



**TERREWODE**

WOMEN'S FUND

*Treating Fistula, Restoring Lives*

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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# DEAR FRIENDS,

**It wasn't long ago that most people had never heard of obstetric fistula.** It was an invisible problem that quietly destroyed the lives of some of the most vulnerable women and girls in the world. Terrewode Women's Fund is immensely proud of the role we are playing in raising awareness about this devastating childbirth injury and creating access to life-restoring holistic treatment.

**Our young organization experienced unprecedented growth in 2021** – many new supporters from communities throughout the US joined us, and we were able to significantly increase our financial support for Terrewode Women's Community Hospital. We hired our first full-time Executive Director, who is deeply committed to providing strong leadership as we continue to grow and maximize our impact in the years to come.

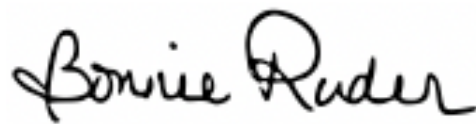
**With our vital support, our extraordinary partners in Uganda continued their life-changing work throughout 2021:** rural outreach to find women and girls who are suffering with fistula, high-quality surgical treatment in a state-of-the-art facility, and comprehensive reintegration support as women rebuild their lives.

**All of this is possible because of the compassion and generosity of the Terrewode Women's Fund community.** We are deeply grateful to our many supporters' willingness to step up and help put an end to the horror of obstetric fistula.

We hope that this report brings you closer to the work you are supporting and the profound impact it is having on the lives of women and girls in Uganda.



**Carolyn Anderman, MPH, PhD**  
President, Board of Directors



**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.

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## OUR VISION

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

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## OUR CORE VALUES

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Access to safe childbirth is a basic human right.

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Healthy mothers are vital to strong families and communities.

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

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

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

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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.

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

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# WHAT WE DO

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Terrewode Women's Fund (TWF) 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, 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 the new Terrewode Women's Community Hospital (TWCH) to provide high-quality maternal health care.



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

# ABOUT THE HOSPITAL

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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 treatment of fistula and related childbirth injuries and reintegration of more than 5,000 women and girls. The five key components of Terrewode's obstetric fistula program are: Awareness and Advocacy, Treatment, Reintegration, Prevention, and Research.



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*With support from Terrewode Women's Fund and other partners, Terrewode built the Terrewode Women's Community Hospital, which opened in 2019.*

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It the only hospital in Uganda dedicated to obstetric fistula repair 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.



# 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

## OUR FIRST VIRTUAL EVENT

With COVID cases rising once again in the fall of 2021, we decided to forgo all in-person gatherings. Instead, we held our first-ever virtual event. Our **Evening for Healing and Hope** was a huge success!

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**Over 150 viewers from across the country tuned in, donating more than \$100,000**—funds that directly support the holistic care women and girls receive at Terrewode Women's Community Hospital.

## INVESTING IN THE POWER OF COLLECTIVE IMPACT

**Ending obstetric fistula and ensuring that all women have access to safe childbirth will require commitment and investment from a broad range of individuals and entities.** As an organization, we believe in the power of collaboration and the resulting "collective impact." It is, therefore, a strategic priority to be a strong collaborative partner whenever possible.



**Seattle Rotary Clubs, Rotary International,** and our donors funded the installation of solar panels in the spring of 2021, helping Terrewode Women's Community Hospital conserve energy, cut costs, and run the facility more sustainably.

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And in May 2021, **TOGETHER WOMEN RISE** chose Terrewode as their featured grantee, raising both funds and awareness about the need for holistic fistula treatment, reintegration support, and prevention programming for women and girls in Uganda.



## SHARING KNOWLEDGE TO IMPROVE MATERNAL CARE

Terrewode organized an advocacy dialogue with midwives from 16 health centers to share knowledge and experiences of fistula survivors, especially adolescent and young survivors. Midwives talked about the causes of obstetric fistula, the most effective and practical prevention strategies, and a work plan for adolescent-respectful maternity wards.



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## ADAPTING TO COVID, AGAIN

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Terrewode Women's Community Hospital remained open throughout a second COVID lockdown in mid-2021, thanks to enhanced screening and testing for all patients and staff, the installation of large open tents on the hospital grounds for rapid testing of all women who arrive for fistula screening, and additional space for patients through the temporary repurposing of Reintegration Centre dormitories.

Other COVID measures included: a strict mask mandate, installation of touchless handwashing stations, restricted entry to hospital grounds, periodic staff testing, and in October, the Terrewode staff were finally able to access the Covid vaccine, a huge milestone for the team.

To ensure the ongoing safety for staff and patients, Dr. Tino, the hospital's medical director, led the creation of a COVID Response Committee and all staff members participated in COVID-19 training through the Ministry of Health. Costs at the hospital have risen as a result of these additional safety measures. Remaining open and continuing to safely serve women remains a top priority.

***“Women with fistula do not want to delay treatment – they are desperate for a cure. With additional COVID testing and PPE, we are able to safely provide the treatment they deserve.”***

Alice Emasu,  
Executive Director of Terrewode

# 2021 IMPACT

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# 289

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

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# 360

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

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# 27

**Fistula Solidarity Groups** received support, mentoring, and economic empowerment from the Terrewode team.



# 16

health facilities participated in Terrewode's fistula prevention and capacity building training for midwives.

# 285

women received surgery at public hospitals supported by Terrewode.



# JENIFFER'S STORY

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**Jeniffer Alupo was just 14 years old when she became pregnant and was forced to drop out of school.** When she went into labor, Jeniffer experienced a long and difficult delivery with no access to the emergency obstetric care and a cesarean section that she needed. Her baby died during the long delivery and Jeniffer was left with an obstetric fistula.

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**Jeniffer received treatment right away to repair her fistula, and also participated in Terrewode's Reintegration Program,** including training in animal husbandry and micro-finance. With a small start-up grant, Jeniffer purchased a goat.

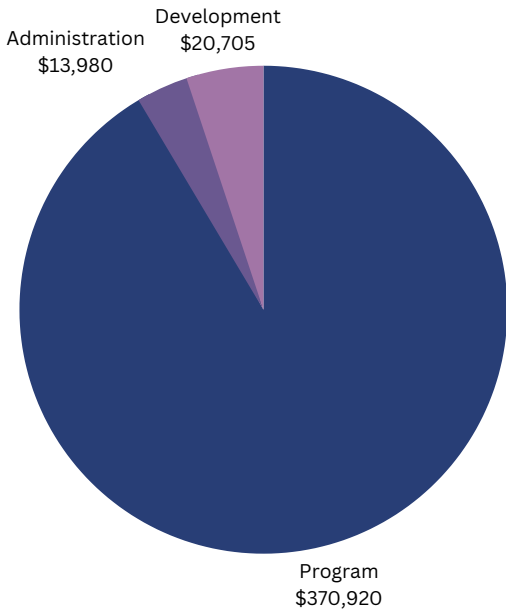
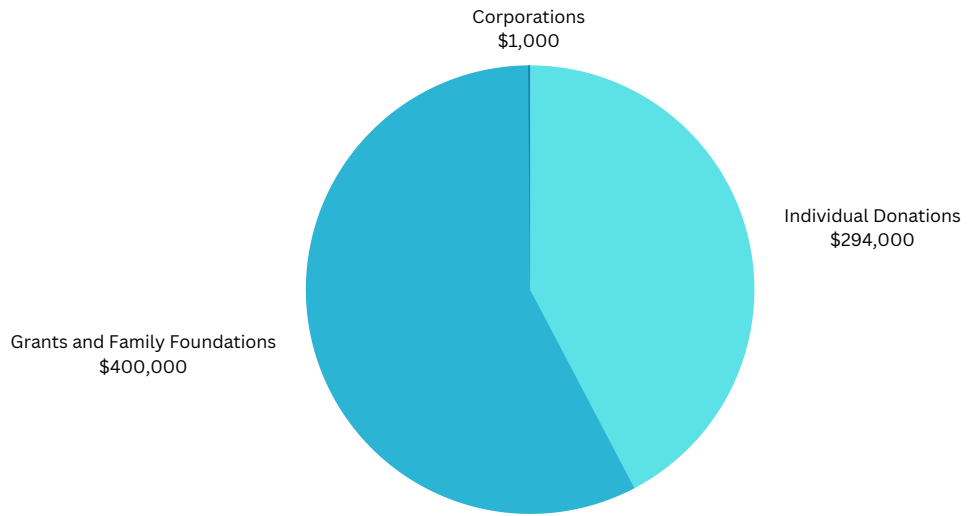
***"I'm hopeful that before the end of this year, this goat will have a kid or two. I'm planning to breed the goat and grow a business venture that will better my life."***

—Jeniffer Alupo, fistula survivor

**Teen pregnancy is a major risk factor for obstetric fistula,** as girls' bodies are not fully mature and ready for childbearing. Sadly, Uganda has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the world — 1 in 4 adolescent girls have had a child or are pregnant.

**Terrewode is working to lower the risks and rates of teenage pregnancy** by educating communities and families about the importance of keeping girls in school and delaying childbearing. They also bring the message directly to secondary schools, educating both girls and boys through their Music, Drama, and Dance program.

# FINANCIAL REPORT



**Net assets**  
at beginning of year

**\$49,068**

**Net assets**  
at end of year

**\$391,000**

*Terrewode Women's Fund relies on the generosity of individual donors to provide ongoing support for the life-transforming care Terrewode Women's Community Hospital provides at no cost to patients. Terrewode is making strides toward providing fistula care to even more women and girls in need.*

# TERREWODE WOMEN'S FUND

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**Monica Stephenson**, Seattle, WA

*Terrewode is a women-led organization.*



*In addition to Executive Director Alice Emasu (left) and Dr. Tino Okedi, medical director, all management positions at Terrewode are held by women. The hospital's medical surgeon, nurses, and counselors are all women. And the top three positions on the Board of Directors are reserved for women.*

*Special thanks to Lynne Dobson, TWF Board Director, who took most of the photos in this report.*



Terrewode Women's Community Hospital welcomed OB/GYN **Dr. Moses Cherop** in late 2021. Dr. Cherop earned his Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery from Gulu University in Northern Uganda. He also holds a Masters of Medicine in Obstetrics and Gynecology from Mbarara University of Science and Technology.

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



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