



# Young Mothers Sanctuary opens in Sierra Leone

September saw the opening of our new Young Mothers Sanctuary - for hope, dignity and empowerment, which will support vulnerable teenage mothers and fistula patients to equip them for employment opportunities.

This social enterprise venture is a six month program that provides safe shelter for the girls, schools them in domestic duties and, after they graduate from the program, provides employment opportunities in selected households and hotels under the security of our agency. We aim to train up to 30 girls at any one time through this program, helping young mothers and former fistula patients build a sustainable future for themselves and their family.

Sincere thanks go to our supporter who donated the funds to refurbish and equip the sanctuary. We are also grateful to the Aminata Maternal Foundation for its support of this project on an ongoing basis.



## Nurse Midwife Technicians - Graduation

October saw the Graduation of 19 Nurse Midwife Technicians from Ekwendeni College in Malawi, thanks to the support of Rotary Clubs in Scotland and Rotary Foundation who partnered with Freedom

From Fistula (FFF) to help build capacity in Malawi's maternal healthcare system.



This program is part of FFF's commitment to fistula prevention through the provision of quality maternal healthcare and we are proud of our 2018 graduates.

Congratulations!







**150**

Fistula surgeries performed so far this year in Sierra Leone

## More news from Sierra Leone

Our core services at Aberdeen Women's Centre have been as busy as ever and we are delighted to report an increase in the number of fistula patients we are able to help with the arrival, in August, of Dr Ennet Chipungu, a Malawian fistula surgeon and obstetrician who trained at our Fistula Care Centre in Lilongwe for three years.

The maternity unit continues to be busy with almost **2200** safe deliveries so far this year, despite the ongoing challenge of recruiting midwives due to a country-wide shortage. We have also welcomed **250** teenagers into our Dream Girls project since the start of the year and safely delivered their babies, thanks to the Aminata Maternal Foundation support.

The Children's Outpatient Clinic remains in great demand with more than **18,000** children being treated so far this year, including **1000** children through our outreach clinic in the Kroo Bay slum.

All in all, it has been a very successful year so far at AWC and we are excited to see what the next few months hold!



**250**

Teenagers welcomed into our Dream Girls Project in Sierra Leone



**18,000** children treated so far this year in our AWC Children's Outpatient Clinic



**2200** babies

safely delivered so far this year in Sierra Leone

## Madagascar

Our team in Madagascar has been extremely busy this year with the arrival of a permanent international fistula surgeon, Dr Michael Breen.

In the first half of the year alone they carried out nearly **150** surgeries at our Fistula Care Centre (FCC) based at CHUT hospital in Toamasina.

In August, we built a new relationship with Pastor Daniel Elias Chivala and his church in Toamasina. Pastor Daniel is dedicated to supporting the Centre and has already brought us more than **20** new blood donors.

Our blood drives are a critical element of our project in Madagascar ensuring that the hospital has a regular supply of donors for our patients.

FCC Madagascar continues our close collaboration with UNFPA and ASOS, a partnership that provides the majority of patient referrals to our clinic in Toamasina.



"Come again and see how I have progressed in life. I am already rich!"

## Malawi

The Fistula Care Centre in Lilongwe is on course to have another record year with **300** patients already having received treatment this year.

Our Patient Rehabilitation, Education and Empowerment Program (PREP) continues to go from strength to strength, with two business opportunities now available to patients through our social enterprise projects – producing and selling reusable sanitary pads and solar income-generating kits.

During one of the solar monitoring trips, the team caught up with Eunice, one of our former patients who now runs a successful solar charging business from her home.

Eunice supports two children and her husband. Her husband does not work but with her solar business she has been able to pay for one child to go to university and her other child to high school.

Before Eunice received her solar station, she was doing housework. Since she started her new business everything has changed! Eunice can now support her children and help them receive an education. She has been able to expand her other businesses selling maize and tobacco as a result. Eunice believes that the training she received at our Centre in Lilongwe has given her the skills to run her businesses more successfully.

Eunice has found such success she plans on buying another solar station from our partners at Sunny Money so she can start to rear chickens and light the chicken house!

## Kenya

The last two years have proved very difficult for us to deliver the breadth and quality of fistula care that we have achieved in the past, due to doctor and nurses strikes as well as obstacles to quality care within the partner hospitals. Efforts to find a location for a permanent clinic have also not been successful. As a result, we have taken the very difficult decision to close Freedom From Fistula in Kenya.

Our partners, FDSA and Safaricom Foundation, will continue to run 'camps' at different hospitals in Kenya and there are three other organisations providing fistula care around the country so we are confident that patients will still be treated. Thank you to everyone who has supported our Kenya program over the last 10 years - **3000** women and girls have had the chance of a new life because of you.



## 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Update

Thank you to everyone who has donated to our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Campaign. We are delighted to tell you we have raised an amazing **\$44,000** so far. THANK YOU!

### Rotary

In June, our founder Ann Gloag was a keynote speaker at the Rotary International Convention in Toronto which was attended by more than 25,000 Rotarians from around the globe.

Ann's speech highlighted our work in Sierra Leone in particular, as Rotary clubs have pledged to support this project in the coming years, as well as speaking of the principles of the organization and the corruption problems in the countries in which we work. You can see Ann's full speech at <https://vimeopro.com/rotary/toronto-convention/video/276477324>

### Update from New York

Since the start of FFF's 10 year Anniversary Campaign the New York office has been abuzz with activity!



We have had a changeover in our Interns. Arielle Gautier has graduated – CONGRATS! – She now has a job with Teaching for America. Jordan Wagner has been our rock throughout the summer months and Jacquelyn Easterwood has been volunteering with us whilst completing her Master's thesis – Kudos to her.

Our Rotary involvement and the new Global Grant, which was announced by Ann Gloag in Toronto and covered in an earlier article, has been keeping us on our toes and FFF's new President, Dorthe Tate and Development Director, Angela McCabe, along with Rotary Centennial District Governor, Joseph Dino, Jr. had a successful time in Montreal for the Rotary Zone Conference.

And nearly forgot to mention, Angela has been busy training for the NYC Marathon, which takes place on November 4<sup>th</sup>. Please support her Marathon Campaign on Crowdrise <https://bit.ly/2Ah8gFa> and go along to cheer her as she runs through the streets of NYC!



### Hope for the Holidays

**There is a massive shortage of maternal healthcare services for young women across Africa. As a result approximately 2 million women and girls suffer from obstetric fistula.**

A donation of **\$150** provides safe childbirth for these young women and their babies and helps prevent obstetric fistula. Don't let them give birth alone and helpless. Together we can **Deliver Hope for the Holidays!**

Our campaign aims to raise \$15,000 to safely deliver 100 babies over the holiday period. Please see the enclosed leaflet for more information.

### Shopping online this Christmas?

**AmazonSmile** is a simple and automatic way for you to support us every time you shop, at no cost to you. You can log in to your existing Amazon account, nominate us as your chosen charity and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the net purchase price (excluding VAT, returns and shipping fees) of your purchase.

