

onebyone

Inspire People. Empower Solutions. End fistula.

www.onebyoneproject.net

What is fistula?

Obstetric fistula is a devastating childbirth injury that affects more than two million women and girls living in poverty in the developing world (some as young as ten). Fistula is particularly prominent in Africa, Asia and some Arab states – robbing young girls of their childhoods and women of their dignity. Motherhood in these places is a dangerous role. In Swahili there is a word for pregnancy that means “carrying death” which is understandable when you learn that 1 in 16 women in sub-Saharan Africa will die in pregnancy or childbirth.

Obstetric fistula is caused by obstructed labor. Ninety percent of women living with fistula have endured the death of their babies during lengthy childbirth – sometimes over four or five days. Because of the prolonged pressure of the baby’s head on soft tissues, the mother is left with a hole from inside her body to the outside world. Through this hole she will leak urine, and sometimes excrement, continuously for the rest of her life. This debilitated woman, who has lost her child, is then shunned and pushed to the edges of society – unable to board a bus, enter a hospital, pray communally or even share a meal with people in many cases.

Can it be stopped?

As devastating as obstetric fistula is, it is both preventable and treatable. Treatment involves a surgical procedure that, in most developing countries, can be performed for \$300 or less. Prevention can cost even less – an emergency caesarean section costs just \$60 in these same communities.

Prevention activities are both medically-based as well as educationally-based. One By One searches for programs that include cooperation between medical professionals, community leaders and qualified non-governmental organizations working at the grassroots level. We look at programs aimed at emergency obstetric care and transport as well as more systemic issues like child marriage prevention and girls’ education and empowerment.



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What is One By One?

One By One contributes to the elimination of obstetric fistula worldwide by engaging the public and supporting those who work to treat and prevent fistula in the developing world.

We are a Seattle-based non-profit organization raising funds, empowering people and making grants worldwide.

Philosophy

Many of us respond to the suffering of others around the world with sadness, guilt and fear. Stories of the sick and the dying can leave us disempowered and wondering how any one person can make a significant difference in issues so vast.

At One By One we believe that small is not insignificant. We believe that it is possible to address global public health issues like obstetric fistula from the “bottom up” to meet the “top-down” work of multilateral agencies. To fulfill our philosophy, we harness the “smaller” and otherwise disparate resources and voices of those who want to help. We empower regular people to conceive of and implement concrete solutions that help manage aspects of treatment and prevention of fistula.

In addition to raising public awareness of fistula and encouraging widespread participation, One By One believes that our resources are best used to address the unmet needs of fistula treatment and prevention programs in the developing world. To this end, we make direct grants to support fistula treatment and prevention in Africa and beyond.

Program Areas

Innovative Public Engagement: One By One promotes innovative and entrepreneurial ways for individuals and organizations around the world to engage in the fight against obstetric fistula.

Effective Grant-making: One By One provides direct funding for activities that treat women affected by obstetric fistula, prevent women from suffering fistula injuries, and help women who have undergone treatment for fistula to return to full lives.

Resource Bank: As a result of the previous two programs, One By One will develop a resource bank of individuals, groups and innovations that can be freely accessed by parties interested in the prevention and treatment of obstetric fistula. We will take measures to ensure that the resource bank is widely accessed.

For more information and to donate, contact Heidi Breeze-Harris at 206.755.0044 or visit www.onebyoneproject.net.

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