The Fistula Foundation is proud to support an important project — our first opportunity to help women with fistula in Chad. We are deeply grateful to the Harold Simmons Foundation for its recent contribution to the Foundation to fully sponsor all fistula surgical costs here for one year. Our capable partners at Women and Health Alliance International (WAHA) are leading a comprehensive project to help the hospital team of 35 midwives and four doctors at the newly opened Center for Reproductive Health located in the capital city of N’Djama function at optimal capacity and meet the needs of its population. The Ministry of Health plans for this Center to handle all of the country’s most complex fistula cases, while also responding to the considerable backlog of fistula patients waiting for treatment. This is our opportunity to show a continued on page 7

Pathbreaking Program: Helping Women in Chad Receive Fistula Treatment

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Ethiopia: Celebrating the Opening of the New International Fistula Training and Treatment Center at Gondar University

Fistula Foundation Executive Director Kate Grant recently visited Ethiopia to celebrate the opening of the International Research, Training and Treatment Center devoted to fistula at Gondar University’s College of Medicine and Health Sciences located in the north of continued on page 3
One Woman’s Story

Bayesh is receiving care at the new international research, training and treatment center devoted to fistula funded by the Fistula Foundation in partnership with Women and Health Alliance International located in northern Ethiopia. Bayesh is the wife of Cafaly, who is a farmer. They grew up together in the same village, and fell in love — like many teenagers do all over the world. At age 14, Bayesh married Cafaly. Bayesh’s first childbirth delivery failed recently. She endured prolonged, painful obstructed labor at home, with no medical help. Her father, a priest, brought his daughter here to the Gondar University Hospital. Bayesh had been in labor for four days. Her uterus had ruptured. Bayesh survived, but developed the childbirth injury obstetric fistula for two possible reasons — her pelvis was too small or a malposition of her baby inside her birth canal. Cafaly is waiting for his wife to return home, hopefully soon. Contributions to the Fistula Foundation are helping restore lives for many women and adolescent girls — and their families — in developing countries throughout Africa and South Asia.

Fistula Foundation Supports Women’s Dignity Project in Tanzania

Strengthening health rights of the poor is something that Women’s Dignity in Tanzania believes in. And we do, too. The Fistula Foundation recently awarded a $75,000 grant to help Women’s Dignity improve mobilization for treatment and help more girls and women living with obstetric fistula receive treatment. While the organization plays a leading role in ensuring the success of a National Fistula Program, our funding will primarily focus on improving systematic support in 50 identified villages in Tanzania. Partnerships with community health workers and paying for bicycles and mobile phones will facilitate their efforts. Following treatment, Women’s Dignity is planning to follow-up with fistula patients to ensure they are fully rehabilitated and resettled after receiving treatment. Women’s Dignity is a pioneering organization working to eradicate fistula in Tanzania.

“Despite the enormous stigma, women living with fistula are strong and resourceful and often continue to care for their families. They deserve to live in dignity and receive proper medical care.”

~ Maggie Bangser, Founder, Women’s Dignity, Tanzania
Ethiopia. Our Foundation was honored to provide significant funding for the Center's construction through our capable partner Women and Health Alliance International. The University will be able to carry out many more fistula operations and also to train fistula care providers from across Africa and Asia, and carry out important research.

Ceremony speakers included Her Excellency Zenebu Tadesse, Minister of Women, Children and Youth of Ethiopia.

During her remarks, Kate shared, “On behalf of the many individuals — mainly women — who contribute to the Fistula Foundation, it is enormously gratifying to see the Center open, and to know that many women will be helped.”

This is Karkaa, a fistula patient (at left) with her beautiful daughter and Kate. She married when she was 17. She has had a fistula injury since her son was born. Karkaa's son is now 7 years old.

Kate and Foundation staff had an opportunity to meet these and many other fistula patients receiving care at the newly opened Center. The atmosphere was friendly and peaceful, and nearly all of the 70 beds were full.

A nurse (at left) with one of her fistula patients (right).

Gondar University Teaching Hospital colleague (left) with Dr. Sinan Khaddaj (center) and Dr. Mulu Muleta (right) of WAHA, who are leading this project.
The Nyanza Provincial Hospital in Kenya needed our help. An unusually high number of cesarean surgeries are performed here because women in labor aren’t reaching the hospital soon enough. And many more women, an estimated 70 percent, are still delivering babies at home, without medical help – and developing the childbirth injury obstetric fistula. There is a big backlog of untreated fistula patients. Our highly-experienced partner, Direct Relief International, wants to help. We recently awarded them a $105,000 grant to launch a broad-reaching campaign to inform people that free, high-quality fistula surgery is available here, and to arrange free transportation for patients.

A grant of $50,000 to the Association for the Re-Orientation and Rehabilitation of Teso Women for Development (also known as TERREWODE) to help increase advocacy for treatment, prevention and social integration of fistula patients in communities in northeastern Uganda. The project aims to improve maternal health treatment in local districts, establishing a map and building capacity so local women’s groups, government organizations and individual volunteers can function as a local referral network for fistula patients. They expect to help 200 fistula patients receive timely treatment by the local government health system during the next year.

A grant of $16,000 to pay for Dr. Steven Arrowsmith to provide two-week fistula surgery training for the medical staff at the Central Evangelical Medical Center in Angola, a relatively new healthcare facility in Angola which opened in 2006 and is treating a large geographic catchment area.

It continues to be a tremendous privilege for me to interact with women with fistula. Their grace, humility, resourcefulness, beauty and quiet (usually) strength is an inspiration that fills my tanks of life energy each time I get to work with them.

~ Dr. Steven Arrowsmith, fistula surgeon
WHAT’S YOUR INSPIRATION?

We’ve been getting lots of beautiful letters in the mail recently with contributions to help restore health and dignity to women suffering from fistula. So many inspiring stories have come from our donors, friends and volunteer ambassadors. For all these reasons and more, thank you for supporting our work.

Elizabeth Maxwell of New York City was honored recently for her service and contributions as program director for the Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen, where she worked for more than 20 years. In her honor, the Chelsea Reform Democratic Club made a donation to a charity of her choice. Elizabeth chose the Fistula Foundation. She shares, “I deeply respect your work, and hope that more women may benefit from it. My daughter, Mihret, was born in Ethiopia. And it is partly because of that connection, through her, with that country that I want to make this contribution as well.” We are deeply grateful and honored to celebrate Elizabeth in this way.

Jillian Cunningham, a senior at Spring Valley High School in Columbia, South Carolina, wrote us recently. Jillian and several other seniors, Sona Tailor, Kellie Shell, Rebecca Rhym, Safiyah Ali, Anna Mesa and Jasmine Ruiz-Yi, were inspired by the book Half the Sky and decided to do something. Jillian shares, “After reading about fistulas in this book, we decided to raise money and awareness for the Fistula Foundation. We raised a total of $550 by selling baked goods and hand-made bracelets. I hope this small contribution will help your Foundation and aid those women in need.” Indeed, it will. Our warmest thanks to Jillian, her co-leaders, and all those at Spring Valley High School who supported their efforts.

Collin Lyle of Germantown, MD, has been one of our most dedicated donors for years now. Helping change one woman’s life is so important to her that even during a recent job layoff, she found a way to continue contributing. A few months later, she’d found another, better job. (Isn’t that great?) She shares, “Donating money to the Fistula Foundation was one of the easiest decisions I’ve ever made.”

The years I spent working with Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders) as a surgeon in many developing countries gave me the opportunity to see first-hand the great need that exists for medical care generally and fistula treatment specifically. At Women and Health Alliance International, we have a team of dedicated surgeons that carry out our work with direct knowledge of local conditions. We appreciate the partnership we have with the Fistula Foundation. Together, we are doing more to help women receive life-transforming care.

~ Dr. Sinan Khaddaj, Secretary General, Women and Health Alliance International
Dining for Women Selects Fistula Foundation as Featured Charity

Dining for Women (DFW) is an extraordinary organization that all began with a simple idea. What if friends got together for dinner once a month, and each person brought a dish to share. For each monthly dinner, the group would choose to support one charity. Every time they gathered, each person would contribute what she would have spent dining out. How much would the group be able to contribute collectively to improve the lives of women and girls worldwide, who often live on less than $1 a day? The first Dining for Women dinner took place in January 2003. About 20 people attended, and $750 was raised. Since then, hundreds of chapters and thousands of women have joined DFW, making a difference in the lives of tens of thousands of disadvantaged women and girls worldwide. Today, DFW members are making a profound difference through the power of collective giving. The Fistula Foundation is deeply honored to be selected again this year as a charitable cause worth supporting. This fall, DFW chapters across the United States will be hosting dinners to raise awareness and donations on our behalf. To join a local chapter, or start your own, visit www.diningforwomen.org.

Great Reads

Brand New – 2010 Annual Report is Now Available

Browse the report online by visiting our website: www.fistulafoundation.org
Would you like to receive a print copy? Simply let us know. Print copies are available upon request.
Tel: 408-249-9596 or 866-756-3700 (toll free)
Email: info@fistulafoundation.org

Oprah Magazine’s special issue celebrating 25 extraordinary years of the Oprah Winfrey Show.

In 2004, Oprah talked about obstetric fistula — something few Americans had ever heard of — and introduced the world to Dr. Catherine Hamlin. A true pioneer, Dr. Hamlin has devoted her career to restoring life to thousands of Ethiopian women suffering from fistula. In 2005, Oprah invited two of her viewers, Sue Hoese and Cyrene Wright, M.D., to join her on a journey to Ethiopia to meet Dr. Hamlin again, along with fistula patients in Ethiopia. Read the inspiring story on page 84.

“I don't think you ever stop giving. I really don't. I think it's an on-going process. And it's not just about being able to write a check. It's being able to touch somebody's life.”

~ Oprah Winfrey
Helping Women in Chad Receive Fistula Treatment… continued from page 1

glimmer of hope to women and girls who are suffering from fistula in a country with a tragically high occurrence of the childbirth injury obstetric fistula. A woman giving birth in Chad knows it could be a life or death event. The lifetime risk of a Chadian woman dying in childbirth is 1 in 14 – the second worst rate in the world. Compare this to a ratio of 1 in 2,100 in the United States and 1 in over 10,000 in many other developed countries. For every woman who dies, many survive with significant injuries such as obstetric fistula. So many women in Chad are waiting for fistula treatment. It is enormously gratifying to know that, thanks to your support, we can help them.

Karen Sue Jensen Stephens was a beautiful woman who consistently gave of herself to make the world a better place. Her family describes her as the most incredible wife, mother, grandmother, aunt and sister anyone could wish for. When she was diagnosed with terminal cancer, Karen’s spontaneous love for life, generosity and compassion for others became even more pronounced. Her daughter Kate shares, “She taught us all how to live fully in the present moment.” She never once complained about her illness, even when she developed a fistula during treatment. It was during this time that Karen, a longtime fan of Nicholas Kristof, began reading Half the Sky. She learned about women in developing countries who were also suffering from fistula. Karen’s family shared the news of her recent passing, and her request that for her memorial service donations be made to the Fistula Foundation in lieu of flowers. We are forever honored by Karen’s choice, and proud to join her loved ones in celebrating her life and beautiful spirit. On behalf of the women whose lives will be restored because of this generosity, deepest thanks.
Your Donation Changes a Woman's Life Forever
Thank you for making a life-changing donation of any amount. Because the gift of dignity is priceless.