



## KRB Update #2200 – Mafugi / Change

Keith R. Brinkman with Mercy Ships

30 August 2014

Greetings to you all around the world – amazing to think that with the internet we are able to communicate with people in most parts of the earth. Awhile back, I remember writing on the thin blue aerograms and folding them and mailing them to only one address.



I thought you would like to have an update on one of my patients from our time in Guinea, though he comes from the slender nation of The Gambia. His name is Mafugi and I called him ‘miboy’. Mary from another organization was aware of the boy’s problem with his leg and through a series of inquiries, they were able to send Mafugi and his mother to us while in Conakry, Guinea in 2012. He arrived speaking no French or English. He was surrounded by other orthopaedic patients speaking Krio (from Sierra Leone), Susu (from Conakry), English and French and so his language grew and included all of those plus his mother tongue (sometimes in the same sentence). I loved seeing Mafugi’s smile and his love for food – I can’t tell you how many kilograms he added during his time with us in the hospital and at the HOPE Center as he enjoyed

three nutritious meals a day. After about five months his care for his leg was completed, it was time for him to leave. I volunteered to drive him and his mother to the airport – emotionally it was hard to say goodbye to him – he on the other hand was laughing and smiling and ready for his trip – not fully realizing that he was leaving leaving. Due to the remoteness of his village, I didn’t think there would be any opportunity to hear how he did with his transition home – no cell phone coverage. But this is where Mary and her organization came in and she occasionally sends Ebrima to visit Mafugi’s village and shared that I could send a letter via email and he would print it out and take it with them. I can’t tell you the joy to be able to reconnect with him. Ebrima traveled by taxi, then a rickety wooden boat up the Gambia River and then a 7 kilometer walk to the Village of Burong. Mafugi’s



*Photo: I have been missing this boy – look at that smile.*



*Photo: Mafugi with his friends, balloons and candies in his village in The Gambia.*

head teacher wrote a letter back to me, he writes, “*Mafugi has recovered a great deal and can run fast, kick and walk normally. As you can see in the pictures, he enjoys playing football in school with his friends and neighbors. He loves children, parents and teachers. Mafugi is well mannered and really ready to*

*learn.*” Ebrima was able to send back many photos. A life transformed physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

On Thursday, our leaders announced that due to the continued uncertainty of the ebola virus outbreak in West Africa, we have postponed our field service to Cotonou, Benin (we had been scheduled to arrive on Tuesday this week). We are working diligently on other possibilities for our field service.

**Please pray** \*All those effected by ebola in West Africa (a region where I have many friends from years serving here) \*Final Technical Work in Engineering to be completed \*Our advance team as soon we will shift them to another country \*Talks about where we should go next and \*Safety for our sail back to the continent of Africa

Serving Together, **Keith**

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