

Together Women Rise Grant Report

Fistula Foundation Treatment Network (FFTN) Tanzania

Grant Period: 2024

Submitted by: Fistula Foundation

Date: February 15, 2025

Introduction

The Together Women Rise grant has played a vital role in advancing the work of the **Fistula Foundation Treatment Network (FFTN) in Tanzania** by supporting the training and empowerment of **Community Health Volunteers (CHVs)** to increase fistula awareness, identify and refer women for treatment, and reduce stigma in affected communities. The **\$25,000 grant for 2024** was distributed across **Maternity Africa and Nkinga Referral Hospital**, two key FFTN partners in Tanzania.

This report outlines the **impact achieved in 2024** through CHV training, community outreach, and direct support for women suffering from obstetric fistula.

Program Activities & Achievements

Maternity Africa

- Trained **243 Community Health Volunteers (CHVs)** in fistula awareness, case identification, and patient referrals. Of these, **75 CHVs** were funded by the Together Women Rise grant.
- Conducted a **large-scale community awareness campaign** across **26 districts and 305 villages** in Eastern, Central, and Lake zones.
- Reached over **8,000 people** through awareness sessions.
- Distributed **9,200+ Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials** (posters, brochures, and handouts) to enhance public understanding of fistula and treatment availability.
- As a result of extensive community outreach efforts, **Maternity Africa performed 225 fistula repair surgeries**, helping women regain dignity and reintegrate into their communities.

Nkinga Referral Hospital

- Trained **40 CHVs** specializing in **fistula sensitization and patient referrals**.
- Aired **1,603 radio spots** on more than **10 community radio stations**, disseminating vital fistula awareness messages.

- Organized **199 community outreach events** across **10 districts** in Western and Lake zones.
- Conducted **sensitization sessions at 20 hospitals, 39 rural health centers, and 173 dispensaries** to strengthen referral pathways.
- The community outreach events and sensitization activities enabled Nkinga to perform **153 life-transforming fistula repair surgeries in 2024**.

Budget vs. Actual Expenses

The table below summarizes how the **\$25,000 grant** was allocated and spent across Maternity Africa and Nkinga Referral Hospital.

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Partner	Activity	Budgeted Amount (\$)	Actual Expense (\$)
Maternity Africa			
	Maternity Africa Fistula nurse and driver to attend Ambassador training	360	359
	IEC Materials	882	1000
	Daily allowance for ambassadors during training	1,500	1,500
	Transport for community ambassadors`	4,200	4,102
	Accommodation & Meals for community ambassadors	1,800	1,800
	Facility Hire	4,032	3,926
Nkinga Referral Hospital			
	CHV Training	7,126	6,803
	Radio Spots	4,880	4,880
	IEC Materials	220	220

Total

25,000

24,590

Note: The minor variance in expenses will be carried forward to CY 2025

Success Story: The Impact of CHV Training

Zephania Senga: A Champion for Women with Fistula

Zephania Senga, an **anesthetist at St. Francis Mission Hospital in Morogoro**, has been a dedicated **fistula ambassador since 2023**. Through CHV training and community engagement supported by the Together Women Rise grant, he has become a key referral point for fistula patients in his region.

- In **2023**, Zephania referred **11 women** to Maternity Africa for life-changing surgeries.
- In **2024**, he continued his mission, identifying and referring **9 more women** for fistula repair.
- He works tirelessly to **educate local communities**, ensuring that more women access the free treatment available through FFTN Tanzania.

His work exemplifies the **lasting impact of CHV training**, where dedicated individuals become trusted advocates, **breaking stigma and saving lives**.



A Lifeline for Women in Need: Sarah Mshingwa's Dedication to Fistula Awareness

For five years, Sarah Mshingwa, a 42-year-old Community Health Volunteer from Bariadi District in



Simiyu Region, Tanzania, has been a beacon of hope for women suffering from obstetric fistula. Living in a region southeast of Lake Victoria, she has dedicated her life to serving vulnerable women at the district hospital, providing critical health education and outreach services.

Sarah's passion for maternal health was recognized by Maternity Africa's fistula coordinator during an awareness campaign in Simiyu Region. Seeing her dedication, the District Reproductive and Child Health Coordinators recommended that she undergo specialized training as a Community Health Volunteer (CHV) focused on fistula identification and referrals.

Through this training, Sarah learned how to identify women suffering in silence, connect them to life-changing treatment, and educate communities about fistula prevention. Her work is already making an impact—in 2024 alone, she successfully identified and referred seven women to Maternity Africa for surgery, offering them a second chance at life.

For Sarah, this work is deeply personal. She has seen firsthand the stigma, pain, and isolation that fistula survivors endure. "Many women in my community do not know that treatment is available. They believe their suffering is permanent. My job is to show them that healing is possible," she says.

Sarah's story is a testament to the power of CHV training and community-driven outreach. Thanks to dedicated volunteers like her, more women are learning that fistula is treatable and that help is within reach.

Her commitment continues to inspire others, proving that one person's dedication can transform lives, restore dignity, and bring hope to the most vulnerable women in Tanzania.

Conclusion & Next Steps

The Together Women Rise grant has been instrumental in **scaling CHV outreach, expanding community education, and increasing fistula referrals**. By strengthening grassroots awareness efforts, **more women are now aware that fistula is treatable and that free, high-quality care is available**.

As we move into **2025**, Fistula Foundation aims to:

- **Expand CHV training** to reach **more remote areas**.
- **Enhance digital and radio outreach** to further amplify awareness.
- **Support post-surgical reintegration programs**, helping women regain independence.

We deeply appreciate the support from **Together Women Rise** and look forward to continuing this **life-changing work** together!

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