



SIGN
FRACTURE CARE
INTERNATIONAL

NOVEMBER 2018

SIGN in Tanzania

Nkoaranga Lutheran
Hospital, Arusha

By Chuck Bigger,
Photojournalist

**Martha Abrahaman—
One of the first SIGN Patients
at Nkoaranga regains her mobility.**

Martha sits in a chair and works behind her home in the arid and impoverished region south of Mt. Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. She lives at the end of 12 miles of dirt track, and the only sounds are the chirping of birds, the rustling of the wind through dried cornstalks, and the steady drop of corn kernels into a bucket as she deftly de-kernels dried ears of corn. After a short time, she gets up from her chair and ambles off to the kitchen. Using some of the spent corncobs, she starts an open fire on which she'll cook porridge.

Six years ago, even sitting in a chair was not a possibility for Martha Abrahaman. A subsistence farmer, she was coming home from the field one evening when she fell and badly broke her femur, deforming her leg. A grievous injury for anyone, but even more so for a person of her age. Born at a

time and place before record keeping began, she believes she is 85 years old. The lines of life are well etched upon her face. Perhaps due to her age or financial capacity, she went untreated

SIGN has changed the quality of life of many people we thought would be permanently crippled like her. If not for SIGN today she would be in a different state, totally crippled."

— Dr. Sam Kiwesa

and was discharged from the local hospital. For five years, she used her arms to drag herself backwards along the ground in a seated position, until the friction wore away the flesh of her buttocks, leaving her with painful ulcerous sores and further incapacitating her. She was then only able to lie on her side and was totally dependent on the care of others.

All of that is behind her now, and soon so may be the walker she uses to get around since her SIGN Surgery at Nkoaranga Lutheran Hospital, located on the outskirts of nearby Arusha. Martha was one of the first patients to
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SIGN in Tanzania: Nkoaranga Lutheran Hospital

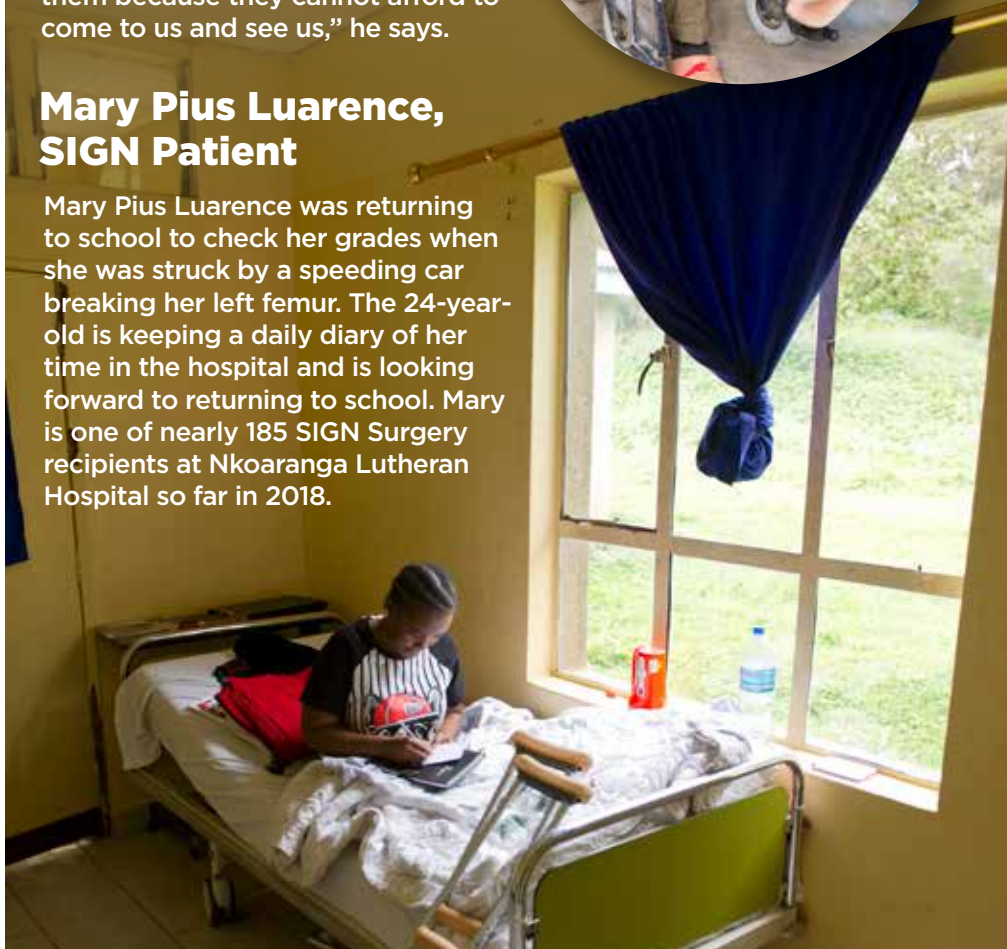
Samuel Lolunda Alayoo, SIGN Patient

Dr. Sam Kiwesa examines Samuel Lolunda Alayoo six weeks after his SIGN Surgery at Nkoaranga Lutheran Hospital in Arusha, Tanzania. Seventy percent of the patients seen at the hospital are orthopaedic trauma patients, with many of them being healed with SIGN Implants. Due to patient caseload, Dr. Kiwesa shuttles between the operating room and seeing the steady stream of patients who line up for their follow-up appointments. Many patients from outlying marginalized areas struggle to travel to their appointments, facing the choice of paying bus fare or having food to eat. Dr. Kiwesa has a vision to support those patients with their follow up appointments. "We are treating very poor patients and it is very unfair that we don't see them because they cannot afford to come to us and see us," he says.



Mary Pius Luarence, SIGN Patient

Mary Pius Luarence was returning to school to check her grades when she was struck by a speeding car breaking her left femur. The 24-year-old is keeping a daily diary of her time in the hospital and is looking forward to returning to school. Mary is one of nearly 185 SIGN Surgery recipients at Nkoaranga Lutheran Hospital so far in 2018.



Sam Kiwesa, SIGN Surgeon

By Lewis G. Zirkle, MD

Dr. Sam Kiwesa is an ideal orthopaedic surgeon. He treats all patients who come to him regardless of the complexity of their fracture or their financial situation. Most of his patients come from surrounding hospitals that either cannot treat them or the patients can't afford the care these hospitals offer.

(Continued from front page) receive the SIGN Nail during the introduction of SIGN to the hospital. She was operated on by SIGN President and Founder Dr. Lewis G. Zirkle and Nkoaranga's Dr. Sam Kiwesa in 2013. Both surgeons expressed concern for Martha's wellbeing at the time because of the softness of her bone due to a combination of age, poor diet, and her long period of immobility.

But Martha continues to heal and regain mobility. Upon seeing Dr. Kiwesa recently, Martha asked if she could set the walker aside and begin using crutches to increase her mobility.

"That lifted my spirits really, really high," says Dr. Kiwesa. "I was very happy to see her in that condition. I'm glad today she's up and about, she's visiting neighbors, she can do her domestic activities. SIGN has changed the quality of life of many people we thought would be permanently crippled like her. If not for SIGN, today she would be in a different state, totally crippled."

"That is my story..." Martha says, "...that I was left untreated for five years. I'm so grateful for SIGN for raising me up from crawling to what I am now."

"I thank God that I am doing very well. I thank you guys for really, really helping me," she says. "My life would be very miserable if I did not get operated on."

Today Martha can cook, wash, clean, and care for herself. She travels on foot more than 200 meters to visit friends, returns, and does daily domestic chores around her austere home. Martha says proudly, "I can do all the activities that an old woman of my age can do."

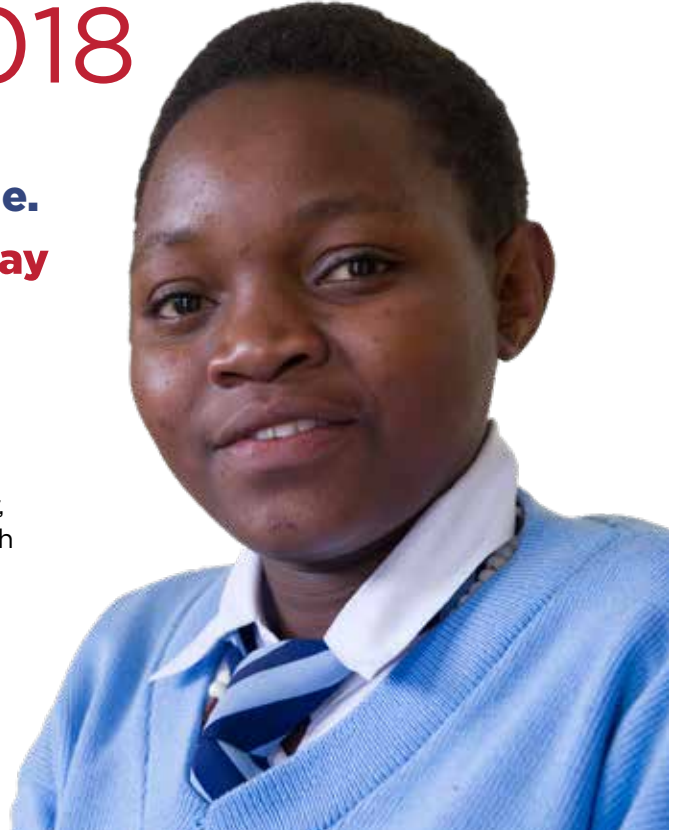


GIVING TWOsday

November 27, 2018

All gifts made to SIGN will be matched,
bringing healing to twice as many people.

Go to signfracturecare.org/GivingTuesday
to learn more and double your donation!



Martha, now 15, broke her leg at age 8. Thanks to SIGN Surgery, she quickly healed and returned to the classroom. Seven years later, she is active and engaged with sports, and she is ranked 5th in her grade academically. When you give to SIGN, you are helping people like Martha overcome their injuries and reach their full potential.

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Giving Ideas

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Check with your CPA to see if you are eligible to give a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA account directly to SIGN.



Stocks and Bonds

When doing your year-end tax planning, consult with your CPA about donating stocks and bonds to SIGN.



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Employer Matching

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For all questions, please call Lori Maier at (509) 371-1107. Donate online at signfracturecare.org/donate



GIVING

TWOsday

November 27, 2018

&

**Double
Your Impact**

Now through
December 31, 2018

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6:00pm to 8:00pm

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Join us at Piton Wealth for a Glassybaby pop up.

**10% of all sales from this event will be donated to
SIGN Fracture Care International.**



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