctors. He is now walking and talking normally. The House of the People (the lower chamber of the Afghan National Assembly, where Modasir's father works) presented a certificate of appreciation to Modasir's lead surgeon, Dr Homayoon Atiq Ghairatmal, for his outstanding work. "We had lost all hope," said Modasir's uncle, Gulzaman. "Our family is grateful to FMIC's doctors for saving Modasir's life."

## Negina

Negina's dream of performing Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, was shattered by an accident that left her with a painful hip injury. Despite visiting numerous doctors in Afghanistan and abroad, she found no relief – until a relative told her about FMIC. At FMIC, she received Afghanistan's first successful complete hip-joint replacement. Following a lengthy recovery, she was able to make the journey to Mecca. Upon her return, she visited FMIC to express her gratitude to her surgeon, Dr Ahmad Khatib Osmani.



## Marhaba

Marhaba was 14 when she began to experience stomach pain and fainting spells. Her parents took her to several hospitals, but to no avail. They were on the verge of taking her abroad for treatment when friends advised them to visit FMIC. There, doctors diagnosed Marhaba with a large cystic mass in her abdomen. A day after FMIC's paediatric surgeons removed the 5 kg (11 lb) mass from Marhaba's stomach, she was discharged from the hospital and returned home. She is now in good health and excited to attend school again. Marhaba is just one of the many Afghans whom FMIC has saved from the trouble, stress and expense of seeking treatment abroad.

## Shaib Jan and Wazhma

Sisters Shaib Jan, 10, and Wazhma, 7, are from Baghlan Province. Both received surgery for developmental dislocation of the hip, a condition that can make it painful to walk and can lead to osteoarthritis by early adulthood if left untreated. Their travel to Kabul, accommodation at FMIC's Women's and Children's House and surgery were provided at no cost to their family, thanks to the hospital's Patient Welfare Programme, which makes it possible for low-income patients to get care at FMIC.



## Bismillah

Bismillah's condition was serious: he was having difficulty breathing, had a high fever and his leg was swollen. His parents brought him from his village in Baghlan Province to a local hospital and then, on the advice of doctors there, to a hospital in Kabul. After two days there, he was brought to FMIC and immediately placed in the intensive care unit (ICU). Diagnosed with a serious bloodstream infection and pneumonia, he spent 20 days on a ventilator and more than a month in the ICU being attended to around the clock by a dedicated team of doctors and nurses. Finally, he recovered and was able to return home with his family.

## The Triplets

What a difference a year makes. Triplets M. Shahir, Harir and M. Bashir were born prematurely at FMIC on June 27, 2018, weighing between 0.96 and 1.3 kg (2.1-2.9 lb). One year later, they returned to the hospital to celebrate their first birthdays alongside staff from FMIC's neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). "We are very happy to see them thriving, and very proud of the care we have provided to them and to more than 1,800 other newborns since the NICU was launched in 2016," said Dr Omaid Faizi, head of the unit.

# Serving the Disadvantaged

FMIC makes it possible for Afghanistan's poor to obtain access to life-saving surgeries and other complex care at little or no cost.

When patients cannot afford the cost of care, the hospital's Patient Welfare Programme pays some or all of their bill. In 2019, the programme helped 42,598 patients from 34 provinces by paying for Afs 176 million (US\$ 2.3 million) in care. As of December 2019, the programme has helped 535,654 patients and paid for Afs 2.9 billion (US\$ 38.9 million) in care.

To help low-income families who live outside Kabul to access care at the hospital, La Chaîne de L'Espoir operates a Women's and Children's House (WCH) on the hospital grounds. Qualifying patients and their family members receive free accommodation at the WCH, free travel to and from Kabul and 100 per cent free care at FMIC. In 2019, 1,485 patients received 100 per cent free care. Prior to 2018, the WCH served only paediatric patients, but it now also serves women

in need of gynaecological care. Seventy women benefitted in 2019, with the number growing steadily throughout the year.

The WCH relies on a network of public and private partners to identify potential patients. Partners include the Ministry of Public Health, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Afghan Red Crescent Society and non-governmental organisations such as Médecins Sans Frontières and Terre des Hommes, as well as local hospitals and shuras (community councils).

In 2019, the WCH began conducting more health awareness sessions for adults and children. Several times per week, social workers gather patients and family members for sessions on hygiene, nutrition, gynaecological health and other topics.



## Telemedicine

Access to quality medical services is a major challenge in remote regions of Afghanistan, due to poverty, poor infrastructure and lack of specialized services and training opportunities, as well as security challenges. FMIC's telemedicine programme enables patients at Bamyan Provincial Hospital, Faizabad Provincial Hospital and Khorog Oblast Hospital in Tajikistan to access the hospital's specialists through online consultations. FMIC specialists also review x-rays, CT scans and pathology images sent by the hospitals.

FMIC is also connected to specialists at the Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi, the Necker Hospital in Paris, La Chaîne de L'Espoir and other institutions in France and Europe. They provide teleconsultations and review MRI and CT scans and mammograms sent by FMIC. FMIC's telemedicine programme has enabled more than 36,000 teleconsultations and imaging reviews as of the end of 2019.

For patients, the benefits of FMIC's telemedicine programme are immense: not only do they get access to expertise that is unavailable locally, but they save the trouble, time and money associated with lengthy travel to Kabul or to hospitals outside Afghanistan.

## Online Learning

FMIC provides convenient online professional development opportunities for staff at Bamyan Provincial Hospital, Faizabad Provincial Hospital, Mirwais Regional Hospital in Kandahar, Baharak District Hospital in Badakhshan Province and Khorog Oblast Hospital in Tajikistan. More than 9,500 staff from these hospitals have attended online learning sessions run by FMIC, including 1,341 in 2019, helping to improve the quality of patient care at these institutions. Baharak District Hospital is the newest beneficiary of FMIC's online learning programme. Eighty-one staffers at the hospital participated in learning sessions in 2019.



# Building Capacity

FMIC continues to help build a qualified healthcare workforce for Afghanistan, through its Postgraduate Medical Education and continuing medical education programmes, in-house training, medical missions, conferences, online learning programme (discussed on pg. 11) and other initiatives.

## Postgraduate Medical Education

Since 2012, the Aga Khan University has been training specialist physicians at FMIC in partnership with the Ministry of Public Health. The Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME) programme trains compassionate physicians who possess outstanding clinical skills, deliver patient-centred care and have the ability to improve the systems in which they work. Training lasts three, four or five years, and is now offered in eight disciplines: anaesthesiology, cardiology, cardiovascular surgery, orthopaedics, paediatric medicine, paediatric surgery, pathology and radiology. Five of these are the only programmes of their kind in Afghanistan.

Forty-five residents have graduated as of the end of 2019. This includes 13 residents who graduated in 2019, at a ceremony attended by Minister of Public Health Dr Ferozuddin Feroz. Currently, 28 per cent of the residents are women and the programme

has graduated the first women in Afghanistan to be locally trained in pathology, radiology and paediatric surgery. Residents have the opportunity to complete a 3- to 6-month rotation at the 710-bed Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi, one of the only hospitals in the region accredited by the U.S.-based Joint Commission International.

2019 saw FMIC launch Afghanistan's first training programme in cardiovascular surgery. Two residents are enrolled in the programme and are expected to graduate in 2023.

The PGME programme is unique in Afghanistan in offering research seminars and epidemiology sessions to foster a culture of research among residents. In 2019, seven research articles were published by residents and faculty members.

## Continuing Medical Education

FMIC conducted 28 continuing medical education sessions in 2019, in fields such as dentistry, obstetrics and gynaecology, ophthalmology, orthopaedics, paediatric medicine, pathology and radiology. More than 1,540 staff members from public and private hospitals in and around Kabul participated in the sessions.



"FMIC's PGME programme is the best in Afghanistan. That's why I did my training there. I'm thankful to FMIC for its high standards and high-quality training."  
– Dr Jamshid Sadiqi

*Dr Sadiqi completed his training in radiology at FMIC in 2019 and is now working at Mellat Hospital in Kabul.*

"The programme is a unique opportunity for Afghan doctors, especially the training at AKU."  
– Dr Rafi Sultani

*Dr Sultani completed his training in anaesthesiology at FMIC in 2019 and is now an anaesthetist at Kabul's Amiri Medical Complex.*



260 women work at FMIC, and the hospital has taken numerous steps to increase the number of its female employees and ensure a welcoming environment for them.

More than 17,000 health professionals have attended FMIC's continuing medical education and online learning sessions since 2006.

### In-House Training

FMIC strives to enable its own staff to learn, grow and develop their skills. In 2019, it conducted training sessions that were attended by 916 employees. The sessions covered subjects such as leadership and communications, as well as clinical subjects such as pain management and diabetes in pregnancy. The year also saw the completion of the hospital's two-year leadership development programme, Developing Healthcare Leaders for Tomorrow, which used online and face-to-face sessions to help FMIC middle and senior managers develop their leadership skills.

### Medical Missions

La Chaîne de l'Espoir and the Aga Khan University continue to send health professionals to FMIC to train its staff, offer recommendations for further quality improvement and help treat patients. They organized 48 missions to FMIC comprising almost 1,000 person days in 2019. Professionals came mainly from France and other European countries, as well as the Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi, and included specialists in obstetrics and gynaecology, intensive care, nursing and midwifery, cardiology, cardiac surgery, neonatology, microbiology and anaesthesia.

### Enhancing Quality

As the first healthcare institution in Afghanistan to receive ISO 9001:2008 certification, FMIC is recognized as a quality leader in the country. Since 2011, FMIC has held an annual Quality Improvement and Patient Safety convention as part of World Quality Day to enable healthcare professionals to share and discover methods for improving the quality of patient care. The 2019 convention featured 13 presentations and drew 200 attendees.

### Community Engagement

FMIC's Community Engagement Programme partners with residents of the neighbourhood around the hospital for a variety of purposes. In 2019, the hospital organised a campaign to clean up the neighbourhood's streets, planted a tree with community elders and came together with residents to celebrate completion of a street paving project. FMIC also held 15 health awareness sessions that were attended by local residents.

# Our Partners and Supporters

FMIC is a unique partnership that demonstrates how government and civil society organisations can collaborate to bring high-quality health services to developing countries.

Each of FMIC's four founding partners—the Governments of France and Afghanistan, the Aga Khan University (an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network) and La Chaîne de l'Espoir—continues to play an active role in the support and development of FMIC. In addition, support by bilateral donors continues to enable the sustainability of FMIC's programmes and the provision of quality healthcare services for the people of Afghanistan.

FMIC receives funds for its Patient Welfare Programme from the French government through Agence Française de Développement (AFD), La Chaîne de l'Espoir, His Highness the Aga Khan and individual donors; for capacity building programmes from AFD and Global Affairs Canada (GAC); and for the PGME programme from AFD and GAC.

To date, Afs 7 billion (US\$ 104 million) has been received from FMIC's founding partners and other donors in support of the hospital's programmes.





# Our Future

Our expansion will enhance our contribution to Afghanistan's healthcare system and enable access to an even wider range of healthcare services.

Over the years ahead, FMIC plans to grow from a 169-bed facility to a 550-bed teaching hospital that offers a full complement of basic and specialized services, trains new healthcare providers and supports a substantial research programme. The Expanded Medical Complex is currently under design. The new facilities will provide space for research activities, additional Postgraduate Medical Education programmes and enhanced diagnostic facilities and medical services, including in adult general surgery, cardiology, gastroenterology, internal medicine, neurosciences, oncology, orthopaedics and renal diseases. We look forward to the completion of design of a 50-bed facility by the end of 2022.

# By the Numbers

	2006-18	2019	Total
Admissions	62,110	9,420	71,530
Clinic Visits	1,155,132	169,765	1,324,897
Deliveries	1,753	1,205	2,958
Radiology Procedures	658,191	81,791	739,982
Laboratory Tests	3,670,203	461,708	4,131,911
Surgeries (All)	31,519	3,580	35,099
Surgeries (ENT, general, gynaecological, neurological, orthopaedic & plastic)	22,166	2,239	24,405
Cardiac surgeries (paediatric & adult)	3,433	348	3,781
Day surgeries (ophthalmologic & other)	5,920	993	6,913





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La chaîne  
de l'espoir

