



ZAMBIA



PHASE II

Country Situation at Baseline

- **Profile of fistula survivors:** In Zambia, early marriage and teenage pregnancy are common, especially in rural areas – on average, women are 18 years old at first marriage and 17 years old at first intercourse. Many women develop fistula during their first childbirth, often in part because they cannot access a health care facility. A significant number of fistula survivors are refugees.
- **Caseloads:** Fistula repairs are done on a regular basis at one rural hospital, two hours from Lusaka, where training workshops are held twice a year. Less frequently, physicians at two other rural hospitals and the Lusaka University Teaching Hospital perform repairs. Approximately 244 repairs are performed each year, with a success rate of 50% to 70%.
- **Barriers:** Inadequate funding limits the number of facilities that can offer fistula repair services, and few specialists are available, as doctors and nurses leave the country at high rates to find better salaries elsewhere. Fistula is often a low priority for doctors because of high patient workload, limited clinical resources, scarce bed space, and high incidence of other health problems. Transportation to health care facilities is also expensive and difficult to obtain.
- **Cultural context:** The decision to seek health care during labour is usually made by women’s husbands, mothers-in-law, or grandmothers, which often causes a delay in accessing care.

SELECTED INDICATORS	
Total population (millions)	10.9
Total fertility rate (2000-2005)	5.64
MMR (per 100,000 live births)	750
% births with skilled birth attendant	43
births among women 15-19 (per 1,000 live births)	145
IMR (per 1,000 live births)	105

Source: UNFPA State of World Population, 2004

Sources: 1) *Report on Obstetric Fistula Situation Analysis in Zambia*, UNFPA and Ministry of Health of Zambia, 2003;
 2) *Findings from Nine African Countries*, EngenderHealth and UNFPA, 2003

Facilities Available to Treat Fistula

1. Lusaka University Teaching Hospital
 - More than 1,500 beds, the largest hospital in the country
 - 11 OB/GYNs, but only one repairs fistula
2. Monze Mission Hospital, Southern Province
 - 250 beds
 - One expatriate OB/GYN trained in fistula repair
 - Holds fistula repair workshops twice a year, with assistance of Dr. Kelly (UK)
3. St. Francis Hospital, Katete, Eastern Province
 - One OB/GYN who has been repairing fistulas since 1996, but without any formal training



4. Chilonga Hospital, Northern Province
 - One expatriate doctor with some training

Campaign Achievements

Policy

- Currently in the planning phase, Zambia is developing a national strategy for fistula advocacy, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.

Research

- Two needs assessments have been conducted. The first was completed in May 2002 by EngenderHealth and included as part of the 2003 *Findings from Nine African Countries* report; the second was an in-depth nationwide survey conducted in November 2003.

Advocacy & Community Mobilisation

- In August 2004, a UN film crew filmed a fistula survivor's repair operation, post-operative care, and return to her home village. The program aired on CNN in January 2005.
- The Safe Motherhood Project, based in Zambia's Northwestern province, has integrated fistula into its community sensitisation programmes, as well as its trainings for safe motherhood action groups.
- The Reproductive Health (RH) Services project has integrated obstetric fistula topics into RH refresher trainings for health care providers.
- An article about obstetric fistula has been published in the "Reproductive Health News."
- In May 2004, a national dissemination meeting was held to publicise the results of the national survey.

Prevention & Treatment

- Through their community sensitisation programmes, the Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Services projects identify fistula survivors and facilitate their referral to health care centres offering fistula repair. The government has also encouraged other community groups to refer fistula survivors for treatment.
- Monze Mission Hospital has been provided with mattresses, a refrigerator, a stove, a table, and medical equipment and supplies (forceps, scissors, needles, and sutures).

Partners

1. Ministry of Health (MOH)
2. White Ribbon Alliance
3. Media