



Transformations

News from the Fistula Foundation, Winter 2009

IN THIS ISSUE

- Campaign 2010
- A Patient's Story
- *Half the Sky* hits best seller list
- Donor Review: *Half the Sky*
- Donor Profile: Alice Smith

The Mission of the Fistula Foundation is to raise awareness of and funding for fistula treatment, prevention, and educational programs worldwide.

◆ The FISTULA
FOUNDATION
from despair to dignity

Campaign 2010: Help More Women Get Life Changing Treatment

You will be pleased to learn that this year the Foundation made a major move that will help us ensure more women in need get treatment. Because you and so many other caring women and men have responded so generously to our appeals, the Fistula Foundation has expanded our mission to fight fistula globally, while remaining the largest current supporter of the Hamlin Fistula Hospitals in Ethiopia.

As you know, the World Health Organization estimates there are between two and three million women with untreated fistula, often leading lives of desperation and despair—simply for want of an inexpensive operation that could dramatically change their lives. Our long term goal is to ensure that any woman with a fistula gets the treatment she deserves.

You can help meet this challenge by participating in Campaign 2010, launching this month. **The goal of Campaign 2010 is to double the number of women we are able to help outside of Ethiopia in 2010. Will you help?**

This year we're already funding fistula treatment programs in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, and Angola, and next year we hope to expand even further. The progress we've made with your help is exciting, but there is so much more to be done! The Fistula Foundation can rise to the challenge—but only with your continuing help.





A Patient's Story: Ethiopia

Wubalem was ten years old when her parents decided that it was time for her to get married. When she was sixteen years old she became pregnant with her first baby. she was scared of what was going to happen to her. One day the pain started and it became worse during the night. Women from her village gathered in her house to help, but with no success. After being in labor for three days, her uncle suggested they try to get her to a hospital. They walked for a whole day before reaching the nearest health center and after another day they were told to take Wubalem to a bigger hospital where they might find a doctor to help her. It was a four hour drive and it was late in the day so they waited until the next day to travel. When they arrived at the hospital they helped deliver her stillborn baby and told her she now had a bladder problem – a fistula -- that could be treated in Addis Ababa.

Wubalem eventually arrived at the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital where she stayed for three months and had two operations before she was completely cured. She went home to her village and was told that if she became pregnant again she must deliver in the hospital.

That was two years ago, and now Wubalem is at the Fistula Hospital again, but this time she is here to deliver a healthy baby. This happy ending was made possible by the skilled surgeons at the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital and by donors like you.

Board Of Directors

Abaynesh Asrat
 Kate Grant (ex-officio)
 Kassahun Kebede
 Cleopatra Kiros
 Linda Levee Samuels
 C. Stephen Saunders, Esq.
 Gerald Shefren, MD
 Mary Tadesse
 Robert Tessler, Esq.
 Whitney Tilson
 Linda M. Tripp
 Larry William, MD

Donor Profile: Alice Smith

In October, Alice Smith did something she's done for nearly eight years – attend her monthly book club meeting. The group was eager to invite a members' husband, Dr. Larry William, a long term member of the Foundation's Board of Directors to talk about health care in developing countries generally and fistula specifically. Some in the club had read Nicholas Kristof's articles on fistula and the work being done to relieve victims of the horrific injuries after rape or childbirth. Larry's presented a vivid and detailed account of the work of the Fistula Foundation. Shocked out of complacency, like so many of our generous supporters, Alice wanted to "do something". For Alice that meant signing up for the Foundation's "Love a Sister" program enabling Alice to contribute enough to fund a life-changing operation for a woman with fistula. We are grateful to Alice and all of you for also wanting to take action.



Alice Smith

“Half the Sky is a passionate and persuasive plea to all of us to rise up and say ‘No more!’ to the seventeenth-century abuses to girls and women in the twenty-first century world. This is a book that will pierce your heart and arouse your conscience.”

~ Tom Brokaw

Half the Sky hits bestseller list

Pulitzer Prize winning New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof has been a compelling and articulate voice for fistula victims. Through his engaging columns he has helped open hearts and minds to the plight of the millions of women with untreated fistula. He and his wife Sheryl WuDunn, also a Pulitzer Prize winner, published a new book, *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*. The book is nothing short of a manifesto – labeling the oppression of women as the moral issue of our time. Since hitting book stores in October, the book is moving up the best seller list. We are honored that the

Foundation is one of the organizations Kristof and WuDunn recognize as worthy of support. We encourage you to buy the book which is available at Amazon.com and at most bookstores.



Pulitzer Prize winning authors Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn

A Donor Review: *Half the Sky*

By Amy N. Lipton of Greenwich, Connecticut

Half the Sky contains shocking tales of misogyny and violence, but shows us that there is hope. Kristof and WuDunn teach us that empowering women worldwide is necessary, achievable, and depends on donors being willing to give generously and strategically. The Fistula Foundation, cited in the book is a great place to start; as the book details in horrifying detail, obstetric and traumatic fistulas can lead to tragic disability, psychological problem, related health problems and isolation. Repairing fistulas, which the Fistula Foundation makes possible, often gives these women their lives back and allows them to contribute in countless way to their families and their communities.

