



# NEO FOR NAMIBIA HELPING BABIES SURVIVE

## TEAM

- Prof. Thomas M. Berger, MD

A more detailed report  
can be downloaded from  
[www.neo-for-namibia.org](http://www.neo-for-namibia.org)

## MISSION REPORT 2025-2

### SHORT VERSION

September 2 to 30, 2025

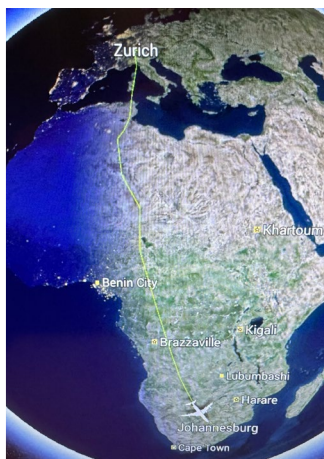
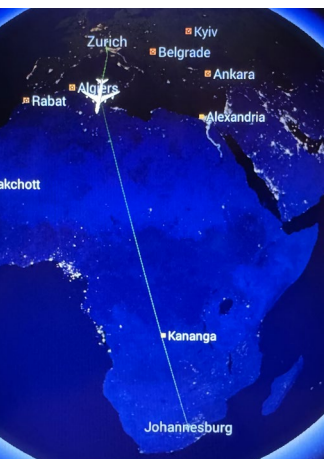
### Mission goals

- To assess the quality of perinatal care at both Rundu Intermediate Hospital and Katima State Hospital (direct observations at the bedside, review of statistical data)
- To identify the most critical deficits and most urgent needs at both hospitals
- To introduce the Rittmann family to our project
- To discuss the logistics for the NGO's largest donation yet with local health care professionals and medical engineers

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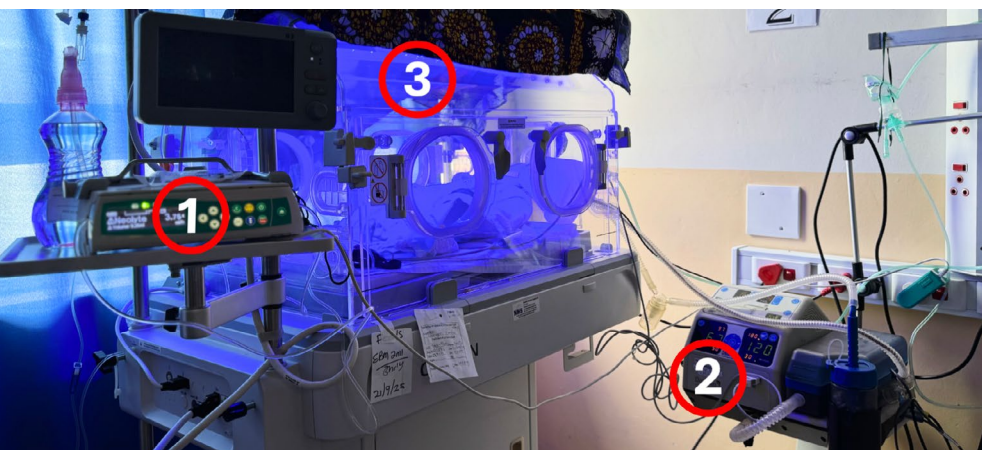




## Hospitals visited

- Rundu Intermediate Hospital
- Katima State Hospital

Overnight flight with SWISS from Zurich to Johannesburg; after a 4-hour-stopover, a South African Airways flight connected to Windhoek. Overall, The mission team drove more than 4'000 km, visiting the two government hospitals in the north of Namibia, as well as the Mowani Mountain Lodge in Damaraland.



## Rundu Intermediate Hospital

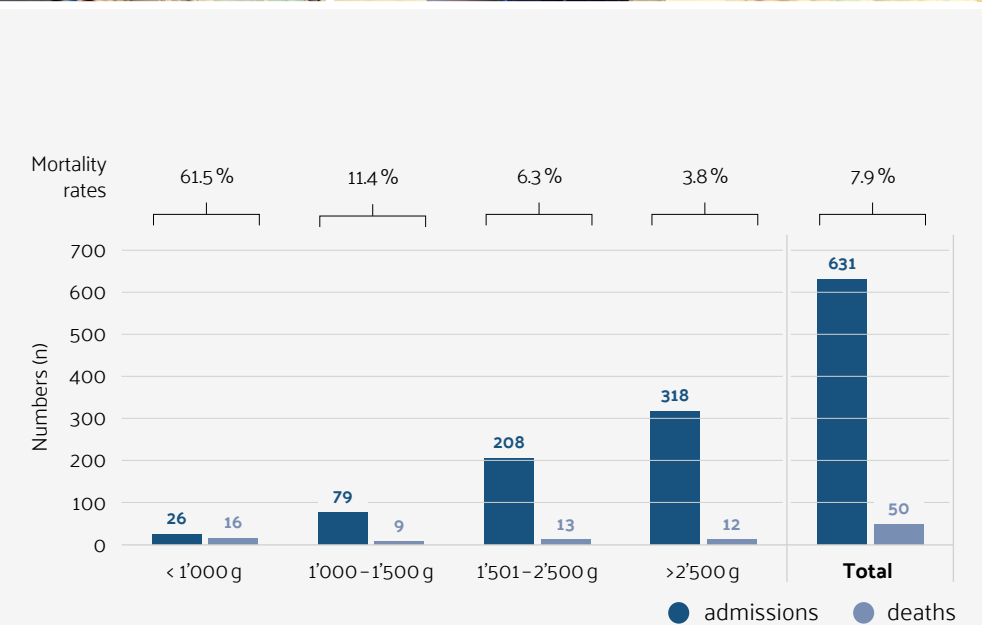
The Prem Unit continues to provide an advanced level of neonatal care. Staffing continued to improve with obvious advantages.

Dramatic progress made over the past ten years: controlled administration of i.v. fluids (1: B Braun® infusion pump), skillful use bubble CPAP (2: MTTs Dolphin® bubble CPAP), provision of phototherapy (3: MTTs Colibri® phototherapy unit).



Interns and medical officers write structured progress notes using the templates provided by NEO FOR NAMIBIA – Helping Babies Survive. The use of the video laryngoscope to intubate babies who need surfactant or invasive mechanical ventilation has become standard.

Geraldine Beukes, MD, using a reusable video laryngoscope to intubate a preterm infant.



From January 1 to August 31, 2025, there had been a total of 4'125 deliveries, resulting in 4'134 live births and 54 stillbirths. In addition, four babies died in the delivery room. Over the same period, 631 babies were admitted to the Prem Unit (532 inborn (admission rate 12.9 %), 99 outborn).

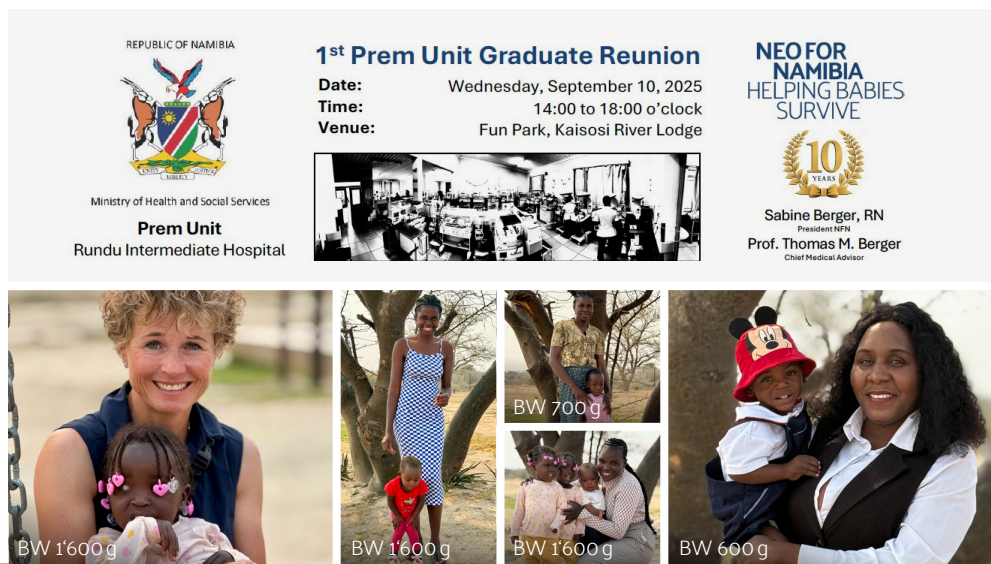
Overall, there were 50 deaths (mortality rate 7.9%). Of these, 35 were inborn infants (mortality rate 6.6 %) and 15 were outborn infants (mortality rate 15.2%).

Overall and birthweight-specific number of admissions, deaths and mortality rates of babies admitted to the Prem Unit at Rundu Intermediate Hospital from January 1 to August 31, 2025.



On September 10, 2025, the 1st NICU Graduate Reunion took place at the Fun Park outside of the Kaisosi River Lodge to celebrate 10 years of successful collaboration between NEO FOR NAMIBIA – Helping Babies Survive and the Rundu Intermediate Hospital.

Sabine Berger and mothers with their former Prem Unit babies at the 1st Prem Unit Graduate Reunion.



## Katima State Hospital

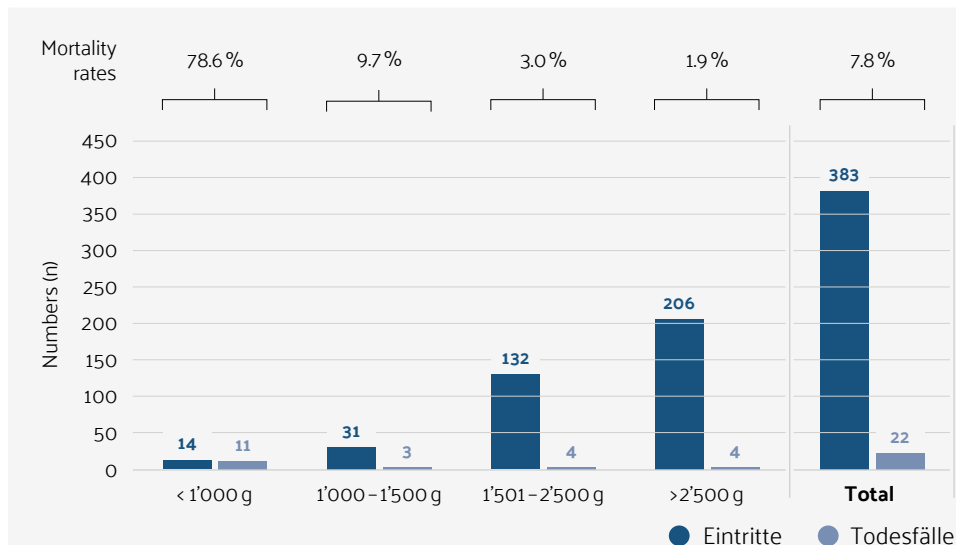
The Neonatal Unit at Katima State Hospital continues to provide solid neonatal care at an Intermediate Care Unit (IMC) level.

Routine use of CPAP with appropriate settings and correct alarm limits (left); proper positioning of babies with respiratory distress needs to be improved (right).



Over the first eight months (January – August) of 2025, there had been a total of 2'660 deliveries, resulting in 2'666 live births and 49 stillbirths. No baby had died in the delivery room. Over the same period, 383 babies were admitted to the Prem Unit. Overall, there were 22 deaths (mortality rate 5.7%).

Overall and birthweight-specific number of admissions, deaths and mortality rates of babies admitted to the Neonatal Unit at Katima State Hospital from January 1 to August 31, 2025.



The Rittmann family joined Prof. Thomas M. Berger and Sabine Berger for one week on the 24th mission of NEO FOR NAMIBIA – Helping Babies Survive.

Patick Rittmann, MD, assisting his colleague Manolo Berbe, MD, from Cuba in the OR at Katima State Hospital (top row). Miriam, Léa and Luc Rittmann joining Prof. Thomas M. Berger on rounds in the Prem Unit at Rundu Intermediate Hospital (bottom row).







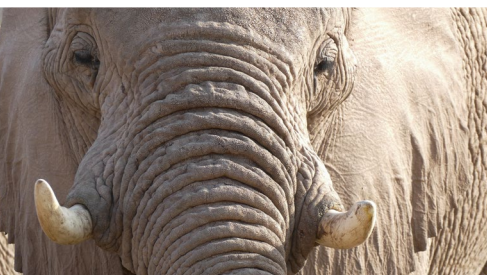
## Impressions from the 24th mission

To conclude this report, some images will illustrate the wonderful people and fascinating animal life the team encountered on their mission. Enjoy!

Meeting our friends: Sabine Berger and the Hamutenya sisters Otilia "Unique", a teacher (top left), and Eleotelia, mother of a very low birth weight (VLBW) infant (bottom left); Prof. Berger and Sabine Berger with Johannes, security guard at the Kaisosi River Lodge (right).



Growing up in Africa.



Crocodiles at the Kavango River near the Popa Falls (top); desert-adapted African bush elephants near the Huab riverbed (an ephemeral river in Damaraland) have adapted to survive in harsh, arid conditions; they are known for their ability to travel long distances to find water and food.

## Donate and help babies survive

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