

Catherine Hamlin
Fistula Foundation



2023
April

Catherine Hamlin, icon, trailblazer, saint

You can live a lifetime and not meet a saint. Catherine Hamlin was a living, breathing saint, a tireless champion for women who are among the most marginalised and shunned in the world.

To Catherine, every woman mattered. Every woman suffering, in pain and in isolation, broke her heart.

It was a heart that was first broken more than 60 years ago when she and her husband, Reg, arrived in Ethiopia and went about dramatically transforming the maternal healthcare landscape for the women of Ethiopia.

From humble beginnings - and with the support of thousands of Australian donors - Catherine Hamlin built a network of six hospitals across Ethiopia employing more than 550 Ethiopian professionals - many of whom were trained by Catherine - a rehabilitation centre, the Hamlin College of Midwifery and more than 90 Hamlin supported midwifery clinics.



Catherine woke the world up to the plight of women with obstetric fistula injuries! One life-transforming surgery at a time, Catherine created an extraordinary legacy of hope and love.

Today more than 60,000 Ethiopian women's lives have been changed, thousands more women have had fistula injuries prevented and fistula surgeons from all over the world have trained at Hamlin.

The extraordinary team of professionals at Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia continue her legacy and have not wavered once. Every day, one life-transforming surgery at a time, they are getting closer to eradicating obstetric fistula from Ethiopia and in doing so, going some way towards eradicating it from our world altogether.

Their work is only possible because of the thousands of our Australian donors who give so generously to Catherine Hamlin Fistula Foundation.

Thank you for supporting our work to eradicate this debilitating, humiliating, treatable condition toward a future where the number of Ethiopian women suffering obstetric fistula injuries is Zero!

Carolyn Hardy
Chief Executive Officer
Catherine Hamlin Fistula Foundation

PS; all proceeds from Hamlin Shop sales support the work of Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia. Consider shopping with us this Mother's Day!

Your Support in Action

“My cure is the biggest moment of my life. It is like a re-birth. You make me a woman again”

- Haile

Thanks to your support, Haile* is ready to start the next chapter of her life after the trauma of fistula.

Haile’s happy life with her new husband in the remote hillside village of Yirgachefe in South Ethiopia was shattered when she lost her baby in childbirth and sustained a fistula injury three years ago.

Heartbroken and ashamed, Haile and her husband spent the next two years trying to hide her condition from everyone in her village.

When a Hamlin patient identification officer found Haile and transported her and several other women to Hamlin’s Yirgalem fistula hospital for treatment and loving care, her whole life changed.

Haile was welcomed with a Comfort Package, including a beautiful hand-knitted Hamlin blanket and hygiene items for her stay.

She received life-changing fistula repair surgery



performed by Hamlin’s world class fistula surgeons.

“The news of a cure ignited hope inside me. When I arrived and met other patients like me, I became 100% sure this is the place of my cure,” says Haile.

Dr Catherine Hamlin’s transformative Model of Care restores the health and dignity of women like Haile every day.

Hamlin midwives are key to eradicating fistula

Since graduating from the Hamlin College of Midwives in 2018, Hamlin midwife Firomi estimates that she’s attended well over 2,000 safe deliveries.

“The high quality training we got at the College equipped us both in theory and practice.

“Our experience makes us confident professionals serving our community in Dr Hamlin’s model of care and affection,” she says.

Firome works in the Sibbo Hamlin rural midwifery clinic, 60 kms away from her hometown, Metu, in south west Ethiopia.

Your support helps train more Hamlin midwives like Firomi, who are the key to a fistula-free Ethiopia and ensure the Hamlin-supported midwifery clinics are equipped with essential medical supplies.



*Firomi,
Hamlin Midwife*

Hamlin Ethiopian Adventure: returning in March 2024!



We're thrilled to announce that our Hamlin Ethiopian Adventure will resume in March next year!

This truly is a trip of a lifetime and gives supporters the opportunity to see the work of Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia first-hand and explore the highlights of southern Ethiopia.

The aim of the 12-day Southern Ethiopia 2024 Adventure is to raise vital funds and awareness for the life-changing work of Dr Catherine Hamlin.

"I was told it would be life-changing and I think it really has been."

This trip will not only have a profound effect on your life but also the lives of many Ethiopian women.

Brand new itinerary!

Your extraordinary journey begins in Ethiopia's capital, visiting Hamlin's Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital, Desta Mender (Hamlin's Rehabilitation and Reintegration centre) and the Hamlin College of Midwives.

It continues south to Jinka, the gateway to the Omo Valley, one of the most unique places on earth given the diversity of the tribal groups living in this remote area of the Great Rift Valley.

This is an extraordinary opportunity to immerse in the fabric of some of these societies, including the Ari, Mursi, Konso and Karo tribes, each with their distinct culture.

You'll visit Hamlin's Yirgalem regional fistula hospital and a Hamlin-supported midwifery clinic, and visit the largest market in East Africa. You'll experience a traditional coffee ceremony and, if you're lucky, see monkeys and hyenas!

The trip finishes back in Addis Ababa with the International Women's Day 5km run (or walk!) at altitude, with Ethiopian women.

Places are limited so secure your spot today! For more information, scan the QR code or visit hamlin.org.au/adventure.



Visit Ethiopia in 2024!

Thank you for your messages of love and support

We've started to receive some beautiful messages to former fistula patients who have recently completed the Women's Empowerment Program at Desta Mender.

The cards in which these messages are written will be sent to Ethiopia and given to recent graduates as they prepare to return home - with new skills to live independently.

Thank you for taking the time to write these messages of love and support.



Perfect Mother's Day Gifts for Every Mum

Only at the Hamlin Shop! Give a gift that gives back. Buy a fairtrade or ethically made present and know that you are helping to restore the lives of brave, courageous women impacted by obstetric fistula.

Better Together: Save with Bundles

Popular bundle



\$99

Acacia Tote bag and Zanele necklace



\$111

Queen Saba (Denim blue) & Zanele (Blue & Gold) necklace



\$129

Joia silk shawl and Tenaye necklace



\$95

Danakil scarf (Flame) and Zanele (Red & Orange) necklace



\$169

Karana Leather Bag and Hassate shawl



\$111

Tsedi Necklace, Sorse Bracelet and Mesrake earrings

Jewellery: make a statement



\$66

\$29

Kazuri Ceramic Necklaces and Earrings



\$50

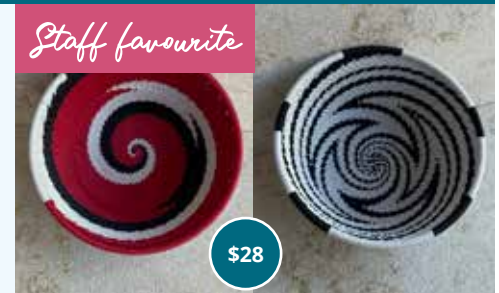
Zanele Beaded Necklace Emerald & Silver

Hamlin at Home Essentials



\$20

Pink heart candle



Staff favourite

\$28

Telephone Wire Bowls



\$20

Oven Mitts (also available in green)

Supporting fairtrade artisans and Ethiopian women with obstetric fistula.

Sustainable and Stylish Fashion

Catherine's favourite

\$79



Brave & Beautiful Scarf



\$150

Bronze Mechat Throw (available in 3 colours)

Staff pick!



\$59

Cherry Maraki Shawl (available in 4 colours)



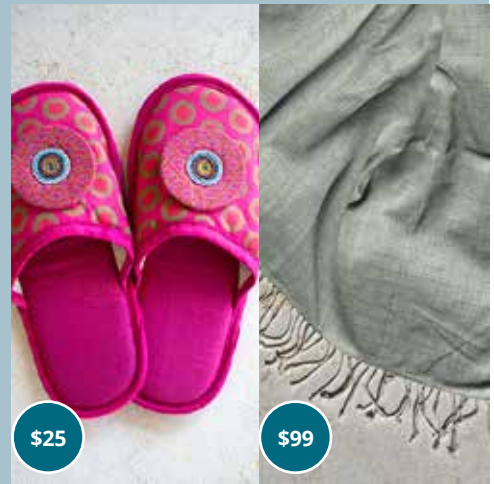
\$99

Sisal Bag Natural and Mariam scarf



\$69

Fuchsia Yeshi Wrap (available in 4 colours)



\$25

Magenta Shweshwe slippers

\$99

Mint Almaz Wrap (available in 4 colours)

\$20-
\$1200



Gifts from the Heart

Every Gift from the Heart card represents a unique gift to an Ethiopian woman, for example the Gift of a Fistula Operation can fund a life-changing fistula repair surgery for one woman during her hospital stay at Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia.

We have 10 Gifts from the Heart cards to choose from, including a special card for Mother's Day. Our cards come in two types - a Physical Card and a Printable Card. You can choose to have your card sent to you, or someone special.

Our Gift from the Heart cards start at \$20, there's something for every budget. Every card is tax-deductible with 100% of the proceeds supporting our work.

Hamlin Store Lucky Dip!

Order now from the Hamlin store and we will send you a surprise Lucky Dip. The more you spend, the bigger your gift - it could be jewellery, homewares or kid's wear.

Available for a short time only, order before midnight 16 April. No code is required.

Minimum spend of \$20 is required.



Shop online at store.hamlin.org.au or call us on 02 9440 7001

Celebrating Catherine High Tea

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our Celebrating Catherine High Tea on Sunday 19th February at the beautiful Gardens on Forest. And huge thanks to Sonia Fenton for so generously hosting us all!

It was wonderful to see so many new and old friends, come together to celebrate Catherine's incredible life-changing work for women with fistula.

It was fascinating to hear from our special guests, author Sue Williams and artist Wendy Sharpe, about their experiences of meeting Catherine and fistula patients in Ethiopia.

We heard about Hamlin's ground-breaking new Women's Empowerment Program that's giving former fistula patients the vocational skills they need to create a livelihood and, in

425 women have benefited from the Women's Empowerment Program since it began in 2021

210 women will participate in 2023, gaining vital vocational skills they will use to support themselves and their families.

many cases, start their own businesses.

You can watch an inspiring short video about this incredible new program by

scanning the QR code here or by following this url: <http://bit.ly/40tAiqv>.



Scan here

All proceeds from the High Tea ensure that women impacted by obstetric fistula in Ethiopia have the opportunity to thrive through our Women's Empowerment Program.

Thank you for your continued support of women in Ethiopia.



If you haven't already, you can make a donation at hamlin.org.au/appeal

Meet Tigist

Tigist Aman is Hamlin's Rehabilitation and Reintegration Manager at Desta Mender and has worked at Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia since 2009.

She has a BA degree in Educational Planning and Management and an MA in Educational Leadership and Management.

She empowers women every day - building their self-esteem and

giving them vocational and life skills so they can contribute when they return to their communities and live independently, with choices and agency.

“Through their training, I see physically and psychologically injured women become confident, empowered and ready to rejoin their home communities,” she says.



Remembering Dr Catherine Hamlin



Three years ago, Dr Catherine Hamlin passed away peacefully at her home on the grounds of Hamlin's Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital. She was surrounded by the colleagues and patients she loved for 60 years.

Catherine's skills as an obstetrician and gynaecologist were coupled with an immense capacity to feel empathy and compassion. She firmly believed that eradicating obstetric fistula was possible.

Today, the team at Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia is progressing Catherine's work and moving closer to achieving her vision of a fistula-free Ethiopia and zero new obstetric fistula injuries. This would not be possible without your continued support.

Thank you for ensuring Catherine's work continues.

Hope for women with advanced stage prolapse

In Australia, pelvic organ prolapse (POP) is relatively common. Most cases are diagnosed and treated early so the outcomes for women are good.

In Ethiopia, it's a very different situation. Many women live in remote areas with little access to medical care.

They usually live with prolapse for years, resulting in advanced

stage POP with complications. Advanced stage POP remains one of the most common gynaecological problems in the country.

Like obstetric fistula, advanced POP has devastating physical and psychological impacts on a woman. Treatment can dramatically improve a woman's health and quality of life.

In addition to obstetric fistula repair, Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia provides surgery for a range of gynaecological conditions, including advanced stage POP.

All six Hamlin fistula hospitals have a specialist surgeon with urogynaecology skills to undertake surgical repair of advanced stage POP.

This life-changing treatment is free of charge to patients.

Knit for Hamlin

Feel like supporting fistula patients from the comfort of your own home? Why not knit an iconic Hamlin blanket, or some colourful squares that will be stitched together to become a blanket?

Every patient is given a hand-knitted Hamlin

blanket when they arrive at a Hamlin fistula hospital for treatment. The blankets are symbolic of the love and respect with which every woman is embraced.

Visit hamlin.org.au/knit to see the knitting pattern and instructions.

Former fistula patients wrapped in their hand-knitted Hamlin blankets



Stepping out in solidarity!

Jo is a personal trainer who specialises in working with women, including those with pelvic floor issues.

She recently took part in 100 Women², which encourages women to walk 100 kilometres and fundraise for a woman's cause of their choice.

Jo chose to raise funds for Catherine Hamlin Fistula Foundation and raised \$1,135!

“My clients have world-class care, but the situation is vastly different in Ethiopia.

“The tragedy of women losing their babies in childbirth and being left with serious pelvic

floor issues is the thing I couldn't walk past.” - Jo

In preparation, Jo walked regularly with her dog and provided updates so her supporters could follow her progress.

A number of them were already aware of Catherine Hamlin Fistula Foundation and donated when they heard about the women being treated by Hamlin in Ethiopia.

Congratulations and thank you, Jo! If you would like to challenge yourself and raise funds for Ethiopian women, get started at:

walk.hamlin.org.au.



Catherine Hamlin Fistula Foundation

Locked Bag 20 Pyrmont NSW 2009 P 02 9440 7001 E hq@hamlin.org.au

W hamlin.org.au · store.hamlin.org.au · ABN 58 159 647 499 · 2023AN

Photos by Joni Kabana, Sabahar, Joe Filshie

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