

Notas

Annual Report 2023



Haiti Crisis Intensifies as Surgeries Continue

Report from Dr. Scott Nelson, Orthopedic Surgeon

Tremendous suffering is all around us, and the crisis is not improving. People are desperate for jobs, security, and the most basic necessities. Most every day, we hear gunfire, usually far enough away to avoid being startled, sometimes not. It almost seemed things were getting a little better for a while, but the situation has intensified.

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Paula Leen



Zimbabwe: Finding Forever
Families



Uganda: A Welcoming Clinic



Malawi: Fending Off Hunger
With “Emergency” Gardens

In spite of on-going crises, Haitians, like young Clifford, are able to obtain high-tech orthopedic surgeries at Haiti Adventist Hospital.



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We thank the following people for donating their services and time so that our annual report can be published at minimal cost:

Graphic Design

(Notas and website)
Lauren Smith Creative
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Amistad International

is a non-profit 501(c)(3) public charity incorporated in California in 1980. All donations are tax-deductible.

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What is Amistad International?

Amistad, a word meaning friendship in Spanish, is a public nonprofit 501(c) (3) charity which supports humanitarian, self-help, and educational programs for communities seeking to lift themselves from poverty through education and opportunity.

Amistad works in partnership with local community leaders to help children and adults develop the skills and knowledge necessary for building healthy economically-sustainable communities.

Some of the projects we support include:

- Kuda Vana Children's Home, Zimbabwe, a home for abused, ill, and abandoned children. <https://kudavana.org>
- Community Initiatives for Rural Development (CIFORD) in Kenya: providing agricultural training, water tanks, and a program to train teenage mothers in marketable job skills. <http://cifordkenya.org>
- Universal Love Alliance in Uganda (ULA): empowering people of marginalized groups: vulnerable women and children, sexual minorities and refugees. Founders Samson Turinawe and Sharon Kukunda teach that "every human being should be respected simply for being who they are as a part of God's creation." <https://www.universallovealliance.org>
- Lambano Sanctuary: homes and hospice for children with life-threatening illnesses, in Johannesburg, South Africa. www.lambano.org.za
- Buddha's Smile School (BSS): a free primary school for 221 children of beggars, garbage collectors, lepers and refugees in Sarnath, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India. Founder and director, Rajan Kaur. www.buddhas-smile-school.org
- Grow Bio-Intensive Agriculture Centre, Kenya (G-BIACK): teaching sustainable agriculture, sewing, cookery, computer skills, fish culture and native seed saving. www.g-biack.org
- Haiti: Dr. Scott Nelson's orthopedic surgical program and orthotics/prosthetics clinic at Hopital Adventiste d'Haiti, Port Au Prince, Haiti.

KVCH youth in transition: now contributing to their communities

Kuda Vana Children's Home Youth Transition Program started in 2017 and has supported 25 young adults through high school, trade school, and university. Zimbabwe's laws require the children to be emancipated from KVCH at age 18 unless they continue in a school or job-training program. KVCH's continues their support of the youth through whatever university or job-training program they choose. This is an update on what some of the KVCH youth-in-transition are accomplishing as they enter adulthood.

Livingstone obtained a diploma in International Marketing from the London Chamber of Commerce and a Bachelor of Commerce in Financial Management from Midlands State University. He works for a seed company in Harare, Zimbabwe, and is a role model to the other Kuda Vana children in many ways.

Through the Youth Transition Program network and working with a mentor, Nesta discovered her talent as an aesthetician. In February 2023, she earned her aesthetician certificate. She is now working as an apprentice for a beautician, which is a sustainable, stable job in Zimbabwe.

Lovemore is a hardworking and determined 24-year-old young man. He persevered against all odds to obtain a certificate in forestry, and he is currently interning for the Forestry Commission of Zimbabwe. He is already making a sustainable income from his businesses selling charcoal and operating a nursery.

Tino is a university student who is studying to become a social worker. He recently began a year-long internship with ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency).

Esami found his passion in photography and studied art and filmography. After graduating from trade school, he returned to Kuda Vana to make a short video and to encourage the younger kids. His artwork was featured on the candy boxes of the American chocolate company, Bellafina Chocolates.

The transitioning students show what is possible when youth are lovingly mentored, guided, and supported as they transition into their careers. Kuda Vana Director William Pepukai is pleased with all their success. "These young men and women continue to be instrumental in inspiring their brothers and sisters at KVCH. They are role models who have gone out and pursued what they want to do in life while also contributing to the community. We are very proud of them."



Because of KVCH's education programs for their young adults, Lovemore is realizing his dream of becoming a forester. He holds a certificate in forestry management and is operating a small nursery.

Laxmi's Life of Hope

Laxmi, 15, was born to a sex worker in the red-light district in Kolkata. She spent her early years in precarious, filthy living conditions with her mother, Bulbuli, who worked day and night to make ends meet. Their “home” was under a staircase, with a tarp as a cover. There was no toilet or kitchen. The space provided no safety and no place for tiny Laxmi and her sister Mongoli to play or sleep in safety.

This situation put Laxmi and her sister at significant risk of being trafficked or sold, just as their mother had been when she was a girl. Their mother, Bulbuli, had suffered extreme abuse growing up and was determined to give her daughters a better life. When she learned about our New Light day and evening meal and learning programs for red-light district children, she brought Laxmi to the safety of New Light. Here the Laxmi was given nutritious food and could play with other children in safety.

Two years later, with her mother's permission, we moved Laxmi to our Soma Memorial Girls Home for girls ages 6-18. From the beginning, her quiet, determined, and responsible nature won the hearts of everyone around her.

Soma Home was formed with the support of Amistad International in 2005 as a residential facility for the children of sex workers and other young girls at risk of human trafficking or being forced into sex work. The home is dedicated to the memory of an infant girl,

Soma, from the red-light district who died after being neglected by her family. Since it opened, more than 115 girls have blossomed in our safe and nurturing home.

At Soma Home, we enrolled Laxmi in the private Gandhi Colony Girls School where the other Soma Home girls attend classes. Laxmi, now 15, has been flourishing and is in her final year of school. She has plans to become a university student.

In addition to their formal education, the girls at Soma Home learn computer skills, Indian classical dance, music, boxing, tailoring, and handicrafts. Laxmi's favorites were boxing, music, and math.

We are gratified that Laxmi is showing remarkable composure and resilience especially in complex situations. She loves to mentor the younger residents of the home, helping them with schoolwork and chores. Laxmi is a shining example of how girls' lives can be transformed with a basic guarantee of safety and education. Now Laxmi looks forward to creating a safe and secure life herself, her mother, and her sister.

We are especially grateful to Amistad International's friend, Ann Down.

Urmi Basu

Founder, New Light and Soma Home



Thanks to the opportunities she is receiving at Soma Home, Laxmi, 15, is looking forward to supporting her mother after she completes her university education.

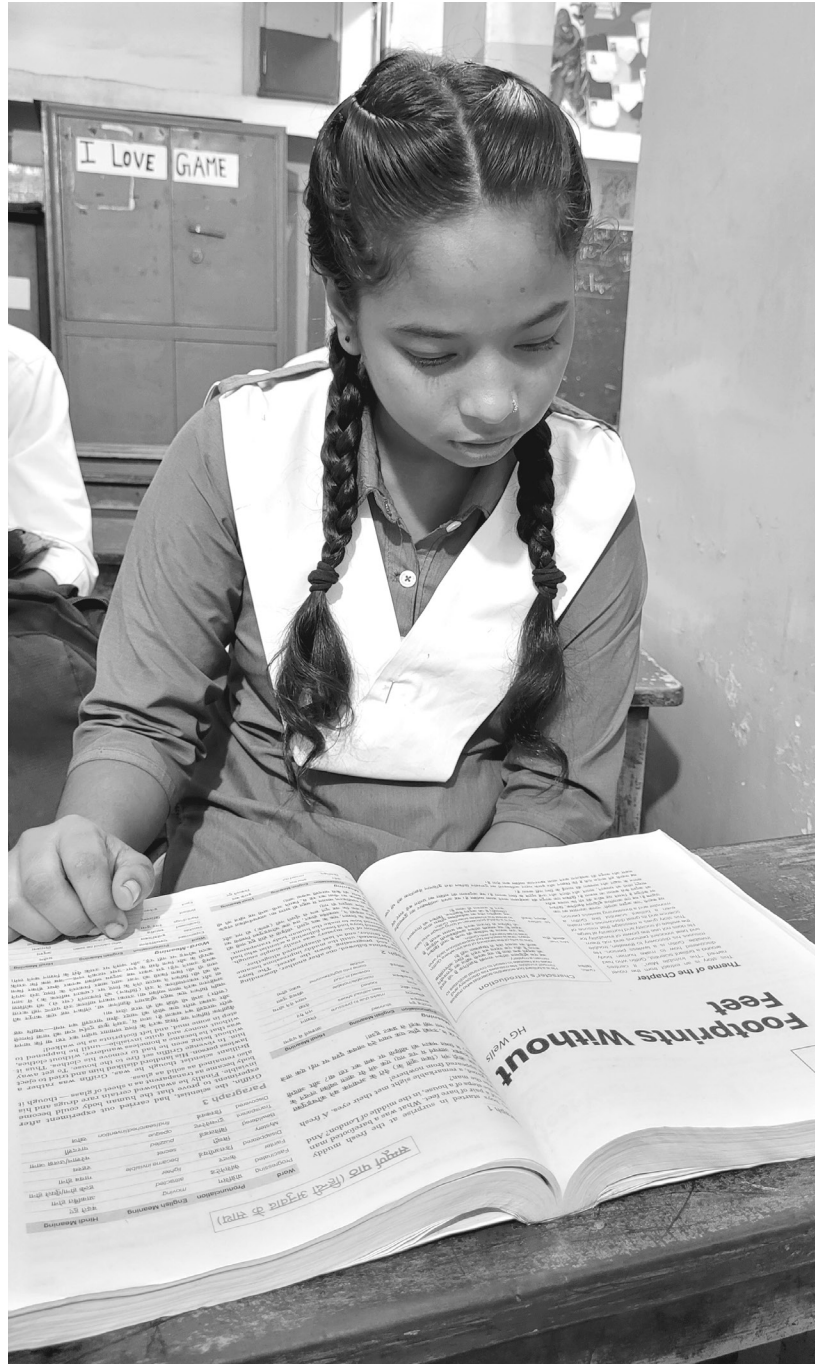
RANI

A Strong Survivor with Big Dreams

Rani, a 15-year-old girl, has been at Buddha's Smile School (BSS) since she was a kindergartner. When Rani was a small girl, her father and grandmother murdered her mother in front of her eyes. She lives with this trauma to this day. After losing her mother, Rani spent her days begging in front of the Shiva Hindu temple. This is where BSS founder Rajan Kaur found her. Rajan gently approached the stricken child and learned her tragic story little by little. Rani had no parents, so, with her grandfather's permission, she could enroll in the BSS kindergarden.

"We teachers created a small family for her," Rajan Kaur tells us. "We have nourished and motivated Rani daily, and she is doing very well in school and dreams of becoming a doctor."

"At BSS, our goals are always to provide more than just book learning," says Rajan. "We also motivate these vulnerable children to face the struggles of life. We are teaching Rani to be a strong survivor. Still, we see deep sorrow in her eyes. To Rani, BSS is the only safe place in the world, and being with us brings her hope that she will be all right. Part of the healing process is not denying the struggle. We write on the blackboard, 'Life is struggle.' We do not tell them otherwise. Many of them have such brave hearts, and with those hearts, they do well in school. Rani's confidence grows year by year. We are proud of the brave individual she is becoming."



Above: Rani was left motherless after her father and grandmother killed her mother. BSS founder, Rajan Kaur, found her begging in front of a Shiva Temple. She enrolled the tiny girl in BSS kindergarden. Under Rajan's nurturing love she is now a good student with dreams.

Right: Vongai was one of Paula Leen's first orphans at Murwira Children's Home. She was given special care by Paula who worked hard to protect the girl because her hereditary condition had left her vulnerable to sunburn and the stares of strangers. Made strong by love and opportunity, Vongai is making all of us proud.

Vongai Chirara

Thriving at Her Internship at the Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado



Vongai, a remarkable, resilient young woman, is one of the oldest girls in the Kuda Vana Youth Transition Program. Vongai found a home first at Murwira Children's Home where Paula Leen welcomed her. As a young woman she moved onward to the Kuda Vana Children's Home Youth in Transition Program. She has soared with every opportunity and is now setting a stellar example for her younger brothers and sisters in diligent work and whole-hearted service to others.

Through Kuda Vana's Youth Transition Program, Vongai received the tuition, support, love, and mentorship she needed to complete high school and pursue her passion in Hotel and Restaurant Hospitality. She worked hard and diligently in her studies, proving nothing would hold her back. She is about to complete her internship at the Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs, where she is serving people at

weddings, banquets, conventions, and receptions. She has grown into a hard-working and responsible young woman.

Several weeks ago, when asked how her internship was going, she reported joyfully she met a corporate official of the Broadmoor Hotel who commended her on her excellent service. Vongai says how thankful she is to her Kuda Vana family taught her responsibility, work ethics, and the habit of being punctual.

She is enjoying every moment of her American internship and reports that the best part of her job is when she has time to chat with hotel guests. Vongai misses her Zimbabwe family and is eager to return when her yearlong internship is over. We are proud of this wonderful young woman who is setting a stellar example for younger KVCH children by whole-hearted service to others.

Remembering Paula Leen

— 1934-2023 —

“I can’t keep people from being hungry but I can keep them from starving to death.”

On September 30, 2023, Paula Leen, 89, founder of Murwira Children’s Home in Zimbabwe, passed away in Portland, Oregon.

Paula, founder of Murwira Children’s Home, was a remarkable woman who cared tenderly for the children and people in Zimbabwe. The care and concern God placed in this woman’s heart for the most vulnerable has had a lasting effect.

In 1981, Paula received an invitation to work as a secretary at the SDA Conference Office in Harare, Zimbabwe. Paula spent her life savings to make her life-changing journey to Zimbabwe.

When the SDA Conference received shipments of used clothing, Paula began spending her free time to take the clothing and food to needy families in the rural village of Marewo. That first trip forever changed her life. She began making the same journey to Marewo repeatedly; eventually she bought a big old van so that she could carry more each week. Developing some health issues, the East African Division of the SDA Church sent Paula home to Portland, Oregon on what they thought was a permanent medical leave. Instead, Paula began volunteering with International Children’s Care orphanage in Romania. That experience only deepened her resolve to help Zimbabwe’s orphans. Returning

to Zimbabwe in 1997, she gave a name to her calling: “Zimbabwe Orphans Project.” (ZOP.)

Paula soon understood the deep poverty and hunger afflicting the rural poor. Using her small Social Security check and some help from her U. S. friends and Amistad International, in 2000 Paula helped the people in Murwira to start planting large food gardens, a 1,700-tree orchard, multiple dams, boreholes, silt traps, more than 20 wells and storage tanks as she protected the crops from hungry orangutans. Paula called it the Work for Food Program. By 2006 she had given away more than one million items of clothing. She became the only employer in the area.

At the height of the AIDS epidemic, Paula’s heart was broken to see so many AIDS orphans (one village alone had 114 orphans). She decided to start building her own orphanage for AIDS orphans in 2003. In 2004, she opened Murwira Children’s Home (now called Kuda Vana Children’s Home). Working long days and driving her beat-up truck, Big Blue, over washboard roads, Paula provided transportation to local clinics for the sick; lunches for thousands of children at local schools; and she performed countless small acts of kindness to people she met everywhere. Paula often wrote to me during a crisis or catastrophe saying “We need

a miracle!” When Zimbabwe’s currency became completely worthless, and her truck became a hearse, she wrote “I keep thinking the situation in Zimbabwe can’t get worse and then it does! I can’t keep people from being hungry, but I can keep them from starving to death.”

Yet somehow Paula kept her children’s home, gardens and large food programs going and growing. Paula always thought God was listening to her pleas for more miracles.

One of the first orphans Paula welcomed was baby Joyleen, (who had no name so Paula named her Joy+Leen). Now an adult, Joyleen recalls her childhood as carefree, happy and her life at Murwira as now some of the best memories she has.

Those from Kuda Vana who knew her, call her their mother, their angel, and their hero. Australian

volunteer, Yvonne Wyer, commented, “The first quality that struck me with Paula is her unfailing compassion and empathy. She is probably one of the most empathetic people I have met.”

“For Paula, to see a need is to meet it head-on,” said Aussie volunteer Lorna McCallum.

We at Amistad International feel deeply privileged to have worked with this heroine of great faith.

If you would like to make a gift to honor Paula Leen’s life, we will, with gratitude, send your gift to Kuda Vana Children’s Home.

Karen Kotoske

Executive Director

Because she let her heart be broken by the needs she saw, humanitarian Paula Leen directly impacted the lives of not only hundreds of orphans but also thousands of hungry school children and families in Zimbabwe. Her legacy lives on through the multitudes she cared for.



Tatenda's Forever Home

The name “Tatenda” means “thank you” or “I’m grateful” in Shona, a commonly used language in Zimbabwe. Tatenda’s story, even though it began with heartache and loss, ends with something to be thankful for.

It was a sunny day when three-year-old orphaned Tatenda and four other toddlers were removed from the only home they’d ever known: a Children’s Home that had to close due to lack of money and staff. Soon after, Tatenda and the other tots were taken to another children’s home: Kuda Vana.

At first, Tatenda was wary of this new children’s home, though she quickly adapted. Instead of a large dormitory, she lived in a home environment with the children she had arrived with. She had a “Mama” who was a constant and loving presence, and she learned what it was like to be a part of a family, sharing chores and responsibilities. At family worship each night, Tatenda learned she was adopted into God’s family and fully loved and accepted as a Child of God.

Soon, Tatenda had made many friends on KVCH campus. Early in the morning, it was common for Tatenda’s sweet

voice to carry across campus as she sang herself awake. When Tatenda started school, she soon read at a pace that far exceeded her peers.

However, all of this care and love do not replace the comfort and belonging that comes from living in a family. And little did Tatenda know, but a married couple had been praying about adopting a little girl. They contacted Kuda Vana’s team to see if their future daughter might be in Kuda Vana’s care, and everyone agreed that they should meet Tatenda.

Tatenda was nervous at their first meeting but soon relaxed, and her sunny spirit shone. Kuda Vana’s staff counseled and facilitated visits with the potential adoptive family and Tatenda. It didn’t take long to realize that these three made a family, and soon, the adoption papers were completed.

It was once again a sunny day when nine-year-old Tatenda was driven through the gates of a children’s home, only this time she was heading out to her forever home with a mother and father to love and care for her. She had a beaming smile and tears in her eyes as she waved goodbye.

Tatenda is thriving in her new family. She has had visits from Kuda Vana's social worker and some of her old friends. She loves her new school and recently achieved the top rank in her class of 58 students!

Tatenda's story is an example of what we hope for every child: providing an unparalleled home and education for children in need of residential care while actively pursuing forever families to love them.

Your support helps Kuda Vana continue to grow its capacity to safely place more children back in a family through safe family reunification, foster care, and adoption. As they say in Shona, "Tatenda, Tatenda, Tatenda," for your support.

Tatenda, like many other KVCH children in the Transitions program, now has a loving and forever family.



PROFILE OF AN AMISTAD PARTNER

MARGARET IKIARA is the founder and Executive Director of Community Initiatives for Rural Development (CIFORD), a renowned organization based in Kenya, and one of Amistad International's long-time grantees. In the patriarchal society of Kenya, it is rare for a woman to lead such an important organization, and Margaret is a powerful role model and cultural influencer in Meru County.

Margaret has dedicated her career to addressing the challenges faced by rural communities, including poverty, food insecurity, gender inequality, and lack of access to essential services. Her leadership and passion for sustainable development have been instrumental in shaping CIFORD's programs and initiatives.

Margaret's approach emphasizes an interactive and cooperative model of operation, which involves community members in decision-making. This ensures that community members feel a sense of ownership of the development programs. Under Margaret's guidance, CIFORD has successfully implemented projects focusing on education, health, agriculture, and women and girls' empowerment.

In addition to her work with CIFORD, Margaret is actively involved in advocacy and policy development at the regional and national levels. She has served as a voice for marginalized communities, advocating for their rights and inclusion in decision-making processes. Government agencies, international organizations, and development partners have sought Margaret's expertise and insights.

Despite the challenges faced in implementing development projects in rural areas, Margaret remains steadfast in her commitment to creating positive change. Her ability to mobilize resources, forge partnerships, and inspire communities has been instrumental in community project success. Her approach combines grassroots knowledge, innovative solutions, and a deep understanding of the local context, ensuring that interventions are relevant, sustainable, and impactful.

Amistad International is pleased to work with passionate and skilled leaders like Margaret to implement programs for positive change in Kenya.

Margaret Ikiara

Margaret Ikiara, founder and director of Community Initiatives for Rural Development/ Kenya, is one of many outstanding community leaders who partner with Amistad to empower their communities.



A Welcoming Health Clinic in Uganda

What's so important about covering the cost of an office in Uganda? The Universal Love Alliance (ULA) office, funded by Amistad, is a vibrant hub for community health and family harmony and provides a safe space for vulnerable community members. It is a place where everyone can feel like they belong and can get the care they need without judgment.

Government-sponsored health centers offer services to people living with HIV/AIDS. Still, these clinics are not safe for everyone, and sex workers and LGBTQI people often face harassment when trying to receive medical care. All are welcome at the ULA office, where medical professionals provide confidential testing and treatment to help people live with the disease. A trained therapist also provides counselling for those who suspect they might have HIV and those who test positive.

The ULA team also welcomes victims of domestic violence, which is widespread in Uganda. Wives are often mistreated and hurt by their husbands. ULA helps women receive specialized counselling and

medical treatment for any injuries. Interestingly, some husbands who have battered their wives attend ULA counselling sessions with them. When ULA saw this happening, they began hosting a series of workshops inviting these men to become women's allies and stop abusing them. Samson, the ULA Director, reports that these workshops went very well and seemed to have a transformative effect on those who attended!

Samson concludes his report by saying, "We would like to thank Amistad International for supporting us and our office during this very trying time. We are grateful that we can be fully engaged in such meaningful work in our community."

Empowering Kenyan Youth to Say No to Rape and Bullying

For the past four years, Amistad International has supported an effort to reduce sexual assault and bullying in the rural community of Turbo in Western Kenya. Young people between the ages of ten and eighteen are taught about human rights, emphasizing the rights of women and girls. They learn how to avoid unsafe situations and communicate effectively to express their needs and protect their personal boundaries.

The six-session workshop format allows for lively discussion and the chance to exchange ideas, which opens up the option to explore experiences and fears together and learn how to support one another. A session with a black belt Taekwondo instructor allows the students to learn hands-on self-protection moves. This gives a huge boost to self-confidence, both for the girls and the boys. The last session brings the girls and boys together for an honest exchange about how they perceive one another and what can be done to improve girl-boy relations.

The students and teachers in the schools where the workshops are offered say that they benefit tremendously from the Say No and Be Counted Program offered by the Visionary Women's Centre. To date,

an impressive 887 youth have received the empowering knowledge and skills gained by participating in this workshop.

Bracksidis, 12, and a rape victim, is one of the attendees who has significantly benefited from the workshops. As a participant, she was able to speak openly about the shaming and discrimination she experienced from her peers. At the Say No and Be Counted Workshop, her fellow students came to understand that it was not Bracksidis's fault that she was raped and that, as a victim, she needed compassion and support from her peers. She said the course helped her esteem and confidence and she is now ready to face the future with more hope.

LIZETTE GILDAY

Founder and Executive Director

Lucy Kawira

A Champion for Women and Girls

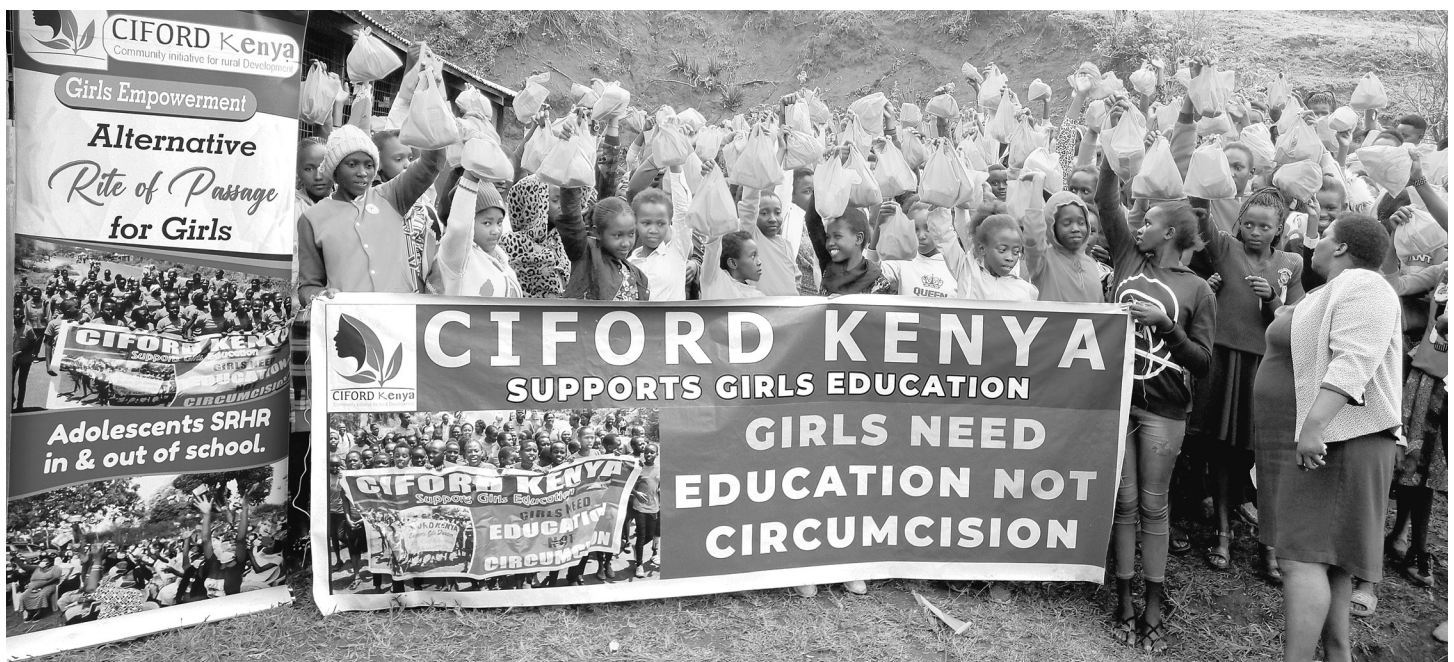
Lucy Kawira, a 15-year-old living in a remote part of Meru, Kenya, is now a champion for women and girls. It was not always that way. When Lucy's mother died, she and her three siblings moved in with her grandma. They struggle financially and often go without food. Recently, Lucy's grandmother had been pressuring Lucy to get married as an easy way to support the whole family. To get married, Lucy would need to be circumcised as the grandma's tradition required. Lucy also heard many of her peers talking about female circumcision, making it seem like going through that process was the only way to be a "complete" girl.

Things changed when Lucy attended a seminar hosted by Community Initiatives for Rural Development

(CIFORD Kenya) and funded by Amistad International. The CIFORD team of social workers, nurses, and community advocates talked to the girls about the dangers of female genital mutilation (FGM), early marriage, and teenage pregnancy and how they can interrupt a girl's education.

The CIFORD seminar gave Lucy the information she needed to be able to tell her grandmother that she wanted to continue her education rather than get married as a way to become economically secure.

"I thank God that I attended the CIFORD girl's seminar, which helped me understand the facts about FGM. Now, I will be a champion for women and girls."



Graduates of CIFORD's Anti-FGM Seminars Mentoring Girls at New Leadership Program



Some of CIFORD's anti-FGM campaign graduates return as mentors and leaders at CIFORD new leadership programs for girls.

This year, Community Initiatives for Rural Development (CIFORD) is mentoring and building the leadership skills of 60 young women in rural Meru County, Kenya. In this highly patriarchal society, the Girls for Leaders Program is a very important step in helping these young women envision and realize a new future where they can also be in positions of authority and leadership in their community.

CIFORD holds classes every two months for six sessions throughout the year. The sessions focus on building confidence and self-esteem and reinforcing the idea that young women should have equal opportunities to boys. The program is run by the excellent role model of Margaret Ikiara, CIFORD Director and a strong leader in Meru.

Ann Kauria, a junior in high school, is one of the Girls as Leaders participants. Before starting the program, Ann was only loosely dedicated to school. Like many of her peers, she did not see the need to continue her education after high school and much preferred just to get married.

As part of the mentorship program, entrepreneurs, community leaders, teachers, and university students have been invited to speak to the young women about overcoming challenges on the way to becoming female leaders in their society. The university students (all graduates of CIFORD's anti-FGM programs) are proving to be especially effective motivators for the girls and are helping them to understand the benefits of higher education.

Ann is planning to attend university, and she wants to be a role model for other girls in the community.

Left: CIFORD's anti-FGM campaigns encourages girls to stay in school and delay marriage until after high school.

Fending Off Hunger in Malawi

In April, the leaders of Manyamula COMSIP Cooperative in Malawi wrote Amistad with an emergency request for funds, seeds, and fertilizers for planting food gardens to stave off impending hunger. The price of maize, the staple food crop in Malawi, had increased by almost 200%. Climate change, erratic rains, flooding, and the war in Ukraine (and its impact on fertilizer costs) were all leading to a dire situation. Winkley Mahowe, Manyamula COMSIP Director, estimated that almost half the families in their community were headed toward months of hunger at the end of 2023.

Amistad responded to the call for support and aided 200 families in purchasing seeds and fertilizer to plant five acres of a “winter crop” of maize in June for harvest in

October. When Amistad Board Member Tanya Cothran visited Manyamula Village in July, she toured several of the farms where the maize plants were just beginning to grow. The farmers have intercropped their maize with beans, which has the double benefit of replenishing the soil’s nutrients and providing a good source of protein to these families.

Typical of the Manyamula emergency garden planting success, Farmer Cafbet Tembo planted one-tenth of an acre and expected to harvest seven to eight bags of maize in October, which will feed his family and other community members for several months.



We Say Gracias

“Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life.”

— Nelson Mandela

Dear Amistad,

We are pleased to be receiving Notas again and perhaps ever more profoundly this year we are reminded how difficult life is for so many and how much is needed to help. We believe strongly in the work Amistad is doing and it brings us joyful humility to participate in some way. Thank you for all that you do!

— Eden and Kevin Jenkins, Sonoma, CA.

Dear Karen,

It's one thing to start an organization to make the world a better place, but to keep it going year after year after year must make God really happy. Us too! Bless you.

— Penny Shell and Kit Watts

- Thank you, Melanie and Earl Boyd, for generously supporting multiple programs at Rebuilders project for internally displaced refugees in Bunia, Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- Thank you, Ann Down, for sponsoring the CIFORD Girls Health Program which delivered reproductive health education for 1,500 girls, ages 12-19. The courses covered decision-making, problem-solving, and self-esteem with the goal of reducing early pregnancy. We are also deeply grateful to you for your comprehensive support for Buddha's Smile School in Varanasi, India, and Soma Home for Girls in Kolkata, India. Your generous heart is giving so many young women and children a strong start in life.
- We're grateful to MaryLou Reiber for her gift which helped build the garden program at Visionary women's Centre, Kenya.
- Thank you Chris and Bill McClure for support of the Visionary Women's Centre/ Kenya for the year-long Anti-Rape and Bullying programs.
- We thank these wonderful women for supporting CIFORD's Girls' Leadership Workshops 2023. Kee Flynn, Arla Barelli, Jane Karageorge, Jeanne Liston, Cheryl Abel, Beverly Bucur, and Chris and Bill McClure.
- Chris and Bill McClure, thank you for your support of the Manymula/Malawi community garden program which helped provide food for 600 Manymula villagers.



Thank you from the children of Kuda Vana Children's Home, Zimbabwe.

Left: When Amistad board member, Tanya Cothran, visited Malawi's Manyamula Village this year she toured several flourishing 'emergency food' gardens, thanks to Amistad donors.

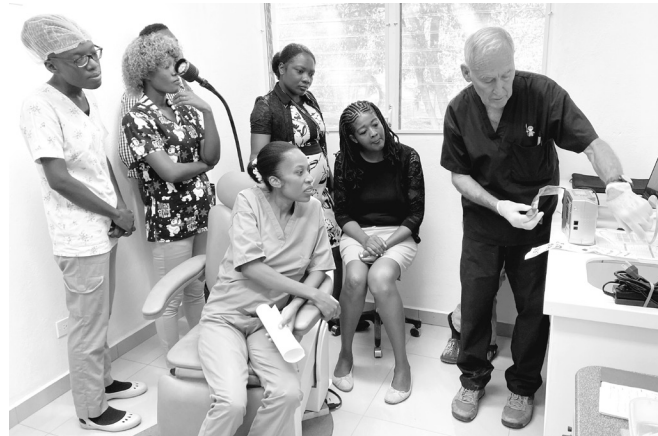
Here's What You've Done

Dr. James Appel sends us an update on his wider African service during 2023:

The SDA Cooper Hospital in Monrovia continues to move ahead with remodeling and restructuring of staff and activities. The Ophthalmologic services are stronger than ever with the arrival of Dr. Roger Muhemi in January 2023. The deformity corrections and fracture care also continue to move ahead as we train the local doctors in surgical orthopedic care. “

“I've just spent three weeks at the Baraka Adventist Hospital in Eastern Chad that I helped found in 2017. They have been partnering with Médecins Sans Frontières to take care of almost a hundred severely injured Sudanese refugees fleeing the genocide in nearby Darfur. MSF didn't have the capacity to care for the most complicated fractures from gunshot wounds, so they brought them to Baraka Adventist Hospital hospital in waves from May through July 2023. Many of them required multiple operations and extensive wound care but none of the patients died and most had their limbs salvaged. They only had to do 4 amputations. I helped them with some of the follow up surgeries requiring debridement of dead exposed bone, soft tissue defects needing muscle flaps and skin grafts and some patients which needed further stabilization with more modern materials that I had brought from Liberia.

- Amistad provided a 2023 grant to Visionary Women's Centre (Kenya) for teaching self-defense classes to those enrolled in their anti-rape program for youth and a second grant to purchase



Dr. Peter Nelson, DDS, at the opening this year of a new dental clinic at Haiti Adventist Hospital. Dr. Nelson spearheaded the fundraising on his 70th birthday in 2015. We congratulate Dr. Nelson and all who helped him realize the dream of a modern Haitian dental clinic.

- irrigation equipment for a community garden.
- Haiti Adventist Hospital opened their new dental clinic in September. The clinic has been in the making for seven years, led by dentist, Dr. Peter Nelson, who started the Haiti Dental Clinic Fund to celebrate his 2015 birthday, inviting his friends to contribute to a dental clinic for the people of Haiti. Peter Nelson's family and friend's rallied generously to help build the clinic, including a digital x-ray machine. The new clinic is staffed by Haitian dentists who will provide greatly needed dental services to their people.
- A grant given to CIFORD to purchase water tanks and a tower for a holding tank for the farmers of drought-stricken Kiremu, Kenya.

- Over 100 free orthopedic surgeries in were done during the month of May at Haiti Adventist Hospital.
- Amistad funded two comprehensive year-long for Community Initiatives for Rural Development/Kenya: Girl's Leadership and Women's Health.
- Amistad supported Soma Home for daughters of sex workers in Kolkata India. The girls ages 6-18 also receive quality elementary-high school educations, as well as computer skills and self-defense instruction.
- Liberia: This year Amistad sent support to surgeon James Appel, and his wife, nurse Sarah Appel, for their tireless efforts to rebuild and improve the clinical care at Cooper SDA Hospital in Monrovia, Liberia.

We Remember

- Audrey Shaffer honors the life of mission pilot Conroy Donesky
- Karen Kotoske honors the life of Paula Leen who served the people of Zimbabwe with full heart and open arms
- Dr. Arla Genstler Barelli honors the lives of her beloved mother and father, Paul and Pearl Genstler
- Susan Erich honors the life and service Conroy Donesky to the Huichol Indians
- Gay and Duane Wilson honor the life of their friend Duane Reuer
- The Erwin Family Foundation honors the life of humanitarian Paula Leen

We Honor

- Gay and Duane Wilson celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary. “God has blessed us with one another for all these years and we feel very grateful!”
- Joyce Runge celebrates her birthday

Right: Clifford's orthopedic team at Haiti Adventist Hospital straightened his deformed legs through state-of-the-art computer-guided limb straightening techniques.

At the same time, we can hear hymns from churches around us, and kids give us fist bumps with smiles on their faces after life-changing operations. Many good people here are just trying to live life, love each other, and provide for their families.

Why are we still here? It is no small miracle that our hospital is fully functional and taking care of more people than ever before in its 42-year history. In May 2023, we set a new record of over 270 cases. As a point of comparison, we had 436 cases for the entire year in 2017. The new record is primarily attributed to the general surgery service provided by Dr. Jimmy, our full-time general surgeon, and Dr. Richard Spady, who visited us from Indiana for two weeks. While we usually ask for some economic collaboration from patients to maximize Dr. Spady's time, we decided to offer completely free general surgery for two weeks.

Due to the insecurity around us, people often cannot safely come to our hospital. They get discouraged and sometimes don't even try. We had no idea what would happen even if we made the surgeries free. But the turnout was impressive. It was a busy time for our operating room staff and every worker at the hospital, including our lab, x-ray department, floor nurses, laundry, and kitchen staff. We learned a lot about our strengths and weaknesses, but ultimately, it was a morale booster for everyone. Some of our staff were also able to take advantage of the program. Elective circumcision was a particularly popular offering that put some of our staff members out of commission for a few days.

Clifford's Life-Changing Surgery

Sourcing materials and supplies is challenging, expensive, and sometimes life-threatening for our staff. But we still do it because people come with life- and limb-threatening injuries and illnesses to Hôpital Adventiste every day.

Clifford did not have a life- or limb-threatening injury but was born with osteogenesis imperfecta. This genetic defect in collagen production often results in fractures and deformity. Believe it or not, he could still walk with his curved legs!

Clifford's surgery has been life-changing for him and his family. Part of Clifford's fibula was removed, and pieces of his bones were attached to a rod that held them stable. Dealing with soft tissues, swelling, and wound healing can be challenging. The surgery took two hours, and during the healing process, he worked with our physical therapist to learn to walk again. Two months later, the rods were removed. It is exceptional that even without a life or death problem, Clifford could still come to Hôpital Adventiste, in a war-torn country with minimal resources, and experience the Kingdom of God and the miracle of healing.



Congratulations to HAH Fellows

Dr. Conor Spady and Dr. Isaac "Zaco" Archelus have been vital members of our surgery staff for the past year, and it is exciting to celebrate their completion of the Hôpital Adventiste d'Haiti (HAH) Global Orthopedic Surgery Fellowship.

The Global Orthopedic Surgery Fellowship at HAH, endorsed by the Office of Graduate Medical Education at Loma Linda University (LLU), provides experience applying modern surgical techniques to a challenging and unusual variety of cases not typically seen in North American hospitals. The priority is on trauma and pediatric orthopedics. We also see a lot of children with treatable disabilities, including clubfeet and other congenital anomalies.

Dr. Conor Spady, who finished his orthopedic surgery residency at Loma Linda in 2022, just finished an additional year of training at HAH. His time here was a rich learning experience for him and the orthopedic residents from the U.S. and Haiti who do rotations at our hospital. Dr. Spady had hands-on experience with trauma and pediatric orthopedic cases, including limb lengthening and deformity correction and doing high-quality surgery in a limited-resource environment. Dr. Spady is doing a second fellowship at the University of California, San Francisco, this year before launching his career.

Dr. Isaac "Zaco" Archelus just finished a six-month fellowship at HAH. Dr. Archelus's surgical skills really blossomed while he was at our hospital. While some doctors in Haiti do fellowships in the United States or France, our fellows have the advantage of developing hands-on skills to treat the types of problems seen in Haiti, using modern techniques and technology adapted to the local environment.

Dr. Archelus was raised in Port de Paix, a small town on the north coast of Haiti with no orthopedic surgeons. Although many doctors are leaving Haiti, he is returning to his hometown with his wife and child. He will work at Beraca Hospital, which serves a large area in that part of the country. Over the last few months with Dr. Archelus and Dr.

Spady, I have "progressed" from being the chief surgeon to a scrubbed assistant to running the x-ray machine and taking care of administrative tasks during surgeries. I am thrilled to see top-quality work done by my protégés at our hospital, in other parts of this country, and beyond.

We are facing many challenges, but despite them all, we realize more than ever how much we have to be thankful for. Almost every day, there are enough surprising, miraculous, and unfortunately tragic. So much is happening, and a lot of it is truly amazing. You can subscribe to receive updates director from Dr. Scott Nelson at <https://haitibones.org>.

How Can I Help Keep This Vital Outreach Going in 2024?

Funds are urgently needed for the following 2024 programs. Please mark "Wherever my help is most needed." If you prefer, you can support a specific program. We will do our best to direct your gift to that program.

Wherever my help is most needed

- India: Buddha's Smile School, (Varanasi, India), an elementary school for 221 children of beggars, lepers and garbage collectors. \$ _____
- Zimbabwe, Africa: Kuda Vana Children's Home. Funds needed for day-to-day operations. \$ _____
- Kenya: Community Initiatives for Rural Development (CIFORD): Job skills training for at-risk teen girls, seeds, women's health and leadership training. \$ _____
- Kenya: Grow Bio-Intensive Agriculture Centre, Kenya (G-BIACK) teaching sustainable farming and job skills for at-risk young women. Salary for tailoring teacher, Moses Mgubua \$3,600 per year. \$ _____
- Haiti: Dr. Scott Nelson's Orthopedic Surgery Program at Adventist Hospital, Port Au Prince, Haiti. \$ _____
- Liberia: The Dr. James and Sarah Appel, RN, surgical program at Cooper Adventist Hospital, Monrovia, Liberia. \$ _____
- South Africa: Lambano Sanctuary and Hospice for HIV+ children. \$ _____

Your gift is deeply appreciated. Amistad International is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit public foundation incorporated in 1980. Donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law and may be sent to: Amistad International, 2205 Shirland Tract Road, Auburn, CA 95603. You may request Amistad's EIN number.

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