



TERREWODE

WOMEN'S FUND

Treating Fistula, Restoring Lives

2022 Annual Report



terrewodewomensfund.org

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Dear friends of Terrewode Women's Fund,

I am once again inspired by the resilience and dedication that our partners at Terrewode Women's Community Hospital demonstrated in 2022. Faced with periodic COVID spikes, an Ebola outbreak, soaring inflation, drought, and food insecurity, the Terrewode team continued to prioritize women and girls suffering from obstetric fistula.

Against these challenges, they provided more surgeries than ever before, expanded their outreach to help women in rural and remote communities, trained new community volunteers, and supported the formation of four new Fistula Solidarity Groups, bringing the total to 42 groups.

Terrewode Women's Fund also continued to grow, raising awareness of obstetric fistula with new communities and building a solid foundation of support for the life-changing work we help fund in Uganda. We also began to explore new pathways towards fistula prevention—something we will continue to pursue with Terrewode in the years to come. Uganda currently has one of the highest rates of fistula worldwide, making prevention critical to our goal of ending fistula forever.

As I reflect back on the past year, I am profoundly grateful for TWF's community of supporters who make all of this work possible. Your commitment to ending the suffering obstetric fistula imposes on women and girls, families, and whole communities is inspiring.

Thank you for joining us in this life-changing work!

With gratitude and hope,



Bonnie Ruder, MPH, PhD
Executive Director and Co-Founder

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MISSION. VISION. VALUES.

OUR MISSION

is to help end obstetric fistula and other childbirth injuries in Uganda through a long-term partnership with Terrewode, by supporting holistic treatment and access to safe childbirth education and services.

OUR VISION

is a world where all women are able to deliver their babies safely.

OUR CORE VALUES

Access to safe childbirth is a basic human right.

Healthy mothers are vital to strong families and communities.

Raising awareness about obstetric fistula will lead to a growing movement in support of ending this problem.

Obstetric fistula is an indicator of poverty, gender inequality and inadequate maternal health systems.

Through the use of voice, skills, and/or resources, everyone can contribute to addressing this problem.

No woman should die during childbirth or be left with a devastating injury such as fistula simply because she does not have access to basic and emergency obstetric care.

All women have a right to live with dignity and be economically empowered to care for themselves and their families.



WHAT WE DO

Terrewode Women's Fund is dedicated to restoring the health and dignity of women with obstetric fistula in Uganda, and to helping prevent fistula by supporting improved access to safe childbirth for all women.

We seek to build a community of concerned people who will invest in the work to **end this grave childbirth injury that is both preventable and treatable** yet continues to devastate the lives of girls and women in Uganda and around the world.

Through a **long-term partnership with Terrewode Women's Community Hospital**, based in Soroti, Uganda, we support community-based outreach to find hard-to-reach women, surgical repair services, and reintegration programs that allow women who have suffered with fistula to heal both physically and emotionally, develop income-generation skills, and successfully reintegrate into family and community life.

We invest in the work to prevent fistula altogether through support of Terrewode's **community-based activities around safe childbirth education and advocacy**, and their plan to build capacity at Terrewode Women's Community Hospital to provide high-quality maternal health care.



Uganda has one of the world's highest rates of obstetric fistula

2022 IMPACT

398

women received surgery and rehabilitative post-operative care at Terrewode Women's Community Hospital.



149

women received surgery supported by Terrewode at public hospitals.



402

women participated in Terrewode's Reintegration Program, receiving counseling, Safe Motherhood education, and economic empowerment training.

42

Fistula Solidarity Groups involving more than 1,000 women received Terrewode support and mentoring.

60

new community leaders received training in fistula awareness and prevention.



100

reintegrated women received mentoring in advanced advocacy skills and shared testimony with district leaders to improve the quality of maternal healthcare.



JUSTINE'S STORY

Justine Amigo lived with an obstetric fistula for over 20 years, since the birth of her third child.

She experienced complications while in labor at a local health clinic, was transported by motorcycle to a regional hospital, and had a Caesarean section after three grueling days of labor.

After delivery, it was clear Justine was leaking urine.

However, she was discharged without a diagnosis or plan for treatment. Back at home she experienced discrimination from the community, and her husband rejected her, forcing her to move back to her parents' home.

Over the years, she tried to find a cure multiple times, yet was never successful. She lost hope that she would ever be cured. Then in 2022, her adult daughter talked to a woman who herself had suffered from fistula and was recently treated at Terrewode Women's Community Hospital. The woman had received training in fistula awareness and patient referral from Terrewode staff, and she quickly connected Justine's daughter to the hospital via a toll-free hotline. Justine was successfully treated in October 2022.



“I don't know how my life would have ever improved without Terrewode – and all of their care was provided entirely free. I didn't have to pay a single coin.”

—Justine Amigo, fistula survivor

Justine is overjoyed to finally be dry and free from the “life-long bondage” of fistula. She is now committed to supporting Terrewode's efforts to help identify and refer fistula patients, and ultimately eliminate this devastating childbirth injury altogether.

Key components of holistic fistula treatment at Terrewode Women's Community Hospital include education, awareness, and advocacy training. Former patients identify and refer women and girls for fistula treatment and support them as they return to their communities. In addition, all fistula survivors receive education about their sexual and reproductive health rights, as well as tools and mentoring to advocate for their rights.

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

FILMS CAPTURE STORIES OF LIVES TRANSFORMED

We collaborated with videographer Kibuuka Muskisa and a Ugandan film team to produce two short films. The first highlights the holistic, patient-centered care Terrewode Women's Community Hospital provides and the impact it has on women and girls treated for obstetric fistula.



The second film tells the powerful and moving story of **Akiteng Grace**, a fistula survivor treated at the hospital during the COVID pandemic. Grace took part in Terrewode's renowned Reintegration Program, and has since built a thriving market business that allows her to support her family.



Special thanks to Lynne Dobson, TWF Board Director and humanitarian photographer, pictured here taking photos of Grace. Lynne took most of the photos in this report.

Our second annual Evening for Healing and Hope featured our two new films, as well as a special guest introduction by Abraham Verghese, author of *Cutting for Stone*. **More than 150 viewers** joined us, helping us raise more than \$100,000 to support the holistic care that women and girls receive at Terrewode Women's Community Hospital.

Working Toward Fistula Prevention

Bonnie Ruder, Martin Andrews of the International Fistula Alliance, and Terrewode staff **teamed up to conduct an in-depth assessment of maternal healthcare** in Soroti, Uganda and the nearby Teso District. They consulted with local midwives, obstetricians, and administrators at nine medical facilities in January **to better understand the challenges and gaps in maternal healthcare**. The team also held a workshop to explore fistula prevention activities and a future phase two at Terrewode Women's Community Hospital: **Terrewode Maternity**.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF OBSTETRIC FISTULA SURGEONS CONFERENCE

Terrewode Women's Fund Executive Director **Bonnie Ruder** and TWF Board Director **Suzy Elniel** both presented papers at the 8th bi-annual ISOFS Conference in Maputo, Mozambique, in November, along with **Alice Emasu**, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Terrewode Women's Community Hospital, who attended with **Monica Opus**, Terrewode's Human Resource Director. The ISOFS Conference brings together clinicians, social scientists, and fistula advocates to share knowledge and best practices, and to collaborate in order to move toward our collective goal of ending fistula globally.



Bonnie Ruder (left), Alice Emasu (center) and Monica Opus (right)

NATIONAL OBSTETRIC FISTULA SURGICAL WORKSHOP



Terrewode Women's Community Hospital held **Uganda's first National Obstetric Fistula Surgical Workshop** as part of their mission as a Center of Excellence to improve access to high-quality fistula treatment nationwide. Five senior Ugandan surgeons attended, along with Terrewode surgeons and two international experts. Workshop leaders introduced **innovations in fistula treatment** and demonstrated **advanced surgical techniques for complex fistula cases**. Participants walked away with new skills and knowledge that will benefit the women and girls they treat.

Reaching Out and Building Community with Ugandan Diaspora

Terrewode Women's Fund Co-Founder and Board Advocate **Sharon Howe**, and TWF Board Director **John Agaba** attended the **34th annual Ugandan North American Association (UNAA)** convention in San Francisco in September to raise awareness of Terrewode's work in Uganda and to inspire the Ugandan diaspora to join our mission to end fistula.

ABOUT THE HOSPITAL

Founded in 1999, Terrewode is a non-governmental, women-led organization dedicated to the empowerment and well-being of women in Uganda. It has supported holistic treatment of fistula and related childbirth injuries for thousands of women and girls. The five key components of Terrewode's obstetric fistula program are: Treatment, Reintegration, Prevention, Awareness and Advocacy, and Research.

Terrewode Women's Community Hospital was built with support from Terrewode Women's Fund and other partners. It opened in 2019. It is the only hospital in Uganda dedicated to caring for women and girls with obstetric fistula and one of just a handful of such hospitals in Africa.



Located just northwest of the town of Soroti, the hospital serves women and girls in eastern, central and northern Uganda—all living in poverty. Terrewode staff also provide education about fistula and safe motherhood to communities in their region.

Terrewode is women-led

All management positions at Terrewode Women's Community Hospital are held by women, along with key clinical staff, nurses and counselors.

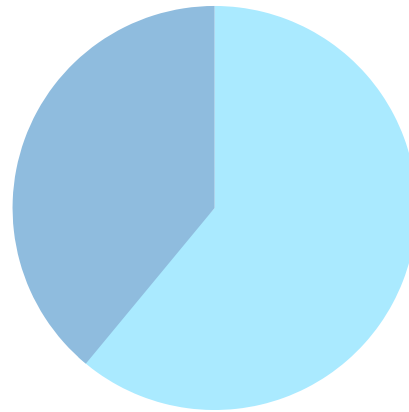


FINANCIALS

2022
TOTAL
REVENUE

\$642,400

Foundations & Corporations
39%



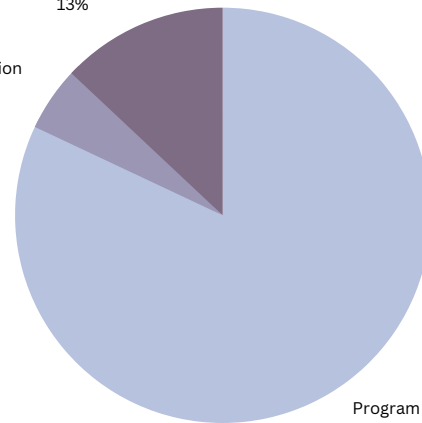
Individuals & Family Foundations
61%

2022
TOTAL
EXPENSES

\$492,800

Development
13%

Administration
5%



Program
82%

Net assets

at beginning of year

\$391,200

Net assets

at end of year

\$540,000

We are deeply grateful for our community of supporters who gave generously in 2022 to make our mission of supporting life-changing treatment at Terrowode Women's Community Hospital possible. In 2023, Terrowode plans to increase capacity, expand outreach to previously underserved and remote areas in Uganda, and provide fistula treatment to even more women and girls in need.

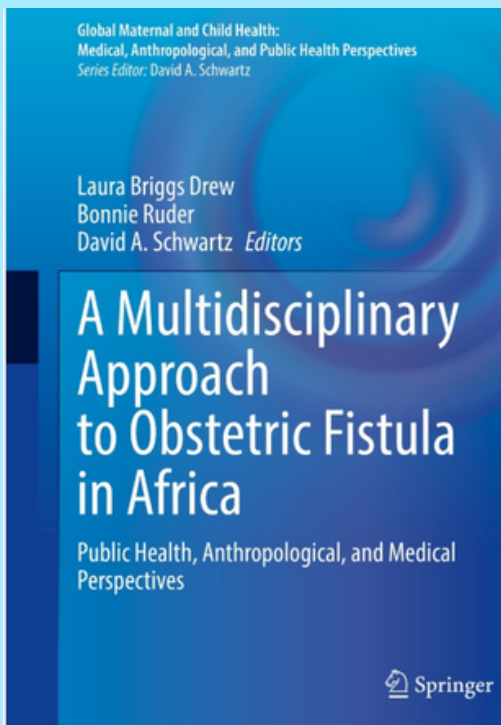
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Research

Characterizing Persistent Urinary Incontinence After Successful Fistula Closure: The Ugandan Experience; Rahel Nardos, Bonnie Ruder, Lewis Wall, Alice Emasu, et al., *American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 2022

The Promise and Neglect of Follow-up Care in Obstetric Fistula Treatment in Uganda; Bonnie Ruder and Alice Emasu, 2022

Making the Case for Holistic Fistula Care: Implementation of a Model Reintegration Program in Uganda. Bonnie Ruder and Alice Emasu, 2022. In: *A Multidisciplinary Approach to Obstetric Fistula in Africa*, Eds. Laura Briggs Drew, Bonnie Ruder, David Schwartz.



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terrewodewomensfund.org

Together, we can **end fistula**
in Uganda and globally.



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