



She's All Smiles 25-year old Akshita looks forward to a new world of opportunities in her new wheelchair.

New Doors Into India

In June 2017, we formed a vital new partnership with India Christian Ministries (ICM).

India has always been close to our hearts. It's where we gave away our first four wheelchairs in 2001, and since then, Free Wheelchair Mission has distributed nearly 100,000 wheelchairs throughout India.

With a population of 1.3 billion, India is one of the largest countries in the world. The needs are staggering: half of the world's orphans can be found here. Over 30 million children work for little or no wages, often in hazardous conditions. Intense, seasonal flooding wreaks havoc, breeding water-borne illnesses, and health care is beyond the reach of many.

ICM has been serving the people of India since 1997 with programs including clean water projects, education for at-risk children, orphanages, disaster relief, and medical outreach.

We look forward to this partnership with ICM.

FREE WHEELCHAIR MISSION

SUMMER 2017 UPDATE



One Million Wheelchairs, One Life at a Time

Greetings,

By God's grace, we recently celebrated the milestone distribution of our one-millionth wheelchair. While this is certainly a number that I'm awed and humbled by, I am more moved by the number one, for every single one of these wheelchairs represents a person who is created in the image of God and has hopes, dreams, loved ones, and needs, just like you and me.

Some of them were born with disabilities. Others lost mobility to accidents or illnesses. In many countries, those who are injured or sick do not have the resources for treatment or access to adequate healthcare. Disability places further economic strain on the family when a parent or other relative forfeits income opportunities in order to serve as a full-time caregiver.

Poverty is not only a cause of disability; it is also a consequence.

Living with a disability can also carry a stigma in many cultures around the world, further affecting one's chances of pursuing an education or employment. Over the years, I have seen people with disabilities confined to their beds, tucked away in dark rooms in the back of cramped homes, unable to do so much as get a drink of water without assistance. Hope may seem beyond the reach of those living under these circumstances.

But together, we can do something about it.

Poverty is not only a cause of **disability;** it is also a **consequence.**



God Transformed Lives Because You Gave



freewheelchairmission.org/provide

Go online 24 hours a day for easy one-time or monthly giving.



Send checks to:

Attn: Dept 921
Free Wheelchair Mission
PO Box 52001
Phoenix, AZ 85072-9615



949.273.8470

Call Monday to Friday
8:00am to 5:00pm PST

We Want to Hear From You! Connect with us online and hear more stories from the field.



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FreeWheelchairMission.org/blog



freewheelchairmission.org

Transforming lives through the gift of mobility™

SPECIAL DELIVERY

A team and I traveled to Ayacucho, Peru earlier this year to deliver a very special wheelchair to a very special little girl.

After a three-hour drive up a winding mountain road, we finally arrived at a village of 100 people.

There, we met a 12-year-old girl named Flor.

Flor is one of four children born to farmers who grow potatoes and corn, raise sheep and pigs, and make cheese with milk from their cow. Their modest home has no running water, though it does have electricity.

Flor has cerebral palsy. She was born healthy, but a vaccine she received when she was six months old led to a high fever. Her parents did not seek medical treatment right away because they could not afford it, but after two weeks, Flor experienced major swelling and was taken to a doctor. She was diagnosed with meningitis, a common condition in the region.

The injury to her brain has slowed down her development: while Flor continues to grow in size, her neurological functions have not

A GIFT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY The gift of mobility will not only transform Flor's life, but those of her family members as well. Her mother will no longer need to carry Flor everywhere.



Waiting With Bated Breath 12-year-old Flor, with her family and friends, eagerly awaits her special delivery.

developed at the same pace. She speaks at a much lower age level than her fourth-grade peers. Her mother had been carrying her to school, but she wouldn't be able to do so much longer, as Flor's height and size will soon eclipse her own petite frame.

We were introduced to Flor by Camino de Vida, our distribution partner in Peru, where over 64,000 wheelchairs have been given away since 2003.

Camino de Vida has coordinated wheelchair distributions throughout all of Peru, which is no easy task, considering that Peru is twice the size of Texas and nearly as vast as Alaska.

When Flor saw us unload a GEN_2 wheelchair from the back of our truck, she giggled with delight.

This was no ordinary wheelchair. This was our one-millionth wheelchair.

We fitted Flor to the GEN_2, a wheelchair model rugged enough for her to traverse the

local terrain. When we lifted her into the seat, her expression of pure joy was contagious. Jubilant, she began to sing a song, inviting the rest of us to join in.

As I share these stories, I can't help but think of the words from Psalm 40:

*He lifted me out of the slimy pit,
out of the mud and mire;
He set my feet on a rock
and gave me a firm place to stand.
He put a new song in my mouth,
a hymn of praise to our God.*
(Ps. 40:2-3 NIV)

We have all been invited to join in these songs of celebration, and each of you has played an important part in transforming the lives of our first one million wheelchair recipients.

You have helped lift people off the ground, open doors to education and livelihoods, and offer people with disabilities a brighter future, one lined with hope rather than cloaked in despair.

On behalf of every person who has received the gift of a wheelchair, I thank you for your prayers, generosity, and support of Free Wheelchair Mission. We couldn't have reached this point without you.

Blessings,

Don Schoendorfer
Founder and President



SMILING FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE Flor's new wheelchair will allow Flor to continue her education at the middle school in the neighboring village.



SUPPLEMENTAL
VIDEO

Delivering our **one-millionth** wheelchair to Flor.

See more of her story at:
freewheelchairmission.org/flor

SPECIAL DELIVERY To deliver the millionth wheelchair to Flor, we took a three-hour journey through the Peruvian Andes, involving countless switchbacks and a few overflowing rivers.

