

June 18, 2009

To All Those Concerned

Obstetric fistula is a hole in a woman's birthing passage that leads to the opening of the wall between the vagina and the bladder, and sometimes rectum. It is caused by prolonged and obstructed labor without appropriate medical intervention or simple violence. A woman with fistula is left incontinent, losing control of urine and even feces.

According to recent studies by the WHO, there may be more than 2 million women with obstetric fistula, and the numbers keep growing. Performed by a specialist, it can be an easily curable condition costing only about 30,000JY to 50,000JY per case.

Many of us have yet had the opportunity to hear about obstetric fistula here in Japan, but I heartily applaud the fact that Hamlin Fistula Japan, Japan's first and only support group for girl children and women with fistula, now in its fourth year, is celebrating the Hamlin Fistula Group's 50th anniversary this year.

I fully support their cause which is to eradicate obstetric fistula from the face of this earth, and in accordance with our communal and global goal of achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goal 5 (Improve Maternal Health) would like to ask any and everyone to contribute to, and partake in this movement.



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