

# Stories of Transformation

## Mercy Ships Fact Sheet

Updated February 2011



Jatu, age 14, Sierra Leone, Obstetric Fistula Repair



### Jatu

A child bride receives healing

A young bride, Jatu told how a long, tragic birthing process left her with a stillborn child, incontinence and despair. And so Jatu joined the estimated two million women who suffer with a condition known as vesico-vaginal fistula (VVF). Most women with VVF suffer for decades, silent and alone. But Jatu's father-in-law heard about Mercy Ships and the possibility of a free surgery onboard. Jatu said, "I was nervous to come to the ship but I was sure I would get healing here." And Jatu did find healing. Her health restored, she left the ship to return joyfully to her husband and family.



George, 5 days, Liberia, Cleft Lip Repair



### George

Precious baby restored

Naomi's first child, "Baby George," was born with a cleft lip and palate — a common but frightening birth defect. "I was scared," Naomi said. When her son was five days old, she brought him to a Mercy Ship. Doctors scheduled "Baby George" for surgery and showed Naomi how to help him put on weight. Months later they returned to the Mercy Ship for a successful free operation. "I'm very happy," a beaming and hopeful Naomi exclaimed as she held her sleeping son.



Assan & Alusan, Twins, age 2, Liberia, Cataract Removal



### Assan and Alusan

They'll never forget what mercy looks like

Blinded by cataracts, Assan and Allusan had never seen their mother – or each other. Their eyes were painful to watch, rolling aimlessly. The twins were born in an Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp outside Liberia's capital city where a Mercy Ship was docked. A few days later Mercy Ships surgeon Dr. Strauss performed bilateral cataract surgery on the twins. The following day, the boys could see! Before long they were playing their first game of hide and seek.



Hawa, age 7, Sierra Leone, Tumour Removal



### Hawa

Saved from the brink of death

The tumor cascading from seven-year-old Hawa's mouth had grown for a year before her father brought her to the Mercy Ship. Doctors said she would die. Life was hard in Sierra Leone. Often her family went days without eating. At first, the surgeon wasn't sure Hawa was strong enough for surgery. But when she played basketball with children on ship and sank five in a row he changed his mind! The three-hour surgery on ship literally saved Hawa's life.



Abel, age 11, Togo, Orthopaedic Surgeries



### Abel

What a transformation!

As an infant, Abel's muscles had stopped growing after he received an injection. But his bones did not stop growing. It caused Abel's legs to bend backwards at the knee, forcing his upper thighs out behind him. Abel underwent surgeries onboard the *Africa Mercy* to straighten both legs, followed by therapy sessions to retrain the leg muscles to work normally. When Abel returned home to his village with his straight legs, he was welcomed with gasps of surprise, disbelieving stares and jubilant cheers! What a transformation!

*Lives transformed  
through hope and healing...*