

## October News From LWB

Sending a warm October welcome your way (although "cool" and "crisp" might be better adjectives in many parts of the world right now).

I just returned home from Uganda a few days ago. I got to experience my first equator crossing by water...on beautiful Lake Victoria, the second largest lake in the world. Can you name the biggest? I have to admit being quite dazzled watching my phone compass move to 0°00'0 as a coordinate, and yes I took a screenshot.

What excited me even more, however, were all of the children who received help thanks to your support. Let's dive right into some of my favorite highlights from the past month.



I'm of course starting with Uganda, since I only just returned. While there, our entire team celebrated the successful healing of 7 beautiful children born with congenital heart defects. Amrita Hospital is one of the top cardiac centers in India, and they told us that this particular group of Ugandan children had some of the most complicated heart anatomies they had ever seen. And yet all seven had successful operations! Isn't that an incredible joy? The changes in the children's health are truly remarkable, as you can see from some of my favorite photos from their time in the hospital. Baby George, on the left, had nonstop smiles with all his new energy, as did Ezra and Patience on the right. I can't resist sharing beautiful Verena post-surgery as well, as the hospital staff dressed her up in her very first sari. What a perfect photo of love crossing borders!

## More Great Medical News

While our cardiac team members were busy arranging surgeries in September, we also had many children receive other types of medical care last month. Here are three of the children who found healing through the kindness of the LWB community.



We first met Kirtan, born with abdominal atresia, during an emergency food delivery to her rural village. She was extremely ill, suffering from dehydration and a severe E-coli infection that required an emergency admittance to the pediatric ICU. Over the last year, she struggled with nonstop infections, but we never gave up on making sure she received all the surgeries needed for her condition. On September 6th she underwent her final operation. I am so thankful our team found her when they did, because the world is definitely brighter with sweet Kirtan in it.

In September, we were called about a 9-month-old baby from South Sudan who needed abdominal surgery. Lual's worried parents had taken him to the best hospital in their country, but doctors told them nothing could be done for their little boy. Refusing to accept that answer, they spent all their meager resources, around \$100, to travel 1000 km to Uganda to search for someone who could help their son. We were so happy to be able to say an enthusiastic "YES" when accepting him into our medical program. Lual was soon able to return to his birth country fully healed.



Our cleft initiative in Gansu continues to help impoverished families receive surgery. In September, we received a request from a family who had recently given birth to twin boys. The oldest, Prescott, was born with a unilateral cleft lip. His parents were devastated after learning they could not afford the surgery he needed to be accepted in their village like his twin brother. I'm so thankful to everyone supporting our medical work, as Prescott was given a beautiful lip repair last month and was discharged back home just a few days later.

## **A New School Year in Cambodia**

September launched a new school year in Cambodia, and our expanded school campuses in both Rangsei and Sokhem Villages are once again filled with the sounds of laughter and learning. Did you know over 600 children now come to our primary schools each day? That's a fact that sometimes keeps me up at night, since we're fully responsible for ensuring every single child receives a quality education to equip them for the future. Thankfully, our incredible teachers and staff on the ground work hard each day to make our schools models of excellence. From core Khmer subjects to computers and music...our students are truly excelling.



## **Cleft Trip Planning - Guatemala**

Plans for our upcoming cleft surgery trip to Guatemala continued in earnest last month, as we finalized the medical team with a third talented surgeon. This special week of healing will be a bit more logistically challenging than our prior ones in China, as we will be operating in a church built in 1663! We also have to bring in every single item required, from sutures and anesthesia to sterilizing solutions and scrub brushes. Yes, I'm giving thanks for extremely well-organized spreadsheets! Just a few weeks ago, our local staff began visiting some of the patients who will receive new smiles in December, including baby Mia (right).





And finally, I want to send the warmest welcome to Mason, who came back to our healing home last month. This gorgeous little boy, born with Down syndrome, had gone back to his orphanage for what was supposed to be a one-day process of registering his hukou papers to make him eligible for adoption. Unfortunately, a positive COVID case in his town shut everything down completely, so he was stuck inside the orphanage he hadn't seen since he was a tiny baby. We are so happy the lock-down was finally lifted, and Mason is now back in our care receiving the extra services and PT he needs to thrive. I think it's pretty obvious from his photo that he is oh so glad to be back with his beloved nannies. We all keep hoping that special needs adoption will once again resume so that all the waiting children like Mason can find the family permanency they so dearly deserve.

Until next month....I just want to remind you how truly grateful we are at LWB to have you as part of the team. We all know the reality that we each get a finite time on this earth. How wonderful it is that you have chosen to make your time truly matter. For children like Mason, Verena, and Millie, you bring the wonderful gifts of hope and healing, which will last for generations to come.

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*Thank You!*

*"Every Child Counts"*