

# 2015

ANNUAL REPORT



## Free Wheelchair Mission

is a humanitarian, faith-based, nonprofit organization that provides wheelchairs at no cost to people with disabilities living in developing nations. In collaboration with a network of like-minded partners, FWM has been providing wheelchairs to those in need around the world since 2001, offering dignity, independence and hope through the gift of mobility.

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## A MESSAGE FROM DON

Dear Friends of Free Wheelchair Mission,

As Mark Twain once said, “kindness is a language the deaf can hear and the blind can see,” or in our case, kindness is the love of Christ through the gift of mobility. I’m thrilled by the opportunities that 2015 presented for Free Wheelchair Mission to impact thousands of lives all over the world, lifting those who lost all hope from the ashes of disability. We finished the year strong, distributing more than 68,715 wheelchairs, putting FWM on track to distribute one million chairs by the end of 2017.

We value innovation, and over the last year, we’ve continued to expand both our reach and technology as a leading provider of mobility in developing nations. In 2015, we were able to complete the field testing and implemented the global rollout strategy for the GEN\_3 wheelchair.

Another new development was our Skin Protection Cushion (SPC). The SPC is designed for wheelchair recipients who are at risk of developing life threatening pressure sores. We’ve been perfecting the SPC and have now begun field testing with a plan that at least 15% of our chairs will include these cushions for those that need it most. Finally, FWM has developed a strategic relationship with ISWP, International Society for Wheelchair Providers.

The gift of mobility often comes in the form of a wheelchair, but we continue to expand our supply of other mobility aids. It started with canes, crutches and walkers. These past two years we started supplying surgical supplies focused on mobility. Through collaboration with our distribution partners and local orthopedic hospitals, surgeries were performed on more than fifty recipients who now have normal or close to normal mobility after receiving a surgery they previously could not afford. We are very excited about the new dimension of restoring mobility.

*One surgery beneficiary was Bling Thi Aver. She was born with clubfoot in the mountainous area of Quang Nam, Vietnam, and surgery was financially impossible for her family; so she grew up with one foot inverted behind her.*

*Our partners arranged for surgeons to use FWM-donated medical supplies to surgically correct Bling Thi Aver’s clubfoot. Now at 16 years old she can walk without pain! As she shared, “my feet are good and I am very thankful to the doctors and donors’ help that brought me a new future. I can walk and do everything I like.”*

I count it an honor to align myself, my family and my resources with our mission to serve those without mobility. Together, as FWM staff, financial supporters and volunteers, we continue to show God’s love through the gift of mobility. Your contribution to our mission is beyond measure to our recipients and magnified again as they hear that God loves them, and our gift of mobility is from Him.

*Don Schoendorfer*

Don Schoendorfer  
Founder



## NEED & VISION

BECAUSE NO ONE SHOULD HAVE TO CRAWL

### THE NEED IS GREAT

The need for wheelchairs in our world is staggering. In developing nations where poverty pervades, it is estimated that 100 million people are in dire need of a wheelchair yet lack the resources to obtain one. Already suffering from the pain, isolation and indignity of a physical disability, many must endure further burdens. Many are forced to live on the ground or must wait to be carried to meet their most basic needs.



### THE SOLUTION IS SIMPLE

Our wheelchairs are simple, cost-effective and highly functional. They are designed to be resilient enough to withstand regular use in rugged terrain more common in the developing world. Our wheelchair design and provisioning model allow us to maximize our impact around the globe, striving toward our goal of providing the transforming gift of mobility to as many people as possible while still maintaining a high standard of excellence. We partner with like-minded organizations to reach some of the most remote regions on the planet.



### YOUR IMPACT

Wheelchairs provide mobility, and mobility changes everything. Mobility means independence, the ability to participate in society and earn a living. It means dignity, leaving behind the days of living on the ground and being an outcast. Get involved and help us achieve our goal of distributing 1 million chairs by the end of 2017, while bringing transformation that opens doors to education, the local church, employment opportunities and community.



# STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

## 2015 OUTCOMES

Since its inception in 2001, Free Wheelchair Mission has continued to grow year after year, endeavoring toward our mission of “providing the transforming gift of mobility to people with disabilities in developing nations as motivated by Jesus Christ.”

During fiscal year 2015, we have focused our resources toward organizational growth in three main areas:

### INNOVATION

#### GEN\_3 wheelchair field testing completed and global roll-out strategy implemented

In alignment with our core value of “innovating to provide transformative mobility solutions,” we are proud to share an update on our GEN\_3 wheelchair design. This fiscal year we implemented and completed field testing in Peru, Uganda and Vietnam. Feedback from our manufacturers, distribution partners and recipients regarding their experiences with these test containers have given us invaluable information that we used to develop and implement the global roll-out strategy for the GEN\_3.

#### Preliminary Skin Protection Cushion field testing initiated

Another exciting new development in 2015 was the new Skin Protection Cushion (SPC). The SPC is designed for wheelchair recipients who are at risk of developing life threatening pressure sores. We’ve been perfecting the SPC and have now begun field testing with a plan that at least 15% of our chairs will include these cushions for those that need it most.

### INTERNATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

One of Free Wheelchair Mission’s strategic priorities is to strengthen our distribution partner network by providing ongoing training to help them continue to improve in both efficiency and effectiveness. Our partners receive instruction on wheelchair assembly, maintenance and fitting, as well as identifying the various causes and manifestations of disability. Additionally, participants receive training on wheelchair use, transfers, exercises and proper pressure relief techniques. FWM has developed a five-day course with classroom and hands-on-training. To ensure the fulfillment of our mission, our top three primary training goals are appropriate assembly, wheelchair prescription and user training.

### INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF WHEELCHAIR PROFESSIONALS

The International Society of Wheelchair Professionals’ (ISWP) launched in February 2015 to professionalize wheelchair services worldwide. The organization was formed because most people around the world who require wheelchairs for mobility lack access to appropriate wheelchairs or services to repair them. Free Wheelchair Mission’s Founder & President, Don Schoendorfer, is an inaugural member of the ISWP Advisory Board and also serves on the Standards Working Group and the Advocacy Working Group developing training materials, knowledge and skills tests to evaluate service providers and product standards for individuals and organizations working in less-resourced countries.



# STORY FROM THE FIELD

## EMPLOYMENT & FINANCES

Mohamed arrived at the distribution point in Somaliland on his hands and knees. Leather kneepads and wooden blocks made it possible for him to get around on his own, but even that independence was exhausting. In his pocket was a doctor’s certificate verifying his disability—it was his ticket to receiving a wheelchair.

Born after the fall of the government in 1991, Mohamed was a healthy baby, but he was one of the countless Somali children who didn’t receive standard vaccinations. At the age of two Mohamed’s parents learned he had contracted polio, and he ultimately lost the use of his legs.

Now 23 years old, Mohamed is excited to regain some control over his future. Despite the stigma attached to disability in his country, Mohamed hopes to use his increased mobility to find a job and help ease the financial burden his family bears. With his GEN\_2 wheelchair and bolstered confidence, he is ready to enter the workforce.



# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

FISCAL YEAR 2015



- PARTNER TRAINING IN FY 2015
- VISION TRIPS IN FY 2015
- POINT OF MANUFACTURE
- TRANSFORMATION INVESTIGATION

- REGIONAL LOCATIONS
- FREE WHEELCHAIR MISSION HEADQUARTERS

- WHEELCHAIRS SHIPPED TO DATE
- 550-4,999
  - 5,000-9,999
  - 10,000+

WHEELCHAIRS DELIVERED:  
894,371

TOTAL COUNTRIES  
91

- TOP 5 COUNTRIES SERVED:
1. VIETNAM
  2. INDIA
  3. CHINA
  4. PERU
  5. PHILIPPINES

# TRANSFORMATION INVESTIGATION

## FOLLOWING A WHEELCHAIR'S TRAIL OF IMPACT

In 2013 we introduced you to our Transformation Investigation, a longitudinal study of 600 wheelchair participants in three countries, across three continents: Peru (South America), Uganda (Africa) and Vietnam (Asia). At the halfway mark, Survey 3 concluded with 404 clients due to deaths, failure to show up for a wheelchair, moving and a variety of other unpredicted circumstances. The purpose of this project is twofold: to quantify the impact receiving a FWM wheelchair has on the life of a recipient and to collect feedback on our wheelchair product and provisioning program for continued improvement.

The investigation data came from six surveys administered via in-person visits with each participant, once every six months over the three-year timeframe. Visits were conducted by a native college-educated analyst hired within each participating country. The questions and results of the surveys are categorized into the following eight areas of transformation: spiritual, educational, financial, social, physical health, mobility, psychological health and overall wheelchair durability.

We completed all six surveys in September 2015 and will have concluded initial data analysis by early 2016. Below are the preliminary findings from Survey 3:



### SPIRITUAL

Receiving a wheelchair positively changed some recipients' view about God. 99% believe it was a gift from God.



### EMPLOYMENT & FINANCES

Of those who are considered "employable", 53% said that having the wheelchair is partially or fully responsible for them having a job.



### PHYSICAL HEALTH

We saw a 70% drop in the number of days overall recipients spent in the hospital, leading to the conclusion that they access healthcare much more often instead of waiting until their health worsens.



### SOCIAL

We are seeing a very large improvement in the comfort levels our recipients experience in various social settings thanks to their wheelchairs: we found that comfort going out in public increased by 41%; comfort shopping increased by 58%; and comfort using public transportation increased 69%.



### EDUCATION

There are various reasons that can hinder educational pursuits in the developing world, however, of those 269 recipients who want to continue their education, 25 recipients (9.3%) have started attending school because of their wheelchair.



### PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH

We asked a series of questions pertaining to feelings of sadness, tiredness, self-value, importance, happiness, love. Survey 3 showed an 87% change in the positive direction of how recipients view themselves and their overall self-value.

# STORY FROM THE FIELD

## PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH

Evgeniy, a young Ukrainian soldier, was injured in recent fighting. His lower body was paralyzed, and it looked like only a miracle could help him. Evgeniy and his fiancée, Svetlana, decided they still wanted to get married, but his immobility made even a simple wedding ceremony impossible. They searched for a basic wheelchair but couldn't find anything they could afford. Evgeniy remained bedridden.

Students from Mission Eurasia's School Without Walls (SWW) visited Evgeniy. As they shared with him about God's love, they realized his need for a wheelchair. On one visit they surprised him with a new GEN\_1 wheelchair. Evgeniy cried and laughed for joy when he received the wonderful gift of mobility.

A few weeks later, Evgeniy and Svetlana were married. Some SWW students attended the wedding and presented the couple with copies of the New Testament.

*Evgeniy shares, "For a long time after I was injured, I kept wishing I could walk again so I could get my old life back. When I realized this wasn't going to happen, I began to despair because I thought I would spend the rest of my life rotting in bed. I didn't want to live like that, so I started thinking about suicide. In those dark days, Christians visited me and gave me new hope. Two of my dreams have come true: I am mobile again, and I got married! I believe there is a God, and He still loves me."*



# FISCAL YEAR 2015 FINANCIALS

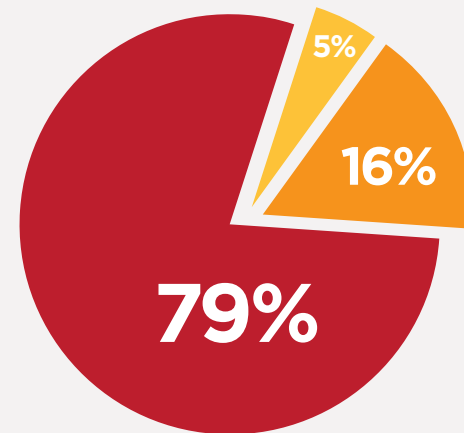
We strive to continually maximize our effectiveness as we deliver the gift of mobility, and thanks to donors and partners like you, 2015 was a strong year of growth.

NOTE: Fiscal Year 2015 reflects July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. Fiscal Year 2014 reflects July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014. There was a change in fiscal year for 2013; the 2013 numbers represent a fifteen-month period from April 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION			
Assets	2015	2014	2013
Total Current Assets	\$1,756,157	\$1,091,960	\$1,000,086
Other Assets	\$728,746	\$567,082	\$135,937
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$2,484,903</b>	<b>\$1,659,042</b>	<b>\$1,136,023</b>
Liabilities & Net Assets	2015	2014	2013
Total Current Liabilities	\$208,591	\$323,628	\$141,269
Deferred Liability	\$145,459	\$91,722	\$65,923
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$354,050</b>	<b>\$415,350</b>	<b>\$207,192</b>
Net Assets:			
Unrestricted/Undesignated	\$793,629	\$481,113	\$591,185
Temporarily Restricted	\$1,337,224	\$762,579	\$337,646
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$2,130,853</b>	<b>\$1,243,692</b>	<b>\$928,831</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$2,484,903</b>	<b>\$1,659,042</b>	<b>\$1,136,023</b>

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES			
Support & Revenue	2015	2014	2013
Contributions	\$7,152,693	\$7,060,225	\$6,602,273
Gift-in-Kind	\$3,251,469	\$1,107,144	\$1,117,990
Other Revenue	\$110,691	\$131,064	\$48,981
<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>	<b>\$10,514,853</b>	<b>\$8,298,433</b>	<b>\$7,769,244</b>
Expenses	2015	2014	2013
Program Services 80%	\$7,625,009	\$6,367,394	\$5,902,427
General and Administrative 6%	\$506,292	\$465,650	\$634,998
Fundraising 14%	\$1,496,391	\$1,150,528	\$1,453,931
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$9,627,692</b>	<b>\$7,983,572</b>	<b>\$7,991,356</b>
Net Assets	2015	2014	2013
Change in Net Assets	\$887,161	\$314,861	(\$222,112)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$1,243,692	\$928,831	\$1,150,943
<b>Net Assets, End of Year</b>	<b>\$2,130,853</b>	<b>\$1,243,692</b>	<b>\$928,831</b>

## Expense Allocation



- PROGRAM SERVICES
- FUNDRAISING
- GENERAL & ADMINISTRATIVE

As a result of our financial transparency and accountability efforts, we are proud to be recognized by the following charity rating organizations:



## STORY FROM THE FIELD EDUCATION

Many Zambians injured in traffic accidents don't receive adequate medical care. The burden is on the individual or family to find, receive and pay for treatment. It is common for broken limbs to never be properly set and result in permanent disabilities.

Following his accident Fwasa's injuries didn't heal correctly. He feared his leg would be amputated as is common for cases like his. But he is fortunate. Fwasa is recovering from knee and ankle surgery, and he's doing it in a GEN\_2 wheelchair. He was thrilled to get rid of his ill-fitting crutches and be able to keep the weight off his leg and still be mobile. Receiving a wheelchair to assist in his recovery was far beyond what he dreamed of when he arrived for surgery.

During his rehabilitation, Fwasa has also been able to resume his studies and has his sights set on completing his degree. The gift of mobility has provided more than a means to get around—it's provided new hope.

Research indicates attending public school is not free in most developing countries, but it also shows that every additional year of education a person receives in low-income countries can increase future income by an average of 10%. Getting children to school is a critical need we help meet when we provide mobility.



BECAUSE  
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