

TRANSFORMING FACES  
IMPACT REPORT 2021



# Deepening Roots & Branching Out

Innovating with  
our Partners in  
Comprehensive  
Cleft Care



# 5 Highlights from 2021

## 1 Planting a New Mission & Vision

Growing through partnership and innovation!  
See our new mission and vision on p.3.

## 2 Growing CCC in Madagascar

We welcomed a new cleft team, formed at Clinique Santé Plus in Antsirabe. Led by Dr. Nirina Mandrano, they are working with TF to grow Madagascar's first Comprehensive Cleft Care centre.

## 3 Diversifying Care Through Telehealth

As the pandemic ground on, our partners innovated! Telehealthcare encouraged parents worldwide to actively support their children's treatments, enabled cross-border care between Thailand, Myanmar & Laos and limited rural families' COVID-19 exposure in India.

## 4 Enhancing Partner Collaboration

As a founding sponsor of the Circle of Cleft Professionals (CoCP), TF partners have been very engaged in the CoCP network - collaborating and sharing knowledge globally to enhance patient outcomes.

## 5 Expanding Bright Start Monthly Giving to Uganda

TF's partner CoRSU, based in Uganda, is now a part of our Bright Start monthly giving program. Read why Bright Start member Suzy Wilcox chooses to donate on p.11.

# Why is Comprehensive Cleft Care (CCC) our rallying cry?

Children born with cleft lip and palate deserve support at every step of their journey to a full life at home, at school, and in the community. This comprehensive care starts at the moment a family learns of their child's condition.

CCC is mobilized through a team of trusted local health professionals with community support. And it is sustained through a child's critical milestones – starting to feed, surgical repairs, learning to speak, oral health supports, and charting a hopeful future in the community.



## MISSION

We partner locally and innovate globally so that children and families in under-resourced communities access Comprehensive Cleft Care.



## VISION

Our vision is for all children affected by cleft lip and palate to experience full rehabilitation and community inclusion with the support of a trusted local health team.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Play it safe in uncertain times, or risk redoubling our efforts to grow? Inspired by the passion of our partners worldwide, Transforming Faces dug deep and stretched out!

In Madagascar, we're proud of the burgeoning growth of the first Comprehensive Cleft Care team in the nation (p. 5). In Latin America, our partners have been pandemic pioneers in bringing speech therapy and counselling inside homes through telehealth (p. 9). In India, we've been thrilled by the resilience of our partners in rebounding from each virus wave (p.11).

Globally, an innovative mentorship program helped young speech therapists gain skills and confidence. Through the Solutions for Comprehensive Cleft Care virtual conference, local cleft professionals demonstrated their innovation and insight in moving care beyond the limitations of COVID.

We're grateful to report that this progress helped us welcome new supporters to the TF Network in the past year (p. 5), even as we kept non-program costs well-pruned.

While disease, war, and instability are burdens that our partners disproportionately bear, we remain committed to seeing CCC flourish – inspired by the stories of children and families – like Bernard and Yaw Han. We are grateful to count you as a nourishing root in this important work.



**Hugh Brewster**

Executive Director

[hugh@transformingfaces.org](mailto:hugh@transformingfaces.org)

# Our Impact in 2021

## Cleft Treatments\*



**33,737**

Treatments in 2021

**393,976**

Treatments Since 1999

## Impact of Your Gift



**\$348**

Average Cost per Patient in 2021 (↑ 3.9%)

↑ As a result of added COVID-19 expenses

## Children Supported



**1,537**

New Patients in 2021 (↑ 22%)

**7**

Average Age of Patients in 2021

**4,811**

Families Helped in 2021 (↑ 27%)

↑ Increased community outreach during the pandemic

*\*A cleft treatment includes any element of rehabilitative care such as counselling, speech therapy, surgery, orthodontics, dental care and nutritional support.*



## WHAT OUR PARTNERS ARE SAYING



"I am very appreciative of new innovations to expand linkages with different experts and to improve our CCC processes. These efforts support our local initiatives, strengthen and develop the skills of our cleft team. I have enjoyed a long working partnership with TF Board and staff members."

– Ms. Phanomwan Yoodee, CCC Team Leader at Northern Women's Development Foundation (Thailand), TF Partner since 2000.

"We had excellent cooperation and support from Transforming Faces through the difficult times because of the COVID-19 pandemic. TF was in full support in bringing and implementing innovative ideas."

– Dr. Mekonen Eshete, CCC Team Leader at Yekatit 12 Hospital (Ethiopia). TF Partner since 2007.

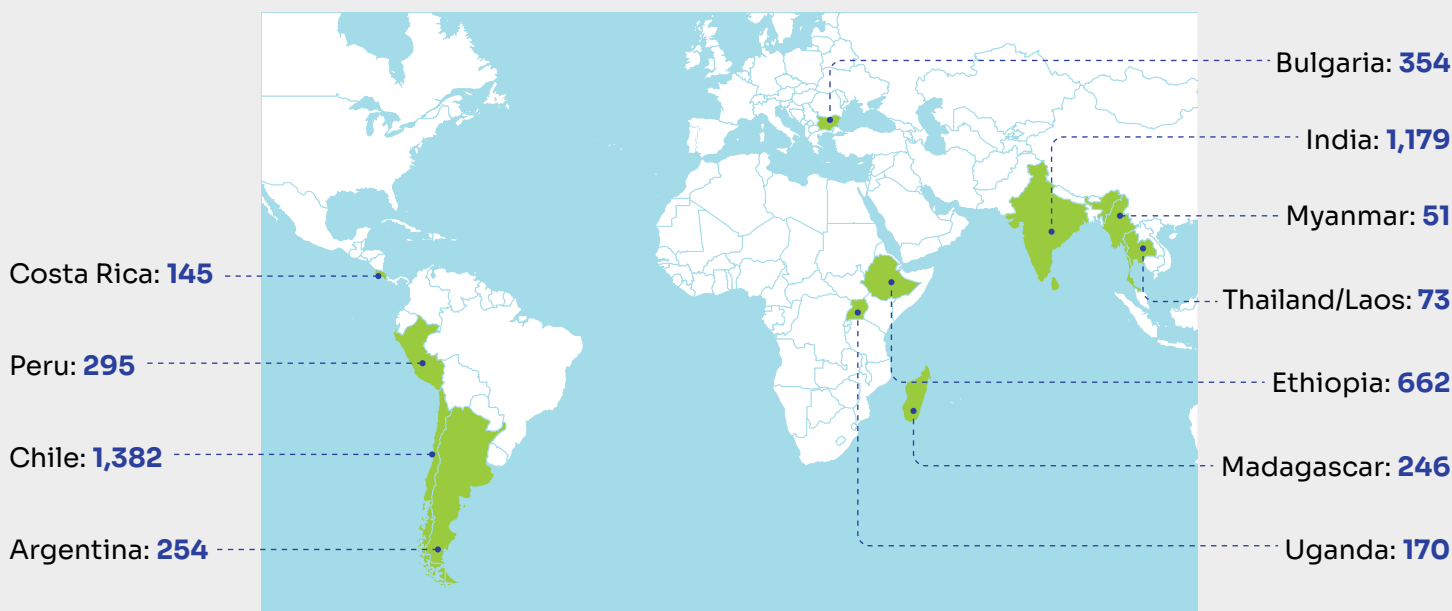




# Rooting Comprehensive Cleft Care Locally & Branching Out

Thanks to your support, TF equips local cleft care teams in under-resourced communities to provide comprehensive and long-term rehabilitation for children born with cleft lip and palate. Globally, we continue to branch out through initiatives such as the Circle of Cleft Professionals (CoCP), extending our impact worldwide.

## FAMILIES THAT RECEIVED CARE IN 2021



## GROWING COMPREHENSIVE CLEFT CARE IN **Madagascar**



### Born with a Cleft in Madagascar

This island nation is known for diverse terrain, unique wildlife and a mainly rural population facing the impacts of climate change. Smaller cities such as Antsirabe, where TF's partner Clinique Santé Plus is based, serve as hubs for health services.

In Madagascar, an estimated 450 children a year are born with cleft. Many families report stigmatization and social isolation as a result of unhelpful community beliefs about cleft.

### Going Beyond the Mission Model

In Madagascar, there are no local training programs for cleft surgery.

*Continued →*

Aspiring medical professionals seek training overseas, but many are reluctant to return to centres where medical infrastructure is lacking.

Without adequate government funding for cleft care, families must rely upon volunteers who visit from abroad. The pandemic halted global travel – cancelling missions and indefinitely delaying care to families in Madagascar. Dially's story illustrates this reality – a boy born with cleft lip and palate to a mother who herself never experienced the benefits of Comprehensive Cleft Care.

Dr. Nirina Adrien Mandrano of Santé Plus trained abroad, but returned with a clear vision for pioneering Comprehensive Cleft Care with Malagasy people. He knew that CCC on a local

scale was the best solution to sustainably reaching children and families affected by cleft in Madagascar.

### **A Successful Pilot Project Turned Partnership**

Santé Plus' progress thus far has exceeded everyone's expectations. Going forward, additional transportation and accommodation support for rural families, and pioneering speech support, will ensure more children receive timely and effective care.



## **IMPACT STORY** **Changing Treatment Outcomes in Madagascar: Meet Dially**



Dially's parents looked forward with anticipation to expanding their family of four. In July 2020, in a small community near Antsirabe, their son Dially arrived.

Dially was born with a cleft lip and palate. His mother, Josephine, was not totally surprised since cleft has a genetic component and she herself was born with a cleft lip. Though her lip had been repaired by a visiting surgeon, she knew the challenges of insufficient local support and the stigma her son could face in the community. To this day, Josephine reports that her speech is difficult for some to understand. She yearns for her son to be able to speak clearly and confidently, living a full life.

Josephine was delighted to discover that TF's partner Santé Plus was the very first to recently begin offering Comprehensive Cleft Care (CCC) to Malagasy families.

Now 18-months-old, Dially has received his first surgery. The family has also attended 9 sessions focusing on dental hygiene and psychosocial counselling. TF and Santé Plus are confident that by the time Dially is ready for school, he will be among the first to receive locally provided speech therapy. From her initial meeting with Dr. Nirina, Santé Plus' CCC leader and surgeon, she has trusted that her son is on track to experience full rehabilitation.

# Africa



## TERRAIN

Local public health restrictions have necessitated virtual care for children and families, yet access to an appropriate device and a stable network is limited. The cost of transportation has also increased significantly.



## DEEPENING ROOTS

Orthodontic treatment and speech therapy were the most disrupted services in the region due to their face-to-face nature. The resumption of these services allowed TF to deepen its roots with partners.



## BRANCHING OUT

This year, TF welcomed a new partner in Madagascar - a country previously reliant on the mission-based model of care. We supported our new partner in building and funding a strategy for offering CCC services locally.

## IMPACT STORY

# A Mother Turns to Hope for the Future



Bernard's mother Halima felt peace of mind knowing her previous three pregnancies and deliveries went exactly to plan. With Bernard's birth, immense sorrow came crashing all around.

Like her son, Halima was born with a cleft lip and palate. She endured a childhood of stigmatization and isolation, especially since she could not access surgery until she was 20 years old. But Halima was determined to provide a better future for her son.

Thankfully, options for cleft care in Uganda have expanded since Halima's childhood. At 3-weeks-old, Bernard visited CoRSU Hospital with his mother for an assessment with Dr. George Galiwango and the cleft team. First order of business? Ensure that Bernard was on track to gain weight in preparation for this surgery. Next? Halima worked with the social work team to grow in confidence in addressing the stigma that surrounds cleft in her community, and to which Halima was painfully well-acquainted.

Of her experience with CoRSU, Halima reports that, "I was excited to meet a hospitable team. I had hope that Bernard would not undergo the same agony of stigmatization as when I grew up. I thank the Transforming Faces donors!"



# Asia



## TERRAIN

In Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar, pandemic-related international border closures continue to limit care. In rural communities of India, many families avoid travel to urban areas as a result of COVID-19 risks. Increased access to telehealth has helped address some of these concerns.



## DEEPENING ROOTS

Virtual care has overcome many pandemic disruptions. Less travel time has increased the frequency in which families access services like speech therapy. Our partners have deepened their roots in schools and health centres where they are emphasizing community awareness of CCC.



## BRANCHING OUT

Our partners continue to increase their CCC expertise and improve long-term patient follow-up. We have seen a 40% increase in the number of patients supported in India.

## IMPACT STORY

# Care Over Closed Borders: Thailand & Myanmar

Yaw Han was born in June of 2021 in a small village located in the Mong Hsat area of Myanmar – near the border with Thailand. He was born suffering from the effects of malnutrition, weighing only 5.3 pounds. It was crucial that Yaw Han gain weight steadily in hope of being eligible for safe surgery.

TF's partner, Northern Women's Development Foundation (NWDF), based in Chiang Rai, Thailand admitted Yaw Han into their program in September of 2021. They faced a key pandemic hurdle: the border between Thailand and Myanmar has remained closed in a region where cross-border support is the norm.

Fortunately, Ms. Phyo Yu Hlaing, a local Red Cross member was willing to help. Despite a 67 kilometre journey on a motorcycle, she made regular visits to the family. She transported Yaw Han to the nearest town when hospital support was required. Ms. Phyo even trained Yaw Han's older sister in cleft nutrition so that she could assist in properly feeding him.

In just a few months, Yaw Han reached a healthier weight of 11 pounds and his path to further treatment is clear.





# Latin America



## TERRAIN

The pandemic has continued to cause delays in healthcare services including cleft surgeries and oral health care. For low-income families, telehealth is often not accessible as many homes do not have internet access. Moreover, caregivers may face technological challenges.



## DEEPENING ROOTS

TF Partners have found that telehealth speech therapy increases parental involvement in their child's sessions. Eliminating transportation time has also inspired more dedication among families in seeing through their child's long-term health plans.



## BRANCHING OUT

New projects have focused our attention on the psychosocial needs of families. They report that they are now better equipped to address challenges such as low self-esteem, bullying and discrimination experienced by their children.

## ☙ IMPACT STORY

# Psychosocial Support in Costa Rica: Cleft & Beyond



\*Thiago is a two-year-old boy from the small town of Perez Zeledon, Costa Rica. Thiago lives with his parents and older brother, Simon. He was born with a cleft lip and palate causing him to have hearing and communication problems.

TF's partner in Costa Rica, Asociación LPH, has helped Thiago and his family look positively to the future.

When Mariana, Thiago's mother, learned through her regular checkups that her soon-arriving son would be born with a cleft she became immediately worried about what it would mean for his future. Mariana recalls, "I went to my first ultrasound with the anticipation that every mother has to see their baby for the first time. Then, the doctor told me he was going to be born with a condition... I left the office crying, thinking that this tiny baby would have to go through a lot during his life."

Thiago's father has struggled with substance abuse, a destabilizing force for the whole family. Through LPH's psychosocial support, they all can now see improvement despite the long journey toward Thiago's full rehabilitation!

Mariana is fully-invested in Thiago's treatment plan with the ultimate goal of Thiago living a happy life where he can communicate and be understood by everyone around him.

# 2021 Financial Statements

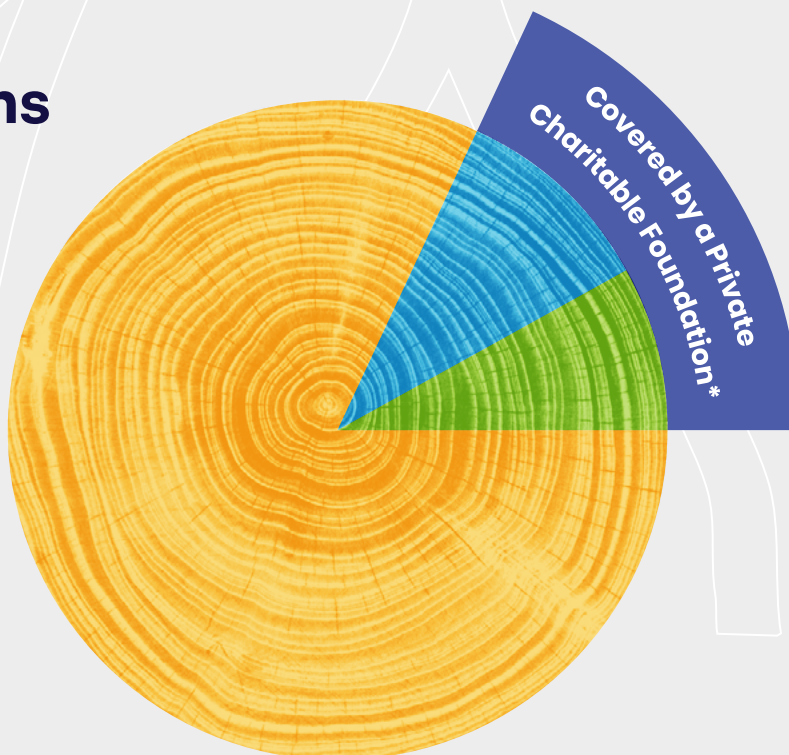
TF supporters have enabled us to work closely with our local partners in enhancing current initiatives and undertaking new ones to increase access to Comprehensive Cleft Care, globally.

REVENUE & EXPENSES	2021	2020
<b>Total Revenue</b>		
Grants, Donations & Other Income	\$1,604,118	\$1,597,738
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,541,921</b>	<b>\$1,638,381</b>
Cleft Care	\$807,786	\$953,857
Partner Medical Training & Capacity Building	\$455,947	\$432,634
Administration and Fundraising	\$278,188	\$251,890
<b>Excess of Revenue over Expenses</b>	<b>\$62,197</b>	<b>(\$40,643)</b>
NET ASSETS	2021	2020
Balance, Beginning of Year	\$344,055	\$384,697
<b>Excess (Deficiency), Revenue over Expenses</b>	<b>\$62,197</b>	<b>(\$40,643)</b>
<b>Balance, End of Year</b>	<b>\$406,252</b>	<b>\$344,055</b>

## Your Donations at Work

- 82% Programs
- 10% Admin
- 8% Fundraising

*\*This allows us to allocate 100% of donations to support programs where local partners provide life-changing care*



# Q&A with Suzy Wilcox, a Bright Start Donor



## WHY IS CLEFT CARE IMPORTANT TO YOU?

I was born with a mild cleft lip that was easily treated with surgery. I never thought about my condition until high school, when a classmate with a noticeable cleft scar was teased and ostracized. I can only imagine the impact on her confidence and self-image.

## WHY SUPPORT TF?

TF understands that cleft lip and palate is a condition that is treatable and, with proper care and support, does not have to negatively influence the trajectory of a child's life. I invest in TF because of

its comprehensive approach to care. It is important to me that TF's work is done by local health professionals, versus a "fly in, fly out" approach.

## WHY DO YOU CHOOSE TO DONATE MONTHLY?

I give monthly to show I believe deeply in TF's work. The value of cleft surgery and comprehensive care is far greater than a few coffees and lunches out for me each month. I'd like to help TF care for as many children as possible!

### Are you interested in donating monthly?

Join Bright Start by visiting  
[transformingfaces.org/bright-2022/](https://transformingfaces.org/bright-2022/)



Now 3 years old, Afra is making strides through speech therapy. Read her unique story here ↓





# Our Gratitude

Thank you for helping children in under-resourced communities to access Comprehensive Cleft Care from local, trusted health care providers.



## LEADERSHIP

### Board of Directors

Jackie Elton (Chair & Co-founder)  
Dr. Michel Grupper  
Cindy Guernsey  
Rev. Dr. Nan Hudson  
Jill Martin  
Elsa Tesfay  
Dr. Ronald Zuker

## Medical Advisory Committee

Dr. Tim Bressmann  
Cindy Guernsey  
Farah Sheikh  
Dr. Bryan Tompson  
Dr. Karen Wong

## Engagement Committee

Christian Parsons  
Sanjil Shah  
Suzy Wilcox

## International Strategic Partners

Akila Bharatha Mahila Seva  
Samaja (ABMSS)  
Deutsche Cleft Kinderhilfe (DCKH)  
Operation Smile  
Smile Train  
The Circle of Cleft Professionals (CoCP)  
World Cleft Coalition (WCC)



View our interactive impact report and support our programs here →



Charitable Registration: 86720 4034 RR0001

All photos are courtesy of TF Staff, Volunteers and Partners.  
Edited by K. Wykes

### Transforming Faces

637 College St, Suite 203  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6G 1B5  
T: 416-222-6581  
E: [info@transformingfaces.org](mailto:info@transformingfaces.org)

@TransformingFaces

@TransformFaces

[www.transformingfaces.org](http://www.transformingfaces.org)