

Uganda has 23 surgeons for 1,900 fistula cases

By Martin Kitubi

The health ministry has decried the inadequate obstetric fistula surgeons that would champion the fight against the dehumanising health condition among women in Uganda.

The director for clinical services at the health ministry, Dr Charles Olara, told *New Vision* that the country has only 23 obstetric fistula

surgeons to handle 1,900 cases registered across the country annually.

Dr Olara said this on Saturday while addressing participants in the the obstetric fistula awareness walk at parliamentary gardens in Kampala. The walk was organised by Women at Work International, a local charity, led by veteran artiste Halima Namakula in partnership with Bank of Africa.

Olara blamed the inadequate numbers on the lack of specific courses at health training institutions.

What is fistula?

Fistula is a hole in the birth canal and rectum arising majorly from prolonged labour. Women with fistula are unable to control urine or stool.

According to the World Health Organisation, more

than two million young women live with untreated fistula in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. It is estimated that one out of 50 women in Uganda has had fistula.

Fistula victims suffer from isolation and shame condition in the giving off of a bad odour.

It is common in young women, especially below 21 years, who conceive at an early age.



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