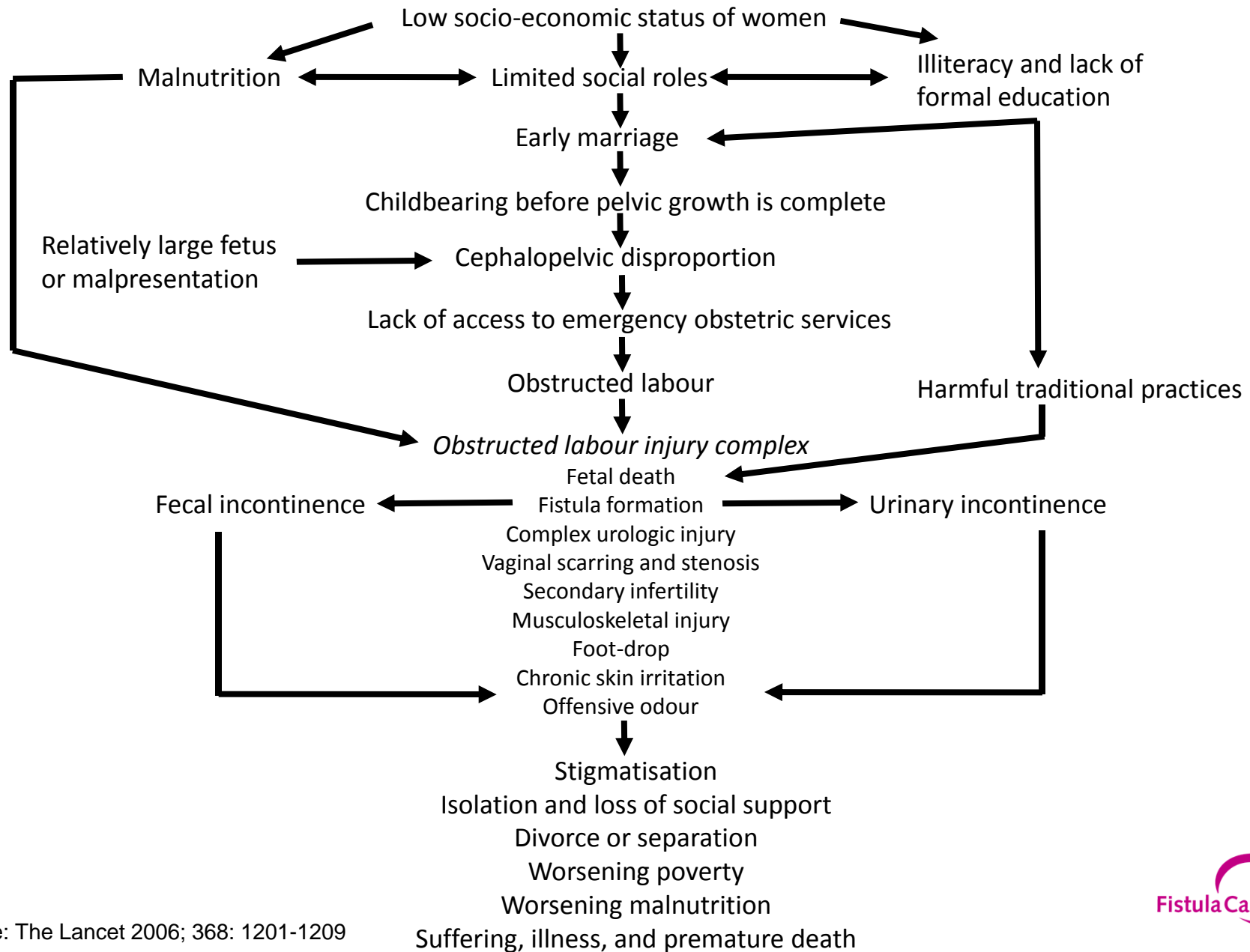


*Prevention and Recognition of Obstetric Fistula Training Package*

Module 10:  
The Roles of Families, Community and the  
Health Care System in Prevention and Care  
for Women with Obstetric Fistula



# The Obstetric Fistula Pathway





# Community Messages

- Obstetric fistula can be prevented
  - Educate girls and keep them in school
  - Eradicate harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation
  - Delay marriage and first birth
  - Promote voluntary family planning to space births and limit the total number of births
  - Assure access to a skilled birth attendant at every delivery and emergency obstetric care when needed
- Most women who develop obstetric fistula can be cured with surgical repair



# Promote reproductive rights

- Promote and support the rights of girls and women and gender equality
- Particularly in situations of conflict or humanitarian emergency, girls and women need protection from sexual violence



# Develop infrastructure

- Rapid referral, emergency funds and transport
- Emergency obstetric care for all women
- Medical and surgical capabilities for the repair of obstetric fistula



# Prevent the direct causes of obstetric fistula

- Create community awareness about skilled attendance and emergency obstetric care
- Prevent prolonged and obstructed labor
- Provide timely care for women who have had prolonged and obstructed labor

*"The sun should not rise or set twice on a woman in labor" – African proverb*



# The role of families

- Feed and educate girls as equally as boys
- Avoid early marriage arrangements and encourage delay of pregnancy once married
- Give equal decision-making power to girls and women for family resources and decisions about reproduction and family size
- Put aside money for emergencies
- Collaborate with neighbors and community when access to health services is needed



# The role of communities

- Organize transport and emergency funds for medical emergencies, especially for pregnant women
- Support the more needy families in the community and educate one another about complications in pregnancy and childbirth
- Work with organizations and the government to build roads or other infrastructure that are needed in emergencies
- Advocate from the government for high quality emergency obstetric services
- Accept and support women with obstetric fistula before and after repair



# The role of health extension workers (HEWs)

- Provide health education to families on core topics: family planning, antenatal care, institutional delivery, postnatal care, HIV and PMTCT
- Refer women to health centers for antenatal care and follow-up with information about birth preparedness, complication readiness and warning signs of problems in pregnancy and childbirth
- Assist in normal deliveries when a woman cannot get to the health facility
- Identify obstetric fistula at the community level, counsel the woman and refer for care



# The role of health workers at Health Centers and Pre-repair Units

- Support the health center by working with other staff to provide high quality care
- Provide health education to patients and the community
- Provide quality care to pregnant women and their families, including safe basic emergency obstetric care and the use of a partograph for every delivery
- Provide timely referral when comprehensive emergency obstetric care is needed
- Arrange transport and an accompanying person for safe referral
- Provide follow-up care for women who have had fistula surgery



# The role of health workers at the District Hospital

- ALL of the roles as at health centers PLUS:
- Organization of surgical services including blood bank or mobilizing blood donors
- Written feedback to the health centers about referrals and follow-up
- Supportive supervision of health workers at health centers



# The Obstetric Fistula Pathway

