

FLYING FOR LIFE

MAF UK'S QUARTERLY MAGAZINE | APR-JUN 2026



Worth a thousand words

Feeding refugee children in Uganda

Believing is seeing

From blindness to independence in Tanzania



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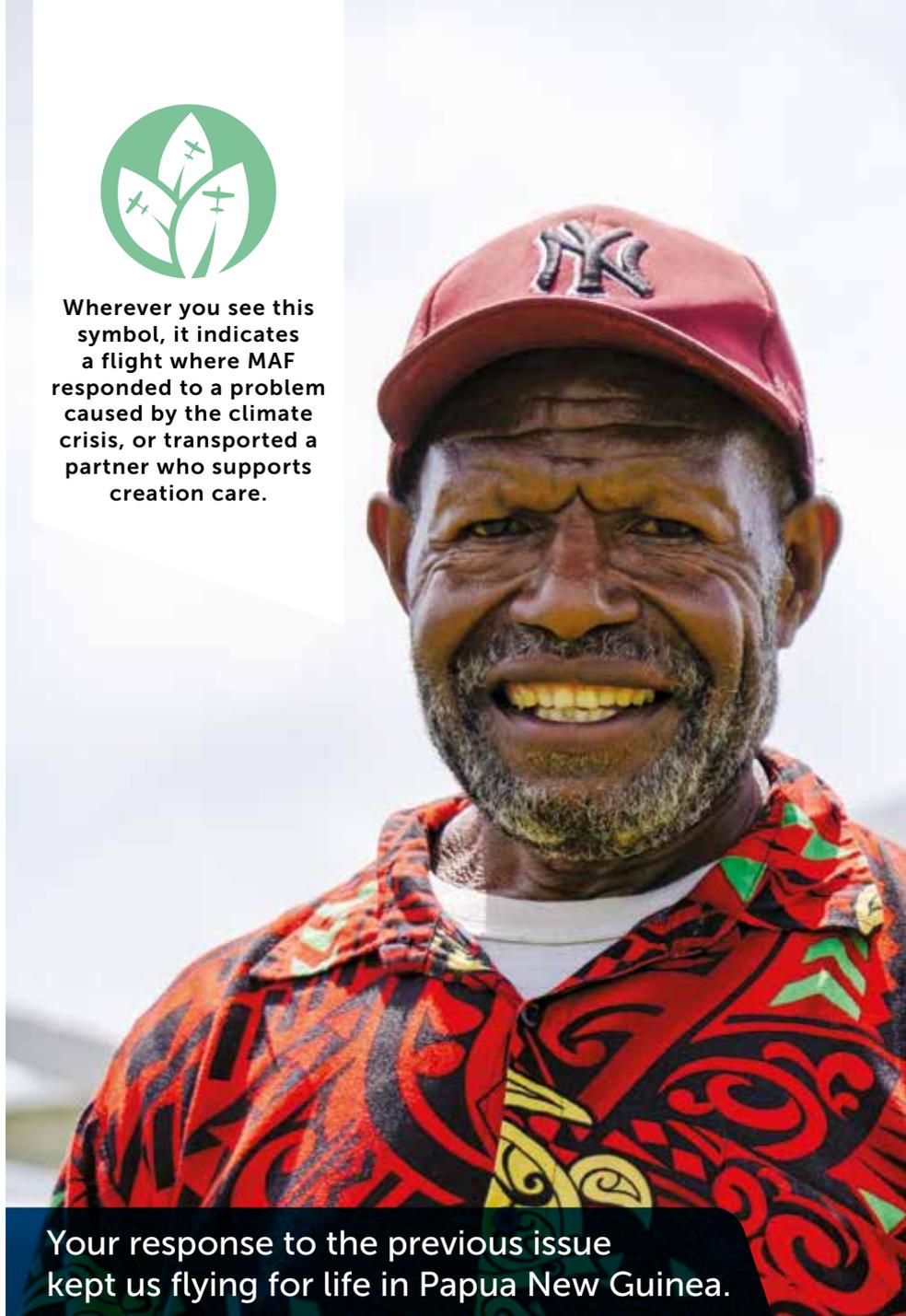
MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship) is a Christian organisation that is changing the world – one flight at a time. Our fleet of more than 100 aircraft enables tens of thousands of passengers every year to fly safely and swiftly over derelict roads, violent conflict and natural disasters. We fly food and water, health professionals and medical supplies, and emergency workers and Christian missionaries to isolated people in more than 1,000 remote communities. Practical **help**. Spiritual **hope**. Physical **healing**.

MAF is flying for life.

MAF respects the indigenous people of Arnhem Land. We have tried to ensure that names and photographs of deceased indigenous people do not appear in our publications.



Wherever you see this symbol, it indicates a flight where MAF responded to a problem caused by the climate crisis, or transported a partner who supports creation care.



Your response to the previous issue kept us flying for life in Papua New Guinea.

Front cover

MAF is flying for life in Uganda

 Damalie Hirwa

Flying for Life

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Copy Editor: Gary Clayton
Designer: Ben Dyer
Printer: Fretwell Print and Design Ltd
Printed on sustainable paper produced from a managed forest

© MAF UK APR-JUN 2026 FFL 262mag

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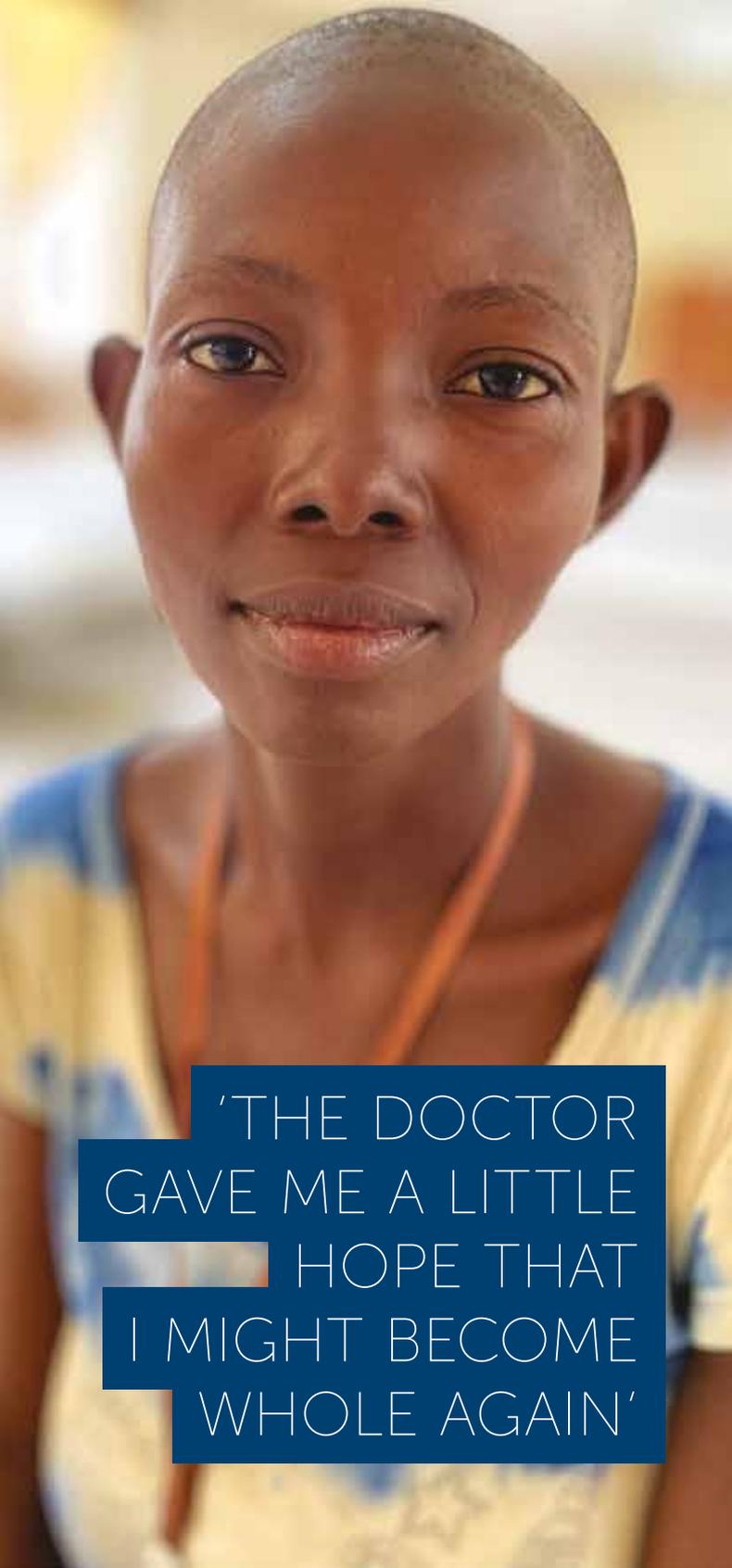
You keep us flying for life!

When you turn the pages of *Flying for Life*, you form a unique connection with some of the remotest communities on earth. MAF only exists because overcoming isolation is a cause worth fighting for – and we are so grateful to have you on board.

Your heartfelt prayers and unwavering generosity are the reason an MAF aircraft can take off or land every six minutes in a forgotten corner of the world.

The lives in these pages have been transformed by a God who cannot be stopped by mountains, valleys, jungles or deserts. The warmth you feel right now is a reflection of His love and yours – changing the world, one flight at a time.

God bless you.



Growing their future

She sat on the open walkway outside the hospital and, when the MAF pilot greeted her, she stood up very carefully.

Nabintu had endured violence that had broken her body. The doctor explained that she'd waited there for four months without a surgeon. Without medicine. Without electricity. A tragically common scenario in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Asked if she could fly to the hospital in Bukavu, Nabintu beamed. Asked to gather her things, she lifted a small bundle of cloth and a piece of plastic. 'This is all I have,' she said.

In the plane, she laid the plastic on her seat – a mixture of shame and courage in her eyes. The MAF crew were left with memories of a woman in pain, her dignity gone.

Two days later, the MAF crew visited Nabintu. 'The doctor who examined me gave me a little hope that I might become whole again,' she smiled.

It's tiny seeds of hope like this that so often open the door to a future that looks dead and buried to people like Nabintu.

When it comes to communities growing their future, your generosity is what powers the pilot who flies the aircraft to where people wait... for hope.

Thank you for the seeds you sow.

Mike Fagg
Chief Executive, MAF UK

'THE DOCTOR
GAVE ME A LITTLE
HOPE THAT
I MIGHT BECOME
WHOLE AGAIN'

The way, the truth and the life

STORY VIVIENNE PATTISON + ELEANOR RIVERS
PHOTOS JAMES GULLETT + JANNE RYTKONEN



A simple campfire gathering in Wandawuy becomes a beacon of hope as MAF staff connect with Yolŋu people through faith and fellowship

Located in Australia's Northern Territory, Arnhem Land is a legally protected reserve. On this, their traditional homeland, Yolŋu people build their own lives and determine their own future.

Arnhem Land's vast geography and prolonged wet season make overland travel extremely difficult. Everything from healthcare to food and education to employment is restricted.

The MAF family has been supporting Yolŋu communities for more than half a century through prayer, donations, flights and friendship. Responding to direct requests for evangelistic outreach has been a regular part of our Australian mission.

At the edge of the red gravel airstrip in Wandawuy where an MAF aircraft sits patiently, a crowd gathers beside a plain white cross. The cross bears the words, *Jesus is the way, the truth and the life*.

Gospel gatherings here take on a distinctly Yolŋu flavour – food, music and dance blending with stories of faith. These informal events are shaped by the Yolŋu emphasis on relationships over schedules and pave the way for Scripture and worship to flourish.

'They've been really eager for us to come,' says MAF Pilot James Gullett. 'The first time we visited there was a little uncertainty about exactly what this was all going to look like. But they enjoyed what we were able to share and we started getting to know each other better.'

One moment stood out in particular. Having shared the story of the Good Samaritan, the team handed out copies of Mark's Gospel in Dhuwya, a local language. For one believer this was incredibly emotional – her grandmother had translated it years before!

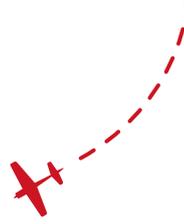
'They were so excited to receive the Gospel and share this heritage of faith with their children,' James smiles.

While it is crucial for the survival of the Yolŋu people to be living in these remote homelands, daily life here is full of hardships.



MAF staff undertook 5 outreaches in 2025 and hope to double that number this year





MAIN Gospel gathering in Wandawuy, Arnhem Land
LEFT Amber Mori, Aircraft Engineer, MAF Arnhem Land
BOTTOM Pilot James Gullett with MAF staff and locals in Wandawuy

Isolation is made worse by bad health, domestic violence and the material and cultural deprivation suffered by the aboriginal people of Australia for decades.

The strong Christian connection which the MAF family provides brings more than just access to life's essentials; it delivers God's love directly into the hearts of people longing for inspiration.

'We are so grateful to be part of God's plan for this remote region,' says James.

And the Yolŋu are grateful for all that MAF supporters do for them.

A determined young woman from Papua New Guinea (PNG) with a passion for aviation, she attended the same church as MAF Engineering Manager Brenton Paix. 'When he showed me around the hangar, I thought, "This seems pretty cool – I want to give it a go!"'

Following a two-year diploma in Aircraft Maintenance Engineering in Brisbane, Australia, Amber returned to PNG where she served for nearly seven years as part of the MAF team at Mount Hagen.

Now an MAF Arnhem Land staff member, her heart still soars when she recalls the occasional field trips back in her home country.

'I always liked going out to the bush – ministry trips showing the Jesus film where we spent time with people in remote communities. So, I'm looking forward to getting to know the communities and cultures of Arnhem Land.'

'HE WILL PROVIDE'

'Trust in God's provision,' says Amber Mori. 'If He's called you, He will provide.'

Amber is an example of how MAF's future is increasingly being shaped by people from the regions in which we serve.



'WE ARE SO GRATEFUL TO BE PART OF GOD'S PLAN'



In Tanzania, MAF conducted 207 medical and health related flights last year

STORY + PHOTOS ANNET NABBANJA

BELIEVING IS SEEING ✈️

Medical care is often inadequate in rural Tanzania. Ophthalmologists are particularly scarce, so simple operations that would prevent blindness or restore sight don't happen

'Our patients can travel more than 100 miles just to reach hospital,' says Dr Amos Mahona – Medical Officer at St John Paul II Hospital in the Tabora district. 'And, when they get here, we have to say we can't help them.'

However, the MAF family is changing that. We recently flew renowned Tanzanian eye surgeon Dr Erick Msigomba and his team from Njombe to Tabora where they saw 200 patients and performed 60 cataract operations.

Dr Msigomba would never have made the journey by road. It would have taken two full days driving over bumpy terrain, risking damage to delicate medical instruments. 'But,' says the doctor, 'MAF delivered me safely with all my tools intact.'

Prior to this momentous flight, 75-year-old Rozalia Mayunga could not care for herself having lost her sight nearly three years ago. 'Every day I prayed, "My God, help me – I am tired of this suffering."'

'When my children told me that doctors were coming, I made up my mind to go for treatment. I was so excited!

'After the operation, they removed something like a scarf from my eyes and I started seeing again. Now I can walk on my own. I will cook and eat instead of begging people for food. They will see me at home, walking, and they will be shocked.'

Yet many more people await the treatment which would dramatically transform their lives.

MAF Tanzania Country Director Stewart Ayling is praying that our aircraft will help to vastly increase the number of men and women who will be able to see again.

'Having seen the impact of the work, our whole team is highly motivated to ensure this medical camp is the first of many.'



'MAF DELIVERED ME SAFELY'

MAIN LEFT Eye surgery underway

BELOW LEFT Tabora eye surgery camp, Tanzania

BOTTOM LEFT Rozalia Mayunga

RIGHT Malagasy cookstove builder Benjamin completes a clay combustion chamber

BELOW Cookstoves being installed at Les Saphirs School in Antohamadiro, Madagascar

BOTTOM Medical evacuation in Madagascar, Phil Sproul, MAF's Director of Technical Operations



MAF's entire annual CO₂ emissions equate to roughly 100 flights from London to New York

MAF's Caravan fleet is now carbon-neutral

STORY BY SEAN ATKINS

A new carbon offset project in Madagascar aims to safeguard the environment in general and families' health in particular

Phil Sproul is Director of Technical Operations for MAF International. He is passionate about seeing isolated people changed by the love of Christ and, naturally, the part that aviation can play in realising this vision.

But he is all too aware of the deep impact that aircraft have on our fragile planet.

So he is delighted to announce that all MAF flights using the Cessna Caravan are now carbon neutral. 'God gave us a planet to look after,' says Phil, 'and He asks us to take care of it.'

In statistical terms, all the carbon dioxide emissions made by our aircraft in an entire year are the equivalent to fewer than 105 flights from London to New York by an Airbus 350 or Boeing 787.

Cessna's manufacturer Textron Aviation and sustainability organisation 4AIR have created the SustainableAdvantage programme, which will supply rural households in Madagascar with cookstoves.

This will stop families cooking over open flames inside their houses where bad ventilation leads to respiratory illnesses and heart problems. It will also reduce the consumption of firewood stripped from forests.

In addition, for each new cookstove installed via SustainableAdvantage, two tree seedlings are planted in Madagascar.

Over the next decade, it's MAF's objective to reduce by 30 per cent the carbon emissions caused by its flights through a variety of green technologies.

'Sustainable aviation fuel is one of these technologies,' says Phil. 'A wonderful idea but – right now – it's exceptionally expensive and hard to obtain. One day, alternatives such as electric or hydrogen will enable "green" flights.'

'At MAF, we're implementing all that we can do now while evaluating technologies that can be of real value in the future.'



'ONE DAY, ALTERNATIVES SUCH AS ELECTRIC OR HYDROGEN WILL ENABLE "GREEN" FLIGHTS'



Scan me to find out more

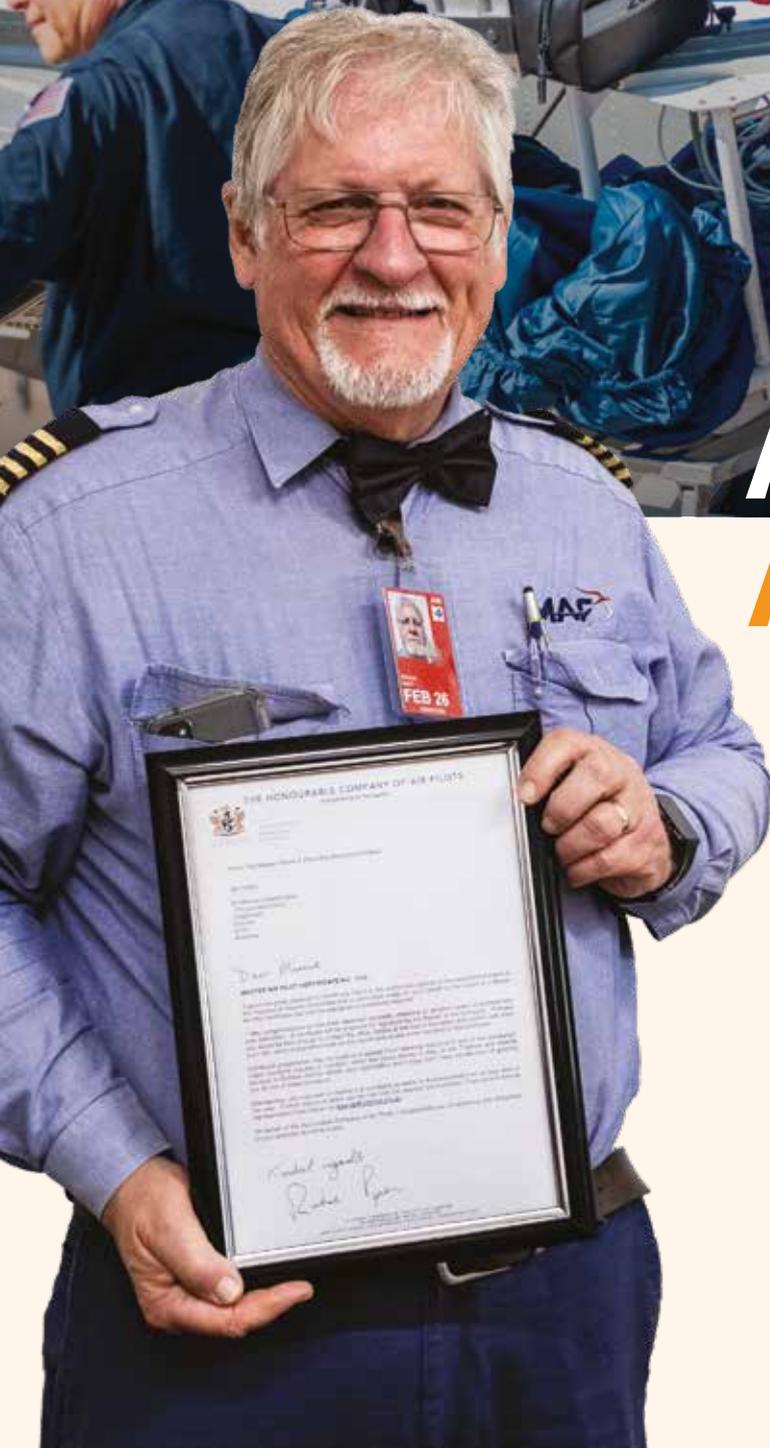
In 2025 MAF carried out 158 medevacs in PNG



ABOVE AND BEYOND

STORY LIESBETH PLAIZIER
PHOTOS TAJS JESPERSEN

All day long, Esther Dii's hands have been clammy and she has been unable to eat. Her racing mind has been repeating one question: *What am I going to say to the man who saved my life?*



The man in question is former Master Air Pilot Marcus Grey who has served with MAF for more than 40 years. The flight that introduced him to Esther took place in 1989.

In Papua New Guinea (PNG), an utterly distressed young mother waited and prayed. Many minutes passed and it felt like hours before the silence above the mountain peaks was finally broken by the roar of an aircraft engine.

With customary precision, Marcus navigated his plane through the rocky range towards the grass airstrip where an emergency awaited him.

An eight-month-old girl lay critically ill. She was neither eating nor drinking and wasn't responding to any treatment provided by the health centre – one of several in PNG relying on MAF for medical supplies and evacuations such as this one.

The young health worker who made the HF radio call that led to this flight did so with a lump in her throat. The baby was her daughter. Her daughter's name was Esther.

Marcus flew mother and child as quickly as possible to Goroka, capital of the Eastern Highlands. Then he drove them straight to the hospital where Esther's life was saved.

FAST FORWARD 36 YEARS AND ESTHER IS ON THE PHONE, SPEAKING TO MARCUS FOR THE FIRST TIME.

'Wow, this is so surreal!' she yelps. 'There are no right words to say, except Thank you to the Lord and to you and to MAF. I am very, very blessed and very grateful for everything.'

The next thing Esther tells Marcus almost causes him to drop the phone.

'As far as I can remember, I've always wanted to fly. Today, I'm a medevac pilot myself!'

Esther flies for CSI Aviation in the USA where she serves rural communities – often Native American reservations – by delivering critically ill patients to hospital.

'Every time I fly a sick child, I think of the day you helped save my life,' she explains to Marcus. 'My mother never forgot the way you went above and beyond that day.'

'Through you, God answered her prayers. Your example and kindness planted a seed in me. I'm sharing my story in the hope of inspiring future generations in PNG by giving the glory to the Lord.'

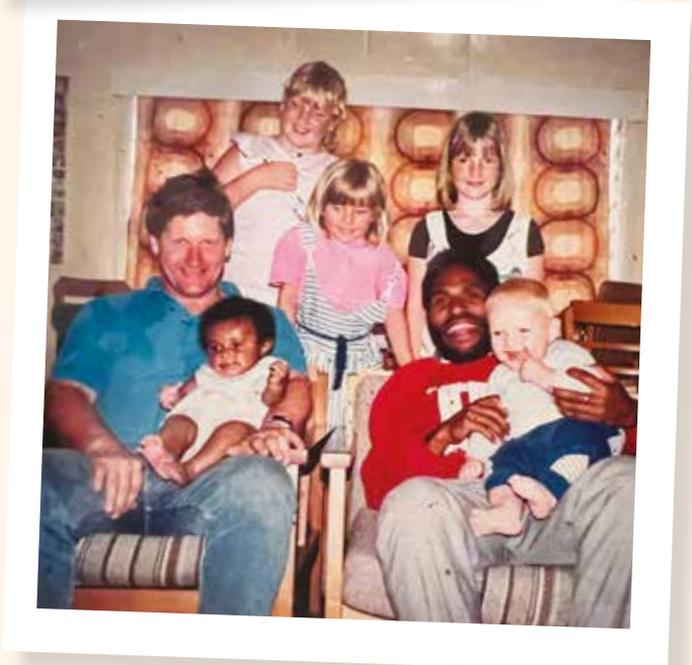
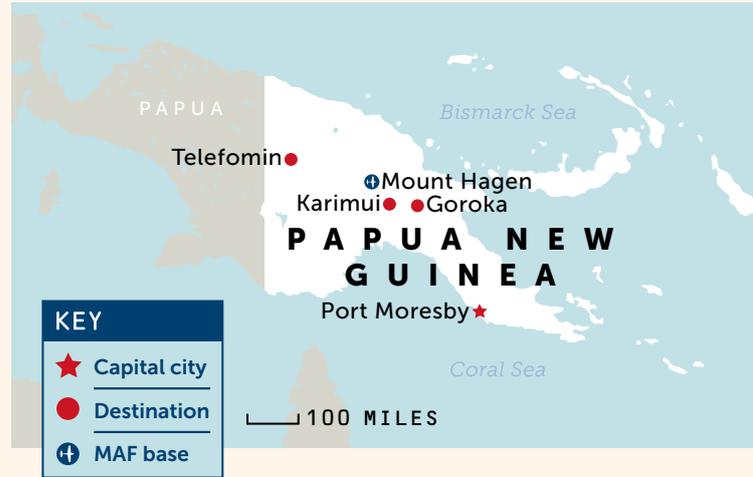
The tiny, vulnerable baby Marcus once carried to his plane is now a strong woman. Today, she is the pilot flying sick children to hospital.

'It does my heart good to hear that you have gone on with the Lord using aviation for sacrificial service,' Marcus tells Esther.

Who knows what will become of the children she brings to safety? Among them will be future fathers, mothers, doctors, teachers... maybe even pilots.

'TODAY, I'M A MEDEVAC PILOT MYSELF!'

MAIN Pilot Esther Dii during a medevac
LEFT Marcus Grey, the MAF pilot who saved Esther's life
BELOW MAF plane in Goroka, PNG, 1980s
BOTTOM Marcus Grey holding Esther Dii as a baby



'Thanks to Him, I can walk'

STORY + IMAGES JOEL CONTE

In Guinea, home to MAF's youngest programme, five widows have reached an amazing milestone after suffering from leprosy for more than 20 years

'This disease has really ruined my life,' says Yomba Jacqueline, a mother of five. 'Life is very difficult in the village. We don't have any care, nor the means to pay for it.'

'Knowing I was suffering from leprosy, I had no hope. Relatives, friends... everyone was distancing themselves from me. I lost my husband.'

'But I thank God for the local doctors and missionaries who are there every day at my side – providing medical and emotional follow-up.'

This terrible disease is very common in rural Guinea. The five women in Macenta, southern Guinea, have completed the medical treatment and hospital observation necessary to be declared 'cured'.

Martha Gafafer is a retired missionary doctor formally with Mission Philafricaine. She still visits Macenta to help train staff or visit those who have been cured of leprosy as part of their social reintegration phase.

'MAF is really a blessing for us,' Martha confirms.

'With the state of the road, it's really exhausting to make this nine-hour journey from the capital Conakry. But MAF flights mean we can arrive comfortably in less than two hours and start planning our activities immediately.'

'We pray to God that MAF continues to serve here in Guinea.'

Facely Fofana is being treated for leprosy. A former mineworker, he was forced by the disease to become a shoemaker.

'I saw spots on my feet and went to the doctor,' Facely explains. 'He told me it was leprosy and that I could be treated, but I had no money. My friends and neighbours contributed to the cost and made it possible for me to be treated at hospital.'

Norbert Loua is 23 and has been hospitalised for nearly 9 years, separated from his family.

'I am here alone. This disease made me drop out of school. It has changed my lifestyle – everything. Emotionally, it's not easy to live with but today I thank God because the treatment is going well.'

'Thanks to Him I can walk today – something I couldn't do before.'

BELOW: Doctor treats leprosy patient

MIDDLE: Martha Gafafer with local children in Macenta, Guinea

BOTTOM LEFT: Norbert Loua with Martha Gafafer



Last year our Guinea programme flew 84,385km – that's the equivalent of flying 2.1 times around the equator!



'MAF IS REALLY A BLESSING FOR US'



Scan me to find out more



MAIN: Captain Ping and Captain Joe preparing for a flight

BELOW: Epaulette with tais design



Did you know MAF has been operating in Timor-Leste since 2007?

Shoulder to shoulder

STORY ELEANOR RIVERS
PHOTOS LOBITOS ALVES

In Timor-Leste, special epaulettes are more than just a part of the MAF uniform, they connect pilots with the identity and history of the men, women and children they serve

The iconic Timorese *tais* is a traditional woven textile that represents the rich culture and heritage of its people. Registered on UNESCO's Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage in need of urgent safeguarding, *tais* is worn across all of Timor-Leste's regions, and is now also being worn in the sky above them.

Mary Domtta is MAF's People Care Co-ordinator in Timor-Leste and the wife of Country Director and pilot Ping Domtta.

'The epaulette shows your role while the traditional design shows where you come from,' she explains.

'I would say it's like mixing your job with your roots. Through colours, patterns or small symbols from local clothing or art, *tais* is a subtle way to show culture in a formal piece.

'The designs usually tell stories about family, community or history. So – when they appear on an epaulette – they carry those stories forward. It's a simple way to show both sides of yourself; your role and your heritage. People can see what you do and where you come from at the same time.'

MAF pilots in Timor-Leste began wearing the *tais* epaulettes last year, whether flying the regular shuttle



'A SHARED JOURNEY
TOWARDS A
BRIGHTER FUTURE'

service that connects isolated communities, or life-saving medevac flights. Reactions from Timorese people have been very positive.

As these vibrant threads find their place on the shoulders of MAF pilots, they symbolise far more than uniform decoration. They honour a nation's identity while strengthening the bond between MAF and the communities it serves.

Each flight carries not only help, hope and healing but also the stories, colours and patriotic pride of the Timor-Leste people – woven into a shared journey towards a brighter future.



MAF flew 6,818
passengers in 2025
in Uganda

MAIN A child in Pagirinya Refugee Settlement, Uganda.

LEFT Refugee children watch the arrival of MAF's aircraft.

BOTTOM South Sudanese refugee children wait to receive food supplies.



Worth a thousand words

STORY ODD ARILD NESSA
PHOTOS DAMALIE HIRWA

Drastic international funding cuts have left many thousands of children in Uganda's refugee settlements with empty food bowls

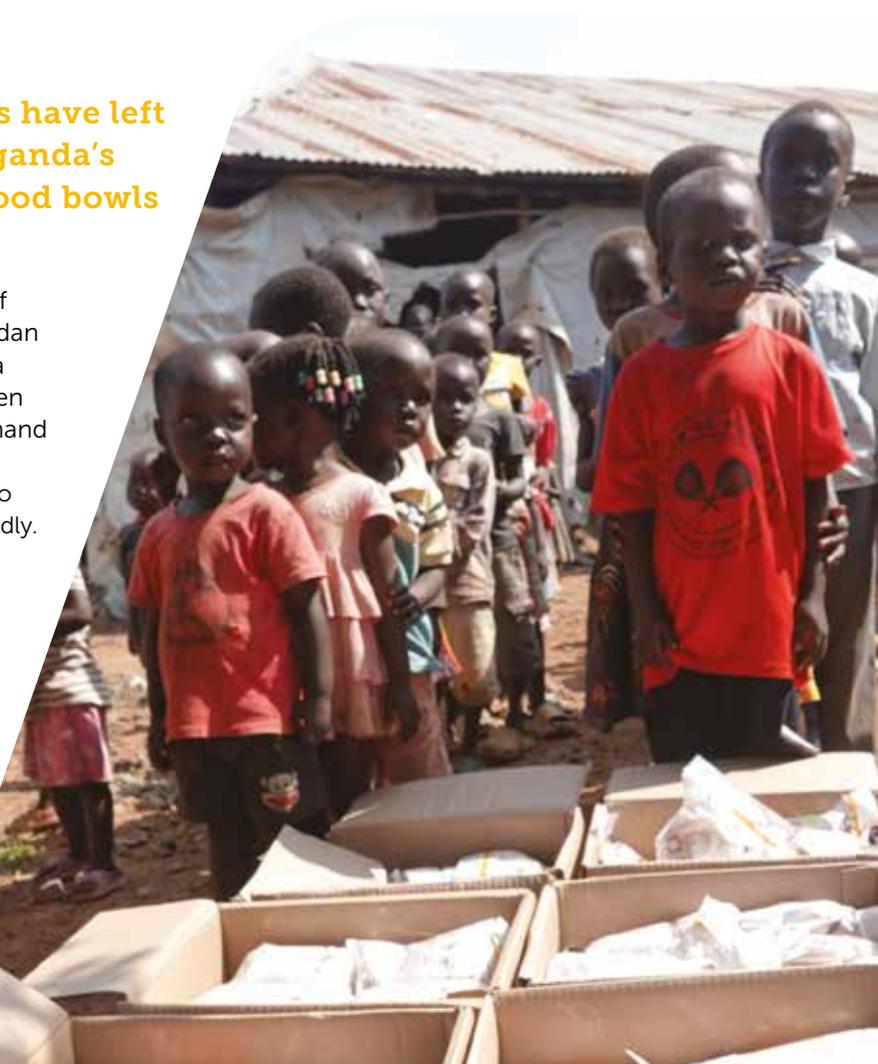
The children were crying because there was no food,' says Vicky Eimane, one of countless people who've fled South Sudan in recent years. Keeping four grandchildren and a daughter-in-law alive was made even harder when complications from diabetes resulted in her left hand being amputated.

Yet when she talks to MAF's Damalie Hirwa – who took these beautiful photographs – she smiles broadly. 'The food given to us by Kids Around the World (KATW) is helping a lot!'

Together with MAF, KATW is ensuring regular supplies of rice, lentils, vegetables and vitamins are delivered to the Pagirinya settlement. However, its ministry goes beyond emergency provision to offer the gift of play.

'Play is therapeutic,' says KATW Team Leader Richard Sekyeru, 'especially for children with troubled backgrounds. When we install play equipment, the joy of seeing a swarm of kids running to use it is priceless.'

'MAF has been a blessing. Our teams waste a lot of time on the road – you reduce that time so we can spend more of it doing life-saving work.'



'THE CHILDREN WERE CRYING BECAUSE THERE WAS NO FOOD'



PILOT OR ENGINEER?

Discover if you're built for take-off or tech!

If you're aged **17-25** MAF Co-Pilot invites you to visit MATC – our international flying school in the Netherlands.

Enjoy an interactive day exploring your potential as a future pilot or engineer. Get a unique taste of what it's like to work for the world's largest humanitarian airline.

Friday 17 to Sunday 19 July 2026

Scan below to register your interest, or email copilot@maf-uk.org to ask any questions.

You can also learn more about our engineer and pilot training schemes at www.maf-uk.org/working-with-us

WHAT WILL I NEED?

- A genuine interest in learning more about working overseas as an MAF pilot or engineer
- To fundraise £350 (£100 will go towards our lifesaving work)
 - An up-to-date passport

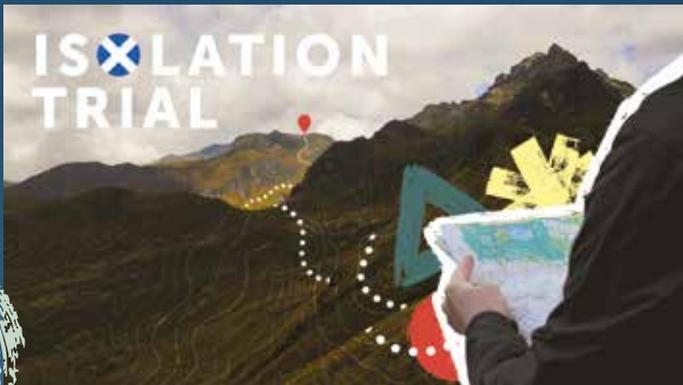
WHAT WILL IT INCLUDE?

- Travel to the Netherlands via minibus (Eurotunnel)
 - Overnight accommodation and food
- A flight lesson on the Elite S812 flight simulator
 - Engineering workshops
- Opportunities to chat with experienced MAF field staff and trainees
 - Flying an MAF plane

scan me



DO YOU remember
the brand new MAF
ISOLATION TRIAL we
advertised in the last
ISSUE OF FLYING FOR LIFE?



Since December,
we've been busily interviewing
applicants for this challenge event in
the wilds of Scotland – September 4-6 –
and are delighted to introduce our first ever
intrepid team to you.

Our brave adventurers hail from all over the
country. Currently strangers, they will be stepping
into the hardships of isolation together
– tackling various challenges in a mystery location
– and wild-camping with minimal resources.

It's well-known that the strongest
friendships are forged in the shared
experience of overcoming adversity,
so we predict this will be
life-changing!

We'd love to take you on their
unforgettable journey. If you'd like to meet
the Isolation Trial team and follow, visit
maf-uk.org/co-pilot/isolation-trial.

For live updates on their preparation
schedule and fundraising efforts,
follow us on

Instagram [@mafcopilot_uk](https://www.instagram.com/mafcopilot_uk) or
Facebook [@MAFCo-PilotUK](https://www.facebook.com/MAFCo-PilotUK)



'Lord, you know me and aircraft!'

Born in North London in 1952,
Janette Rowland's love of aviation
began very early

'My parents were wonderful at taking me to
places,' she recalls. 'I remember visiting
Heathrow in my buggy just to watch
the planes.' From *Biggles* books at school to the thrill
of Red Arrows displays – and two 'wonderful, nerve-
wracking' flying lessons at Biggin Hill – Janette's passion
never faded.

Working for Trans World Airlines opened doors to
incredible adventures – marvelling at God's creation
from a helicopter over Hawaii being a highlight.

Naturally, when Janette first heard of MAF at a
church presentation, her heart leapt with the immediate
reaction, 'Lord, You know me and aircraft!' She signed
up immediately, is a regular giver and continues to pray
faithfully for staff serving remote communities.

MAF's partnership with the **National Free Wills
Network** made the process of writing her Will simple.
'The solicitors were brilliant,' says Janette, 'courteous,
caring – they even visited me at home. I felt God's
guidance throughout.'

We're delighted to offer
you an easy way to write or
update a simple Will for
FREE via a trusted local
solicitor. Appointments
can be arranged in
person or remotely for
your convenience.
Alternatively, you
can find a solicitor
through the Law
Society website.



To find out more about using the **National
Free Wills Network**, please
phone us on [01303 852819](tel:01303852819),
scan the QR code or visit
www.maf-uk.org/legacy



Because of you...



... Vicky is able to keep four grandchildren and a daughter-in-law alive.

Read on page 12 how the loving kindness of MAF family members for the refugee communities of Uganda is keeping people alive in spite of drastic international funding cuts.

God bless you



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