



**WORLDWIDE FISTULA FUND**  
HEALING WOMEN, RESTORING LIVES

## Empowering Fistula Survivors in Uganda

The women and girls who come to the Reintegration Center in Uganda have endured years, some even a decade, of suffering, odor and ostracism. The Worldwide Fistula Fund (WFF) believes that treating fistulas requires caring for the whole person, encompassing physical injuries and psychological trauma.

In June of 2013, TERREWODE, in partnership with WFF, launched the Reintegration Center in Teso, Uganda, to provide postoperative care for fistula survivors. This month marks the first anniversary of the center, which offers counseling, nutritional support, literacy education and entrepreneurial and vocational skills training. Through these programs, women and girls are empowered to improve their physical, social and economic welfare.

In Uganda, approximately 65 percent of women and girls with fistula were victims of forced marriage and became pregnant in their adolescence.

Harriet Akello, 20, is one of them. When she went into labor, it took five days before she gave birth to a stillborn baby. Harriet survived, but her life as she had known it was over.



Harriet Akello

Her husband abandoned her after the first surgery was unsuccessful and she was required to rest for three months before a second operation.

"I felt like my world had collapsed," said Harriet, who would constantly break down crying during counseling sessions when she first came to the center.

Harriet found life-changing opportunities at the Reintegration Center. She discovered a passion for tailoring and was able to secure a loan using what she'd learned at the center in entrepreneurship and savings management. She paid off her loans making student uniforms for primary schools. Today, Harriet is progressively building her business as a tailor and even employing three other people. Her next goal is to save up to buy her own sewing machine and expand her business.

There is no greater inspiration for fistula survivors than women like Harriet, who have similarly suffered and overcome. With WFF's support, TERREWODE is currently developing an Obstetric Fistula Awareness and Advocacy Network that will train fistula survivors to be advocates in their communities. These advocates will support women and girls with fistula access treatment and reintegration services and spread awareness about how to prevent fistulas.



TERREWODE

**We need your help to make it happen -- please consider making a donation today. Your gift can help transform women's stories of tragedy into triumph.**



**For questions, contact us at:**

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