Flight Log

May 2023

Malaria survivor walks again

MAF helps a Ugandan teenager receive new legs after a tragic double amputation caused by malaria

PHOTO: DAMALIE HIRWA

On 14 April, Scovia Drateru (14) walked down the steps of an MAF Cessna aircraft, returning to Arua, northern Uganda, with a new pair of prosthetic legs. She said, 'I can't express how happy I am to be able to walk.'

Symmetrical peripheral gangrene (SPG) is an extremely rare complication of malaria which requires urgent amputation. Contracting malaria as a 15-month-old baby, Scovia was diagnosed with SPG and lost both of her legs by the age of four.

Jane Feku, a single mother of three who sells local brew for a living, recalls: 'After the amputations, we lived day to day with Scovia's disability. It had a major negative impact on our whole family.'

MAF partner Rev Pooshani visited Scovia's rural village last year and kick-started an intervention plan to help the teenager walk again.

In January 2023, MAF arranged a medical flight to transport Scovia and her mother to Jinja, where she received intensive treatment at St James Orthopaedic & Surgical Centre. The one-hour flight saved Scovia and Jane roughly ten hours by treacherous road.

After three months of surgery and rehabilitation, Scovia returned home by MAF aircraft to start a new life, with a new pair of custom-made prosthetic limbs.

Jane said, 'Scovia is an active girl who loves playing football. Artificial limbs are a miracle for her — we never dreamed of a possibility that she would walk. I am so thankful to all the people who have helped us.

'Scovia and I are the first people in our family to fly, and when we landed, airstrip staff jumped from their desks to give Scovia a hero's welcome. I am very happy because MAF gave us this lifetime experience.'

Pause for prayer

It's not often that we are able to follow a patient's progress after we fly them to hospital, so it's a real pleasure to share Scovia's touching story with you. Please pray for Scovia to settle back into school life, and for the many other patients who are still recovering after MAF flew them to hospitals around the world.

Join the fight

To mark World Malaria Day, MAF launched a campaign to raise awareness and funds with our colleagues across the MAF family. Please visit **www.maf-uk.org/malaria** to find out how MAF is flying to fight malaria, and how your support can make a lasting difference.

Flying For Life Podcast

The third of MAF's new Flying For Life podcasts is available now and unpacks how MAF responds to medical emergencies. Hear MAF Pilot Ping recall some of the 150 medevacs he has flown, as well as the inspiring story of gunshot survivor Maud Kells who was shot in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Listen at **www.maf-uk.org/podcast**

MAF UK Castle House, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2TQ
Scotland Office Challenge House, 29 Canal Street, Glasgow G4 0AD
T 01303 852819 **E** supporter.relations@maf-uk.org
www.maf-uk.org
MAF UK @MAFUK MAFUK @flying4life MAFUKFILM
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