

From: Christopher & Nancy Zoolkoski <christopher.zoolkoski@sim.org>
Sent: Sunday, October 28, 2018 6:13 AM
Subject: Christopher & Nancy reporting from the front lines

October 2018

Team GALMI:
Fighting for life 24 hours a
day, 7 days a week



Dear Family & Friends,

Our short rainy season ended a month ago. During that time, the rains were plentiful and frequent, resulting in an abundant millet harvest which is happening now. We are thanking the Good Lord that the people of this region should have an adequate food supply for this next year.



In Niger, we must deal with the downsides of adequate rainfall, which include the water-borne illnesses like cholera and typhoid and the mosquito-carried illnesses like malaria. We are working a lot of 14 and 16-hour days to give attention to the hundreds of very sick people who come to Galmi Hospital daily. One of those who arrived today is 3 year old Mardiya. Her father brought her limp body to our pediatric clinic.

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Marie measures a STAT blood glucose level on one of our hundreds of patients today to tell us if hypoglycemia is a cause of his lethargy.

We rushed Mardiya to the lab to obtain the initial information needed to make treatment decisions. One of our gifted lab techs smeared a drop of her blood on a glass slide, stained it, looked at it through our microscope, and announced the high percentage of red blood cells invaded by malaria parasites. At the same time, another lab tech announced her blood type. A minute later, in another corner of the lab, it was found that her hematocrit was 6% . . . in other words, she was struggling to survive with only one sixth of the oxygen-carrying cells that healthy people have.

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We immediately injected her with the life-saving anti-malaria medication, Artemether, to halt further destruction of her remaining red cells. Her father gave us a quarter of a liter of his blood and we began transfusing her.

Tonight, her fever is going down and she has more color than she did a few hours ago. She will probably be one of the many survivors, thanks to this great team we are privileged to work with. Nevertheless, we are consoling far too many fathers and mothers who have to take their child's body home tied to the back of a motorcycle. Thank you giving us the privilege of being on the front lines of this winnable war. Jesus is being made known to hundreds daily who have never heard of Him before. Whether they return to their village with restored health or in grief, they are returning with hope that they never had before.

Gratefully serving with you,
Christopher & Nancy



Our lab tech, Abdourahamane, consoling a febrile child as he pricks his finger for the blood sample.



Our lab tech, Moussa, after spinning down the sample in our microcentrifuge to his right, measures the column of red blood cells in proportion to the total of plasma plus red cells.



This particular patient shows a hematocrit of 14% which is critically low but is over double what Mardiya's was.



Nouridine and Abdoul Salaam examining the slides. Our lab techs are experts at identifying malaria parasites, which can be hard to detect by the untrained eye.



Moussa taking a blood donation from a worried father whose child desperately needs it.



Mardiya, after her transfusion, together with her Mom and her little sister.



At the end of a long day, we have LOTS of reasons to be thankful

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Thank you for sharing our desire to bring healing and the Gospel of Jesus to the needy people of Niger.

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