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Media Advisory

May 24, 2011

Congressional Briefing: Key Progress Addressing Obstetric Fistula

How the response to this childbirth injury is transforming the lives of millions of women and girls in the world

WHAT:

A congressional briefing, “Ending Fistula Forever,” organized by Rep. Carolyn Maloney and [Campaign to End Fistula](#) partners (UNFPA, EngenderHealth, Fistula Foundation, Human Rights Watch and International Women’s Health Coalition), will highlight strategic approaches to the fight against obstetric fistula —a critical reproductive health and human rights issue affecting more than 2 million women in the world. Speakers at the briefing will share the experience of women and girls living with the condition and discuss the impact of U.S. support for programs that prevent and treat fistula globally.

Obstetric fistula is both a preventable and treatable childbirth injury that leaves women with urinary and/or fecal incontinence. It results from prolonged, obstructed labor without timely medical intervention, and largely afflicts poor, rural and illiterate women in developing countries. Fistula makes women outcasts in their own families and communities. The debilitating effects of fistula have forced hundreds of thousands of women and girls to suffer the consequences of this condition in solitude and shame. Fistula is perhaps one of the most tragic and telling examples of inequitable access to maternal health care around the world.

Partners from the international community, civil society and the U.S. Government are working together on a global campaign to prevent and treat fistula, with the goal of making the condition as rare in the developing world as it is in the United States.

WHEN:

Tuesday, May 24, 10:00 - 11:30 am

WHERE:

121 Cannon House Office Building, Capitol Hill, Washington D.C.

WHO:

Representative Carolyn Maloney
Kate Grant, Fistula Foundation
Janet Walsh, Human Rights Watch
Mary Ellen Stanton, USAID

Carrie Ngongo, EngenderHealth
Gillian Slinger, UNFPA
Jennifer Redner, IWHC (moderator)

