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STORIES FROM
**WEST
AFRICA**



Two years after her surgery, Marie Madeleine is walking better than she had in years!

Most Likely to Succeed

Marie Madeleine loves school. She believes with a good education, she will be able to accomplish her dreams, and she refuses to let her condition slow her down.

When she was a child, Marie Madeleine developed an abnormally tight muscle contracture in her leg. As she continued to grow, her knee hyperextended backward, leaving her with a severe limp when she walked. Despite this difficulty, Marie Madeleine continued making the short journey to school, where she was determined to learn. Eventually though, Adama believed that her granddaughter's condition would have held her back from reaching her full potential.

"We couldn't afford surgery, so we waited for a miracle," she said.

That miracle arrived in the form of the *Africa Mercy* arriving in the Port of Dakar, about 100 miles from their home. After a successful surgery onboard, Marie Madeleine was ready to begin rehabilitation.

Marie Madeleine had the end in sight and, eager to get back to school, she persevered through several hours of rehab a week to restore mobility and improve her leg's strength.

Several months after her arrival at the *Africa Mercy*, the bright 13-year-old girl with the triumphant smile and straight legs was ready to go home and back to school!

With her determined spirit, Marie Madeleine has already succeeded. Her *Mercy Ships* journey may be finished, but she has the rest of her life ahead!

Two years after her surgery, she's walking better than she had in years! Many things have changed in this bright 14-year-old's life, but one thing has remained the same – she still loves to learn!

"She is going to school and she says she wants to be a doctor!" says Marie Madeleine's mother. "She wants to help people back like she was helped."



Marie Madeleine before surgery.