



WORLDWIDE FISTULA FUND
HEALING WOMEN, RESTORING LIVES

Nicholas Kristof Visits Danja Fistula Center

Thanks to all the work and incredible generosity from all our supporters, Worldwide Fistula Fund was able to realize a dream last year in the opening of the Danja Fistula Center in Niger. Several years ago Nicholas D. Kristof first wrote about Worldwide Fistula Fund and recently returned to the center to write a new op-ed for his column in the *New York Times*.

The fistula center was the dream of Drs. Steve Arrowsmith and Lewis Wall, and in keeping with the original vision of having the center be run by Africans, Dr. Itengre Ouedraogo, a surgeon from Burkina Faso, has been trained to be its medical director. Danja Fistula Center handles some of the toughest cases of obstetric fistulas in the region and offers so much more to its patients than just surgery, with the reintegration program teaching women skills that will ultimately help them become better prepared and educated to what they can achieve in life.



Nicholas Kristof highlights the story of Hadiza Soulaye who doesn't know her age and was married off to her uncle before she started menstruating. A year after marriage, she was pregnant and developed an obstetric fistula during three days of labor. Not only did she lose her baby but when she returned home she was ostracized from her community and kicked out of her home by her husband. Recently, Hadiza learned of the Danja Fistula Center and received the surgical treatment that would allow her back into her life and community without the humiliation she had previously endured. However, on her return home, her husband summoned her to bed, and even though Dr. Arrowsmith had warned her not to have sex for six months after surgery, Hadiza was left with no choice and had the fistula torn open. As a result she was again thrown from her home by her husband and returned to the fistula center with hope that this injury can be mended again. Hadiza vows not to return to her husband this time. This kind of story exemplifies the need for education, which Worldwide Fistula Fund sets high among its goals to not only offer surgery but to help prevent surgery from ever being needed.

Without the generosity of our donors none of the work Worldwide Fistula Fund do would be possible, and we would like to thank everyone for their continued support.

[Nicholas Kristof's entire op-ed can be found here...](#)



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