Did you know the last two months of this year will determine Fistula Foundation’s ability to treat women in 2015? Nearly half of our annual revenue will be earned in the final two months of this calendar year, meaning our ability to provide treatment to women who are suffering from obstetric fistula next year is directly tied to the amount of funds we are able to raise by December 31st. We want to fund life-changing surgeries for 4,800 women in 2015. But we can’t do that without you.

You have shown your commitment to transforming the lives of women with obstetric fistula in the past. In fact, Fistula Foundation has now funded over 10,000 surgeries thanks to the generous donations of people like you! As 2014 draws to a close, we are counting on you once again to help us deliver treatment and services to women in need.

With a team of only eight full-time staff, we work extremely efficiently to channel the funds you entrust to our care into the hands of our partners in the field, because that’s where women’s lives are changed. We do this so effectively that we are consistently recognized and rated highly by the top charity evaluators and influencers in the industry: Better Business Bureau, Charity Navigator, Charity Watch, GreatNonprofits and The Life You Can Save, an organization dedicated to effective philanthropy.

We know that for every single woman we treat, 50 more are still in need. When you make a financial contribution to Fistula Foundation before December 31, you have the power to help change lives. Women are waiting. Can they count on your support?
We all sleep. Why not sleep on a deliciously luxurious silk pillowcase? Better yet, one whose proceeds support women suffering from fistula! Silky Kisses is a non-profit organization in Australia that “focuses on positive giving through shopping” – 100% of net profits from the sale of their pillowcases are donated to Fistula Foundation. Since 2013, Silky Kisses and its founder, Wendy Michell, have donated over $25,000 to Fistula Foundation!

Silky Kisses are “made with Love” and come in every color of the rainbow. You can shop for these beautiful pillowcases and help women with fistula at www.silkpillowcases.com.au. A big thank you to Wendy Michell and the Silky Kisses team for their generous support!

One Woman’s Story
Debora from Angola

Debora lives in a tiny village quite far from any emergency medical services. In 2008, she was in labor with her fourth child for nearly a week before her uncle finally brought her to a hospital. By that time, her uterus had ruptured and her baby, delivered via C-section, had died. The difficult labor also left a fistula between her bladder and cervix, causing her to leak urine constantly. All of Debora’s other children had also died shortly after childbirth, and her husband finally abandoned her too.

Luckily, Debora found our partner site Centro Evangelico de Medicina de Lubango (Evangelical Medical Center of Lubango, or CEML) in Angola. Once she arrived, her fistula repair surgery turned out to be much more difficult than doctors expected – in addition to a fistula, Debora had a large cyst and also had to be treated for schistosomiasis, a disease caused by parasitic worms that is common in many parts of Africa. Her fistula was so complex that three surgeries were required, but today Debora is healed and no longer leaks urine. Our partners at CEML report that following her surgery, Debora returned to her parents’ home, and she is hopeful about her new life.

Supporter Spotlight:
Silky Kisses

Debora was treated at our partner site
Evangelical Medical Center of Lubango in Angola

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Rwanda/Somaliland | This August, Fistula Foundation partner surgeon Dr. Lauri Romanzi led a collaborative fistula training exercise for surgeon trainees from Rwanda and Somaliland. Carried out at Edna Adan University Hospital and National Boroma Fistula Hospital in Somaliland, the training was a great success. 56 surgeries were completed and Dr. Romanzi reported that the six trainees in attendance collaborated extremely well, allowing for an accelerated and productive learning experience. The group will reconvene in early 2015 to complete a fistula repair clinic and receive more in-depth training.

Burundi | We are thrilled to introduce one of our newest partners, Gihofi Hospital in Burundi. Providing competency-based surgeon training in fistula identification and treatment is a top priority of this project. Experts will train new surgeons in Burundi based on the standardized fistula manual recently developed by FIGO. This increase in the number of qualified fistula surgeons in Burundi, along with provision of necessary medical supplies and equipment, will result in women having greater access to fistula care services. Through this project, Gihofi Hospital hopes to perform 200 surgeries in the next year.
This holiday season, you can help heal obstetric fistula and how the gift has helped give a

**Pearl Necklace: $125**
This necklace incorporates a single cultured pearl, a universal symbol of health and purity, into a beautiful drop pendant.

**Pearl Earrings: $50**
These elegant, cultured pearl earrings make a great accessory to any outfit and are custom-designed to match our pearl necklace.

**Pearl Gift Set: $150**
Earrings and Necklace

**The Ayesha Scarf: $85**
This soft and cozy rayon-blend scarf is the perfect accessory any time of year. Its versatile size (20x80") and color palette mean it goes with almost anything, and its signature Fistula Foundation diamond logo print helps to raise awareness about this too-often hidden condition every time you wear it.

**The Jacinta Scarf: $95**
These chic scarves are custom-designed and 100% silk. They feature a floral design and measure a full 3 feet by 3 feet, allowing you to wear them in a variety of ways.

**The Serafina Scarf: $95**

**Africa Phone Case: $35**
We use cell phones every day – why not spread the word about obstetric fistula at the same time? This sleek bamboo phone case features a custom “Africa” design with our signature Fistula Foundation diamond logo. Made to fit iPhone 4/4s or iPhone 5/5s models.

**Holiday Card: $15**
In thanks for your donation of $15 or more, we will mail a customized holiday card to you or a loved one. It can even be personalized to include the handwritten name of you and your honoree!
To make your donation, complete and return the enclosed form by mail. Donate online anytime at www.fistulafoundation.org. Or, simply give us a call toll free at 866-756-3700 (+1 408-249-9596 outside the U.S.) Monday to Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Time.

To ensure the best possibility of your gift arriving by December 24 (continental U.S. only), please place your order no later than December 16.

Our Signature Tees: $25
These soft and comfy tees allow you to spread the word about obstetric fistula in style! Sizes S-XXL.

Love-A-Sister Card
Fistula is a devastating condition, but can be healed with a surgery that costs, on average, just $450. When you choose to fully sponsor one woman’s surgery by making a one-time donation of $450 or a monthly donation of $37.50 for 12 months, we will send you or a loved one a personalized certificate celebrating the life-changing surgery you have made possible.

Assorted Note Cards: $25
These note cards are perfect for any occasion and feature women who have been treated by Fistula Foundation partners. Every note card sent spreads the joy that these women feel after receiving a free, safe and successful fistula repair surgery. Each package of note cards includes eight blank 5x7” cards, two each of four different designs.
Dr. William Visits Burundi & Rwanda

In Burundi, Dr. William visited Gihofi Hospital, a rural health center and the Foundation’s first partner site in the country. Dr. William was impressed with the facility and even more impressed by its fistula surgeon, Dr. Jean de Dieu Yunga. Larry was able to observe Dr. Yunga in action in the operating room and visit with fistula patients before continuing to Central Hospital University of Kigali (CHUK) in Rwanda.

In Rwanda, Dr. William met with Fistula Foundation partner surgeon, Dr. Lauri Romanzi, and head of the OB/GYN Department at CHUK, Dr. Stephen Rulisa. They discussed the challenges and opportunities related to fistula care in Rwanda, met with trainee surgeons, and visited with fistula patients at the hospital.

Dr. William referred to CHUK as “a first class fistula surgery center” and is looking forward to continued growth as part of these new Fistula Foundation partnerships in Burundi and Rwanda.
Surgeon Spotlight:

Dr. Kees Waaldijk – Nigeria

Some of the unsung heroes in the fight against fistula are the surgeons who dedicate their lives to performing life-transforming fistula repair surgeries for women in need. At 73 years old, Dr. Kees Waaldijk is one surgeon who has truly gone above and beyond…and he’s not showing any signs of stopping!

Considered to be one of the most experienced fistula surgeons in the world, Dr. Waaldijk has performed an incredible 23,782 repair surgeries throughout his career over the last 30 years. He is currently the chief surgeon of the Nigeria National Fistula Program, which operates at nine sites in Nigeria and an additional four sites in neighboring Niger. It is the largest obstetric fistula surgical and training program in the world and has provided over 43,000 surgeries to women with obstetric fistula since its creation in 1983.

Dr. Waaldijk is also a master trainer in the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) surgeon training program, and has trained 402 doctors and 375 nurses/midwives in obstetric fistula treatment. The information he has collected over the years has been used to research different types of fistula, the effectiveness of various operating techniques, and even to predict results in future patients. Dr. Waaldijk is committed to evidence-based practices and documentation of results. He compiles detailed patient logs and gives each patient her medical history and operation report in a plastic-covered booklet.

Although the Nigeria National Fistula Program is largely government funded, current streams of funding are not sufficient to ensure the continued, uninterrupted availability of fistula surgery throughout each of the program’s sites. Fistula Foundation is proud to have provided supplemental funding of over $400,000 to the Nigeria National Fistula Program since 2012 to support free surgeries, surgeon training, and equipment upgrades.

The poor maternal health care indicators in Nigeria reflect the pressing need for fistula services throughout the country and continue to inspire Dr. Waaldijk’s work every day. Despite the country’s recent history of regional conflict and instability, he has remained dedicated to helping women in need access repair surgery. Needless to say, Dr. Waaldijk is one of Fistula Foundation’s true heroes!
Allan Rosenfield Award

This October, Fistula Foundation proudly presented the Dr. Allan Rosenfield Award to Dr. Larry William, Linda Tripp and Rob Tessler at our annual board meeting in San Jose, California. The award recognizes the outstanding contributions of William, Tessler and Tripp to Fistula Foundation during their tenures on the Foundation’s Board of Directors. They leave behind a deep and accomplished legacy, having helped lead Fistula Foundation through the organization’s mission change in 2009.

Dr. Larry William is the longest serving board member in Fistula Foundation’s history. He served on the Foundation’s Grants committee for several years and recently completed his second visit to Panzi Hospital in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a center founded by his dear friend and Nobel Peace Prize nominee, Dr. Denis Mukwege. Dr. William has also visited partner sites on behalf of the Foundation in Ethiopia, Rwanda and Burundi. He is board certified in internal medicine and medical oncology and practiced privately for over 20 years.

Linda Tripp led the Foundation’s Finance and Investments committee for several years. Prior to joining our board, Tripp worked at World Vision for 31 years on important issues like women’s empowerment and refugee resettlement. She first became involved with the issue of obstetric fistula in 1981, when she met Drs. Catherine and Reginald Hamlin at the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital in Ethiopia. She was deeply inspired by their work and we are extremely fortunate to have had her expertise and passion on our Board.

After reading an article about fistula by Nick Kristof in the New York Times, Rob Tessler knew he had to do something – but what? He contacted us at Fistula Foundation and the rest is history! Tessler has served on our Board ever since and made important contributions as part of the Governance and Nomination committees.

The award is named for the late Dr. Allan Rosenfield, who served on Fistula Foundation’s board of directors for five years. As Dean of the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University he was known globally for his pioneering leadership and myriad contributions to the field of women’s health. We miss Allan greatly and honor his memory by recognizing others who have made significant contributions to the mission of the Foundation.

Congratulations to all three award recipients! You will be missed!

$10,000 Grant from The MAIA Foundation

This September, Fistula Foundation was honored to be the recipient of The MAIA Foundation’s final grant in the amount of $10,000. Established by sisters Laureen and Barbara DeBuono in 2008, the Foundation invests in solutions and programs that strengthen the capacity of women to navigate their health and that of their families in sub-Saharan Africa. After seven successful years, The MAIA Foundation is closing its doors, but their generous final gift will ensure the Foundation is making a difference for many years to come. We are truly touched by this gesture and grateful for the opportunity to steward these funds to help more women get the treatment they need. Thank you to Laureen, Barbara and The MAIA Foundation for their generous support!