



WORLDWIDE FISTULA FUND

HEALING WOMEN, RESTORING LIVES

Summer Update from Niger

Summer has been busy at the Danja Fistula Center. In July, a team of six people flew to Niger to assist the staff with patient care at the hospital. Over the course of the month, 40 surgeries were performed on women suffering from obstetric fistula. These women came to Danja hopeful that our team of medical experts would have the ability to repair their fistula and help them begin a new chapter to their life. Nearly every one will return to her village optimistic about the opportunities that lie ahead. One of those women is Habibati. We wanted to share her story with you.



Habibati immediately stood out to us as she did not look



Dispatches from the DFC

One of the main objectives of the Danja Fistula Center is to employ local Nigeriens. It is a big goal, as the area surrounding the hospital has a literacy rate of just over 10 percent. But there are stars in the region, and one of them is Nouhou Maone. Nouhou is in his third year of anesthesia training, and has one year remaining to become a fully licensed and credentialed provider. When we bring in ex-pat anesthesiologists to Danja, Nouhou only has one request: "please bring a textbook." As a trained nurse, he also volunteers his services in the ward. He learned English so that he could communicate better with visitors and his commitment to women is remarkable. And to top it off, Nouhou is the manager of a band and dance troupe. They perform every few months on the steps of the DFC to enthusiastic and appreciative fans.

like most of our patients. Her skin was much fairer and softer and her hair was longer and braided. Unlike many of the women who traveled from nearby villages, Habibati is Algerian.

Habibati had a pre-arranged marriage at 13 and became pregnant at 14. For three days she labored in her village. Eventually the baby passed and was stillborn. Immediately she started leaking urine and her parents arranged for her to have surgery in Algeria. She had three surgeries and none were successful. While in Algeria, she heard a news report from a North Africa BBC affiliate about a new fistula hospital in Niger and traveled to Danja in hopes of receiving another surgery.

Habibati's relationship with her husband is unlike that of many of the patients who come through our door. Her husband came to Danja with her and stayed at a place close to the hospital so he could visit her daily. While so many women with fistula are abandoned by their husbands, it was heart-warming to see Habibati's husband treat her with such care.

Communicating with Habibati required an extensive game of medical telephone and we were fortunate she also arrived with a friend who served as a personal translator. Our doctor spoke in English to our translator, who spoke in Hausa to one of our nurse's aides. The nurse's aide translated Hausa to Fulani to Habibati's friend, and Habibati's friend translated Fulani into Arabic for Habibati. Each response was translated back, from Arabic to Fulani to Hausa and then English. While time-consuming, the system worked and we were able to communicate with Habibati and prepare her for surgery.

It took Habibati some time to warm up to the surroundings in Danja because of the language barrier, but once the nurses learned to say hello in Arabic she quickly perked up. She received surgery and is recovering in the patient village. We all hope that this fourth surgery will be her last.

Please stay tuned to our [blog](#) for more news out of Danja, stories of the women we've served and updates on our progress.

To continue supporting the ***Danja Fistula Center*** -- and help bring healing and medical care to thousands of women living with the agony of obstetric fistula -- **[please make a tax-deductible one-time or recurring gift today.](#)** We thank you for your incredible generosity.



Dr. Intengre and Nouhou

Our crew in Danja planted 34 moringa trees on the hospital grounds in July. The edible leaves are highly nutritious and rich in vitamins A and B. They are excellent at fighting droughts, and they can produce a crop throughout the year, even under severe weather conditions. With careful watering, the leaves can be harvested in just two months. We plan on teaching the patients at the DFC how to benefit from this nourishing, resilient and dependable tree, including how to grow and upkeep the plant, as well as harvest and cook the leaves.



Moringa Tree

The Danja Fistula Center has an official ice cream! The Worldwide Fistula Fund was recently the beneficiary of a generous donation from [Little Man Ice Cream's Scoop for Scoop](#) program. This Denver-based ice cream shop donates one scoop of rice for every scoop of ice



cream it sells. With its donation, we were able to purchase food for the DFC to serve to our patients. Our cooks especially loved wearing their Little Man Ice Cream shirts in the kitchen.



Cooks at the DFC

Connect with the WFF

