

# PATHOLOGY SERVICES IN TANZANIA

An overview.



# Historical Perspectives.

## I. German Colonial Period: 1884-1918.

- Tanganyika was called “German East Africa” ( + present Rwanda and Burundi).
- 1891- first hospital opened at Bagamoyo.
- 1893 - Sewa Haji Hospital opened in Dar es Salaam( near present Railway Station).
- 1897- Ocean Road Hospital opened to treat Colonial Administrators.



# German Colonial Period (ct)

- Dr Robert Koch opened the first laboratory at Ocean Road.
- He studied infectious diseases - malaria, plague, tuberculosis, etc.
- He also set up upcountry health posts.
- ❑ THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF SCIENTIFIC LABORATORY IN THIS COUNTRY.



## II. British Colonial Period: 1918-1961.

- Further expansion of hospitals and laboratories in all Provinces and Districts.
- The Chief Medical Officer, answerable to the Principal Secretary- in-charge of Hospital and Public health functions.
- The Principal Pathologist- in charge of all Laboratory services ( had his own Budget).



# British Colonial Period (ct)

- Training of laboratory personnel was conducted up to Laboratory Assistant.
- Any further training was done abroad.
- The Ocean Road Laboratory grew into the Central Pathology Laboratory, headed by the Chief Pathologist.
- This was also the Referral Laboratory in the country.



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- All diagnostic work in histopathology and other sophisticated tests for whole country conducted here.
- The CPL moved to a new building site at Muhimbili Hospital in early 1971.
  - School of Medical laboratory-1963: Certificate in Medical lab.
  - Upgraded to Diploma Course-1969

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- Advanced Diploma Course- 1993.
- BSc degree Course in Medical laboratory Sciences 2007.



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- ❑ Specialist Courses (Masters of Medicine in Pathology) – 1973.
- Initially MMed Clinical Pathology.
- Mono-speciality – 1987 till today.



# Achievements

- ❑ 1991- National health laboratory Service Policy formulated.

Lab categories:

1. Specialist or Consultant labs.
2. Regional labs.
3. District labs
4. Health centre and Dispensary Labs.



# Strengths

1. Muhimbili University - a source for academic staff & specialists.
2. School of Medical Lab. Sciences- a source for manpower.
3. Premises- adequate.
4. Water and electricity- available.



# Weaknesses/Problems.

1. Human Resources- inadequate.

i. Histopathologists- total in the country  
14.

➤ Muhimbili	9
➤ Bugando	1
➤ KCMC	2
➤ Private Hospitals	2
➤ Mbeya	0



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ii. Histotechnologists- total 13.

- Muhimbili 6.
- Bugando 1
- Mbeya 1
- KCMC 1

“ALL THIS HAS ALSO RESULTED INTO  
SHORTAGE OF TEACHING STAFF”



# Reasons for lack of enough human resources

1. Histopathology services confined mainly at Muhimbili and a few places.
- 2 . Lack of interest for students to train in the field.
3. No incentives/motivations .



# Training constraints

- Postgraduate students: since 1990 only 8 trained.
- Histotechnologists since 1990 only 8 trained.



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2. Lack of equipment.
3. Lack of maintenance of equipment.
4. Lack of reagents.
5. User training lacking.
6. Continuing education- at a slow pace.



# Obstacles.

1. How can we motivate people to join training in the field ?
2. How can these services reach the peripheral health units ?
3. How can we get enough staff to teach and work in the laboratories ?

Thank you.

