

## ***Maurizio Cardi, Italy***

Dr Maurizio Cardi is a 60 years-old University Surgeon. Since 2007 he collaborates with the Italian NGO “Emergency”. During these years he spent most of his time in Afghanistan where, as a surgeon and Medical Coordinator, was in charge of the surgical treatment of the war-wounded patients and of the training of local staff.

### ***Surgery in low resource settings. What’s the limit? Experiences from Afghanistan***

Surgery in war setting and in resource-poor and low technology environments is gaining importance and represent a great challenge for the surgeon. Declaration of Alma-Ata strongly reaffirms that health is not merely the absence of disease but a complete physical, mental and social wellbeing. Surgical care would be highly cost-effective in many surgical areas, with basic trauma care being one of those. 90% of the patients are civilian, as poverty carries social and sanitary emergencies, with lack of acceptable level medical facilities, trained staff and effective long-term program. However, injuries are a neglected epidemic in these countries and availability to high standard, free of charge surgical services are far from being satisfied.

“Emergency” is an Italian NGO founded in 1994 and promotes a culture of peace, solidarity and respect for human rights. Intervention in Afghanistan began in 1999, and since then we opened 3 hospitals (1999 Anabah -Panjshir Valley, 2001 Kabul and 2004 Lashkargah – Helmand) and a maternity Centre (Anabah -Panjshir Valley).

Basic points of our intervention are:

1. High standards of cure, free of charge for the victims of war, landmines and poverty;
2. We treat everybody regardless of sex, political and religious issues;
3. We build, organize and run our hospitals;
4. We provide high-level training for local staff, and our 3 hospitals are recognized training centres for afghan residents in surgery and ObGyn. In 2014 we organized in Kabul a training program for over 200 surgeons coming from all over Afghanistan, supported by WHO, European Commission for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection and Afghani MoPH.
5. We developed a unique pre-hospital system of referring to the main hospitals the wounded patients from the field:
6. We use simple clinical protocols.

Since 1999 we were able to treat over 1 million outpatients, in our hospitals we admitted 125.000 patients, we performed over 110.000 operations and 25.000 children were born in our maternity centre.