

Quickly Back to Work

By Ryan Smith, SIGN Communications Specialist

Nicholas, 20, sells chicken and chipati on the side of the highway near his home in Uganda. His family depends on his income, which averages about \$2 USD per day.

One day, he decided to save money on transportation and ride on the back of a motorcycle that already had another passenger. But on the highway, a truck with a trailer lost control and crashed into the motorbike, knocking all the passengers off.

Nicholas felt a lot of pain in his left thigh, and was unable to stand. Onlookers rushed him to the local hospital, which provided first aid, took x-rays of his leg, and referred him to Kumi Orthopaedic Center for further care.

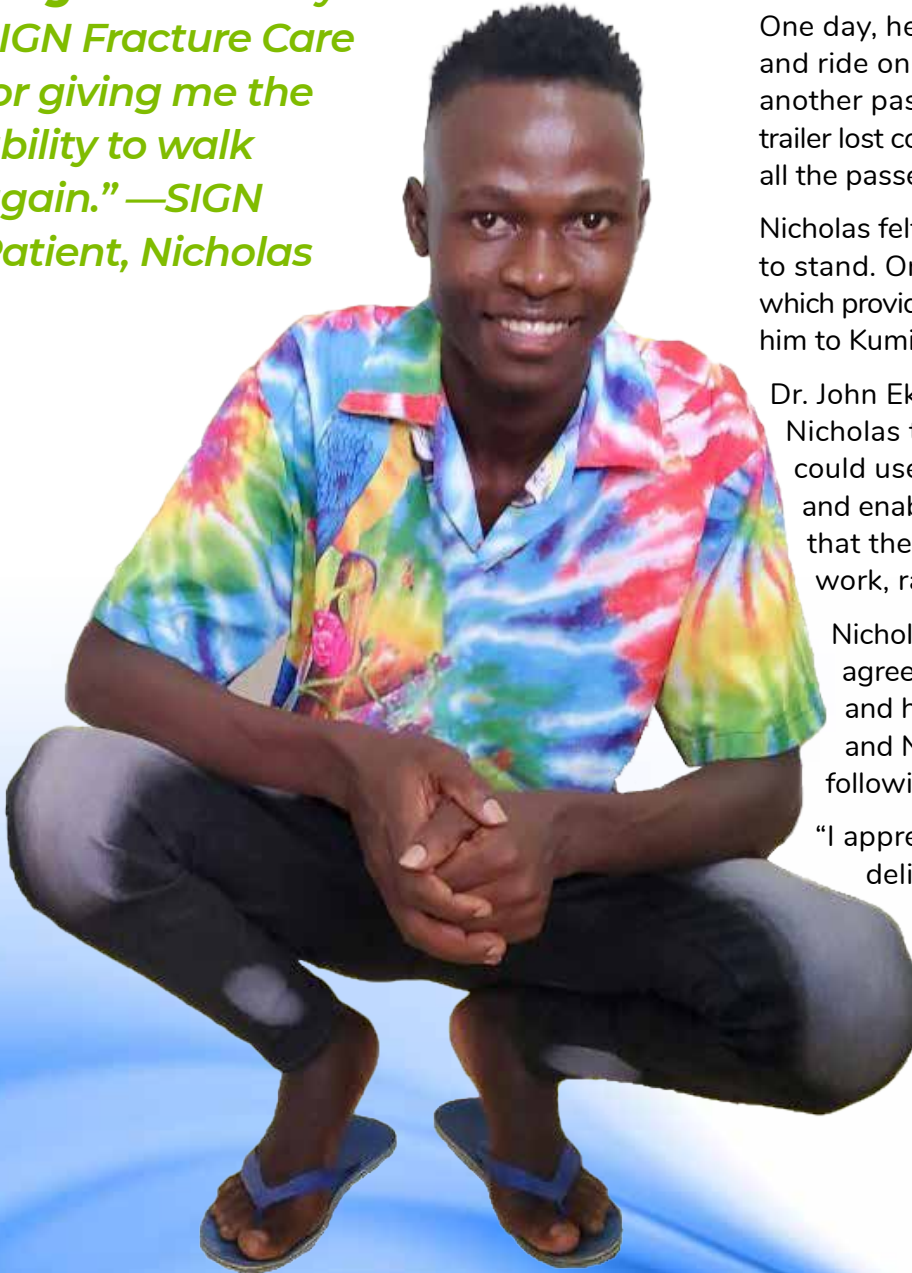
Dr. John Ekure, the SIGN Surgeon at Kumi, showed Nicholas that his femur was fractured, and that he could use a donated SIGN Nail to stabilize the bone and enable it to heal. In addition, Dr. Ekure explained that the nail would enable him to quickly return to work, rather than lying in traction for months.

Nicholas consulted with family and friends, then agreed to the surgery. The next morning, Dr. Ekure and his team performed successful SIGN Surgery, and Nicholas was able to walk with crutches the following day.

"I appreciate the fine surgery and care that was delivered to me at Kumi Orthopaedic Center," Nicholas said. "I think the nail is magical. Thank you SIGN Fracture Care for giving me the ability to walk again."

You can help someone like Nicholas quickly recover from a fracture by donating with the enclosed form or giving at www.signfracturecare.org/donate

"I think the nail is magical. Thank you SIGN Fracture Care for giving me the ability to walk again." —SIGN Patient, Nicholas



Nicholas was back to work just
2 weeks after SIGN Surgery.

Bridging Hope: SIGN Outreach in Tanzania

By Dr. Raymond Lyimo, SIGN Surgeon

In December 2023, heavy rain in northern Tanzania triggered flooding and landslides down the steep slopes of Mount Hanang.

Numerous houses were buried or swept away. Local media reported at least 300 households have been displaced.

The SIGN Team at Dodoma Regional Hospital, under the leadership of Dr. Ernest Ibenzi, swiftly organized an outreach program to address the pressing needs of the injured patients in Manyara. A team of skilled surgeons, nurses, and support staff traveled more than 300km from Dodoma to the region, bringing not only medical expertise but also a sense of compassion and hope.

The SIGN Nail, which is durable, effective, and donated for free, became the beacon of healing for those who had endured the pain of long bone fractures. The procedures were a success, and more than 20

patients began their journeys toward recovery within a few days.

The success of the outreach program in Manyara became a symbol of resilience, illustrating how medical innovation and collaborative efforts could bring about positive change in even the most remote corners of the world.

The people of Manyara, once burdened by fractures and uncertainty, now looked toward the future with renewed hope and gratitude for the healing touch of the SIGN Nail outreach program.

SIGN and the medical team from Dodoma left an indelible mark on Manyara, not just in the form of healed bones but as a testament to the power



Flooding caused significant damage and injuries.



of solidarity, compassion, and quick, effective healthcare responses.

Award: Dr. Duane Anderson

Dr. Duane Anderson, who serves as chief orthopaedic surgeon and has overseen the SIGN Program at Soddo Christian Hospital in Ethiopia, received the 2024 Humanitarian Award from the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.

Under his leadership, 5,115 patients have received SIGN Surgery, and he has helped train hundreds of residents in partnership with the Pan African Academy of Christian Surgeons.

We join AAOS in honoring Dr. Anderson's lifelong service to his patients and colleagues.



Dr. Ibenzi (left) guides local surgeons through the steps of SIGN Surgery before starting on their patient.

SIGN Database Drives Innovation

By Ryan Smith, SIGN Communications Specialist

If there is a secret that explains how SIGN has succeeded in supporting surgeons and helping more than 430,000 people heal over 25 years, it just might be the SIGN Surgical Database. Data and reports aren't our usual talking points with donors, but managing our information and processes is crucial to keeping SIGN operating effectively and efficiently.



Dr. Billy Haonga (left) trains fellow surgeons on the SIGN Surgical Database (2020).

After each SIGN Surgery, surgeons upload x-rays, comments, and information about the procedure, which is reviewed by Dr. Zirkle or a team of SIGN Mentor Surgeons. Surgeons then provide follow-up reports at 6 and 12 weeks after surgery, to verify patient healing. Those reports are also reviewed by SIGN Mentors.

Turning Feedback Into Innovation

In exchange for uploading this information, SIGN sends resupply shipments of implants, instruments, and other materials to the surgeons—free of charge—after 20 case reports are submitted.

The SIGN Surgical Database is the largest long bone fracture database in the world, with more than 238,000 cases entered. It gives us the unique ability as a medical device manufacturer to get case data and user feedback directly from surgeons.

SIGN Engineers are able to research these cases, looking for trends or issues in surgical outcomes. The database also makes feedback from international surgeons more relevant and actionable, which drives SIGN's innovation.

Skin Graft System

The database tool helps to foster innovation with SIGN Implants, but also with other tools that are not directly related to long bone fracture surgery.

SIGN Engineers have recently developed and delivered a Skin Graft System. This is needed in many countries because a majority of injuries are caused by traffic accidents. When a person is thrown from a motorcycle, they often have significant skin injuries in addition to their fracture. In order to help the patient avoid infection and fully heal, doctors need a way to safely and effectively cover the injury site.

With feedback and guidance from international surgeons, SIGN Engineers developed tools and a technique for harvesting and meshing skin, so that doctors can take a small area of skin and cover a large injury.



The first shipments of the Skin Graft System were sent to surgeons last fall, and we are gathering feedback in order to start the next round of innovation.



The Skin Graft System enables surgeons to cover wounds and improve patient healing.



SIGN Surgeons tested the Skin Graft System at the SIGN Conference.

FREEWILL 

Do you have a will?

If you don't yet, check out the free resource from our partner FreeWill. Learn more at www.signfracturecare.org/ways-to-give



About SIGN

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give.org

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See SIGN's privacy policy and state disclosures at signfracturecare.org/privacy



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