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# A HAPPY MOUTH IS... A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT

RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT  
NOMA TO SAVE LIVES

“90 PER CENT OF NOMA PATIENTS DIE  
WITHIN A FEW WEEKS AND THAT IS  
SOMETHING THAT WE CAN PREVENT.  
TELLING MY STORY ENCOURAGES NOMA  
PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO KEEP  
ON FIGHTING AND GIVES THEM HOPE.”

**MULIKAT OKANLAWON, NOMA SURVIVOR, CO-FOUNDER  
AND PRESIDENT OF ELYSIUM, THE FIRST NOMA  
SURVIVORS ASSOCIATION**

#WOHD24  
#HappyMouth



World Oral  
Health Day  
20 March



[worldoralhealthday.org](http://worldoralhealthday.org)

# A HAPPY MOUTH IS A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT

Noma is a severe gangrenous disease of the mouth and the face, mainly affecting children aged between two and six years. Noma starts in the mouth and can spread very quickly and may lead to the destruction of skin, muscle, and bone. Within a few days, if undiagnosed, noma causes death for 90% and leaves life-changing facial disfigurement for the other 10%. Prevention or early detection is key.



## THE MAIN RISK FACTORS FOR NOMA



Malnutrition.



Lack of oral hygiene.



Weakened immune systems after other diseases.



## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

- **Early detection is key:** with appropriate prevention, awareness and early interventions noma can be effectively managed.
- **Treatment can help:** if diagnosed at an early stage, treatment is possible through basic hygiene, antibiotics, and improved nutrition.
- **Eradication of noma requires political commitment:** the eradication of noma needs concerted efforts to alleviate poverty, promote improved nutrition of both pregnant women and infants, and help to teach parents and healthcare workers to recognize early signs of the disease.

