

GOEDELE LIEKENS, NATALIE IMBRUGLIA GO TO NIGERIA TO HELP UNFPA CAMPAIGN AGAINST FISTULA

BRUSSELS — From 8 to 12 December 2007, Goedele Liekens, Goodwill Ambassador for UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, and Natalie Imbruglia, singer, actress and spokesperson for the Campaign against Fistula, will go to northern parts of Nigeria to put their weight behind the worldwide campaign to help end fistula everywhere in the world.

Earlier, in April 2007, Ms. Liekens and Ms. Imbruglia organized an event in Brussels to support the Campaign to End Fistula. At that occasion, they made plans to do more to highlight fistula and seek solutions to it.

In Nigeria, the two women would meet with local health authorities and workers. They would also visit hospitals and new fistula rehabilitation centres and talk with the young women—often very young girls—who live with the maternal injury. Ms. Liekens and Ms. Imbruglia would then narrate the stories of these women to the international community, to maintain its focus on ending this humiliating injury.

A substantial sum was raised for the UNFPA fistula project in Nigeria through fundraising events in London with Ms. Imbruglia and Virgin Unite (Sir Richard Branson's Virgin Group's charity arm). During the late December mission to Nigeria, Ms. Liekens and Ms. Imbruglia would meet with some of the women and girls in northern Nigeria whose lives have been touched by the project.

"Safe motherhood is a right for all women throughout the world," said Ms. Liekens, who has campaigned against fistula for several years.



(L-R) Natalie Imbruglia and Goedele Liekens pictured on the roof of the Flagey building before the launch of the worldwide sensitivity campaign against Fistula, Thursday 26 April 2007 in Brussels. This campaign is organised by United Nations Population Fund and Elle Belgium. Photo: Nina Francesca