



HRC45 Statement for Item 3 on Obstetric Fistula.

“The Millennium Development Goals sought to decrease maternal death and disability. Although we've seen a two-thirds reduction in maternal deaths in Africa and Southeast Asia—the areas where obstetric fistulae occur in greatest numbers—more needs to be done.”

Twenty years later the Sustainable Development Goals still do not mention Obstetric Fistula. We think this is a mistake. This failure adds to the silence and secrecy around this topic.

In 2018 a UN resolution¹, adopted by member states, without a vote, called for an end to fistula within a decade. The resolution also calls for increased commitments and investments to end fistula.

“Leave no one behind,” is a much publicised aim of the Sustainable Development Goals.

If Obstetric Fistula is not eliminated in the next ten years then this aim will be just more empty rhetoric.

This is a most devastating condition endured by an estimated 2 million young women in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

What is missing is the political will in the International community to end this horrific condition.

We call on all governments to help bring this suffering for women to an end and to bring the issue out of the shadows.

¹ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/147>