

Hamlin
Fistula
NZ



Restore. Empower. Equip.

MARCH 2024

Change the life of
another woman like

Emnet

Paralysis is rarely something a woman in New Zealand experiences as a consequence of childbirth. Yet, in addition to losing her baby and sustaining an obstetric fistula injury, Emnet lost the use of her legs during an agonising and lengthy home birth.

Emnet's injuries were so severe that her life hung in the balance.

Falling into a coma, she was transported on a makeshift stretcher through the rain to a government hospital in Addis Ababa. From there, she was referred to Hamlin's Hospital, renowned for its specialised fistula treatment and care. However, upon arrival, Emnet's condition was too precarious for immediate surgery.

In addition to her physical pain, Emnet endured the emotional anguish of losing her stillborn baby and the humiliation of uncontrollable urine leakage. Emnet realised she could not move her legs.

She told us: *"My legs felt weak and unmoving. I was not able to move freely. I couldn't sit if I want to. I used to be a neglected woman."*

For five months, Emnet stayed at the hospital, receiving intensive physiotherapy, emotional support and nutritious meals. It was only after regaining movement in her legs and strengthening her body that she was deemed fit for the critical fistula repair surgery.

Will you give a donation to stop a woman's suffering and help her regain her life?



**Celebrating
Catherine's**

*100th
Birthday*

This year, in celebration of Dr Catherine Hamlin's heavenly 100th birthday, our goal is to restore the lives of 100 vulnerable women in Ethiopia, just like Emnet through holistic treatment and care.

Dr Catherine Hamlin was an inspirational humanitarian. Affectionately known as Emaye - or Mother in Amharic. She cared deeply for every woman suffering the horrific effects of obstetric fistula.

When she and her husband Reg first arrived in Ethiopia in 1959, they were shocked to see so many women suffering in agony and shame with fistula.

Equally as devastating as their horrific physical injuries, were the emotional and psychological effects of this cruel condition. Humiliated, ostracised by their communities and families and left to survive alone without an income, for most women it was a fate worse than death.

Over 65 years, Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia has transformed the lives of over 70,000 women through the Hamlin Model of Care. Catherine's pioneering approach remains central to the organisation, addressing every aspect of a woman's healing journey.

Despite this progress, an estimated 31,000 women still suffer from untreated fistula, with around 1,000 new cases each year.



Emnet's story embodies the Hamlin Model of Care, a holistic approach that encompasses physical, psychological, and emotional healing. Catherine's philosophy was clear: **"We don't just treat a hole in the bladder, we treat the whole patient with love and tender care."**

When a patient arrives at a Hamlin Fistula Hospital, she receives a Comfort Package, symbolizing the start of her healing journey. Included is a beautiful Hamlin blanket, hygiene items, a clean new nightgown, slippers and a lovely homecoming dress.

In addition to surgery, every woman receives a tailored program which includes counselling, physiotherapy, nutrition, numeracy and literacy skills and vocational and life skills training. When she returns to her community, she is empowered with health, dignity, confidence and the ability to earn an income.

Women are not defined by their fistula injury. Many go on to have a family and lead full, happy lives, thanks to the support of people like you.



It costs \$2,427 for one woman to receive fistula repair surgery, holistic care and the essential items for her recovery.



You'll be pleased to hear that Emnet has returned home and is recovering well after surgery. She is so thankful for the support of people like you, who have helped her to walk again and regain her life after fistula. She says:

"Here [at Hamlin's Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital], everybody is treated equally without discrimination. The staff treated me beautifully and encouraged and supported me to recover fast. They help me to do exercise every morning, feed me nice food, let me wear clean clothes and I showed great improvement.

Now I am able to stand on my feet and walk by myself. After my body got strengthened, I take the surgery for the fistula and now I am sleeping safe and dry. I thank every one of you who helped me cure.

Thank you."



In honour of Catherine's 100th birthday, your gift can restore the life of another woman like Emnet. Your generosity honors Catherine's legacy of love, care, respect, and support for every woman.

To make a donation

**Please complete the slip on your covering letter, or visit:
www.hamlinfistula.org.nz/donate**

5 ways you can support us this year ...

Donate

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To donate any amount, please complete the slip on your covering letter, or visit:
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Partner

Partner with us in raising awareness about the crucial need for fistula surgery and improved maternity care in Ethiopia.

You can make a difference by talking to your friends and family about Catherine's work. Share our posts on Facebook, encourage others to sign-up for our emails, host a High Tea, or consider gifting Catherine's biography, 'A Hospital by the River'.

We also welcome the opportunity to speak at your church or community group and gratefully accept items or vouchers we can auction/raffle at upcoming events.

Journey

Journey with us this October.

We are very excited to offer the **2024 Ethiopian Tour** to our valued supporters. This is a fantastic opportunity to personally see the lasting work of Drs Reg and Catherine Hamlin, and to explore the fascinating country that they so loved.

Eyayew Tours have organised an incredible 12-day tour encompassing the Hamlin Fistula Hospital in Addis Ababa, Desta Mender, the Hamlin College of Midwives, Yirgalem Hamlin Fistula Hospital, two rural midwifery centres in the Sidama region, the Great Rift Valley and wildlife, and some of the most exotic and authentic tribes in Southern Ethiopia.

To qualify to join us on the Tour, we ask that you have donated \$6,000 (or more), to Hamlin Fistula NZ during the lifetime of your connection with us. This can come as a one off donation, or top-up prior to your booking if need be.

If you are interested in joining us, please register your intent by emailing jayne@hamlinfistula.org.nz

Barefoot for Hamlin

MAY

Imagine walking for days, barefoot, through remote Ethiopian landscapes just to receive medical care. For women suffering from fistula, this is a reality.

This May, Hamlin Fistula invites you to go barefoot and walk in solidarity with these courageous women while fundraising to support their journey to healing.

You can tailor your challenge to suit, whether it's a barefoot walk in the park, along a beach, a run in your city, or even a day barefoot at work - every step you take will make a difference.

Ask your friends and family to support your efforts by donating to your personalised fundraising page.

What's more, your impact will be doubled! Thanks to a generous donor, every dollar raised for the Barefoot Challenge will be matched, up to \$10,000!

Ready to make a difference?
Find out more at:

**Double your
Impact with a
\$10,000
Donation
Match!**

www.hamlinfistula.org.nz/barefoot-challenge

SEPTEMBER

High Tea for Hamlin

Indulge in an Afternoon of Elegance and Impact this September!

Join us for High Tea in Christchurch or host your own event anywhere in New Zealand.

By participating, you're not just savouring delightful treats; you're spreading hope and raising awareness.

From cozy gatherings to lavish affairs, your High Tea can be tailored to your style and location. Whether it's at home, work, school, church, or your local community center, your event will make a meaningful impact.

Keep an eye on your email and our website for further information on the Christchurch event date and how you can get involved www.hamlinfistula.org.nz/high-tea



Meet Firomi: A senior Hamlin midwife

Firomi Shume is one of our dedicated and passionate Hamlin midwives working to prevent fistula and maternal death.

Now 26 years old, Firomi was born and raised in Mettu, a small town in West Ethiopia where one of the five Hamlin regional hospitals is located. It was from here that she was recruited for a Hamlin scholarship to the **Hamlin College of Midwives** in 2015.

Four years later, Firomi graduated and was deployed at Sibbo midwifery centre, 60km away from Hamlin Fistula Hospital in Mettu.

For the past three years, she has been working at the clinic leading the maternal healthcare service, along with another Hamlin midwife. Together they shoulder the maternal healthcare services of the clinic with 30 births each month. Firomi estimates she has attended over 2,000 safe deliveries since she began.

“The high-quality care we are providing at the clinic has brought significant change in increasing the number of mothers seeking our services. Also, Hamlin’s supportive packages to the clinic, added with the highly skilled treatment we are giving grabs the attention of the community and helped us to get their full trust,” reflects Firomi.

With her experience at the clinic, Firomi remembers many birth complications she has managed that would have required a hospital referral if it were not for her. ***“The high-quality training we got at the college equipped us both in theory and practice. We already had enough experience before graduation which makes us confident professionals serving our community in Dr Catherine’s legacy of affection and model of care,”*** she explains.

Firomi is still single and is prioritising her education and profession. Unlike many young women her age, she does not plan to be engaged in the near future until she studies a further degree in the health sector.

The downstream effects of a Hamlin midwife are remarkable; when a Hamlin midwife arrives, new cases of fistula drop to almost zero in nearby villages. **This is all made possible with the support of people like you.**



Prevent



Treat



Rehabilitate



Equip

