

## DORCAS THE UNSTOPPABLE

Dorcas who first arrived at Upendo (love) and Tumaini (Hope) Children's Cancer Wards after a journey of over a thousand kilometres. She arrived with huge swellings around her neck and chest making it difficult for her to breathe. We quickly diagnosed her with acute leukaemia thanks to our friends in the lab in Muhimbili National Hospital, Dar es Salaam and in CHI Crumlin, in Dublin.

She started her chemotherapy, (provided free of charge by TLM) and slowly responded. One morning on the ward round she was sitting up smiling and her tumours were considerably smaller – she was finally breathing a little easier and so were we! But too soon.....

That same day she suddenly developed a high fever and collapsed into a state of generalised convulsion. Despite our best efforts, her seizures continued so we took her to the Intensive Care unit that TLM built thanks to our generous donors. Still, her seizures continued. Eventually, she was ventilated and given a general anaesthetic. Tests indicated that she had developed cerebral malaria, and she continued to seize non-stop for a full 48 hours before finally we managed to control her symptoms. We all feared the worst – even if she survived how could her poor brain survive such a terrible event?

Well – within 2 days of her seizures stopping she was returned to our wards. Poor Dorcas was so weak lying flat in the bed that we were not sure she could still move all her limbs. But she was awake and her convulsions had stopped .....which was a start. That very same day, Dr Trish asked her to do one thing - an 'exercise' – to sit up in the bed or if possible to try to sit at the side of the bed. Trish turned to the next patient to assess them and when she looked back – there Dorcas was, immediately sitting straight up at the side of the bed with her lovely mum supporting her with a big smile on her face.

That's when we all knew she'd be just fine. She still has a long road to go with her cancer treatment but we hope you can see **how much your support has impacted her care so far.**

With her incredible spirit and your support, we are really hopeful for her future. Thank you!

Monthly donations are the backbone of our mission to provide free and curative cancer treatment for children in Tanzania. These donations combine to provide enough chemotherapy, consumable and medical staff and simply put, **hope for children like Dorcas who present to us in life-threatening states.**

