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## LIVING WITH FISTULA IN BANGLADESH

YOUNG GIRLS IN HOSPITAL

### NARRATION

Like many girls in Bangladesh, Shahin was married young, at age ten, and was pregnant at twelve. When her labour was obstructed, her in-laws waited two days before taking her to the hospital. (12")

SHAHIN ON CAMERA

### SHAHIN: (BENGALI)

*"The pain was unbearable. Then I had convulsions and lost consciousness. When I woke up, they told me the baby was dead. After seven days, urine started to leak out of me."* (14")

PATIENT UNDERGOING  
SURGERY

### NARRATION

The trauma of childbirth has caused a hole to form between Shahin's bladder and her vagina, leaving her incontinent. This condition, known as obstetric fistula, afflicts at least two million women and girls worldwide. Shahin became an outcast. (15")

SHAHIN ON CAMERA

### SHAHIN: (BENGALI)

*"People who used to love me said, 'Go away. You are smelly.' I was very sad and alone."* (6")

DHAKA COLLEGE HOSPITAL / DOCTOR DURING SURGERY	<p><u>NARRATION</u></p> <p>Now 21, Shahin is at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital to repair her birth injury. Dr. Sayeba Akhter heads the hospital's fistula centre. (11")</p>
DR. AKHTER ON CAMERA	<p><u>AKHTER:</u> (ENGLISH)</p> <p><i>"The most devastating maternal morbidity is obstetric fistula. Most of the fistula cases occur when women go into labour at home."</i> (9")</p>
DOCTORS AT HOSPITAL	<p><u>NARRATION</u></p> <p>UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, leads a global Campaign to End Fistula. Suneeta Mukherjee is a UNFPA Representative. (9")</p>
YOUNG MOTHERS / MUKHERJEE ON CAMERA	<p><u>MUKHERJEE:</u> (ENGLISH)</p> <p><i>"Fistula occurs because girls get married early—very early, 12, 13, 14, 15—and often have children very early, and by unskilled deliveries."</i> (11")</p>
PATIENTS / SHAHANAZ	<p><u>NARRATION</u></p> <p>Delays in getting proper delivery care can be devastating. Shahanaz developed fistula and also lost her uterus. (7")</p>
SHAHANAZ ON CAMERA	<p><u>SHAHANAZ:</u> (BENGALI)</p> <p><i>"I can never have children. A woman without a child has no dignity."</i> (5")</p>

DOCTORS IN TRAINING

NARRATION

The Dhaka hospital is training doctors from all over Bangladesh to address fistula. (4”)

DR. AKHTER ON CAMERA

AKHTER: (ENGLISH)

*“So we need to train the people around the country so they will go back in their own setup and they will also start treating the patients. That means the decentralization of the services.” (14”)*

WOMEN SEWING / LEARNING TO WRITE

NARRATION

Surgery is only part of the rehabilitation process. While they recover, patients are taught job skills. Many learn to read and write. (7”)

YOUNG MOTHERS

Women’s health advocates are also working to prevent obstetric fistula, by promoting later marriage, training health professionals, and educating the public. The global Campaign, now in more than 35 countries, aims to eliminate fistula by 2015. (14”)

DR. AKHTER

AKHTER: (ENGLISH)

*“Increasing awareness about the services—to take maternal services in time—is very important, not to get the girls marrying early. And also, when they are in labour, when anyone is in labour, it should not be prolonged. It should be taken to the maternal care centres.” (16”)*

NARRATION:

ANOU WITH DOCTOR

Anou, aged 16, is delighted to be going home.

ANOU ON CAMERA

ANOU: (BENGALI)

*"I want to start having children right away, but only two." (3")*

PATIENTS

NARRATION

So far, more than five hundred fistula patients have been rehabilitated in the Dhaka hospital. (6")

UN LOGO

This report was prepared by William Ryan for the United Nations.