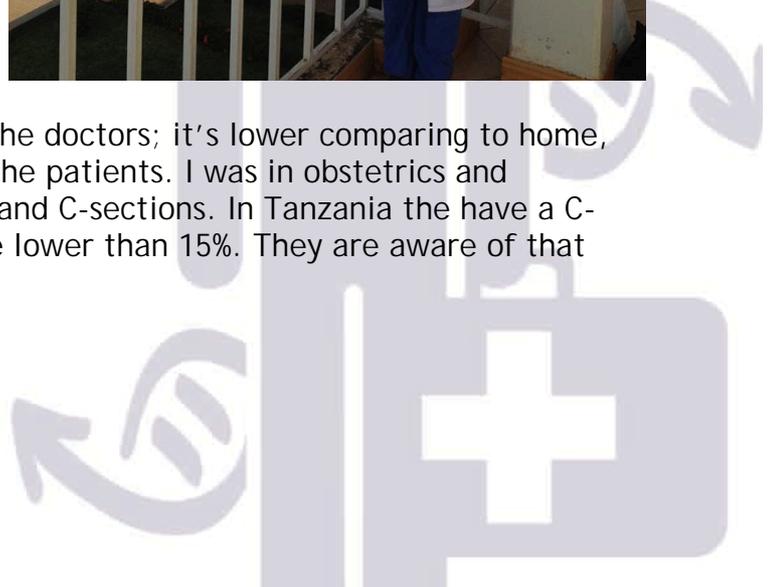




On the 29<sup>th</sup> of July I arrived at Kilimanjaro Airport in Tanzania. I had never been in Africa, so I was a bit nervous. I knew that Tanzania was a beautiful country, but so different then the Netherlands. My Local Exchange Officer (LEO) picked me up from the airport, the first night I slept at here place. There was no electricity that day, it was raining and there was no running water. I thought: 'how on earth will I survive these five weeks here'.

The next day we went to the hospital, my LEO introduced me to the people of the International Office of the Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre (KCMC). My LEO left on holiday, I was a bit surprised and I never saw my LEO again. But it went out al great. They showed me the doctors' compounds of KCMC, many other international students were staying over there, I think around 40 people. They gave me a tour on the doctors' compound, hospital and lunch places. Every night we went out for diner, because most of the times there was no power.

The days in the hospital were one big experience; I had never seen a hospital like this, people were lying everywhere, big rows in front of the entrance and the hygienic was not optimal. Patients first need to pay, because almost none of the people had a medical insurance, without paying they were not admitted. For every test, blood sample or treatment the patients had to pay. No money, no treatment. Many people were sending home without help. This was very hard to see, such a big difference with The Netherlands. The medical system of the hospital was the biggest differences with The Netherlands. I never thought it could be like this. There were many other differences like the knowledge of the doctors; it's lower comparing to home, less about research, but enough to help the patients. I was in obstetrics and gynaecological, so I saw many deliveries and C-sections. In Tanzania the have a C-section rate around 70%, which should be lower than 15%. They are aware of that fact, but are not changing their rules.





In advance I thought that I would learn a lot about the diseases, but that was a hard part, because all the patients speak Swahili. The doctors translated if we asked, but sometimes they were in a hurry and not able to translate. I learnt so much more about the health system, culture and thoughts of the doctors and interns over here. I'm happy I paid more attention to this, because the test and treatments of each diagnosis I can learn at home as well. I joined many ward rounds, ultrasounds, deliveries, C-sections and operations. Some operations were shocking, like a hysterectomy because of myoma. (picture)



There was no organised social program. Luckily, there were many other international students, so we organised a lot of trips on our own. You can do so many things in Tanzania. Moshi was a really nice town, we spend some afternoons and evenings over there, we went out to have some drinks and we danced a lot on African music. The most special thing I have done in Tanzania is a safari. I went with three other students to the Ngorongoro Crater and Serengeti International Park, I had the best time of my life. It was amazing seeing those

animals in the wild, we saw the whole Big Five, which was very special for the dry season. Another weekend we flew to Zanzibar, this was so beautiful, I have





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never seen these white beaches. We did a lot of small trips, like waterfalls, a coffee tour, church and the hot springs.

I made so many friends, had a total new experience, saw some rough things in the hospital, but also had a lot of fun. I will always keep in mind how bad it's organised over here in KCMC, one of the biggest hospitals of the country. There are no oncology treatments in Tanzania, only in Nairobi (Kenya). After 5 weeks of internships in the hospital, making new friends, learning some Swahili (polepole, karibu, polé, ahsante) and going on the best trips, I can say I had an amazing time in Moshi, Tanzania.

