



## Focus Fistula



ASSOCIAÇÃO FOCUS FISTULA MOÇAMBIQUE

[info@focusfistula.org.mz](mailto:info@focusfistula.org.mz)

[www.focusfistula.org.mz](http://www.focusfistula.org.mz)

[www.facebook.com/focusfistula](https://www.facebook.com/focusfistula)

# MOZAMBIQUE, FOCUS FISTULA ASSOCIATION

## Who we are

Focus Fistula is a non-governmental, non-profit association operating in the field of reconstructive surgery and obstetric fistula, offering free, life-changing treatment to vulnerable women, adolescents and children.

## Our mission

Contribute to improving the health of women and children by restoring their physical integrity and dignity, allowing them to reintegrate into their family and community.



# FOCUS FISTULA INTERVENTION AREAS



**Prevention** (maternal health, safe birth and fistula prevention)

**Treatment** (simple, complex and so-called “incurable” cases of obstetric and iatrogenic fistula; and reconstructive surgery for congenital malformations and trauma)

**Training** (of Doctors, Surgical Technicians and other healthcare professionals)

**Patient reintegration** (trauma assessment and recommendation for reintegration)

**Community Mobilization** (raising awareness in communities for prevention and treatment)

**Collaboration** (strategic partnerships and national and international collaboration)

**Advocacy** (policy influence; and media campaigns)

**Data and Research** (Database, Studies, Scientific Presentations)



# FISTULA PREVENTION AND TREATMENT PROGRAM

Focus Fistula contributes to the National Program for the Prevention and Treatment of Obstetric Fistula, working in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and with the support of national and international partners.

## Obstetric Fistula

In Mozambique, there are an estimated 2,300 new cases of obstetric fistula per year, with the health system's limited capacity to provide fistula repair services.



The country treats an average of 500 fistula patients per year, of which the Ministry of Health treats around 300 mostly simple cases, and around 200 mostly complex cases are treated by Focus Fistula

Focus Fistula has contributed free surgeries to patients in most rural areas; in the training of doctors, surgical technicians, SMI nurses and other health professionals; supporting the improvement of operating rooms and wards in provincial hospitals; and raising awareness in communities about prevention and treatment.



# RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY PROGRAM



Focus Fístula offers life-changing surgeries for women, adolescents and children, from different provinces of the country, suffering from complex or incurable cases, such as:

Sexual development disorders, congenital malformations, Rokitansky Syndrome, posterior urethral valves, prolapses, genital mutilation due to traumatic situations, and other traumas of the urological and urogenital tract.

These surgeries involve a specialized surgical team of surgeons, intensivists, specialized nurses and advanced equipment, and are generally very expensive.

Focus Fistula surgeries are free for the patient.

Focus Fistula supports the referral of these patients towards social reintegration.



# CONGENITAL MALFORMATION, ROKITANSKY SYNDROME, GENITAL MUTILATION

## CONTEXT

In developed countries, congenital malformations are diagnosed at birth and operated on as early as possible.

In Mozambique, the diagnosis is not made either in the delivery rooms or in postnatal consultations and the majority of children grow up without a diagnosis and only in adolescence do they come across the malformations and end up waiting 15-30 years for a diagnosis and treatment.

We also have many cases in the country of traumatic situations of genital mutilation, mainly the result of acts of violence against children related to harmful traditional practices and human organ trafficking.

People in these conditions face traumatic stigma and discrimination from society in general, especially during puberty, and some are rejected, abused and isolated by their families and communities.

There is no precise data on existing cases, causes and prevalence. Cases that are diagnosed are not treated and only those who can afford it can seek help from professionals in private clinics or abroad, as pelvic and genital reconstructive surgery is very expensive.

The development of reconstructive surgery in Mozambique as such is still at an embryonic stage and many patients remain without treatment for life.



## GENERAL RESULTS FF PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM

Activities	Results
	2018 - 2023
Health units supported by FF in the area of surgical treatment	15
Women seeking treatment at Focus Fistula	1,835
Fistula surgeries performed (simple, complex cases and those considered “incurable)	<b>940</b>
Reconstructive surgeries (Rokitansky and other DDs, Prolapses, Genital Mutilation in Children, Prostate Cancer)	32
National surgeons, doctors and surgical technicians who participated in FF	24
Other health professionals in the country who benefited from training in prevention and treatment	422
International surgeons and doctors who participated in FF* advanced surgical training	87
Community members who participated directly in FF community mobilization sessions	5,548

\* Through surgery workshops inside and outside the country



## STATISTICS FOR FOCUS FISTULA

2018 to 2023

**15**

Health facilities supported for obstetric care, fistula prevention and treatment services

**1,835**

Women seeking surgical treatment at Focus Fistula, observed



**940** surgeries

Life-changing surgeries for women and girls in Mozambique, mostly from rural areas

**24**

Surgeons and Surgery Technicians in training for improved surgery skills

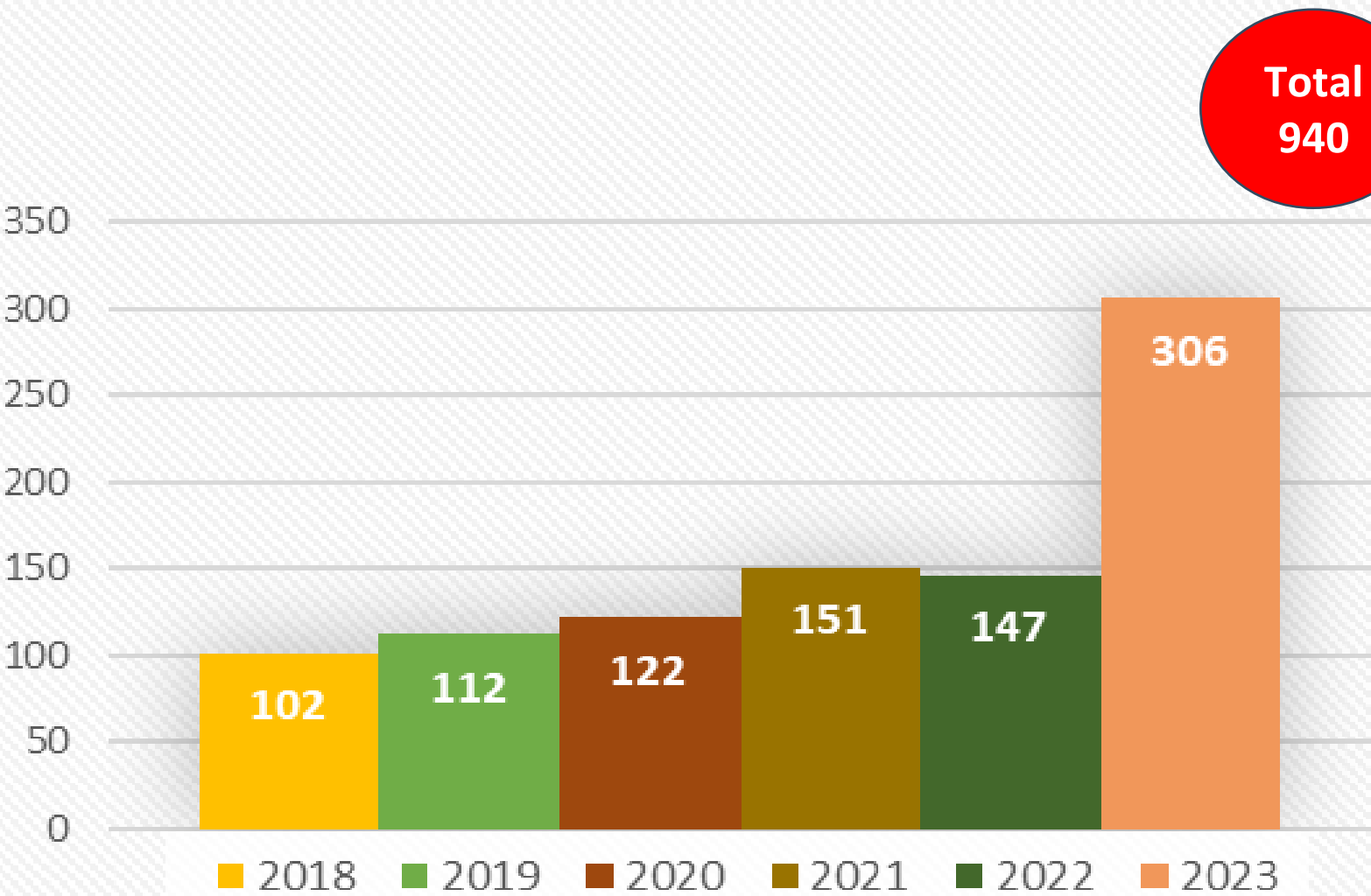
**422**

Other health providers trained on fistula and/or POP prevention and treatment topics

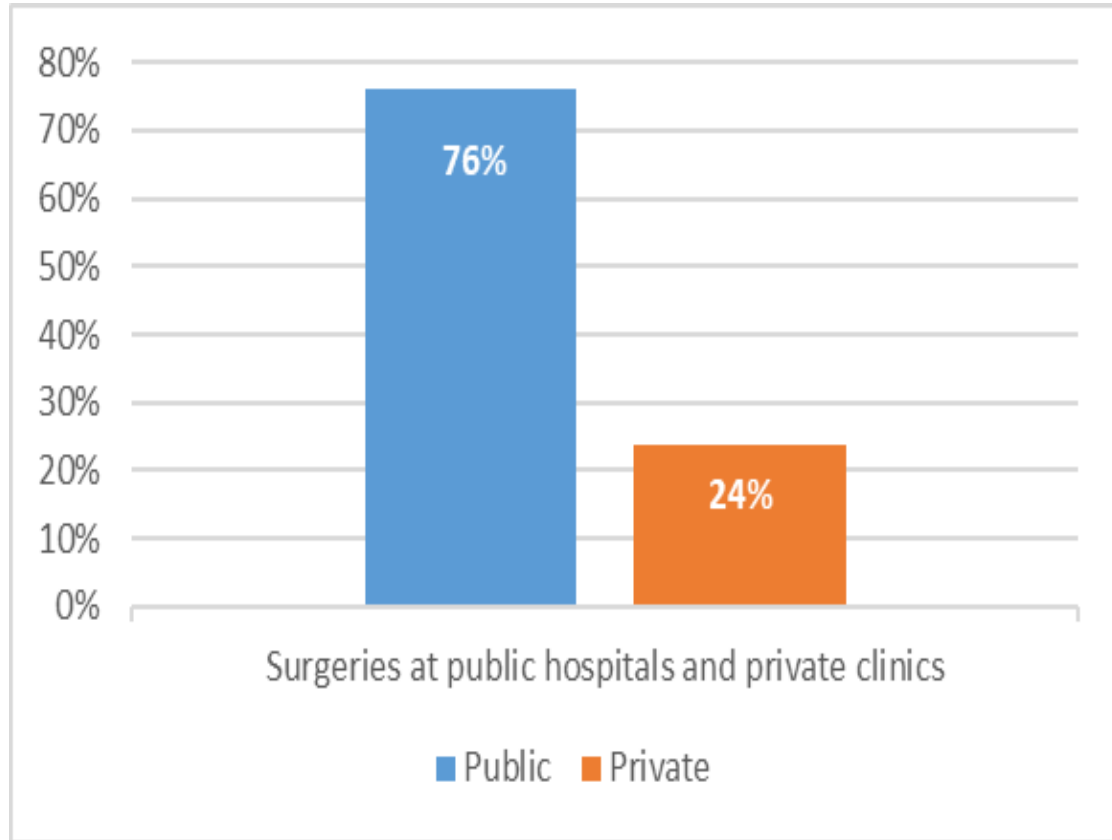


# Total of Surgeries Performed by Focus Fistula 2018-2023

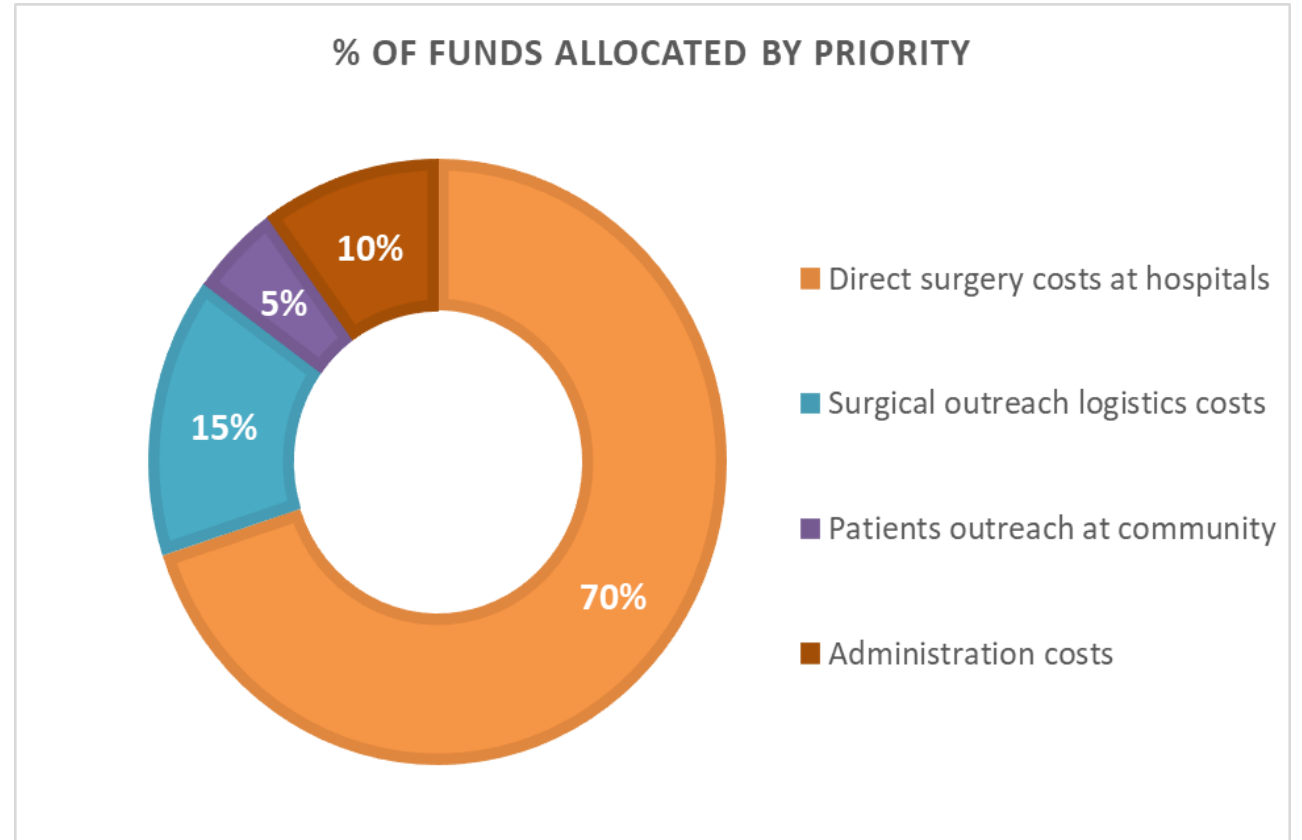
Data until December 30, 2023



## Surgeries at Public Hospital & Private Clinics



## Percentage of Funds Allocated by Priority



# **SOME IMAGES OF THE FOCUS FISTULA ACTIVITIES**







Complex case of Mayer-Rokitansky-Kuster-Hauser syndrome. Focus Fistula Surgery at Maputo Central Hospital.



Live reconstructive surgery for congenital disorders, in a surgeons' workshop organized by Focus Fistula





### **Norcia, 14 Years Old**

- Agenesia of the bladder, urethra, vagina and atopic and obstructed ureters. Advanced Obstructive Renal Failure, first operation at age 5 to relieve obstruction.

She benefited from pelvic and vaginal reconstructive surgery, carried out by Dr. Igor Vaz at the Maputo Central Hospital, and which was assisted live and in person by 120 surgeons, doctors and surgical technicians for teaching/learning purposes.

The surgery had satisfactory results.  
The smile on her and her mother's faces says it all!



FROM AN OBSTETRIC FISTULA SURVIVOR  
TO AGENTS OF CHANGE



“I want to start working again, doing business – I’m very good at doing business. But I still don’t have the resources, I’m still looking for solutions, but nothing will **stop** me now!”

Sara 45 years old

Operated by Focus Fistula after having sought help everywhere with no tangible support.

She is very satisfied with the intervention and the results she is getting. Today she is confident and optimistic to start a family.

**Sara Helena, 38 years old**



FROM AN OBSTETRIC FISTULA SURVIVOR  
TO AGENTS OF CHANGE



“Now I am well and **cured**. I want to study and maybe one day get a scholarship.”

Hanifa 18 years old

After suffering searching for solutions, she found hope at Focus Fistula for her surgical operation.

Today she is a happy confident woman who is satisfied with the surgery and by the medical team and staff.

**She is all smiles now!**

**Nilza, 24 years old**



## Patient's stories



When I was told by the doctors that it was impossible to have children due to the fistula, I was desperate...

This is my baby! Thanks to Focus Fistula I was cured from fistula and two years later I gave birth to a healthy and beautiful baby girl.



Focus Fistula



Public testimonials from women operated by Focus Fistula. The emotion and empathy between them and the guests, combined with tears of joy, filled the auditorium. They are the heroes of the day, for their courage and determination to changed their lives after enduring sorrow!

## Fistula Ambassadors Testimonials



Luzimar



Alice and her baby



Conceição



Dr. Igor Vaz and Dr. Elenia Amado (surgeons) with former patients who are Focus Fistula Ambassadors







## Pelvic reconstructive surgeries and fistula surgeries





# WORKSHOPS E SESSÕES DE FORMAÇÃO PARA CIRURGIÕES E MÉDICOS NACIONAIS E INTERNACIONAIS







**PARTICIPANTS (SURGEONS AND DOCTORS NATIONALS AND INTERNATIONALS), SPECIALIST TRAINERS, FOCUS FISTULA AND HCM ORGANIZING TEAM WITH THE IRISH AMBASSADOR, REPRESENTATIVES FROM MISAU, THE EMBASSY OF IRELAND AND THE CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSION**



**Training of national and international surgeons in fistula and reconstructive surgery**





## Fistula Patient's Trauma Evaluation

Trauma evaluation of 19 fistula patient before and after surgery, by Dra. Isabel Soares, Psychologist-Therapist and one of Focus Fistula founders.



Dr. Isabel, evaluating patients after surgery

## Dignity Kit for Fistula Patients





## Radiofrequency and laser

During the Nampula surgical camp, Dr. Carla Becker used radiofrequency and light laser therapy techniques on patients to help stimulate healing and reduce pain and discomfort.

Dr. Carla, a Urogynecology Therapist from Brazil is helping Focus Fistula with an innovative study/investigation for radiofrequency on very scarred vagina for tissue improvement and to stimulate and accelerate healing of cells, previous and after surgery.

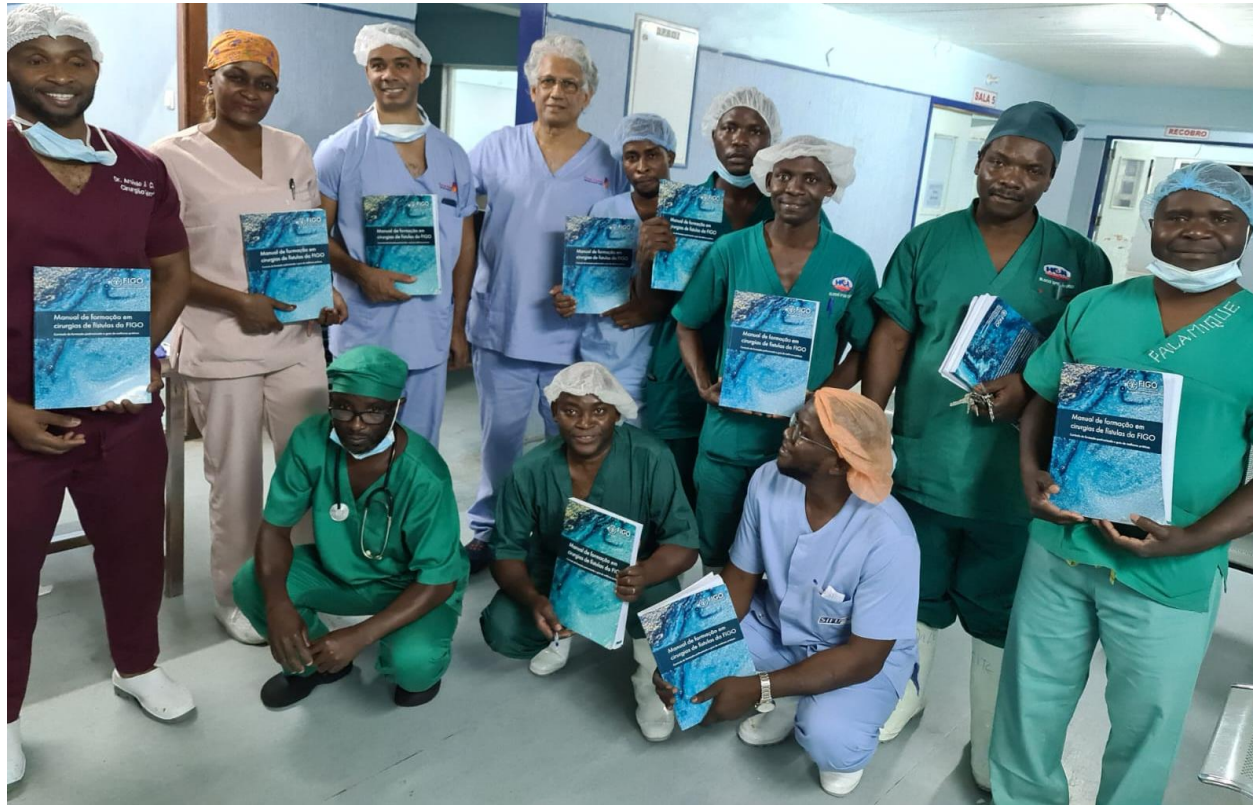


Dr. Carla Becker with patients at Nampula Central Hospital.





## Training in Nampula surgical camp



## Training in Niassa surgical camp



Surgeons and Doctors in training, receiving the FIGO Surgery Training Manual, translated to Portuguese



# COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

Focus Fistula gathered 2,500 high school students to talk about maternal health, early pregnancy and obstetric fistula



Session with operated patients in a surgical training and treatment mission in Niassa province



Dr Luisa Panguene, National Director of Medical Assistance, in a Focus fistula community session



Session with 50 community activists from various districts of the country





## Session “Obstetric fistula from prevention to social reintegration”

At Beira University, with 120 participants: University professors and students, health personnel, members of NGOs and churches.





Media coverage



Tratamento gratuito de fistula obstétrica  
Focus Fístula devolve bem estar e dignidade de mulheres em Sofala

**Cirurgias salvam mulheres de fistulas obstétricas**

Pacientes contam suas experiências

Profissionais de saúde em formação

**Gravidez precoce e fraca cobertura de unidades sanitárias preocupa cirurgiões de fistula obstétrica**

Medicos especialistas em cirurgia de fistula obstétrica e reconstrução pélvica mostraram-se preocupados com situações de casamento prematuro, gravidez precoce e a fraca cobertura de unidades sanitárias que tem contribuído para aumento de casos de fistula obstétrica no país.

**PAIS**

**BEIRA** - Falando a jornalistas nesta terça-feira, 18 de julho, no Hospital Central da Beira (HCB), no âmbito da campanha provincial de tratamento de fistula obstétrica e reconstrução pélvica, o cirurgião Igor Vaz, diretor da Focus Fístula, explicou que a fraca cobertura de unidades sanitárias tem dificultado o atendimento adequado de mulheres durante a gravidez.

**Apelo para partos institucionais**

Zambézia são as mais populosas e são as que apresentam mais casos de fistula. Eu penso que a maioria da população de Moçambique vive nessas zonas.



Media coverage: National TVs, National Radio, community radios, press.

Nurse Alcinda from Focus Fistula, radio interview



# MEDIA OUTREACH



## Associação Focus Fístula Moçambique massifica mensagens para o diagnóstico da Fístula Obstétrica no País

JVM

TEXTO:

FOTOS:



faz com que a mulher tenha o parto em casa ou demora ir a uma unidade sanitária ou seja, a demora de procura de serviços de cuidados de saúde ou por ignorância que não sabia que devia ter o parto na unidade sanitária, não teve uma informação a tempo para poder fazer essa consulta" Disse.

A médica foi mais longe e advertiu as adolescentes de modo a se prevenirem da Doença. "Prevenir o custo para tratar uma fístula em termos cirúrgicos é muito teluroso ou seja gasta-se muitos recursos para poderem corrigir a fístula, falamos de cirurgias que podem levar uma hora duas horas, há cirurgias que até levam 5 h." Frisou.

A Directora da Escola louvou a Iniciativa e apelou que as palestras desta natureza sejam frequentes.

"Foi uma palestra agradável, e necessária para educação, porque não se pode esperar ou pensar que a doença só atinge a pessoas adultas então adolescentes também podem sofrer desta doença, e é preciso de facto preveni-las dando este conhecimento do surgimento da Doença e da sua existência", Disse.

O dia Internacional para acabar com a fístula obstétrica, é comemorado anualmente para aumentar significativamente a consciencialização, intensificar acções, fortalecer parcerias e mobilizar apoio para acabar com a patologia, no contexto mais amplo de melhoria da saúde materna, e este ano a campanha é promovida sob o lema, "acabe com a fístula agora, invista em cuidados de saúde de qualidade, capacite as comunidades".



During the media campaign - International Day for the Elimination of Obstetric Fistula - Focus Fistula gave exclusive interviews on national TVs and Radio, and had coverage of its activities by various televisions, radios and newspapers.



## Parceiros



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



**FISTULA**  
FOUNDATION



**Government of Ireland**  
International Development Programme



**Canada**



**Direct Relief**



**EUROSIS**  
consultoria e formação em gestão



Focus Fistula