

# Docs mercy mission will change face of Ethiopia

AN ARCHWAY man has returned from a trip helping to change the lives of disfigured children in Ethiopia.

Tom Hoyle is the development manager of charity Project Harar which was set up by Hampstead businessman Jonathan Crown six years ago.

Teams of surgeons travel to Africa to perform operations on people who have suffered deformities from illness, burns or animal attacks.

Mr Hoyle, 26, joined a team of surgeons in Ethiopia in October.

He said: "Imagine if a severe condition affected the appearance of your face, or even worse your child.

"He or she might lose their place in school, perhaps even all hope of employment and family life.

"We live in the secure expectation that should we or a family member be struck down with a disability, an illness or injury, the health system would be on hand to help us in some way – but in countries like Ethiopia there is no such certainty."

Around 250 patients have been treated through Project Harar.

In Ethiopia, which has a population of 75million, there are only eight surgeons who are able to perform reconstructive surgery on the face.

Mr Hoyle and the team encouraged villagers to send their youngsters to the capital Addis Ababa, to receive free treatment.

"Often their minds are made up when they see the before and after pictures of some of our past patients," said Mr Hoyle.

"Some of the children that we find



**Professor Mark McGurk and Dr Sissay Befikadu assess a young Project Harar patient.**  
Left: Tom Hoyle.

Tiko's operation cost just £400, with most procedures costing between £100 and £300.

Mr Hoyle said: "Though project Harar is a children's charity, we will not refuse anyone that we are able to help.

"We are discovering a legacy of untreated childhood tumours and other injuries among adults, including a man who received a gunshot wound to the mouth during the Ethiopian civil war, which ended in 1994."

For information or to make a donation visit [www.projectharar.co.uk](http://www.projectharar.co.uk).

have such severe deformities that the Ethiopian surgeons are unable to cope without the extra skills and equipment from European medics."

Among those treated on the trip was Tiko, a young man whose jaw contained a tumour the size of a golf ball.