

CURE Ethiopia Performs Ethiopia's First Microvascular Surgery to Save a Child's Leg

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Three years ago, Sofonias, an eight-year-old boy, fell and broke his leg while playing outside with friends. His mom, Endawek, rushed him to a local hospital, where the doctors performed a routine surgery to fix the broken bones in his leg. After the surgery, everything seemed fine, and Sofonias was recovering. Unfortunately, after the procedure, an infection developed in Sofonias's tibia (the large bone in the lower leg). This infection prevented the tibia fracture from healing, caused tremendous pain, and shortened his leg as he walked on it.

Without specialized surgical intervention, the boy's leg would need to be amputated to prevent the infection from spreading to his whole body. Thankfully, Sofonias received the life-changing surgery thanks to the grace of God, the support of donors around the world, and through the hands of CURE Ethiopia's surgeons.

Endawek, Sofonias' mother, herself a health worker, learned that CURE Ethiopia was holding a mobile clinic in their town and took him to be examined. It was at the mobile clinic that his healing journey began.

"If treatment hadn't been paid for by CURE, we would have sold our house to pay for his surgery," said Endawek.

Microvascular surgery joins the blood vessels in the recipient's leg with the tiny blood vessels in the transferred bone. The transplanted bone heals fast, enabling the leg to lengthen and adequate skin cover to areas where the soft tissues are poor. This reconstructive surgery requires trained surgeons, an operating microscope, specialized surgical instruments, and micro-stitches finer than a human hair. Previously, the surgery was performed at CURE Ethiopia by visiting teams of experts from around the world. This case was the first 'in-house' micro-vascular procedure.



X-ray image of Sofonias' tibia shown on the left and the microvascular surgery on the right

Sofonias is recovering well. His experience has paved the way for more children to receive this highly-specialized surgery for years to come. The second-grader says he hopes to grow up to be a doctor so he can help kids one day soon.



(Pictured from left to right at CURE Ethiopia) Dr. Tim Nunn, Medical Director and Orthopedic Surgeon; Dr. Tihut, Anesthesiologist; Dr. Dorothy Bbaale, Plastic Surgeon; Dr. Tesfaye Mulate, Plastic Surgeon

In addition to offering orthopedic and reconstructive procedures at most of its eight hospitals, CURE is always looking for opportunities to add specialized services not available elsewhere in the healthcare systems of host countries. This practice has resulted in several network hospitals developing unique specialties, such as complex neurosurgical procedures at [CURE Uganda](#), [the management of neglected traumatic hip dislocation in children](#) at CURE Ethiopia, and now microvascular surgery at CURE Ethiopia.

Sofonias' surgery is the first of many microvascular surgeries to be performed at CURE Ethiopia. Now equipped with the necessary training and equipment, the hospital expects to be able to perform 10-12 of these surgeries each year. CURE will be using this surgical technique on limb conditions that would otherwise be needing amputation. The grace of God is on full display in CURE's quest to improve access to reconstructive surgery for children across the world.

"At CURE, we are excited to offer the best and highest quality treatment possible to children who have such limited access to limb reconstruction surgical care. Being able to provide this service reflects Kingdom values in contributing to improve some of the inequities that exist in global

healthcare provision. We trust and pray that Sofonias will have a transformed life following this reconstruction and that the praise and glory for this would not go to doctors, nurses or even an institution, but to Christ alone” - Dr. Tim Nunn, Medical Director at CURE Ethiopia

Click [here](#) to learn more about [CURE Children’s Hospital of Ethiopia](#).



Sofonias underwent microvascular surgery at CURE Ethiopia that saved his leg from amputation and enabled him to walk and play again