

JULY

2017



**FREEDOM**  
from  
**FISTULA**

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# Update

**Spotlight on  
Kenya**

**Making life worth living for women & girls in Africa**

## 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Fistula Camp at Kenyatta Hospital, Kenya

**In partnership with Flying Doctors Society of Africa and sponsored by Safaricom Foundation, we held our 12<sup>th</sup> annual fistula camp at Kenyatta National Hospital, Kenya.**

The theme this year was capacity building fistula care in Kenya. During the camp Dr Andrew Browning, an expert fistula surgeon, gave a lecture to healthcare workers.

Two of our patient ambassadors, Mwandawiro from Taita Taveta and Lucy from Embu, brought patients to the camp for treatment.

Esther and 131 other patients were treated for their fistula at the camp and were presented with a gift bag of hygiene products before returning home.



Mwandawiro and Lucy



Patient Screening



Esthers' life transformed



Patients preparing for home

### Viavy Meva Celebrations

9 Patients shared their stories as part of a recent Viavy Meva Celebration in Madagascar.

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### Mabinty's Miracles

In March the first set of quadruplets were born at the AWC in Sierra Leone.

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### Life after Fistula

Julie developed an obstetric fistula giving birth at 12. Now she returns to safely give birth.

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### Rotarians Support FFF

We are grateful to the ongoing support from Rotarians across the UK and USA.

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Madagascar

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*Families rejoice when their wives, sisters, mothers & daughters are healed*



## An update from Madagascar

2017 saw the start of a successful collaboration with UNFPA and ASOS. Patients are referred to the Fistula Care Centre for treatment and our wards are always full.

In May we celebrated International Day to End Obstetric Fistula and focused our efforts on community sensitization. Reaching out into the local community, talking about fistula and the work that we do is vital.

135

Surgeries since  
January 2017



## Viavy Meva Celebrations

Staff and patients welcomed crew from TVM to film our **Viavy Meva Celebration**. 9 patients asked us if they could tell their story in the hope of helping other women, to help them understand they are not alone and there is a place they can get help. Patients like Minette.

Minette was carried into our centre in 2016, unable to walk, severely malnourished and badly injured. Thanks to your support she was able to receive nutritional support, counselling, physiotherapy and surgery. On 23<sup>rd</sup> May she danced her way out the door!







Sierra  
Leone

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**Staff, patients & volunteers welcomed the arrival of our first Quadruplets**



## A very special family at AWC

On the 8th March, Mabinty and Mohammed welcomed their beautiful baby girls - Maria, Hannah Jeredine, Tamimu and Ann - into the world, with the help and care of our staff at the Aberdeen Women's Centre.

These tiny babies birth weights ranged from just 1.4lbs to 3.6lbs.

For nearly four months, the staff of the Aberdeen Women's Centre, along with Mabinty and Mohammed, nursed and cared for the quads 24/7 (without access to specialist neonatal equipment) and in mid-June all four girls were well enough to go home. It was a joyous day.

Our team arranged a new home for the family, as well as essential supplies which were purchased with the support of our donors who helped us raise over £2,500 as part of our #QuadSquad campaign.

Unfortunately, 10 days after they were discharged, baby Ann became very unwell with a chest infection and despite the best efforts of our staff, died on Saturday 1st July.

It has been a very sad time for everyone, but we are focused on the remaining babies who are all doing well and developing their own strong personalities.

These little girls have a long journey ahead of them. Their father Mohammed works hard for a living, however at this crucial time, the family still needs a huge amount of support and so, we have opened a new campaign to help them work towards building their own sustainable, independent future.

You can donate towards Mabinty's Miracles at:

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/freedomfromfistulafoundationusinc/mabintysmiracles> or by sending a cheque to: Freedom from Fistula, 777 United Nations Plaza, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Suite 8-B, New York, NY10017



Welcome to the world little ones



Ann at the girls 10 week check up



3 months old and growing fast!



## Abie's story

**Abie was 16 years old when she fell pregnant. In labor for 4 days by the time she arrived at hospital to give birth she had sadly lost the baby and developed an obstetric fistula.**

Thankfully the hospital referred Abie to our Aberdeen Women's Centre and following successful treatment for both the fistula and 'drop foot' in May 2017, Abie is now free from fistula and looking forward to returning to her family and to school life.

## A minibus from DFID

**We are grateful to our friends DFID for the generous donation of a 14-passenger minibus.**

AWC conducts regular trips into rural areas to identify and transport potential patients requiring fistula treatment throughout the year. At present, once suitable patients are identified, AWC transports them to its facility using a variety of means, including locally operated poda-podas (public transport), which can be unreliable. In addition, because of the physical condition of our patients, some poda-poda drivers charge double fare to transport them which has a negative impact on the self respect and dignity of the ladies. Having a dedicated minibus now provides significant benefits including increasing awareness of AWC in rural communities with the livery on the vehicle.





Malawi

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*Our solar charging units give former patients an opportunity to support themselves*



## Empowering women

**Empowering the women in our care and helping them to reintegrate into their communities is an integral part of our patient rehabilitation at the Fistula Care Centre in Malawi.**

Apoloniya had her surgery in September 2016. The operation was very successful and she is now completely dry. After returning home to her village with her Sunny Money solar charging unit, Apoloniya's life changed dramatically. She now makes a living charging phones and with the capital raised has been able to reinvest into a second business, buying and selling beans.

Former patient Corida, works tirelessly as a patient ambassador to find patients with fistula in her community and bring them to our Fistula Care Centre. She is able to contribute financially to her household with income earned from her Sunny Money solar unit.



Apoloniya



Corida



Helping communities

## Julie's story

**Julie suffered from her obstetric fistula for 11 years.**

Married at the age of 12 she was pregnant with her first child. Too small to deliver naturally and a delayed 6 day labor resulted in the baby getting stuck in the pelvic canal for a day. Sadly the baby did not survive.

In 2013 Julie was referred to our Fistula Care Centre where she successfully received treatment.

Now 33, Julie returned to the Fistula Care Centre in March 2017, 8 months pregnant for monitoring and went on to safely deliver her beautiful baby.

## Fistula conference held in the Machinga District to improve referrals

**Many of our fistula patients come from the Machinga District. Since 2015, 109 patients have been referred to our centre through the patient ambassadors in this district.**

With this in mind, we held a fistula conference at the district hospital in April 2017. Staff members from all community health centres were invited to attend. The purpose was to come up with a better referral system to ensure identified fistula patients can access the Fistula Care Centre with ease.







USA

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**100% of your donations go to the projects as our administration costs are met by the charity founder**

## Local news

**We are extremely grateful for the ongoing support received from Rotary Clubs across the UK and USA.**

Most recently Becky Raymond and Debbie Rodriguez of the Rotary Club of Southern Rensselaer County personally delivered a cheque for \$1800 at our office in New York for our work with women and girls in Africa. We were also grateful to receive a cheque for \$1000 from Northern Valley Rotary in New Jersey and a further \$500 from the Rotary Club of The Palisades following a presentation by our Development Director, Angela McCabe on our work.



Angela with Becky and Debbie



Rotary Club of The Palisades



Rotary Club of Northern Valley

**Development Director, Angela McCabe kicked off her 2017 New York City Marathon Training on July 27th and will be raising both funds and awareness for Freedom from Fistula.**

**Follow** Angela's progress as she trains for the marathon on our social media pages.

**Sponsor** her efforts to help raise funds that will ensure the lives of expectant mothers and their babies are safe, and also to care, heal and empower the women and girls with obstetric fistula in Africa. WE ARE THEIR VOICE. Join us as we SHOUT about them throughout the five boroughs! On Marathon Sunday EVERYONE is going to be their voice and together we can make a difference!  
<https://www.crowdrise.com/marathon-maddness-for-the-freedom-from-fistula-foundation1>

**Want to get involved?** Join the 'Scream Team' on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave, wear the t-shirt, hold the banner, scream as loud as you can! Contact [info@freedomfromfistula.org](mailto:info@freedomfromfistula.org)

## Dates for the diary

**August 29<sup>th</sup>**

Presentation at Ridgewood Rotary Club, NJ

**September 5th**

International Day of Charity

**September 21st**

Presentation at Ridgewood AM Rotary Club, NJ

**October 11th**

International Day of the Girl Child

**November 5th**

New York Marathon

**November 23rd**

Thanksgiving

**November 25th**

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

**November 28th**

Giving Tuesday

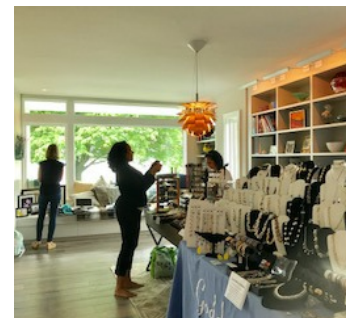
**December 31st**

Last day to make charitable contributions for 2017

## Summer Soiree for FFF

**Dorthe Tate and Emily Chapman hosted a Summer Soiree to benefit FFF.**

Participating vendors included Arbonne, Ash&Ames, d&lya, Fairchild/Baldwin, India Hicks and Tideline Tunics. A fun time was had by all. Even the local constabulary turned up!



# BIG KNIT

Groups, individuals and organisations across the UK continue to take part in our Big Knit Challenge.

To take part please knit 6" or 8" squares and send to our office in Perth. Watch out for the thanks and photos on Facebook.



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<https://www.facebook.com/FreedomFromFistula/>



<https://www.instagram.com/freedomfromfistula/>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/freedom-from-fistula-foundation>



<https://twitter.com/WeFixFistulas>



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCleutFBHNaKzW2IAKpTKINw>

SOCIAL

## Stay in touch...

Are you following us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or LinkedIn?

Our teams update our pages regularly with news from the Centres, patient stories, images and videos.

## Contact us

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100% of donations go to the projects as our administration costs are met by the charity founder.



## Make a difference

One woman dies every minute from complications in childbirth. One woman every two seconds is seriously injured or disabled giving birth.

Without you, many of those who survive will continue to live in shame and isolation because of obstetric fistulas.

With **YOUR** help we can provide free surgeries to heal women and make them 'dry'.

With **YOUR** help we can provide free maternity care to help prevent obstetric fistulas occurring.

With **YOUR** help we can train local midwives and health professionals to provide sustainable, quality maternity