



MALI

PHASE III



Country Situation at Baseline

- **Profile of fistula survivors:** In the health care facilities surveyed for a 2002 rapid needs assessment, most fistula survivors ranged in age from 12 to 40, with many between the ages of 15 and 25. Many were first-time mothers and had spent several days in labour. The majority came from rural areas, and a number had also travelled from other countries, including Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea. Few fistula survivors came from the capital city of Bamako, as most women there deliver in hospitals and are less likely to develop fistula.
- **Caseloads:** Dr. Kalilou Ouattara and his team of four urologists accept referrals from all over the country and perform most of the fistula repair surgeries in Mali, including surgery on complex cases. Missions from Doctors of the World assist in Mopti. Over a period of three years, 568 fistula cases were recorded in two health centres. Ninety percent of these patients were successfully treated.
- **Barriers:** Hospitals lack funding and the ability to provide transportation. There are few trained health care personnel, and supplies and equipment are scarce. Since the majority of clinically trained midwives practice in the capital, it is difficult to access skilled attendance for childbirth in rural areas.
- **Cultural context:** Women giving birth have little decision-making power, and are expected to defer to mothers-in-law and other family members when deciding where to give birth and whether to seek care if labour is prolonged. Many women and their family members are unaware of the dangers of obstructed labour.

SELECTED INDICATORS

Total population (millions)	13.4
Total fertility rate (2000-2005)	7.00
MMR (per 100,000 live births)	1,200
% births with skilled birth attendant	41
births among women 15-19 (per 1,000 live births)	191
IMR (per 1,000 live births)	119

Source: UNFPA State of World Population, 2004

Source: Findings from Nine African Countries, EngenderHealth and UNFPA, 2003

Facilities Available to Treat Fistula

1. Hôpital Regional de Mopti (Regional Hospital of Mopti)
 - Six out of 100 beds are reserved for fistula clients; two operating theatres.
 - There are no local surgeons available to perform fistula repair, but there are four missions per year from Doctors of the World.
2. Centre Hospitalier Universitaire du Point G (University Hospital of Point G), Bamako
 - The Department of Urology handles fistula surgery, which is conducted by Dr. Kalilou Ouattara and four urologists.
 - The hospital houses women awaiting repairs in a facility called the Oasis.
 - A separate ward for fistula patients would be very helpful, as capacity is limited.

Campaign Achievements

Policy

- Mali has begun to implement its National Strategy to End Fistula, which was finalised in January 2004. To further the strategy, constructive partnerships have been formed within the framework of PRODESS (the government's health and social development program) with IAMANEH/Suisse, Doctors of the World, UNICEF, WHO, and Save the Children

Advocacy & Community Mobilisation

- A video documentary about fistula is in the process of being produced. It will be used as an advocacy tool to foster interest among political leaders and decision-makers and participation in fistula prevention and treatment initiatives.

Research

- A rapid needs assessment was conducted by EngenderHealth in 2002, and its findings included in the *Findings from Nine African Countries* report.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, an in-depth needs assessment, which examined both health care facilities and the socio-cultural dimensions of fistula, was completed in January 2004.
- Fistula and related issues were highlighted during a national medical and surgical conference in Mali.

Treatment

- UNFPA is currently providing preliminary support to the University Hospital of Point G to expand its capacity. A new operating theatre, specifically dedicated to fistula repair, was renovated and equipped in early 2004. As a result of these upgrades, treatment capacity has been expanded from four to 16 cases per week, and Point G has been identified as a potential site for a regional training, research and treatment centre for the Africa region.
- Doctors of the World is providing support to the Regional Hospital of Mopti, including human resources, equipment, and medical commodities and supplies.
- International Association for Maternal and Neonatal Health (IAMANEH) subsidises the costs of treatment and hospitalisation for fistula patients in the Segou region, while the families of patients cover transportation costs.

Rehabilitation

- Delta Survie, an NGO working in the Mopti region, promotes the social and economic reintegration of women who have received fistula treatment, by providing training in textile production and offering the opportunity to work at an artisan textile workshop. Funds from textile sales are eventually expected to make the endeavour financially self-sufficient. To date, 75 women have been trained at the workshop and almost 200 sensitisation events have been held with women and their families.

Partners

1. Doctors of the World: Annual missions with a pool of 20 physicians who travel to perform fistula repairs.
2. Delta Survie: a local NGO that helps women return to their communities with a skill set they can use to generate income.
3. IMMANEH/SUISSE
4. Save the Children
5. UNICEF
6. WHO