

Serving
with



STORIES FROM
**WEST
AFRICA**



"If I hadn't had this operation, I don't know what would have happened to me. I'm grateful because it is by the grace of God that I am here."

A Bright Light for Mabouba

Mabouba was finishing up her junior year of high school with plans to become a midwife. Then the facial tumor appeared, and everything changed. For the next six years, Mabouba remained at home.

By 2014, her tumor had grown so much that it began to block Mabouba's esophagus and windpipe. All the while, Mabouba's family searched for help. They gathered what money they could and sent Mabouba to Ghana for surgery, but something went wrong and she almost died.

With the precious money gone and her health in shards, Mabouba returned home. "Those days my mind was preoccupied with the tumor," she recounted. "I could think of little else."

Finally, in 2016, Mabouba's father received word the *Africa Mercy* would be returning to Benin and Mabouba would be seen.

But the trial wasn't over. Tests revealed that the tumor would soon starve her to death, and it would be extraordinarily difficult to remove. The morning of surgery, the entire *Africa Mercy* crew was asked to intercede for a patient undergoing a difficult surgery. For nine long hours, there was prayer all over the ship.

As evening approached, Mabouba was finally wheeled out of the operating theater. Miracle of all miracles, her tumor was gone.

Five Years Later

It has been five years since Mabouba came onboard the *Africa Mercy*. They've been eventful years for her. Shortly after her surgery, Mabouba experienced another miracle in her life – a baby daughter. She hadn't thought she would live long enough to have a family, but now she could celebrate being a mother. Her young daughter is now the brightest spark in Mabouba's life. Her name is Moustassira... bright light.



Mabouba before surgery.