A world where everyone has access to safe, high-quality comprehensive cleft care and is able to live a full and healthy life.
It is said that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Our journey to more than a million smiles has been long and deliberate, with many steps along the way.

Fiscal year 2023 was a critical moment in this journey. It was a year of taking stock following years of rapid growth; a year of honing our operations and fortifying our initiatives worldwide. It was also a year of innovation, partnership, and impact. None of this would be possible without your support.

In our 2023 fiscal year (July 2022 - June 2023), you helped us:

• Transform the lives of 105,000+ children.
• Launch partnerships with 57 surgical centers across 26 countries, including new programs in Algeria, Barbados, North Macedonia, and Oman.
• Initiate 73 new non-surgical, comprehensive cleft care programs in 25 countries, including:
  • 16 new non-surgical cleft care treatments at 14 different partners in India.
  • Our first cleft nutritional programs in the Central African Republic, Chad, Madagascar, and Afghanistan.
  • Our first cleft orthodontics programs in Togo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic.
  • Our first cleft speech treatment programs in the Central African Republic, Madagascar, Morocco, Thailand, and Ukraine.
• Launch a state-of-the-art Smile Train Cleft Leadership Center in Vietnam.
• Jointly publish the first-ever State of the World’s Cleft Care Report with the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington, validating that nutritional support is vital to every cleft journey.

There is much to celebrate, but the reality is that another baby is born with a cleft every three minutes. As our State of the World’s Cleft Care Report revealed, tens of thousands of these babies could suffer severe malnutrition and even die before their fifth birthday. Of those who survive, countless will spend their lives out of school and out of sight, all for want of what is for so many routine healthcare.

So, our work is not done. You have helped us transform the lives of innumerable children, but we still need your support to ensure that every person has access to safe, high-quality, comprehensive, free cleft care and is able to live a full and healthy life.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for what you’ve helped us achieve this year, and every year.

Susannah Schaefer
President & CEO, Smile Train
OUR IMPACT

1,100+ PARTNER HOSPITALS

1.5M+ SURGERIES PERFORMED ON PEOPLE OF ALL AGES SINCE OUR FOUNDING IN 1999

2,100+ TRAINED MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

35 COUNTRIES WHERE SMILE TRAIN OFFERS ESSENTIAL NON-SURGICAL CLEFT CARE SERVICES

90+ COUNTRIES WHERE SMILE TRAIN HAS SPONSORED FREE CLEFT TREATMENT

40,000+ TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

EVERY 3 MINUTES ANOTHER BABY IS BORN WITH A CLEFT
WHERE WE WORK

*Smile Train has provided support for cleft organizations in the U.S. and U.K.
Smile Train, Inc. can accept donations worldwide and has fundraising programs in Brazil, Germany, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Philippines, U.A.E., U.K. and U.S.

Cleft Surgeries Sponsored

- 0
- Surgical Awareness Programs Only
- 1 - 100
- 100 - 500
- 500 - 1,000
- 1,000 - 10,000
- 10,000 - 100,000
- 100,000 - 400,000
- 400,000+

Map as of January 2023

*Smile Train has provided support for cleft organizations in the U.S. and U.K.
Smile Train, Inc. can accept donations worldwide and has fundraising programs in Brazil, Germany, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Philippines, U.A.E., U.K. and U.S.
At Smile Train, diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility have always been at the heart of our model. From our founding, we have believed that actively and thoughtfully centering these principles — leveraging diverse skills and perspectives, treating everyone with respect, creating equitable opportunities for growth and development — in all that we do is not only right, but also true to all that we are and all that we strive to be. This makes us a stronger, more effective organization.

Smile Train formalized this ethos by launching a global diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility (DEIBA) program in 2020. In fiscal year 2023, these efforts really blossomed. Staff across more than a dozen countries are leading on crafting policies and practices informing how we do our work, how we operationalize our values, and how we position ourselves to bolster talent management and workforce capacity. These contributions, in turn, also strengthen our sustainable model of making world-class, life-changing cleft care accessible to all who need it, no matter what.

Innovating Inclusively: Simulare Medical, a Division of Smile Train

By late 2021, a year after acquiring Simulare Medical, a world leader in surgical simulation, we had sent more than 1,000 of their cleft lip and cleft palate simulator models to our partners around the world. While these models immediately bolstered partner training efforts, a consistent theme emerged in feedback: These don't look like my patients.

It was true: Every simulator was the color of a Caucasian baby's skin.

Based on this feedback, we set out to create a more representative model. With help from experts at The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, our team searched for a skin tone that could feel relatable to everyone in the places we work.

After considering 20 variations, Simulare Medical's team selected the tone that was determined to be the most inclusive.

The revised simulators have been incredibly well received. And this is much more than a superficial change. At the core of our model is partnership, and true partnership is a two-way street. By design, we do not export one-way ideologies and solutions — rather, we channel and lean into the localized expertise of our trusted partners worldwide to ensure we are best positioning providers — and thus their patients — for success.
Truly healing from a cleft requires a holistic process that is as unique as each patient. At the core of our model’s success is our focus on the whole patient. Surgery is a critical component of cleft care but is just one piece of a much bigger puzzle — and is often only the beginning. Many patients need nutritional support to reach a healthy weight and thrive, as a cleft can prevent an infant from breastfeeding. After surgery, patients often need long-term and coordinated speech therapy, dental treatments, and orthodontics to position them for a healthy future. And psychosocial support is critical in helping many children heal from the stigma, bullying, and ostracization they have endured for having a facial or speech difference. Our model is ultimately a promise that, whatever the need, Smile Train will be there to meet it with the safest, highest-quality care possible. Every child deserves no less, and babies born with clefts are no different.

Writing the Book on Clefts and Nutrition

Listening to the needs of our patients and their caregivers has always been at the heart of our work. Patients’ parents are always telling our local staff that the free, continuous nutritional support we sponsor at our partner centers is the reason their child is healthy enough for cleft surgery, and sometimes that it has even saved their child’s life.

Effect of Malnutrition on Children with Clefts

Clefts can make nursing and standard bottle feeding impossible. Among providers, it is no secret that this often has profound implications for an infant’s nutritional development.

Yet, the relationship between malnutrition and clefts had never been scientifically examined on a global level. We decided to change that.
In commemoration of World Smile Day® on October 7, 2022, Smile Train partnered with the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington to produce a landmark, first-of-its-kind research study: *A Generation Lost: The Devastating Effect of Malnutrition on Children with Clefts.*

The findings were indisputable:
- Babies with clefts are twice as likely to suffer severe malnutrition as those without
- 200,000+ children with clefts are dangerously underweight
- Between 2000 and 2020, more than 46,000 children with clefts died from malnutrition before their fifth birthday

*Read the full report at smiletrain.org/nutrition-report*

> “Societies and the global community continue to fail the most disadvantaged children. Our findings should be a wake-up call for initiatives that promote feeding and nutrition care for infants with clefts from the time of birth.”

*Dr. Barbara Delage*

*Director, Global Nutrition Programs, Smile Train*

This report also shone a light on nutrition as the critical facet of cleft care that we know it to be. Together with our local partners, we are on the ground across five continents building regional and community networks to deliver resources and training where they are needed most.
Efforts like these are saving children’s lives. Prisca, one of our Smile Train-supported patients in Tanzania, was born with a cleft that made it impossible for her mother, Regina, to breastfeed her. A doctor taught her how to express milk and feed Prisca by cup. They also recommended surgery, but the cost put it far out of reach.

Prisca still struggled to feed — at four months old, she weighed just nine pounds. Navigating stigma, shame, and limited medical resources in her community, Regina was isolated and watching her child waste away.

Fortunately, a village government official noticed Prisca, and told Regina that they could access the care she needed for free at Bugando Medical Centre, a Smile Train partner in the city of Mwanza.

Prisca was too underweight to ensure a safe surgery, so hospital staff enrolled her in Bugando’s Smile Train-supported nutrition program and kept her there for monitoring. After three weeks she had gained enough weight, and she received the cleft surgery that saved her life.

Once fighting for her life, Prisca can now eat, smile, and grow just like every other child in her village.

Read Prisca’s full story, as well as the stories of other lifesaving nutrition interventions across Tanzania.
EMPOWERED. EMBOLDENED. EDUCATED.
Thanks to Smile Train, talented, passionate health professionals from low-resource settings are bringing cutting-edge medical techniques to their communities and training their peers. This self-sustaining, global ecosystem of empowerment is saving countless lives each day thanks to supporters like you.

Smile Train COSECSA Scholars Graduate at the Top of Their Class: In December, Smile Train congratulated seven new graduates of the plastic surgery training scholarship program we sponsor in conjunction with the College of Surgeons of East Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA). Two Smile Train scholars were named the best in their respective disciplines: pediatric surgeon Dr. Martha Munkonka and Dr. Francoise Mkagaju — who became Rwanda’s first female plastic surgeon.

The fellows now head back to their home countries — Ethiopia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zambia — to serve in a charitable cleft surgery program.

Through this five-year program, Smile Train aims to improve surgical capacity in sub-Saharan Africa by sponsoring scholarships for aspiring plastic and pediatric surgeons in COSECSA’s training program.

Cleft Congress Brings Smiles Across Latin America: From June 22–24, we hosted the Smile Train Leadership, Innovation, and Training (LiT) Congress in Santiago, Chile. More than 200 partner practitioners from across the region attended, including surgeons, speech therapists, orthodontists, and anesthesiologists. The congress included hands-on workshops on surgery using hyper-realistic simulators from Simulare Medical, speech, and orthodontics, as well as interdisciplinary sessions where speakers from partner programs across the region shared their experiences. The event was a great success, and attendees returned to their cleft teams with new resources, knowledge, and connections with their peers across the region.

Surgical Fellowships Train the Next Generation of Indian Cleft Surgeons: An estimated 35,000 babies are born with a cleft in India each year. Making world-class cleft care available to all of them is essential. Smile Train India’s surgical fellowship program provides talented young surgeons from every corner of the country hands-on training in cleft surgery, comprehensive cleft treatment plan management, and patient and family counseling. After completing the fellowship, graduates go on to offer their services at their local Smile Train partner center — and teach their peers what they’ve learned.

In our 2023 fiscal year alone, five surgeons graduated from the program, while another six were enrolled.
STRENGTH IN COMMUNITY

Though everyone with a cleft has their own, unique experience, if there's one thing that unites nearly every cleft-affected person, it's that, at some point or another, they have all felt alone.

Every day since our founding, Smile Train has brought people with clefts together in partnership and pride. For more than two decades, we have witnessed people who grew up never speaking about the way they were born become outspoken activists for the dignity of every face while helping empower a whole new generation to grow up #CleftProud.

And fiscal year 2023 was yet another year of historic firsts. In July, Smile Train and the Cleft Community Advisory Council, our US-based volunteer board of cleft champions and changemakers, hosted our largest-ever in-person event, Cleft Con Chicago, then followed it up in December with the Third-Annual Virtual Global Cleft Con, which attracted nearly 1,000 registrants from 21 countries.

We launched our Smile Train College Scholarship Program for incoming college freshmen with clefts. The winners, Ling Clobes of Wichita State (KS) and Victoria Reed of St. Michael's College (VT), are the epitome of what it means to live #CleftProud.

Learn more about our scholarship winners’ inspiring journeys: smiletrain.org/college-scholarship

Inspired by feedback from Cleft Con 2021, we sponsored Love Meets Joy, the first podcast featuring real talk from two young women with clefts, Ashley Barbour and Iva Ballou.

Listen to it at smiletrain.org/lovemeetsjoy

Support. Friendship. Inspiration. A lifeline. That's the life-affirming power of community. And thanks to you, that's what we were able to provide the US and global cleft communities in fiscal year 2023 like never before.

“I want everyone to know that it's okay to be different. We're all unique, whether physically or mentally. People born with a different ability can accomplish anything anyone else can.”

Ling Clobes

“My cleft does not define me negatively. I recognize its significance and its role in my life, but I do not view it as who I am entirely. As a human, I am much more than the scars adorning my face.”

Victoria Reed
I clearly remember my daughter, Sadie’s, first smile. She showed me that first gummy grin at eight weeks old, and never lived a day after without beaming several times. Even on grumpy days, she found things to look delighted about. Sadie found joy in so many areas of life.

Sadie first learned about Smile Train when she saw banners with photos of children with clefts at the mall. She asked, “What’s wrong with that boy?”

I explained as best I could, then we went home and learned more. She showed great compassion and wanted to help. That Christmas, we asked for donations instead of gifts and raised $500.

On August 9, 2011, Sadie sustained a head injury while roller skating and joined her angel friends in heaven.

In our short time together, my daughter taught me empathy, generosity, the benefits of living with an open heart, and the awesomeness of sparkly things. Once she was gone, I could only sustain myself by continuing her good works.

Sadie loved to run, so I organized a 5K on what would have been her sixth birthday, with all proceeds going to Smile Train.

Word spread quickly, and the community came together to make Sadie’s Race a big success. My goal was to raise $20,000.

But then I wondered what I was going to do after that, so I determined to raise enough money to fund a child’s smile for every day that Sadie lived.

It was a bold goal, but Sadie lived with a bold heart and much compassion.

I thought raising nearly a half-million dollars in Sadie’s memory would be the work of a lifetime, but 10 years later, we were already so close. That was truly something to celebrate.

So in October 2022, we booked a banquet hall, hired a band, put sparkly things everywhere, and invited our family, friends, and sponsors to celebrate Sadie’s life and the generations of smiles that will be her eternal legacy.

The gala went off without a hitch.

It’s humbling to think how many smiles have been funded in memory of my joyful Sadie, who blessed us with her beaming, contagious smile each day. She would have been delighted to contribute to sharing smiles with others, and I am amazed at the goodness and generosity she continues to inspire among our friends and community.

Sara Parella, Herndon, VA

Read her full story at: smiletrain.org/sadies-smile
Smile Train’s corporate partners come to the table with a breadth of business experience: they are leaders in healthcare, makers of your favorite food and beverage brands, national retail giants, and civically minded local businesses. As a like-minded group of entrepreneurs, CEOs, and marketers, we are working together under one guiding principle: the first step toward achieving a happy and healthy life for every child begins with a smile. If your company believes in our bold vision that a better tomorrow is possible for every child born with a cleft, please join us!
Smile Train is always looking to partner with other NGOs on urgent global health issues that can’t be solved in isolation. One of the most severe issues facing all surgeries in Africa today is frequent power outages in operating rooms (ORs). They are time-consuming, dangerous, can last for days at a time, and can even be deadly.

Another is climate change, as ORs are responsible for a significant portion of hospital greenhouse gas emissions, waste, and energy usage.

This year, we joined with our longtime partner Kids Operating Room, a Scottish global health charity working to provide every child with access to safe surgery, to devise an innovative solution to both issues:

Equipping hospitals across the continent with solar batteries that power ORs for up to eight hours after charging.

These batteries help ensure safe and continuous care if the power goes out during a surgery, and each one saves roughly 1.5 tons of carbon dioxide each year.

After announcing the groundbreaking initiative at the UN General Assembly in 2022, we immediately got to work to make surgery safer and greener for our patients and for all Africans.

As of June 2023, we had already substantially mitigated both power outages and greenhouse emissions at four Smile Train partner ORs in Africa, with another 40 under construction. Green pediatric ORs are a win-win, offering the chance for a better tomorrow to our children and our planet.
EVERY CHILD DESERVES SAFE SURGERY EVERY TIME

Safe, high-quality care is always Smile Train’s number-one priority. As with any operation, even what is considered “routine” cleft surgery inevitably carries risks. Our promise to the patients, families, and communities we serve is to ensure the safest possible care no matter where in the world they are. We uphold this promise through an exceptional global partner network that is built on rigorous standards and accountability measures as well as a tireless commitment to leading-edge education, training, and innovation.

The reason Smile Train can enable the safest possible surgery for every child is the same reason we have been able to sponsor more cleft surgeries than every other cleft-focused organization combined: our model of empowering local experts, as our safety and quality highlights from fiscal year 2023 make clear.

SAFE Paediatrics for Cleft course with WFSA: Together with the World Federation of Societies of Anesthesiologists (WFSA), we developed Safer Anaesthesia from Education (SAFE) Paediatrics for Cleft, a course that will equip anesthesia providers around the world to enhance the safety of cleft surgeries, regardless of resource constraints. The course was piloted in Uganda and Tanzania and has trained 48 anesthesia providers so far. We are excited to build on these achievements as we roll the course out more broadly.

Team Cleft with Lifebox: Effective communication in the operating room is one of the most important non-technical skills cleft teams can have, yet it has historically also been one of the most overlooked, until now. Team Cleft was developed in partnership with Lifebox to improve pediatric surgical safety by enhancing multidisciplinary teamwork and communication of cleft teams in the operating room. In July 2022, pilot Team Cleft courses reached 55 participants across different surgical disciplines in Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia. Their success was so remarkable that plans are already underway to expand Team Cleft to more countries.

Smile Train-Lifebox Safe Surgery and Anesthesia Initiative: In many parts of the world, inadequate monitoring for patients under anesthesia is one of the most severe impediments to safe surgery, sometimes leading to catastrophic outcomes. To address this challenge, Smile Train and Lifebox have put ourselves at the forefront of distributing and training on robust and cost-effective pulse oximeters and capnographs — two of the most important basic anesthesia monitoring tools, yet also some of the scarcest in underdeveloped regions. These are lifesaving technologies — they help ensure a patient is getting enough oxygen during surgery, and should be in every operating room in the world. Together, we are making this a reality.

Of course, this surgical equipment can be used for more procedures beyond clefts, improving safety and quality of care across the board in otherwise underserved communities.

2023 Annual Report
DR. ELIZABETH IGAGA: 100,000+ Cleft Surgeries a Year; One Uncompromising Standard of Excellence

Based in Kampala, Uganda, Dr. Elizabeth Igaga is Smile Train’s global Director of Programs Safety. In this role, she ensures that every one of the 100,000+ cleft surgeries Smile Train sponsors each year meets the same rigorous standards of safety and quality. We caught up with her to discuss her path to this role, her vision for the future of global surgery, and much more.

What made you want to be a doctor and how did you pursue this goal? We had many challenges growing up, but my dad made sure we went to good schools. I gravitated towards the sciences and ended up in medicine. Medical school in Uganda is a five-year course, and in the last two years, you get to try different disciplines. I did great in all of them, but nothing felt like home until I tried anesthesia. As it happens, my university was also trying to recruit doctors to study anesthesiology at that time, because there were only about 40 of them in a country of 40 million.

During my training, I took Safer Anaesthesia from Education (SAFE) courses that opened my mind to the world of advocacy and implementing safe surgical practices. Sometime later, I was delighted to receive an offer to do this work alongside auditors and reviewers. This experience narrowed my focus to perioperative safety; I went around assessing the quality of anesthesia care being offered at Smile Train partner hospitals in Uganda and other parts of Africa, and doing whatever I could to make it even safer.

What are the stakes of your role, for Smile Train and for our patients and partners? The stakes are high. Smile Train has already proven that we’re able to train healthcare workers in countries with minimal resources. I believe that, by working through our model, we have the capacity to likewise create an environment that will ensure every surgery we sponsor is safe and of the highest quality. So, my work is about ensuring the safety of perioperative care provided to all Smile Train patients by building on the work we’re already doing. It’s about making sure that if anything goes wrong, the cleft team members are adequately trained and equipped to respond.

Why is it beneficial that our Director of Programs Safety lives close to our programs instead of in the US? I think it is important for contextualizing our partners’ work and for diversifying ideas. I know a lot more about working in an OR in a low- and middle-income country than someone who has never been in a situation where they haven’t always had all the tools they need right at hand.

It’s also important for me to show little girls here that it is possible. I think if you told 19-year-old me that I would be in this role someday, I wouldn’t have believed you. But it’s possible and we’re able to do it. We’re no different.
Yes, we have challenges with resources sometimes, but we’re able to do jobs like mine and we’re able to advocate for patient safety.

**From your perspective, why does Smile Train’s model of local partnership and investment matter?** Smile Train’s model matters because it causes a ripple effect. You train one person, that person goes on to train two more, who then go on to train more, and so you’re able to create a bigger network in less time and reach more people in a more efficient manner. It also allows you to leave the skills with the people you are training. With a mission-trip-based model, someone does surgery, stays for a week, then goes away. Unfortunately, when a child then develops a complication, no one knows what to do.

That’s why building local capacity is so important. Smile Train helps build local resources — instead of flying people in, we’re investing that funding into training local teams and making sure they have the resources that they need to treat patients safely. The impact is exponential.

**What safety issues are you addressing?** One recurrent issue is that governments are not prioritizing surgery. It was only recently that the World Health Organization recognized surgery as an important part of primary healthcare.

The late Dr. Paul Farmer dubbed surgery as the “forgotten stepchild of global health.” Surgery isn’t prioritized in policy-making, and as such, the infrastructure, training, and human resources that could potentially be channeled towards ensuring safe surgery for all are diverted towards other pressing needs. We also just don’t have enough people doing this work. The Lancet Commission on Global Surgery recommended increasing the surgical workforce density to 20 surgical, anesthetic, and obstetric providers per 100,000 people in developing countries by 2030. This goal is a far cry from current reality.

Malnutrition is another major issue. Children with clefts often have lots of trouble feeding adequately. We’re working with our nutrition specialists to ensure all cleft teams can assess each patient’s nutrition and provide additional support to those who are malnourished before they have their surgery.
What changes have you seen at our partners since you started in this role? I’ve already seen the beginnings of a culture shift since I started in this role. Different specialists are working more as a team, taking collective responsibility for each patient. I’m also seeing the creation of a culture of safety. Partners feel safe talking to Smile Train because they know we are here to walk together with them on this important journey towards providing the absolute safest, highest-quality treatment for all people with clefts. That makes me happy — I wanted to be part of creating a space where people feel comfortable reaching out when they need help.

How does what we do for cleft care help improve other services at our partner hospitals? The standards of safety that we set are not just for children with clefts. Yes, Smile Train is a cleft charity, and we only fund cleft care, but we work with partners who are treating all patients. So, when an anesthesiologist is trained, they aren’t just going to take care of the children with clefts, they’re also going to take care of all children.

It’s the same with equipment. Smile Train supports our partners with grants to buy and train their staff to use the latest medical equipment needed for cleft care, but once it’s in the OR, it’s there to benefit everybody. Everything that we do for our partners eventually benefits every patient. So, while we are trying to solve one medical issue, we are also solving a bigger problem — universal safe surgery. It’s the same for nutrition and other aspects of care: If we’re training nutritionists to help children with clefts, they’re going to apply those learnings to other children. I think it’s very important to impact the world even beyond clefts.
# CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As of June 30, 2023.

## ASSETS

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>Investments – Board-Designated Endowment Fund</td>
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## LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

### LIABILITIES

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### NET ASSETS

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CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT
OF ACTIVITIES

For the year ended June 30, 2023.

SUPPORT AND REVENUE

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EXPENSES

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CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

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<tr>
<td>Net Assets, Beginning of Year</td>
<td>365,061,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets, End of Year</td>
<td>$367,697,501</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HOW WE STEWARD YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS

- **Program Services** 84%
- **Fundraising** 15%
- **Management & General** 1%
In our 2023 fiscal year, you transformed the lives of more than 105,000 children through safe, high-quality, free cleft surgery and other comprehensive care. You advanced critical new data and insights into the global scale and special impact of malnutrition on children with clefts. You saved the lives of countless babies like Prisca. You helped promising college students with clefts pursue their dreams. You provided talented young cleft specialists around the world with previously unheard-of educational opportunities. You made all surgeries safer at 1,100+ healthcare centers around the world.

Thank you for helping us to make the world a healthier, safer, and happier place.

Here’s to another year of life-giving smiles, those we give and those we receive.
Smile Train is a leader in efficiency, transparency, and impact. Smile Train is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit recognized by the IRS, and all donations to Smile Train are tax-deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.