



**FISTULA**  
FOUNDATION

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2024 ANNUAL REPORT

# No Woman Left Behind



Dear Friends and Partners,

If we were to choose a word to capture the last year at Fistula Foundation, it would be GROWTH. That's because we are on track to do more than 17,500 surgeries this year, which is a 63% increase over just three years ago. While the extraordinary gift from MacKenzie Scott helped fuel that expansion, those funds were spent down early this year. Thanks to you, and generous people like you, who have continued to support our work, we've been able to maintain our momentum. That means more women than ever before are receiving life-transforming care. Thank you!

The other word that's fitting for this year is TRANSITION. That's because, as you can tell from the fact that both of us are signing this letter, we are in the process of a major leadership transition from Kate as CEO, to Pam as CEO. We are happy to report that we are in the final days of that handover, and it should be complete in August. As with everything we do, we drew on research and experience of others to guide our path. In the case of this transition, both wisdom and data pointed to a longer glide path to ensure a smooth and successful handover. We both are confident that the best days for the Foundation are ahead.

In the following pages, we hope you will be inspired by the tremendous work done by our hospital partners to help women too often left in the shadows regain their health and hope for the future. None of these miracles of healing would be possible without your selfless support.

With deepest gratitude,



*Pam Lowney*

Pam Lowney  
Incoming CEO



*Kate Grant*

Kate Grant  
Outgoing CEO





# 100,000 Surgeries— 100,000 Reasons to Keep Going



Since our very first surgery, we've dreamt of a world where no woman is left behind by a treatable childbirth injury. In 2024, because of you, we reached an extraordinary milestone: We provided our 100,000th life-transforming surgery for women living with obstetric fistula and severe perineal tears.

We celebrate this milestone not as a finish line, but as a reminder of the power of community, and what we can continue to accomplish together. Because for every woman we've reached, there are still countless more living in devastating isolation, waiting for the care that they deserve.

With you by our side, we aim to reach every woman who needlessly suffers with a profound promise of healing and hope.





# Behind Every Surgery Is a Woman's Future

Behind every surgery is a woman like Hauwa—a woman with a name, a family, and a future. After living with obstetric fistula for five long years, Hauwa was connected to care by an outreach worker and received the surgery she needed to reclaim her life. Her suffering ended because people like you cared enough to act. A chain of small, individual acts of compassion and generosity made her healing possible. And while Hauwa's story is one of hope, there are still so many women waiting to be found and healed so they can start their futures free from fistula.

***At Fistula Foundation,** we believe that no woman should live a life of misery and isolation, simply for trying to bring a child into the world. We strive every day to end the suffering of women injured in childbirth—and to ensure that no woman is left behind.*



# From Headlines to Healing: Your Compassion in Action



*"There are many problems we can't fix, but let's not forget those areas where we can make a life changing difference. We have a chance together to light a path forward and lift up women who have almost lost hope."*

— Nicholas Kristof, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, *The New York Times*

In November 2024, Fistula Foundation was named as a 2024 Holiday Impact Prize Winner by Nicholas Kristof, a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist for *The New York Times*. The annual Prize celebrates organizations working to make the world a better place. Fistula Foundation was one of just three 2024 honorees, chosen out of 1.8 million nonprofits in the U.S.

Again in December, Kristof—a longtime advocate for fistula patients—wrote another article featuring patients from our partner Jamaa Mission Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya. He urged his loyal readers to take action by asking this simple question: "Is There a Better \$600 Investment?"



Thanks to the awareness generated by Kristof, four generous matching donors, and support from people like you, Fistula Foundation raised more than \$4 million, funding more than 6,400 life-transforming surgeries.



# Hope Delivered



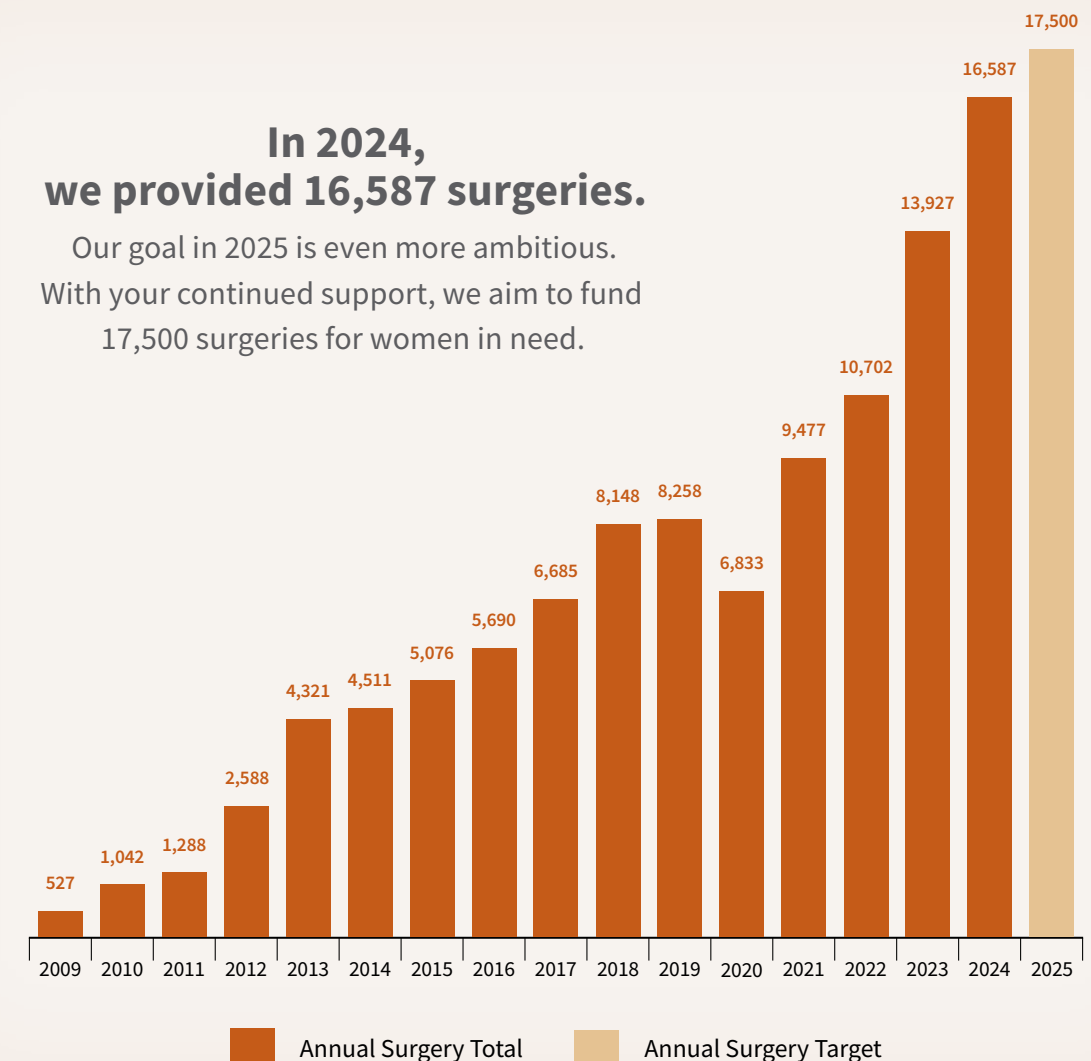
At our partner Koochi Goth Women's Hospital in Karachi, Pakistan, women like Zobia (right) and Rehana (left) reflect the life-changing impact of access to quality care. After losing multiple children in childbirth and

suffering from constant incontinence, Zobia received repair surgery at Koochi Goth. "I was scared before coming here, but everyone is very helpful and caring," said Zobia. "Girls (like Rehana) from under-privileged areas are trained

# Impact Measured

**In 2024,  
we provided 16,587 surgeries.**

Our goal in 2025 is even more ambitious.  
With your continued support, we aim to fund  
17,500 surgeries for women in need.



here and these girls go (back) to serve people like me who don't have hospital facilities in their areas." Rehana—once a fistula patient herself—returned to Koochi Goth as a trained midwife to care for women like Zobia. Together,

they embody the enduring promise of No Woman Left Behind. Behind the numbers in this report are individual stories of lives transformed and futures reclaimed—made possible by people like you.



Countries where  
Fistula Foundation  
Partners operate

Partner Sites

THE NETWORK

# Together, We're Reaching Farther Than Ever

Thanks to people like you, 2024 was a year of powerful progress. Supporter generosity fueled the expansion of our partner network from 77 to 91 trusted organizations—an 18% increase that reached more underserved communities than ever before. It also enabled us to fund programs in four new countries—Ghana, Niger, Cameroon, and Burundi. What's more, our Fistula Foundation Treatment Networks (FFTNs)—the countrywide, coordinated care model in Kenya, Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Tanzania—continued to thrive, delivering 7,618 surgeries, nearly half of our global total. People like you made this possible!



OUR PROVIDERS

# The Compassion Behind the Care

Behind every surgery is a team of courageous, compassionate people—from skilled surgeons to nurses to community outreach workers. Together, they form a growing network of partners whose expertise and deep understanding of the realities on the ground bring life-changing care to remote corners of the globe, reaching some of the world’s most vulnerable women. Through this network and the support of donors like you, we’re not only treating fistula—we’re building a global movement led by local leaders, transforming lives and communities with every surgery.



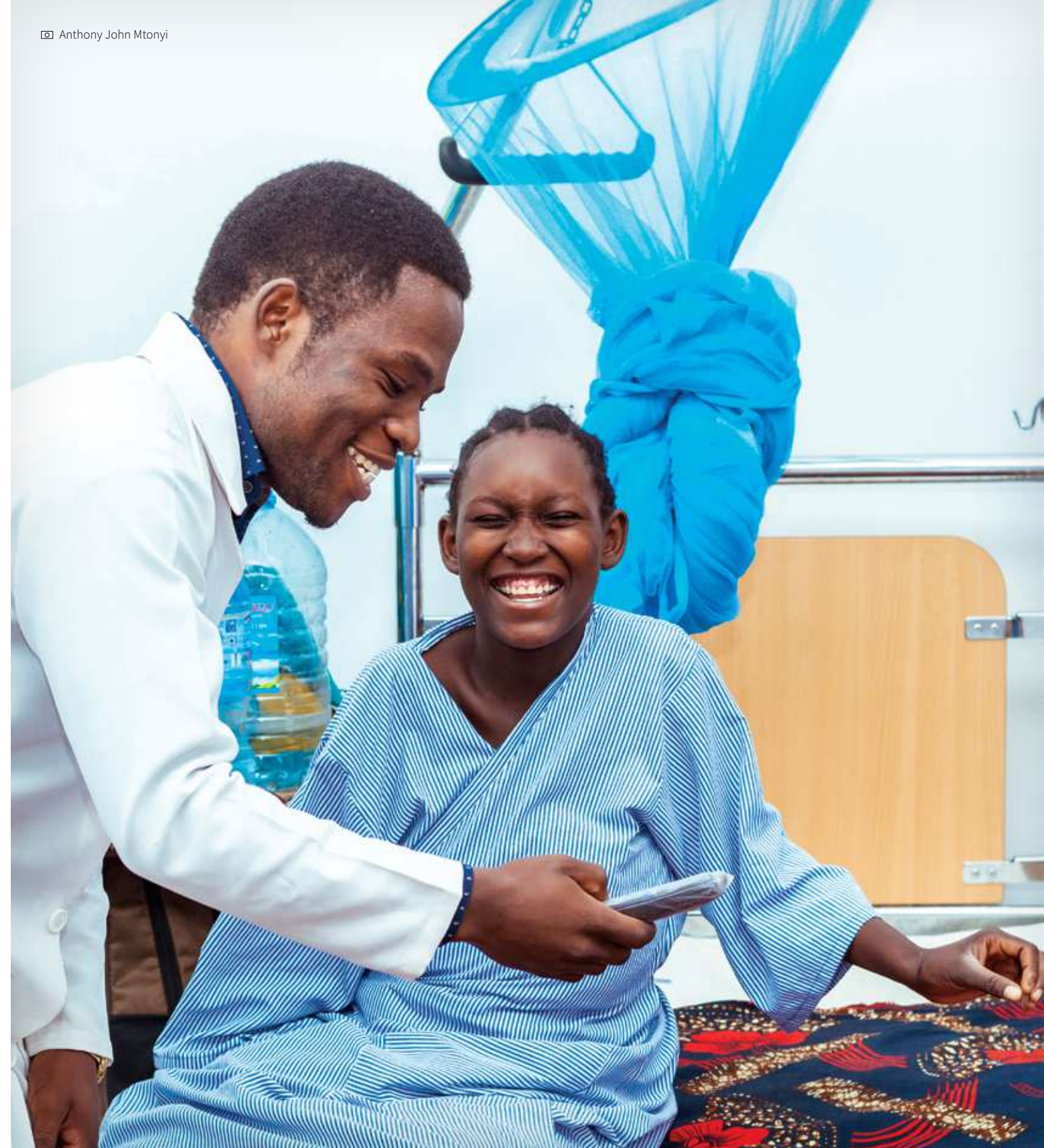
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**DRC, HEAL Africa** — *Lupasa stocks the pharmacy at Masuika Hospital in the Democratic Republic of Congo. A former fistula patient, she now works as a nurse and helps raise awareness of fistula in her area.*



© Lindsey Pollaczek

**Pakistan, Pakistan National Forum on Women’s Health** — *Dr. Pushpa Sirichand embraces Shamshad, a fistula patient, after a successful surgery at Isra University Hospital, Hyderabad in Pakistan.*



© Anthony John Mtonyi

**Tanzania, Nkinga Referral Hospital** — *During clinical rounds, Dr. Amos Mwazembe—a provider at Nkinga Referral Hospital in Tanzania—shows patient Seleviana how to operate a remote control. Receiving loving care from providers like Dr. Amos aids in a patient’s recovery journey, bringing hope and joy to women like Seleviana who have suffered needlessly.*



OUR DONORS

# The Heart Behind the Healing



## Honoring Ava’s Legacy: A Lifeline for Others

*This past year, a deeply meaningful gift arrived at Fistula Foundation—made not in the donor’s own name, but in honor of a beloved woman: Ava Yung. As a teacher and single mother to her son Ken, Ava devoted herself to helping others—with genuine kindness, warmth, and sincerity.*

*In her final years, Ava suffered from a rare neurological disorder that left her incontinent and unable to control her body. Ken, who cared for her, witnessed the isolation and the loss of independence this brought.*

*Ava’s experience echoed the suffering of women in far less resourced places.*

*In her memory, Ken chose to honor Ava’s spirit of hard work and perseverance with a transformative gift to Fistula Foundation from the inheritance Ava left him. “I hope that the donation—my mother’s gift—can help those in need, relieve them from suffering and give them a better life,” said Ken. Today, Ava’s legacy lives on—in every woman who walks out of surgery with the promise of a brighter future.*

## Where Community and Compassion Meet: The Dr. Mary Cushman Circle



*On the quiet, rocky shores of coastal Maine, a legacy of compassion ripples outward. The Dr. Mary Cushman Circle, based in the town of Castine, has supported Fistula Foundation for 14 years, providing more than 30 life-changing surgeries.*

*Named in honor of Dr. Mary Cushman—a physician from the town who, in 1922, opened a hospital in Chilesso, Angola—the Circle reflects her commitment to healing and community.*

*The members of the Circle keep Dr. Mary’s legacy alive through events like holiday fairs and garden sales. “There is such a need in the world,” said treasurer Elise Adams, “It’s wonderful to know that your foundation gives women a second chance at life.”*

## A First Paycheck, A Lifelong Promise from Gabrielle

*When Gabrielle Kotanidis—a young nurse from Tasmania—received her first paycheck, she wanted it to be more than a milestone. “I thought of it as a promise to myself—that I would use my career to do good,” she said.*

*After reading The Hospital by the River by renowned fistula surgeon Dr. Catherine Hamlin, Gabrielle was moved to act. “I’m a young woman and I could have very easily been born somewhere else in very different circumstances. I could really put myself in their shoes,” she said.*

*That’s why Gabrielle chose to donate her first paycheck in its entirety to Fistula Foundation, turning her hard-earned wages into life-changing care for women she may never meet, but will always carry in her heart.*



## Finding Strength in Giving: Nechama’s Journey



*Nechama Liss-Levinson—a psychologist from Washington, D.C.—believes in every challenge there is opportunity. So when she began chemotherapy for colon cancer, she turned each round into a moment of giving. “When you volunteer or help others, you begin to see other people’s lives and it puts your problems in perspective,” she said.*

*She began treatment in February—the month she’d given birth to both of her daughters. In their honor, and in gratitude for the care she’d received, Nechama gave to Fistula Foundation. “It was important to me. I had so much access to care, and I wanted to help women who otherwise would not have access to care.”*



## OUR TEAM

# A Bridge to Healing and Care

This is the team that turns your compassion into action. From raising vital funds to delivering them swiftly to trusted partners on the frontlines. From coordinating life-transforming surgeries to building countrywide treatment networks. Every person here is committed to careful stewardship of your generosity and works with focus and urgency to move this mission forward—ensuring no woman is left behind.

### TEAM U.S.

**Kate Grant**  
Outgoing CEO

**Pam Lowney**  
Incoming CEO

**Lisa Flattery**  
Deputy Director

**Lindsey Pollaczek**  
Chief Partnerships Officer

**Kelly Anderson**  
Chief Philanthropy Officer

**Darren Blankenship**  
Database Administrator

**Suntali Giri Dhanju**  
Donor Relations Associate

**Jhoanna Enriquez**  
Digital Strategist

**Hannah Garone**  
Director of Philanthropy

**Victoria Matelli**  
Office Manager/Bookkeeper

**Katie Nerod**  
Communications Associate

**Jaya Patten**  
Philanthropy Associate

**Keerthana Rajagopal**  
Senior Program Manager

**Jing Shi**  
Senior Finance Manager

**Lara Veldman**  
Program Associate

**Alyssa Vu**  
Senior Donor Relations Associate

**Tarah Walker**  
Director of Communications

**Donalda Watson-Walkinshaw**  
Director of Fundraising Operations

### TEAM DRC

**Pascal M. Vahwere**  
Program Director

**Clément Lofumbwa Balilo**  
Program Manager

### TEAM KENYA

**Dr. Esther Njoroge-Muriithi**  
Chief Program Officer

**Nelson Musa**  
Program Director

**Michael Juma Aduol**  
Program Officer

**Gerald Kennedy Okada**  
Driver

**Violet Okwaro**  
Office Aide

### TEAM TANZANIA

**Clement George Ndahani**  
Program Manager

### TEAM ZAMBIA

**Bwalya Chomba**  
Program Director

**Emmanuel Chiluba**  
Senior Program Officer

**Kalumba Kaputo**  
Senior Program Officer

**Jameson Kaunda**  
Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

**Victor D. Chibale**  
Driver

**Jordan Chileshe Chomba**  
Driver

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Board Chair

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Darren Lew

**William (Bill) H. Mann III**

**Charlotte Polle**

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**Dr. Fekade Ayenachew**

**Dr. Andrew Browning**

**Dr. Sunday Lengmang**

**Dr. Dolorès Nembunzu**

**Dr. Itengré Ouédraogo**

**Dr. Shershah Syed**



Jhoanna Enriquez

Members of the Fistula Foundation Board of Directors and San Jose, CA, staff gather at Fistula Foundation's headquarters in the U.S.



Muthoni Njuki

LEFT: Chief Program Officer Dr. Esther Njoroge-Muriithi visits with Everlyne, a patient at Cherangany Nursing Home in Kenya.

RIGHT: Program Manager Clement Ndahani follows up with Daima, a fistula patient.



Anthony Mtonyi



Muthoni Njuki

LEFT: Chief Executive Officer Pam Lowney dances with a fistula survivor at Women and Development Against Distress in Africa, an outreach partner in Kenya. RIGHT: Program Director Bwalya Chomba embraces Florence, the fistula patient on the cover of this report and in No Woman Left Behind.



Sumy Sadumi



YOUR GIFT AT WORK

# Earning Your Trust

We know that when you give, you’re placing your trust in us—and we take that responsibility seriously. That’s why 84% of every dollar goes directly to our partner network, funding life-changing surgeries and programs in the field. With a four-star Charity Navigator rating, a recommendation by The Life You Can Save, and an A rating from Charity Watch, we’re proud to be recognized for transparency, accountability, and the life-transforming impact your generosity makes possible.



This is the highest rating given by Charity Navigator, reflecting exceptional financial health, accountability, and transparency. With a four-star charity, you can trust that your gift is managed responsibly and used effectively.



The Life You Can Save maintains a small list of charities that it believes provide the greatest good for funds spent. As a recommended charity, Fistula Foundation is vetted for impact and cost-effectiveness, ensuring donations go toward proven, high-impact programs that save and improve lives.

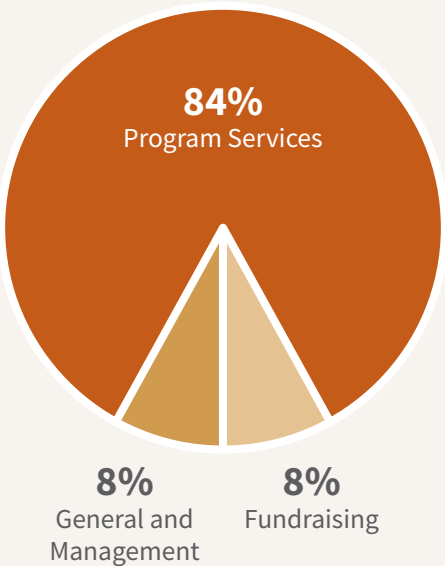


An ‘A’ rating from CharityWatch signifies excellent financial efficiency and transparency, demonstrating that the organization uses the vast majority of donations directly for program services rather than overhead.

## 2024 Financials

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
<b>Revenues and Support</b>			
Contributions	\$10,880,996	\$9,063,216	\$19,944,212
Net Investment Income (loss)	\$1,600,157	\$1,145,600	\$2,745,757
Net Assets Released from Restriction for Purpose	\$4,461,627	(\$4,461,627)	—
Total Revenues and Support	\$16,942,780	\$5,747,189	\$22,689,969
<b>Expenses</b>			
Program Services	\$16,533,204	—	\$16,533,204
Management and General	\$1,490,119	—	\$1,490,119
Fundraising Expense	\$1,702,784	—	\$1,702,784
Total Expenses	\$19,726,107	—	\$19,726,107
Change in Net Assets	(\$2,783,327)	\$5,747,189	\$2,963,862
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$13,060,896	\$13,542,886	\$26,603,782
Net Assets at End of Year	\$10,277,569	\$19,290,075	\$29,567,644

### Overall Spending in 2024



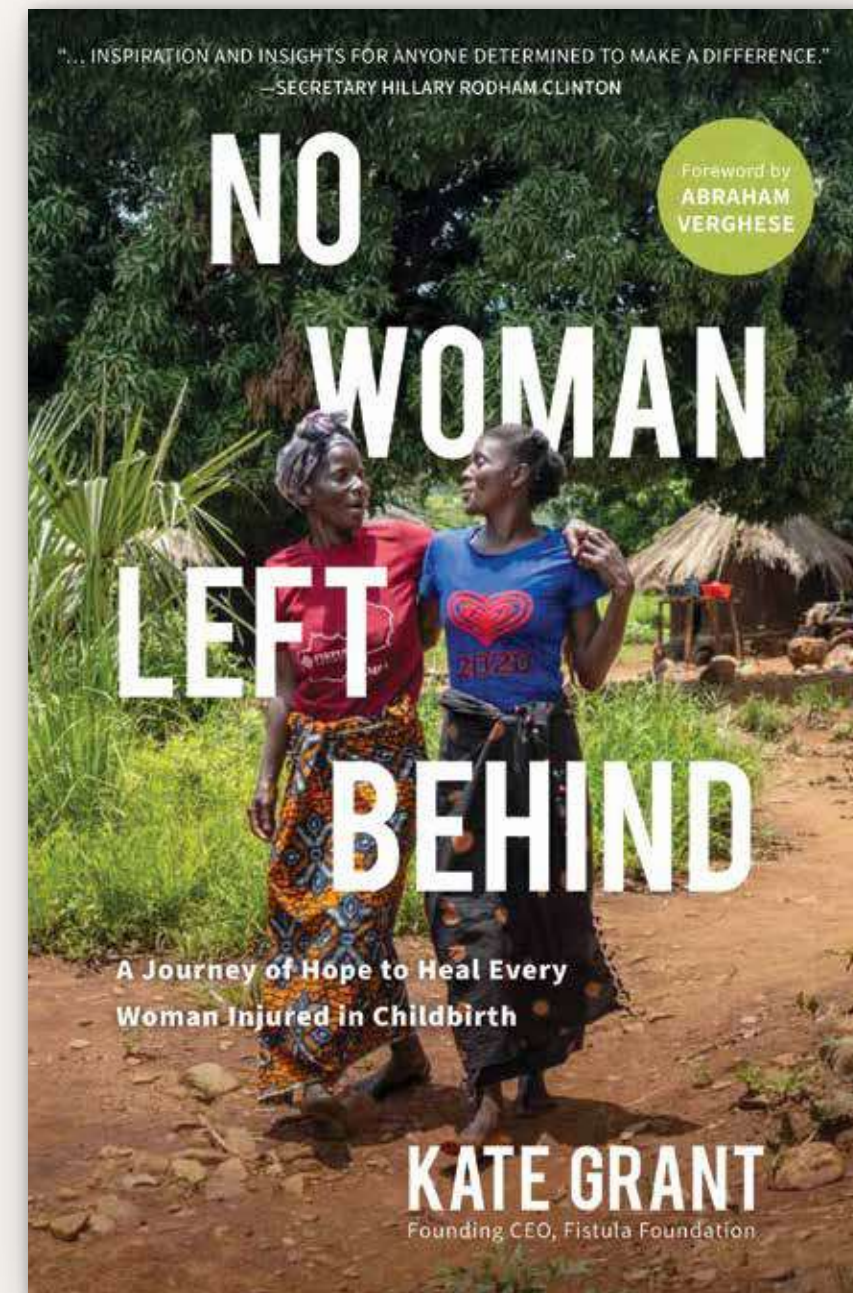


## A message from Kate:

*No Woman Left Behind* is in many ways a love letter to people like you who have made our story possible. Since this is the last annual report I'll be a part of, I thought it would be fitting to end with an excerpt from the final page of my book.

*Every day life asks each of us: what kind of person am I? I believe our answer is shown in how we treat other people. Our donors' selfless empathy is the rocket fuel that drives everything we do. I am inspired by the countless people who give amounts large and small to help women they will never meet, in places they will likely never visit, get their lives back. We share a reverence for the courage of women with fistula, who against the odds, persevere to emerge the heroes in their own story as their despair is turned into hope and healing. I feel so lucky to spend my days surrounded by such compassion and courage.*

*A woman with fistula is like you and me—she is someone's daughter, sister, wife, aunt, or friend. She wants what you'd want for yourself—a healthy future. Her story is unique and her own. Her struggles are deeply personal. And yet, there is one element that is often the same: surgery provides a hard-won opportunity for a new life—a rebirth. But the promise of curative surgery is a dream for far too many women. It doesn't have to be this way. Together we can create a world where no woman suffers needlessly for trying to bring a child into the world. My hope is that you'll join us in our efforts to ensure that every woman injured in childbirth gets the care she needs to thrive, so that there is no woman left behind.*



**100% of net proceeds from Kate's book will go to the Foundation's Love a Sister program, which provides free surgeries to women across Africa and Asia.**



[Learn more](#)





## With You By Our Side, The Best Is Yet to Come

Bound by hope, driven by compassion, and fueled by your generosity, we're reaching more women in more places than ever before. Your support is a lifeline for women like Florence (right) a patient from Zambia—who also featured on the front cover of this report—who was found by Beatrice (left), an outreach worker who connects women to the care that they need. Florence and Beatrice represent the women whose lives we seek to change. They will forever be memorialized as the faces of *No Woman Left Behind*.

### **Fistula Foundation**

1700 The Alameda, Suite 300, San Jose, CA 95126 | [fistulafoundation.org](https://fistulafoundation.org) | 408-249-9596

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