



A Year In Review 2025



“I am going back home healthy, without any shame. I will stand *confidently* and happily.” - Tiruwork



Because of you, Tiruwork’s health and dignity has been restored - and she will always be thankful.

In the quiet fields of Addis Zemen woreda (district), Tiruwork once spent her days herding cattle under the Ethiopian sun. Like many young women, Tiruwork dreamed of a future filled with family, love and good health.

Shortly after she got married, Tiruwork was delighted when she became pregnant. But when she went into labour, what should have been a moment of joy turned into a terrifying ordeal.

Tiruwork’s labour stretched on for days and doctors at a nearby health centre performed emergency surgery to save her and her baby’s lives.

Although she and her baby survived, Tiruwork was left with a devastating obstetric fistula which left her leaking urine constantly.

“When I experienced fistula, I was extremely sad. I felt hopeless and unable to raise my head with confidence. I was embarrassed and stopped going to church and visiting friends. I felt so alone.” - Tiruwork

Tiruwork’s newborn daughter gave her a reason to remain strong. “When I saw my baby she gave me happiness, even in my pain,” she recalls.

Tiruwork repeatedly visited her local health centre, pleading for a referral to a place that could help her. When she finally arrived at Hamlin’s Bahir Dar Fistula Hospital, she

was welcomed with love and compassion. She received fistula repair surgery and a customised rehabilitation program which included counselling, numeracy and literacy classes and vocational skills training.

“They [Hamlin staff] are the reason for my health and happiness. I will always be thankful for what I received from this hospital. Now that I am cured, I can go to church, markets and other places without embarrassment. Thank you.” - Tiruwork



Thank you for your generous support of Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia’s life-changing work. Because of you, the achievements highlighted in this 2025 Year in Review are possible.

- Joli & Jayne (Hamlin Fistula NZ)



These women have suffered more than any woman should be called upon to endure. To meet only one is to be profoundly moved and calls forth the utmost compassion that the human heart is capable of feeling.

- Dr Catherine Hamlin



Treatment

Your support is transforming women's lives after suffering from traumatic childbirth injuries.

For most women, a single surgery lasting no longer than two hours repairs their obstetric fistula injury. Your generosity ensures every woman arriving at a Hamlin hospital receives world-class treatment and loving care free of charge.

Pioneered by Catherine and Reg Hamlin, Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia is globally renowned for its surgical treatment technique and recognised by leading global health organisations. Thousands of health professionals from around the world have visited Hamlin's hospitals over the years to learn from our acclaimed clinical team.



Treatment FY25

4,119 Total life-changing surgeries

94% Obstetric fistula closure rate

In FY25, Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia performed 4,119 life-changing surgeries* at Hamlin's six fistula hospitals - an average of over 340 surgeries a month. The fistula closure rate was 94%.

In addition to obstetric fistula surgery, all Hamlin hospitals provide a range of gynaecological treatments for women, including advanced stage pelvic organ prolapse (POP) surgery.

In Ethiopia, the prevalence of POP is particularly high at almost 23%, or 1 in 4 women.

The impact of this condition on women is just as devastating as obstetric fistula and causes significant discomfort, pain and disruption to their daily life.

"To see a girl from abject poverty and sadness and sorrow suddenly become a new person - that's the joy that fistula surgeons get when they cure them."

- Dr Catherine Hamlin

* includes both obstetric fistula and prolapse surgeries



Project Zero, Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia's groundbreaking program to eradicate obstetric fistula, is already making a profound and transformative impact.

Following successful pilots in Ale and Didessa Woredas (districts) in 2024, Project Zero was active in three more woredas in 2025 - Seharti Woreda in the Tigray region, Fedis Woreda in eastern Ethiopia and Semen Bench Woreda in south west Ethiopia.

Thanks to your support, over 350 women with long-term untreated childbirth injuries have already been found and treated.

The key objectives of a Project Zero pilot are to find and treat all women with childbirth injuries and increase awareness of and make sustainable improvements to maternal healthcare.

Because of you, Abebech has a new life

"The transformation was profound. I felt a sense of liberation and I could finally look forward to the future with hope and joy." - Abebech

With no access to maternal healthcare, Abebech endured eleven days of excruciating labour before delivering a stillborn baby. She sustained a double fistula, leaving her incontinent of urine and faeces.

Abebech spent 15 years hiding in shame and isolation. She recalls: "The shame was overwhelming.



I asked my family to let me die rather than endure such a harsh existence. I spent years suffering in silence."

After a full year of treatment and rehabilitation at Hamlin's Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital, Abebech was finally healed and is so grateful to kind supporters like you.

"I am a new person. Please continue helping women like me. Your kindness truly saves lives."

- Abebech

Prevention



Prevention FY25

40,292 Babies delivered

65,274 Pregnant women received antenatal care

Your support provides life-saving maternal healthcare to women in rural communities across Ethiopia.

The Hamlin College of Midwives is widely considered the best midwifery school in Ethiopia.

Since its establishment in 2007, 294 Hamlin Midwives have graduated and been

“We are delighted to be graduating clinically trained midwives who work in their own home areas... who go back and help mothers in their own language.”

- Dr Catherine Hamlin

deployed to more than 90 Hamlin-supported midwifery clinics. In October, 23 BSc students and 29 MSc students graduated from the College, achieving a 100% pass rate.

There are currently 45 students at the Hamlin College of Midwives; 22 students are studying BSc in Midwifery and 23 students are studying MSc in Clinical Midwifery. The undergraduate program will enrol 26 new students this month.

In FY25, Hamlin Midwives safely delivered 40,292 babies (a 13% increase from FY24) and 65,274 pregnant women attended their first antenatal appointment at a Hamlin-supported midwifery clinic - a 38% increase from last financial year.

They have prevented countless obstetric fistula injuries and neonatal deaths and provided life-saving education to their communities about maternal health.

“Since I arrived at Olonso Keka Hamlin-supported midwifery

clinic, our community has been transformed. New cases of obstetric fistula have dropped to almost zero. Every safe delivery, every healthy baby and every life saved reminds me why this work matters so deeply.” - Konjit, Hamlin Midwife



“I am so excited to have graduated from the Hamlin College of Midwives.” - Yididya - Hamlin Midwife graduate



Project ZERO Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia

Project Zero goes far beyond finding and treating women with childbirth injuries. Embedding quality maternal healthcare practices into woredas (districts) is a key component to sustainable change.

The PZ team, alongside community health officials and Hamlin Midwife Mentors, conduct baseline assessments of local health centres to determine the existing skills of government midwives



and identify what is required to bring centres up to a Hamlin level of care.

Hamlin Midwife mentors play a crucial role in supporting

and guiding healthcare staff working in the Maternal and Child Healthcare (MCH) units of local health centres.

They are making important improvements including:

- Providing mentoring and on-the-job training
- Embedding best-practice maternal health practices
- Renovating maternal waiting rooms, updating equipment and ensuring adequate medical supplies.

None of this vital work to improve maternal healthcare across Ethiopia is possible without your support.

Rehabilitation



Rehabilitation FY25

2,156

Patients completed numeracy and literacy education

1,188

Women completed counselling courses

Because of you, women are being empowered to live with dignity, choices and independence.

Repairing obstetric fistula is just the start of a woman's journey to a full recovery.

Many women have been trapped in a life of pain, shame and isolation for years after being shunned and humiliated by their communities. The Hamlin Model of Care's holistic approach heals the whole woman with respect

and compassion - treating the physical, psychological and emotional effects of fistula.

Since opening its doors in 2002, thousands of women have received customised counselling programs, physiotherapy, literacy and numeracy classes and vocational training at Desta Mender, Hamlin's Rehabilitation & Reintegration centre.

In FY25, 2,156 patients completed numeracy and literacy education and 1,188 women completed counselling courses.

272 women graduated from the Women's Empowerment program, training in diverse fields such as poultry, dairy and vegetable farming, apiary management, catering, pottery and sewing.

"I learned so much here [at Desta Mender] - love, discipline and skills. The emotional support



helped me heal as much as the medical treatment. I plan to apply what I have learned and make my teachers proud. I love and respect my teachers, who feel like family. Thank you for everything." - Ayniye

"We don't just treat a hole in the bladder, we treat the whole patient with love and tender care, literacy and numeracy classes, a brand new dress and money to travel home."

- Dr Catherine Hamlin

Birtukan is healed and *empowered*, thanks to you



Birtukan sustained an obstetric fistula during the birth of her son. The physical pain formed only part of her suffering.

"Fistula brought relentless discomfort and embarrassment, making even the simplest tasks unbearable.

I avoided church and the market and was unable to contribute to my family's life. It was a lonely and depressing existence."

A Hamlin-trained health worker visited Birtukan's community, handing out flyers about obstetric fistula. It named her condition and said it was treatable.

Birtukan received surgery at Hamlin's Yirgalem Fistula Hospital and participated in Hamlin's Women's Empowerment Program at Desta Mender.

"I learned many skills including animal husbandry, poultry, pottery and handicrafts. I learned to read and write and was taught how to start a small business. I plan to continue my education and implement the skills I have gained." - Birtukan



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Patient names have been changed to protect the identities of those we help.

Hamlin Fistula
New Zealand

