



# Freedom from Fistula

Annual Review 2017





# Welcome

## Ann Gloag OBE

I am delighted to present our 2017 Annual Review.

2017 was a year of tremendous success and difficult challenges.

We had great success in Malawi where, for the first time, we treated more than 400 fistula patients in our centre. 50% of them were identified through our Patient Ambassador programme which now has more than 100 former patients and family members working in communities to raise awareness of fistula and encourage good maternal health care.

In Sierra Leone, we are now the second busiest maternity unit in the country with more than 2,800 babies delivered in our hospital in 2017. We expanded our maternity capacity and were delighted to welcome HRH The Princess Royal to officially open the new extension.

Our ongoing training of healthcare professionals in all four countries where we work, coupled with our support to improve access to maternal healthcare, is also contributing to the prevention of fistula which is key to long term success.

2017 was also a year where we were not able to perform as many fistula surgeries as planned, in Kenya because of doctor and nurses strikes and in Madagascar due to a lack of a skilled fistula surgeon for three months. Sierra Leone also experienced its worst ever natural disaster, a landslide, when many of our staff and patients lost family members and their homes

Unfortunately it is the ingrained corruption in each of the countries in which we work, that continues to cause us ongoing problems. We stand firm and will not pay bribes (or facilitators fees, or thank yous)

so some things take a little longer than desired – but we always get there.

Our partners are vital in our success and we are grateful to all who continue to contribute generously, both financially and with 'in-kind' goods and services.

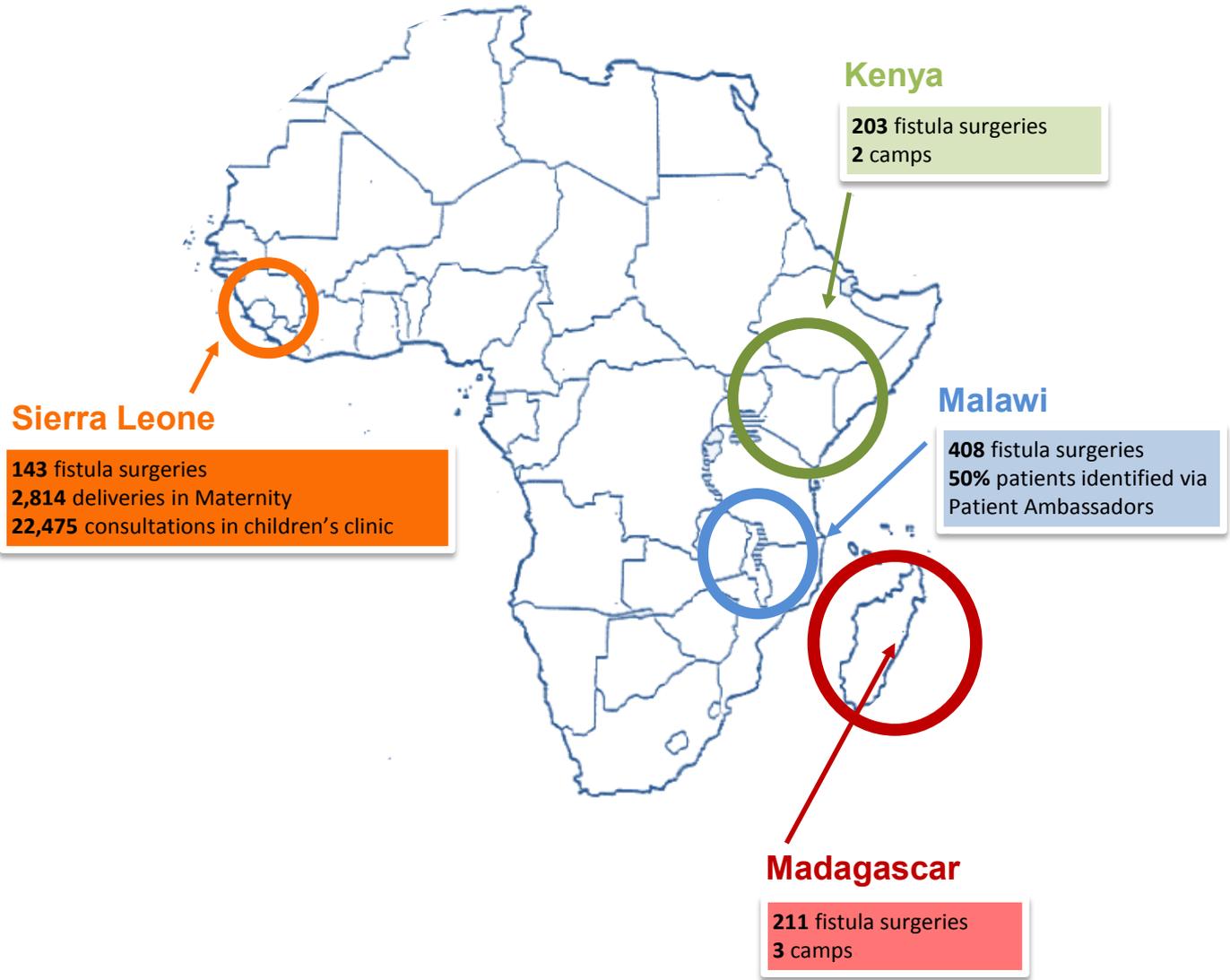
Only if we work together to ensure all women and girls have access to quality maternal healthcare, will we prevent fistula. Please continue on this journey with us.

Thank you.

**Ann Gloag OBE**

Founder

# Serving the women of Africa



# SIERRA LEONE – the impact



**143** Fistula Surgeries  
**2** Local surgeons in training

**22,476** Child visits to outpatient clinic



**2,814** Babies born  
**497** Births by Caesarean Section  
**433** Babies born to teenagers



# SIERRA LEONE

20,000+  
women and children  
treated

WINNER of Sierra  
Leone's 'best  
philanthropist 2017'



## Aberdeen Women's Centre (AWC)

2017 was our busiest-ever year at the AWC, when we treated more than 20,000 women and children in our fistula and maternity units and outpatient children's clinic.

We were honoured to have our first set of quadruplets born on the 8th March 2017 – International Women's Day – and they were all girls. Sadly one died at three months but the others are thriving and continue to receive care in our children's clinic.

To cope with the ever increasing demand for our maternity services, we built an extra floor on top of existing wards during the dry season. The extension houses a new ward, dedicated space for the ante-natal services, a large classroom and new offices for finance and admin teams. We also reconfigured the ground floor space to create an expanded post-natal ward, as well as a nurses changing room.

Additionally, national nurses received ongoing quality training in all aspects of specialised fistula and midwifery care at the AWC from our international team of trainer midwives and consultants.

Our Dream Girls programme expanded in 2017 and we were delighted to welcome Sydney-based Aminata Maternal Foundation as a partner in this programme.

We also partnered with The Girls Access to Education Programme (GATE) which was a nationwide education initiative that aimed to ensure pregnant teenagers in Sierra Leone remained engaged in education throughout their pregnancy and subsequently reintegrated back into formal education pathways post-delivery. AWC provided space for the education classes and support for the school reintegration.

Sadly, on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2017, Freetown experienced the worst natural disaster the

country has ever seen with flooding that led to a disastrous landslide . FFF, through the Gloag Foundation, co-ordinated more than 50,000 donated items in Scotland and sent two 40ft containers to provide relief items to those affected by the disaster in Freetown. Our team from Sierra Leone and the UK, worked with partners to personally deliver the relief items to families living in the emergency camps. We would like to thank all those in Scotland and beyond who donated to the effort.

The year ended on a high when, in November, AWC won the national achievement award as Sierra Leone's 'best philanthropist 2017' – a fantastic achievement for the whole team.

**“To attend a Gladi Gladi ceremony is to hear the joyful sound of healing, celebration and fellowship. These women and girls can now return home healed, ready to face a life worth living – a life free from fistula”**

# MARIE – SIERRA LEONE



Marie Mansaray first came to Aberdeen Women’s Centre in 2006 as a fistula patient.

As a result of poor access to maternal healthcare, Marie had only one living child from four previous pregnancies.

When she discovered she was pregnant for the 5th time, she came to the AWC to register for antenatal care services and discovered she was expecting twins. Due to her complex medical history, she opted for an elective caesarean section.

On the 17th April 2017, she went into labour before her surgery date and an emergency caesarean section was performed and healthy twins were born.

Marie and her husband are very grateful for the love and healthcare given to her at AWC. Marie believes that without AWC, she would have been forced to deliver her high-risk pregnancy at home and her babies may not have survived.



# MALAWI – the impact



**408** Fistula patients treated

**10** Sensitisation Trips  
**3** Fistula camps



**156** Patient Ambassadors



# MALAWI

2017 saw record numbers of patients at our Fistula Care Centre (FCC) in Lilongwe, with 408 fistula patients treated from all over Malawi and neighboring Mozambique.

The Patient Ambassador programme continued to be very successful, with 156 Ambassadors recruited by the end of the year who brought 50% of our patients for treatment. Donated bicycles also helped them travel further to identify patients.

We partnered with the University of Edinburgh and Nkhoma Hospital to expand their 'screen and treat' programme for cervical cancer into our Fistula Care Centre. Two FCC nurses were trained and all patients and staff are now screened for cervical cancer. The aim is to roll out this programme to partner clinics in 2018.

In March, we partnered with Sunny Money and FINCOOP to provide fistula patients with solar charging stations that enables them to earn an

Record number of  
fistula patients  
treated

income and also provides safe, clean light. This was a tremendous success with a 90% repayment rate on the £40 contribution to the value of the kit. This project will continue in 2018.

In June we began a social enterprise reusable sanitary pad project that provides employment for three former fistula patients, income-generation opportunities for all patients and income to the FCC for the sustainability of the project. It also provides free pads for all patients and some school girls. Sanitary products are expensive and difficult to obtain for an average woman who lives in the village and so this project benefits women and girls beyond our patient group.

In order to help build capacity in fistula surgery across Malawi, the FCC – as the centre of excellence for the country – partnered with the Ministry of Health and

Successfully building  
capacity across  
Malawi

UNFPA to develop a training programme for clinical officers, nurses and nurse anaesthetists in obstetric fistula treatment and care. The ongoing programme involves intensive training at the FCC, combined with the FCC 'mobile team' doing on-site assessment and training in the clinical officer's hospital.

In our quest to prevent fistula, we continued to fund safe deliveries at Mtengowatenga Catholic Mission Hospital and Achikondi Community Clinic. Our partnership with these projects enabled the safe delivery of 1,900 babies in 2017.

**“Our patients find healing, friendship, education and acceptance while in our care. Our patient PREP programme teaches life skills they can use when they return home, skills that will give them an opportunity to start enterprises, gain financial independence and help lift them out of poverty. We heal more than the fistula, we heal the woman.”**



# FRYNESS - MALAWI



Fryness Ngwire is a former patient and one of our patient ambassadors who received a Sunny Money solar charging station in March 2017.

Since receiving the solar station, Fryness has been able to light her house and also earn money by charging mobile phones for others in her community. This is the first time Fryness has lived with light since she was born. This solar station also provides security in her home as thieves are afraid to approach her home due to the lights that are visible from a distance

Fryness has used her earnings for transport and to purchase other household items. After repaying her £40 loan, Fryness hopes to save money to purchase land and run a farm.

Fryness is very grateful to have a solar kit. Her life has completely changed compared to her previous life. She never thought her life would be this good. She wishes for the project to continue so that other women in a similar situation have the same experience.



**“I am happy to be free from fistula, I never knew I would be cured. The centre saved my life because I thought I would never be cured. I am so grateful and I want the centre to continue having women like me. God should continue blessing everyone who works for organisation”**

*Fryness*

# KENYA – the impact



**203** Fistula patients treated

**61** Fistula patients treated in the routine programme  
**133** Fistula patients treated at camps  
**2** Fistula camps





# KENYA

2017 was a challenging year in Kenya as the 2016 doctors strike continued into 2017 and then the nurses went on strike across the country.

The main camp at Kenyatta National Hospital went ahead after the doctors strike finished and FFF participated in a camp at Gatundu Hospital, to mark the International Day to End Obstetric Fistula.

Freedom from Fistula also continued with a routine repair programme at two sites - t Mary's Mission Hospital and Kenyatta National Hospital until May and August respectively.

Unfortunately, the routine surgery programme at St Mary's was unsustainable due to lack of operating theatre space and FFF severed ties with Kenyatta National Hospital and stopped its funding for fistula repair due to concerns regarding patient care.

In 2018, we will start by doing camps in partnership with Safaricom Foundation and FDSA, with a view to restarting a regular programme again subject to finding a suitable partner hospital.



**At 97 years old, Risper was the oldest patient to have received treatment this year**

**We hold fistula camps offering surgeries to women from all **47** counties in Kenya**



# DAMA - KENYA

For the last 23 years Dama has lived in isolation and solitude in a small village. She sustained a fistula during her last delivery in 1994, after labouring for three days without help. The baby died within a week while still in the hospital, leaving Dama with a double tragedy.

She had no idea of how or where to get help and her travels became limited due to the constant urine leakage and bad smell. Her husband also died a year after Dama's injury and his death left her to look after four young children by herself.

One of the patient ambassadors identified Dama and brought her to Freedom from Fistula for treatment. After a 560km journey, Dama arrived deeply sad but, after surgery, she went back home victorious and smiling.

Her daughter Rose called to express the family's gratitude for what they described as a miracle.



# MADAGASCAR – the impact



**211** Fistula patients treated

**301** Patients screened



**3** Fistula camps



# MADAGASCAR



2017 was a busy year at our newest centre – the Fistula Care Centre (FCC) in Madagascar. A total of 301 patients were screened and the team performed surgeries on 211 patients over nine months.

We had a combination of a routine programme and three camps in the year (January, April and June) .

Through our partnership with UNFPA, we engaged with ASOS who actively searched, screened and provided transportation for patients to the FCC and the return journey to their villages after surgery. ASOS referred more than 60% of our patients in 2017.

We also conducted several staff trainings for both clinical and non clinical staff. We had international surgeons training clinical staff at the centre.

Our main tool for raising awareness is the national radio in Toamasina, and the national radio in Antananarivo..

We also carried out three sensitization trips around Toamasina (Vatomandry, Brickaville, and Fenerive Est) and one in Antananarivo.

**Continued staff  
training to build  
capacity in country**



**Successful  
partnership working  
with UNFPA & ASOS**



# CHARLENE - MADAGASCAR



At 16, Charlene was anticipating the birth of her first child. Like any new mother she felt a wide range of emotions, but the fact that her boyfriend abandoned her immediately after announcing her pregnancy only complicated her situation. Thankfully her family took her in and provided financial help for her prenatal checkups at the rural health centre near her home.

Once in labour she made her way to the rural health centre. In labour for days without any signs of progression, Charlene was only referred to a local hospital for a caesarean section once the baby stopped moving.

Unable to pay for the c-section at the hospital Charlene walked for four days to the next rural health centre. Shortly after arriving, she gave birth to a stillborn baby boy. Distraught with grief Charlene also began leaking urine continuously.

Shunned by her community, Charlene and her new partner never gave up hope that a cure could be found.

After over a year of searching they came to our Fistula Care Centre in Madagascar where she underwent surgery to repair her fistula, received counselling and was taught life skills to prepare for her new life after fistula.



**“I will go back to my village and tell people about my healing. I want to encourage others, because I believe there is always hope.”**

***Charlene***

# Financial Overview - 2017

		Funded by							
Project	Total Operating Cost	The Gloag Foundation <sup>(1)</sup>	UNFPA <sup>(2)</sup>	Fistula Foundation <sup>(3)</sup>	Maitri Trust <sup>(3)</sup>	Aminata Maternal Foundation <sup>(3)</sup>	Rotary <sup>(4)</sup>	Freedom from Fistula USA	Other Partners
Sierra Leone	£1,047,147	£882,748	£96,411		£29,932	£25,996			£12,060
Kenya	£198,281	£163,081			£7,515			£27,685	
Malawi	£654,696	£422,601		£108,198	£30,991		£79,661	£7,728	£5,516
Madagascar	£281,547	£148,481		£85,473	£8,958				£38,635
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,181,671</b>	<b>£1,616,912</b>	<b>£96,411</b>	<b>£193,671</b>	<b>£77,396</b>	<b>£25,996</b>	<b>£79,661</b>	<b>£35,413</b>	<b>£56,211</b>

(1) Funding from the Gloag Foundation includes donations to Freedom from Fistula Foundation ( UK ) and any direct support to the projects

(2) The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) provides grants which partially finance the fistula operations and family planning services in Sierra Leone. UNFPA funding is primarily targeted at fistula prevention and education.

(3) Fistula Foundation, Maitri Trust and Aminata Maternal Foundation partner in our fistula repair, maternal health, teenage girls and training programmes.

(4) Rotary International supported the training of midwives in Malawi.

The Gloag Foundation separately finances overheads, including fundraising costs, capital costs, administration and related expenditure.



# Primary partners

We are grateful to all of our partners who enable us to provide fistula treatment services for the women in Africa. Thank you.



Government of Sierra Leone  
Ministry of Health and Sanitation



Government of Malawi  
Ministry of Health



FISTULA  
FOUNDATION



Republic of Kenya  
Ministry of Health



World Food Programme



Kenyatta National Hospital  
Quality Health Care



St. Mary's Mission Hospital



WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE LIFE WORTH LIVING

# Administration

It is only possible to serve the poor and needy in Africa by directing and coordinating international activities from our main base in Perth, Scotland. Our essential, dedicated team manages all aspects of administration, including recruitment and selection of international staff, financial management, transport, logistics and strategic and tactical decision-making.

100% of donations go directly to our projects because all administration costs are borne by The Glog Foundation. This means that all donations to Freedom From Fistula are applied directly to where they are needed most – on the front line, treating the poorest of the poor in Africa.



# How to help

## Help Make A Life Worth Living

We are grateful to all our supporters and partners – private individuals, charitable trusts, businesses, local and international aid agencies and government departments – who help **Make a Life Worth Living**.

Here are some ideas of how you could help in the UK to meet the healthcare needs of women in Africa:

- Donate online via [www.justgiving.com/freedomfromfistula](http://www.justgiving.com/freedomfromfistula). If you are a UK taxpayer, you can make your donation go further by selecting the Gift Aid option.
- Making a regular donation via standing order. Please contact us at 01738 633 264 to request a standing order form, or email us at [info@freedomfromfistula.org.uk](mailto:info@freedomfromfistula.org.uk).
- Organise a fund-raising event (such as sponsored run, jog, walk, hike, cycle, swim, ...). For more ideas, visit our web page at [www.freedomfromfistula.org.uk/resources](http://www.freedomfromfistula.org.uk/resources).
- Arrange a corporate sponsorship / donation as part of your company's Corporate Social Responsibility programme.
- Remember Freedom From Fistula Foundation in your will.
- Post a cheque to our UK office at Robertson House, 1 Whitefriars Crescent, Perth, Scotland, PH2 0PA.

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# Contact us

Sign up to our newsletter & follow us on social media

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