



Your chance to transform lives.

Message from Chair

We need your help! The vulnerable Cleft suffering children of Bangladesh need our continuing support more than ever.

The impact of Covid-19 across Bangladesh and for the millions of poor impoverished families is catastrophic. As you know these are the families we work with, where our Cleft suffering children are found and need our help. The lockdown imposed from early March has been devastating. For example, the closing down of all public transport has left more than 7 million low paid (often paid daily) transport workers destitute without food or money. The daily infection and death rate are growing steeply. But worryingly, just 393 Covid-19 tests per million people have been undertaken as of today, May 1st, compared to Australia's test rate of 22,800 per million population. The Operation Cleft surgery program along with all other non-urgent surgery has been suspended since early March.

Our surgeons are busy assisting their colleagues handle the serious public health issues arising from the pandemic.

Why we need your on-going support? Since July 1st Cleft Bangladesh (OCA and our partner) have completed, up until the virus struck, just under 1,300 free Cleft surgeries. This 19/20 year is one of our most successful beginnings in our 15-year history in Bangladesh. The challenge for us is that every day 14 more children are born with a congenital Cleft lip and/or palate issue, and therefore every day without remedial Cleft surgeries the number of untreated Clefts grows sharply.

The WHO and our many local medical experts tell us that the virus curve will flatten, and with the help of a vaccine and/or treatment begin to dissipate. We at Operation Cleft Australia must be ready and organized to take up the challenge on what we know will be an even bigger need than we have ever faced before.

With your partnership and faithful support, we have accomplished in 15 years more than 13,000 life changing free surgeries, providing hope and a future for the poor and disadvantaged children and their families of Bangladesh. These are unprecedented tough and challenging times, new to us all. Together we have been able to see Children's lives transformed; confident to go to school, learn and appreciate the value and opportunities of education, feel and enjoy social acceptance within their extended family/community and to happily SMILE.

Thank you so much for your part in continuing to make the 'Gift of a Smile' possible. Enjoy the stories and news in this Winter Newsletter edition.



Thank you
Bruce McEwen
Chair.

Let's e-meet!

We have had great response to our request to e-meet you and share our Operation Cleft Australia story via online platforms. Please let us know if we can join in your next Zoom/Skype club or corporate meeting to give a few minutes virtual presentation during the lockdown stage. Please email your interest to info@operationcleft.org.au or call anytime on 03 9877 9717.



Please make your kind tax-deductable donation before End of Financial Year!

Smiles and futures of these two little cheeky boys are now bright thanks to you.



Niloy Bormon's Story

Niloy Bormon was born in a remote village of Tangail district, about 100 km from the capital city Dhaka. His parents were very sad to see a cleft lip deformity in their child. They had to listen to and endure a lot of negative remarks from their family members and also the neighbours. They did not know what to do. But when they came to know about the free surgical services that are provided in our centre, they brought Niloy to us. We explained the situation to them and operated on the baby.

After the surgery they were extremely happy to see the immediate result. On going back to their village, they called us to let us know that all their family members and neighbours are also very happy to see Niloy's birth defect corrected.

Niloy's life-changing journey...



Akib Hossain's Story

Akib is a 7 years old boy who was born with cleft lip and palate. Luckily, his parents heard about our Cleft Centre and Akib's lip was operated when he was 3 months old. A couple of months later, his palate was operated too. His mother was blamed for his deformity because people in his village which is nearby Chittagong still believe in the myths of solar eclipse. Now the family knows that the cleft of Akib wasn't the personal fault of anyone. With the age of three years Akib's another heavy blow of fate happened.

Accidentally Akib put pasted chalk (Hydrated Lime/Calcium Hydroxide) into his left eye and afterwards lost his visual capacity on his left eye. With the age of 7 years, Akib needs a Maxillofacial surgery as well. His parents are very happy about the free treatment they receive. As a daily labour with a monthly income of only 8000 Taka it won't be possible for the family to pay the treatment. Due to the early treatment, Akib could live nearly a normal life. He is visiting the first class with the other children from his village. Only his voice sounds nasal and proves how important comprehensive care of cleft is.

The goal of Cleft Bangladesh is to be able to offer children like Akib speech therapy to give them the chance to live without any impairment.



Generous support received from Abbott Australia

A very kind staff member from Abbot Australia; Jacqui Hodgkinson convinced her colleagues and work to choose OCA as the chosen charity to support during their Melbourne Cup weekend gathering.

The generous bunch at Abbott Australia raised over \$15,000 to provide free cleft operations to poor children in Bangladesh!

We would like to express our gratitude to all who contributed!



Thanks to our Media Supporters

We were fortunate enough to be given the opportunity to share our OCA story with The Senior newspaper in November last year and The Leader (City of Whitehorse) early February this year.



Leave a Lasting Legacy

“Operation Cleft” has changed the lives of more than 14,000 children in Bangladesh since it started in 2005. By providing these children with the opportunity to have the cleft repair surgery they need, we are not just giving them a smile, we are giving them a happy future.

Leaving a bequest is an extraordinary act of generosity and kindness. By remembering “Operation Cleft” in your will, you are contributing to Operation Cleft’s vision for the poor and underprivileged in Bangladesh born with cleft defects – gifting them a “Smile for Life.”

A truly incredible act, a bequest to “Operation Cleft” is a gift that gives a life-changing opportunity and helps Rotary’s work live on. We very much appreciate your thinking about us for a potential bequest for more information correct words to use or if you would like to discuss any aspect of leaving a bequest to “Operation Cleft” and how much it will help our project, please contact our office on 03 9877 9717 or send us an email to info@operationcleft.org.au.

Thanks for considering this very special investment, this is much appreciated.

For \$25 per month for a year, you can provide a free cleft lip /palate operation to an underprivileged child in Bangladesh. AUD \$300 is all that it costs to transform a life and give a chance for a better future!



SNAP SHOTS



14,252

Total of free operations achieved to date.

AUD\$300

Operation Cost maintained for five consecutive years despite a 5% inflation rate.

70%

Funds from Individuals, Schools, Private Sector and Trusts for 2019-20 Financial Year.

30%

Support from Rotary Clubs for 2019-20 Financial Year.

Celebrating a Birthday in lockdown?

Birthdays are a special days for the families. These special days also remind us how blessed and thankful we are. It gives us an opportunity to reflect on the people who are less fortunate than us. So we would want to do something for them on our special day.

To transform a child's life and give them a future only costs AUD\$300. Birthdays are great moments to 'Gift a Smile for Life' to a disadvantaged child, that without this corrective surgery, he/she will live their whole life being disadvantaged.

Would you like to raise funds for an Cleft corrective operation in lieu of birthday gifts? Or would you like to donate on behalf of someone celebrating a birthday?



If so, please fill the form below or visit our donation page at www.operationcleft.org.au/donate-now/

Also inform us the name and address of the person who is celebrating to info@operationcleft.org.au so we can send a Gift Certificate.

All donations no matter how small will help us towards our target of 1,500 cleft operations a year!

You can send a donation directly to our bank account or complete and send the following form in the enclosed reply envelope.

IMPORTANT Please add your name as reference and e-mail your name and address to info@operationcleft.org.au so that we can provide you with a tax receipt.



"Gift a smile for life"

I wish to be a Smile Donor

An international humanitarian project of the Rotary Club of Box Hill Central Inc District 9810 Australia



Winter NL 2020

Donate safely online at www.operationcleft.org.au

OR complete the following and post it to **Operation Cleft Australia, PO Box 631, Box Hill VIC 3128**

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible

I wish to donate by Cheque EFT to BSB 633 000 **Account No** 165 147 935 **Account Name:** Operation Cleft
 Credit Card Please debit my Visa MasterCard

For a one off donation of \$_____ OR monthly payment of \$_____ which I can cancel at any time

Card Number:

Donor's Name _____

Address _____ State _____ POSTCODE _____

Email _____ Contact Number _____ Signature _____

Operation Cleft Australia Foundation (ABN 36 063 471 446)

PO Box 631, Box Hill VIC 3128 T: +613 9877 9117 E: info@operationcleft.org.au

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Operation Cleft Australia is a Public Ancillary Fund with DGR status. Deductions of \$2 or more are tax-deductible in Australia.