Global Day to focus on women facing devastating childbirth injuries. Worldwide Fistula Fund Reflects on 30 Years in the Fight, as we look to International Day to End Obstetric Fistula.

What is Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)?

Estimates

With organizations facing cuts to funding in recent months across the globe, Worldwide Fistula Fund (WFF) is steadfast in its mission to support women facing or recovering from childbirth injuries by helping recognize this important day.

In 2012, the United Nations established May 23rd as an International Day of Observance to raise awareness about obstetric fistula, a severe childbirth injury affecting women in many low-resource settings worldwide. The Worldwide Fistula Fund (WFF) supports this initiative, recognizing the need to work together as global partners to end obstetric fistula.

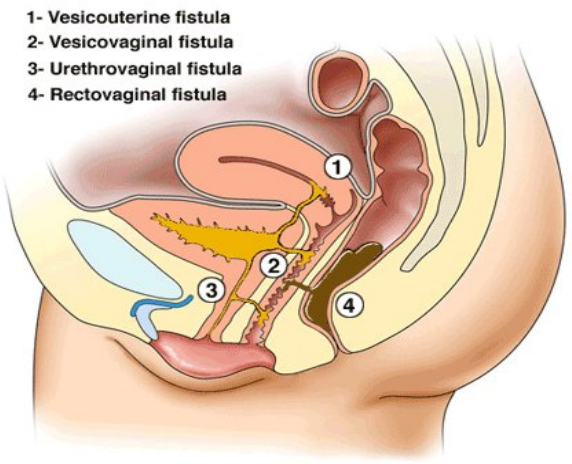
In our 30th year, we reflect on our progress and the work that remains, with 50,000-100,000 childbirth injuries occurring annually in under-resourced regions. Fistulas are mostly preventable and 100% treatable. Mary Rose Keller, WFF's Board Chair, wants people to know that "*for WFF's partners, it costs less than $1,000 to completely repair the trajectory of these women's lives, and we feel that we have the expertise to support improvements for not just these women, but for maternal healthcare in the communities we serve.*"

The Worldwide Fistula Fund board is comprised of a diverse group of accomplished individuals with knowledge and experience in the care needed by women who sustain obstructed labor injuries. We support partners on the ground that care for the whole women in a holistic approach, not just the physical needs of fistula repair, but the associated psychosocial, economic and reproductive health care needs. This is accomplished through active clinical, research and educational initiatives currently in 5 countries.

WFF identifies and develops the capacity of country leaders, with current programs in Burkina Faso, Uganda, Kenya, Niger, and Ethiopia. From partnering with Mekelle University's Urology program in Ethiopia to running a women's community hospital in Uganda, our grantees provide life-changing services and education.

Since 2013, our achievements include:

- Reaching over 2 million people through prevention and treatment outreach
- Performing more than 5,285 surgeries to repair obstetric fistulas and other childbirth injuries, all free of charge to patients
- Providing reintegration support to over 6,900 women, including vocational training, solidarity groups, and individualized psycho-social support



Obstetric-Fistula courtesy of Healing Hands clinic

- Training more than 3,300 leaders and medical professionals in childbirth injury prevention and treatment

These numbers highlight the impact of our holistic model, which not only addresses the physical aspects of these injuries but also helps women reintegrate into their communities and reclaim their futures. The average cost for surgery, plus 2 weeks of hospital stay for recovery, in 2024 was $905. With help from our partners these survivors can return to their families, hold a job or start their own business, and provide for their families.

Please help spread the word and support this important initiative. Every mother deserves the right to safe delivery of their baby and quality after-birth care.

About Worldwide Fistula Fund:

Established in 1995, the Worldwide Fistula Fund's mission is to protect and restore the health and dignity of the world's most vulnerable women by preventing and treating devastating childbirth injuries. For more information about WFF, visit www.worldwidefistulafund.org.

About International Day to End Obstetric Fistula:

You can read more about the observance of International Day to End Obstetric Fistula (IDEOF) on the United Nations site by clicking here.