



2023  
WINTER

# Smile Report

Operation Smile  
Canada

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Top and Below: Leasy and his grandmother, Jeanette

## Madagascar

### Leasy's Resilience

Sweet Leasy was born with a cleft lip and palate in Toamasina, Madagascar. His grandmother, Jeanette, has been a pillar of support and care for him since. "He was so tiny," she shared. "His parents have not been around, so I am the one who takes care of him."

Jeanette tried her best to care for her grandson, but Leasy struggled to feed due to his severe cleft palate. He was malnourished – getting weaker by the day.

Fortunately, Jeanette reached out to Operation Smile in Madagascar and found hope for her grandson's future. At Leasy's first medical evaluation, it was apparent that he would need nutritional care to help him gain the weight he would require for his first cleft surgery, and time was running out.

Your compassion and generosity meant Leasy received the life-saving nutritional care he needed. He's one of over 280 children enrolled in Operation Smile's Nutrition Program in Madagascar.

The program provides children like Leasy and their families with monthly nutritional boxes, including baby formula, specialized cleft feeding bottles, and nutritional supplements.

With support from Operation Smile and his grandmother's loving care, little Leasy gained 100 grams in just two days! He will receive his first life-changing cleft surgery when he reaches a healthy weight.

"I've wondered how I'd be able to take care of my grandson. I've been very worried," says Jeanette. "I was searching for information on how to feed him. I'm so thankful I found Operation Smile and appreciate you taking care of my grandson."

We are so thankful to be able to share powerful stories like Leasy's! Our incredible global volunteers and partners like you embody this spirit of resilience that allows Operation Smile to continue delivering life-saving cleft care throughout the world.



Operation Smile  
Canada



## Thank You, Ken Wilson

Sincere thanks to Dr. Ken Wilson for chairing the Canadian Foundation Board over this past decade.

Dr. Wilson has volunteered on more than **45 surgical programs**, dedicating many hours to training and educating local surgeons and medical volunteers in the many countries we serve.

In the mid-2000s, Dr. Wilson discovered how many generous Canadians were supporting our children on their own. It was then he helped lead the way for Operation Smile Canada to obtain charitable status in 2012.

Dr. Wilson chaired his final annual meeting this past October and is seen here with (L-R) Dr. Michael Bezuhly, plastic surgeon and incoming Board Chair, Anne Trask, surgical nurse, and me.

**Thank you for your continued service as past Chair, Dr. Wilson**, and for helping us launch this Next Decade of Love and Leadership!

Mark Climie-Elliott, CFRE  
CEO & Chief Smile Officer  
Operation Smile Canada



# Operation Smile

## THE NEXT DECADE OF LOVE AND LEADERSHIP

Launching our “Next Decade” plans, ensuring a million more patients receive access to the surgery and care they need – closer to where they live – is well underway.

Initial plans for this first year project close to 65,000 patients to receive clinical care, as well as thousands of global medical volunteers benefitting from Operation Smile’s education and training programs.

To achieve these long-range goals, our major focus is being placed on medical education to ensure we maximize the volume and quality of training in all clinical programs (surgery, nursing, etc.).

Clinical Care programs are currently running 94% to plan, with minor delays in only a few countries. Oral Health programs are exceeding the plan by 12% due to expanding capacity at our care centres.

Our Nutrition programs in Madagascar, Guatemala, and Peru have surpassed by 11%. Operation Smile’s Co-Founder, Dr. Bill Magee, is the first to explain that the surgeon is only 10% of the solution for a child born with a cleft condition. Through delivering complete (pre- and post-surgical) care, with a constant focus on quality training and medical education, more patients will be helped.

While economic issues, including inflation, currency devaluation, and other local issues, are ever-present, we will not lose focus on the fact that every three minutes, a child is born with a cleft lip, cleft palate, or both. With donors, partners, and our global team of dedicated medical volunteers on these children’s side, we will help more patients in more places than ever before. A million more.





Top: Álvaro from Paraguay  
Below: Samantha from Paraguay

## Paraguay

# Álvaro's Story of Compassion

"He was unprotected, and I had the chance to help him. I felt like it was what I needed to do," nurse Mónica del Valle reminisces about adopting baby Álvaro as her own. He was born with a cleft lip and cleft palate and sadly, his family abandoned him at the hospital where Mónica worked.

Mónica knew the road ahead for Álvaro would not be an easy one. Fortunately, she was referred to Operation Smile in Paraguay by a specialist. Álvaro soon began receiving the vital care he needed for his first cleft surgery.

Mónica's compassion transformed Álvaro's future – and so has yours. As an Operation Smile partner, you've helped Mónica get her new son the cleft surgery and comprehensive care he needs to thrive. In September 2019, our global medical volunteers repaired Álvaro's cleft lip. He continued to receive follow-up cleft care until he was ready for his cleft palate surgery.

Pure compassion is the overwhelming factor that drove Mónica, our global medical volunteers, and YOU to deliver life-changing and vital cleft care to children around the world.

**"Seeing him for the first time after the surgery was just amazing, I can't describe the feeling."**

Mónica, Álvaro's grateful mother



Your generosity and care did not stop there! It has helped Operation Smile offer vital follow-up surgeries, and in October 2022, our global medical volunteers performed 15 rhinoplasty procedures over two days for patients to correct nose alignment and improve the patient's ability to breathe easier.

We continue to care with all our hearts for our patients, their families, the communities we serve, and the people who help us serve them. We are beaming together with our patients and global volunteers because of the support of compassionate partners like you!







*Top: Tong Xuan Nguyen  
Below: Tong Xuan Nguyen and his  
father, Tong Xuan Bin*

## Vietnam

# Tong Xuan Nguyen's Bright Future

When Tong Xuan Nguyen was born with a cleft lip, his father wasn't afraid. He also lived with a cleft condition for most of his life.

His father wanted him to receive the cleft care he needed much earlier than he did. So, he reached out to Operation Smile in Vietnam, trusting that his son's life would soon look different from his own.

His father's hope for a better future for him was realized because of partners like you who continue to strengthen Operation Smile worldwide and enable us to deliver complete cleft care with integrity.

Today, father and son share the same joyful and beautiful smile. Tong Xuan Nguyen was one of 57 patients who received life-changing cleft surgeries and vital follow-up care in Hanoi this October.

A total of 118 children were screened during the surgical program. Despite heavy rains, the program exceeded its

initial screening goal of 70 patients by an incredible 68 percent!

Dedicated partners like YOU and our global volunteers are indispensable to the quality of surgical care Operation Smile delivers worldwide. Together with you, we will help more patients in more places where we serve over this Next Decade of Love and Leadership.



**"Everything went quite smoothly...  
Smiles lit up the children's faces."**

**Trang Tran**, Program Coordinator for  
Operation Smile in Vietnam







Top: Yolatha from South Africa  
Below: Minqweno from South Africa

## South Africa IMPACT in South Africa

In October 2022, the first surgical program in over two years resumed at Nelson Mandela Academic Hospital in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape. Our medical volunteers were eager to return to what they did best – delivering beautiful smiles and making an impact in the lives of children born with cleft conditions.

The team (including plastic surgeons, nurses, doctors, dentists, and speech therapists) worked together to conduct surgeries and deliver follow-up assessments and comprehensive care.

Twenty-two children and one young adult received life-changing cleft surgeries during the surgical program.

“Mothers’ hearts were healed and young doctors from the hospital, who enthusiastically gave up their weekend to be part of the program, will take the learning and inspiration they gained into their daily work to serve our people.”

**“The impact of this goes much further than the individual lives that were transformed.”**

**Sarah Scarth**, Executive Director of  
Operation Smile in South Africa



Operation Smile has been serving communities in South Africa since 2006 through the support of our generous and compassionate partners worldwide.

“Thank you to everyone who helped us heal lives through new smiles,” Sarah says gratefully.

Together with you, we are inspiring the next generation of volunteers and change-makers, leading by example and never missing an opportunity to provide life-changing services.



There's more to this story.  
Watch the video at  
[operationsmile.ca](https://www.operationsmile.ca)





*Top: Stive Santiago, Dominican Republic  
Below: Arturo Grullón Pediatric Hospital in Santiago, DR*

## Dominican Republic

# Marking a Milestone in the Dominican Republic

In the Dominican Republic, Operation Smile celebrated a milestone at the end of 2022 with its 30<sup>th</sup> international surgical program in Santiago. Since 2009, dedicated partners like you have helped provide more than 1,550 cleft surgeries in the Dominican Republic.

Our global team, including Canadian volunteers, delivered an incredible 45 cleft surgeries over four days, surpassing our initial surgical goal by more than 12 percent.

Your generosity helped us provide vital comprehensive cleft care such as nutrition, pediatrics, dentistry, speech therapy, and psychosocial care. These services meant the world to Nadege Jeudi, the mother of little Stive. Stive had been waiting to receive his life-changing cleft surgery and during this program, he received his brand-new smile.

Two years ago, Stive was born with a cleft lip shortly after his family immigrated to the Dominican Republic from Haiti. Today, his mother, Nadege, is overjoyed and grateful for her son's sweet new smile. Partners like you have given Stive and his mum new hope for the future!

"These patients have been waiting so long for this moment," shared Maria Nirvana Saldana, Program Coordinator for Operation Smile in the Dominican Republic. "Today we can feel the joy of their parents, knowing their child is going to have a new smile and a comfortable life."

Through delivering free, safe surgery and care, Operation Smile creates access to safe surgery for its entire community. Your generous support delivers smiles, and so much more.







Operation  Smile | 40 YEARS

**This past November, Operation Smile's global efforts marked 40 years of serving children born with cleft conditions and their families.**

It also marked 10 years since our Canadian Foundation was established. On behalf of our Co-Founders, Dr. Bill and Kathy Magee, the board volunteers and staff, thank you for your commitment to our children through your very generous support.

You are a vital partner in our Operation Smile family. We hope you know and feel that.

As we begin this Next Decade of Love and Leadership through a globally coordinated effort across more than 35 countries, your continued partnership will help us serve and care for a million more patients.

With you alongside our children and dedicated team of medical volunteers, we can do so much more.

**Thank you for all you do!**

## Thank You Skeletons of Vivian Line!



Shout out to our community Ambassador extraordinaire, Melissa, the founder of Skeletons of Vivian Line! Every October this "humerus" group of skeletons and their boney pets perform different antics for 13 days of Halloween fun while raising awareness and community donations for Operation Smile Canada.

In 2022 with the support of the Dairy Farmers of Ontario and the Perth County Dairy Committee, over 2,000 people enjoyed a fun-filled day "Powered by Milk" at Hillmanor Dairy Farms, raising over \$5,500 for Operation Smile Canada, and helped deliver 152 new smiles to children waiting to receive surgical care.

### A HUGE thank you to

- Heather and Frank Louwagie and their family at Hillmanor Farms.
- The Dairy Farmers of Ontario and the Perth County Dairy Committee.

The possibilities to provide a gift of a new smile to children waiting for their life-changing surgery are endless.

Set up a lemonade stand in the summer, a garage sale in the spring or fall, host a community booth at a local fair, plan a bake sale, or enjoy a dinner party with friends.

If you are looking for ideas that engage your local community and make a difference, email us at [givesmiles@operationsmile.org](mailto:givesmiles@operationsmile.org).





*Britany, age 15,  
from Honduras*

## A Gift In Your Will

You probably have a will. Perhaps you're thinking about getting one drawn up. Maybe your circumstances have changed and it's time for an update. Each step is important because it shows you care about what's meaningful to you: family, friends, your community, and the children with cleft conditions that you help every month.

You can ensure that you'll always be there for the children with a gift made through your will or estate.

With more local and international surgical programs resuming where conditions are safe for patients and medical volunteers, it's a great time to learn more and include Operation Smile Canada in your will.

Begin the conversation with Paige Melvin at: **1.844.376.4530** or email [paige.melvin@operationsmile.org](mailto:paige.melvin@operationsmile.org). Thank you.

## Become a **SMILE PARTNER** Always Be There for the Children

Every gift leads to a smile and means the world to a child who needs your help. A great way to help more children is to become a monthly **SMILE PARTNER**. Giving monthly is an easy, budget-friendly way for you to **deliver impact to the children every month**. You'll keep them healthy before, during, and after their surgery ensuring care every step of the way.

More and more surgeries are resuming where it's safe for patients and medical volunteers. Together with you, we can help deliver life-changing surgery and comprehensive cleft care to thousands of children who want nothing more than a new smile.

Call us at: **1.844.376.4530** or visit [operationsmile.ca](http://operationsmile.ca) and become a **SMILE PARTNER** today. Thank you.



*Dilan, age 3,  
from Guatemala*

## We're Here to Serve You

From making a donation over the phone, updating your contact information, changing your credit card or banking information, to discussing the impact of your gift or how to have lasting impact with a gift made through your will, we're always so pleased to hear from you.

 [@operationsmilecanada](https://www.instagram.com/operationsmilecanada)

 [/operationsmilecanada](https://www.facebook.com/operationsmilecanada)

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