



September 2024 Newsletter

Thank you so much to everyone, especially our generous matching donors, who helped make our third *Raise2Restore* Giving Day on 29th August such a huge success. With an amazing \$432,058 raised in just 12 hours it highlighted for me how lucky we are to have such a generous community dedicated to continuing Dr Catherine Hamlin's life-changing work.

All funds raised will equip and upgrade seven rural health clinics and transform them into quality Hamlin standard health clinics providing vastly improved health care services for women. Catherine believed every woman should give birth safely and without harm. Your support on Giving Day will make this a reality for hundreds more women living in rural and remote areas of Ethiopia.



Bookings are open for the 13-day Hamlin Ethiopian Adventure in March 2025. From meeting the staff and brave fistula patients at Hamlin's hospitals and clinics to witnessing the unique lifestyles and traditions of the tribal groups in the south of the country, this trip of a lifetime will exceed your wildest expectations. I urge you to book now as our trips sell out fast.

In the first week of September we recognised 'Include a Charity Week' which raises national awareness around the importance of including a gift in your Will to your favourite charity. If you are writing a new Will or amending an existing one, I would ask you to consider including a gift to Catherine Hamlin Fistula Foundation. Your legacy will make a lasting difference to the health of future generations of Ethiopian women.

In exciting news, the next roll out of Project Zero will shortly begin in Fedis Woreda (district). The Project Zero team, led by Hanna Tesfaye, is making great strides in finding women who have been hidden away with untreated fistula and other childbirth injuries for many years, often decades. It is rewarding work indeed to see women regain their lives through treatment and repair surgery after suffering for so long. Your ongoing support makes this possible.

Hamlin's Women's Empowerment Program is going from strength to strength and the 15th cohort of former fistula patients has recently graduated. During their two-month residency women choose from a wide variety of learning opportunities which empowers them to earn an income and support their families when they return to their communities.

As always, we are incredibly grateful for your ongoing support of Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia.

Julie White
Executive Chair, Catherine Hamlin Fistula Foundation

P.S. Take a look at the centre spread for all your Hamlin favourites and best sellers at incredible prices! It's the perfect time to get in early for all your beautiful, ethically made Christmas gifts.

Your Support in Action

Thanks to YOU, Hamlin's Giving Day was a huge success!



Thank you to all of YOU who supported Catherine Hamlin Fistula Foundation's third *Raise2Restore* Giving Day on Thursday 29th August. You - and a generous group of donors who matched your donations on the day - helped us raise an astonishing \$432,058!

With your incredible support, Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia can equip and upgrade seven rural health clinics to transform them into Hamlin-supported midwifery clinics, providing improved health care services for women when they most urgently need it.

These clinics will receive essential medical equipment and supplies for specialised



care to ensure safe deliveries, prevent horrific birth injuries and empower local communities.

From everyone at Hamlin, **THANK YOU** for your support.

“The compassion and care of the staff were exceptional. They accepted us when our own families rejected us. Now, I’m receiving the treatment and support I need. We are empowered here, without any discrimination. I’m truly thankful.” – *Eshe*

Next Project Zero roll out underway

Your amazing support will make it possible to commence the next roll out of Project Zero in Fedis Woreda (district). This groundbreaking program continues to accelerate the eradication of obstetric fistula across the country through:

- **Going house-to-house** to find women living with obstetric fistula.
- **Providing mentoring** to midwives and nurses at local health centres to improve maternal healthcare services.
- **Training local health and community workers** in identifying fistula and referring women for treatment.
- **Spreading awareness** of fistula and its treatment by visiting major marketplaces, community and religious gatherings and schools.



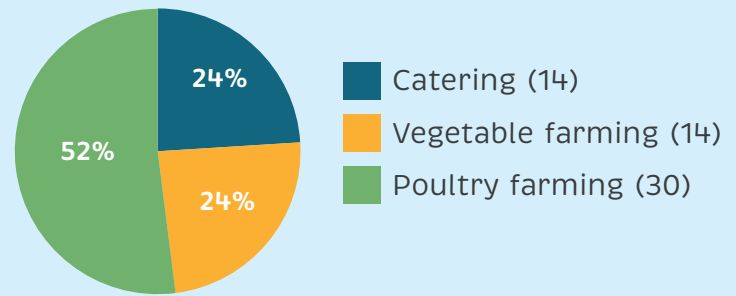
Hamlin's fistula patients are learning skills for life

International Literacy Day is celebrated on 8th September every year and highlights the importance of literacy for all people, communities and societies. For women who live in poverty, like most of our fistula patients, the chance to reach their full potential is hampered by a lack of numeracy and literacy skills.

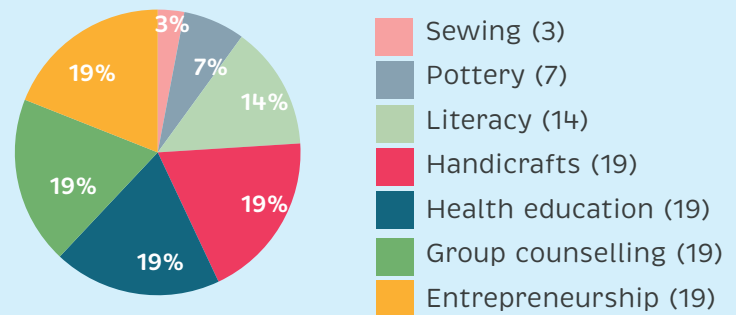
That's why Hamlin's Women's Empowerment Program is so important. This pioneering program invites former fistula patients in need of income support to learn numeracy and literacy and vital vocational skills at Desta Mender.

The two-month residency program offers women a range of learning opportunities, including leadership and communications training as well as small-business guidance, empowering them to live a life with independence and choices.

Major training courses



Supplementary training courses



Meet Dr Binyam Sirak



Dr Binyam Sirak joined Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia nine years ago and is the Medical Director at Hamlin's Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital. His connection to Hamlin is certainly unique: he was born at Desta Mender!

At the time of his birth, the grounds on which Desta Mender currently sits was the

site of an orphanage where Binyam's father worked.

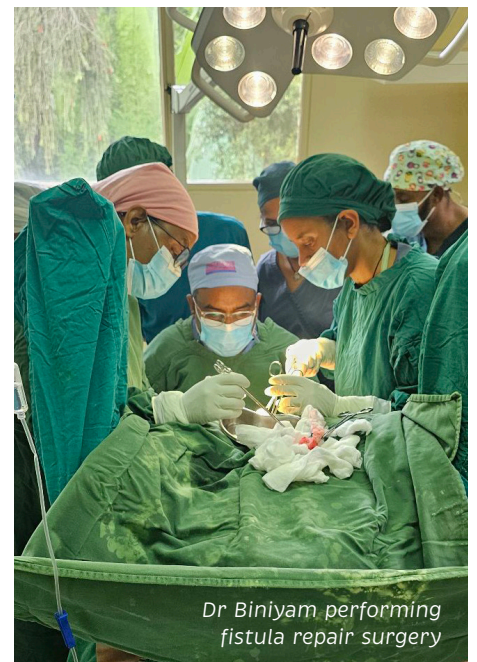
Binyam was inspired to work at Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia by Dr Catherine Hamlin's selfless commitment to ensuring Ethiopia's most vulnerable women got the life-changing maternal healthcare they deserve. He says:

"The selflessness of our founders, Drs Reg and Catherine Hamlin in establishing such a specialised centre for the marginalised women of my country remains the inspiration behind my choice to prioritise helping these women. There is nothing that I would love more than continuing the Hamlins' work."

Binyam has performed hundreds of life-changing surgeries, restoring women's health and dignity. He has this

to say to you, our supporters:

"Because of your support we are here giving life back. Obstetric fistula is not about quality of life. It is life or nothing. We are serving humanity. Thank you so much."



Dr Binyam performing fistula repair surgery

CLEARANCE SALE

This year we are having our largest ever CLEARANCE sale! Everything in our online store MUST GO!

There are some amazing discounts on offer. Every purchase helps restore the lives of our brave obstetric fistula patients while also supporting the independent artisans.

Christmas is approaching, so you know what to do... Visit our online store and get your shopping done early. Run don't walk: this will be your last chance to get your favourite items at never seen before prices!

ALL ORDERS OVER \$120 RECEIVE FREE SHIPPING AUSTRALIA WIDE.



Summer

35% OFF!

Abay beach towel \$49



Summer reading book bundle \$45



Sisal Bag & Marian scarf \$62

30% OFF!



Fashion

40% OFF!

Queen Saba shawl \$53



40% OFF!

Anna Cape \$59



55% OFF!

Telba shawl \$43



40% OFF!

Yeshi wrap \$35



25% OFF!

Adina shawl & Zanele necklace \$59

A wide range of colours available at great discounts!

FREE XMAS WRAPPING PAPER WITH ALL ORDERS!

Supporting fairtrade artisans and Ethiopian women with obstetric fistula.

Homewares



Elephant salad servers

Large striped tablecloth

Assorted set of 4 cotton napkins

Assorted set of 4 placemats

Assorted set of 6 coasters

up to 45% OFF!



up to 25% off

Bullets to beads



up to 25% off

Kazuri earrings



Bundle & save

Almaz wrap & necklace \$86



up to 50% OFF!

MUST GO
Large range of colours available

- A Zanele Necklace - Metallic Green
- D Kazuri Necklace - Yellow
- G Kazuri Necklace - Springtime
- J Zanele Necklace - Lime & Teal
- B Kazuri Necklace - Forest
- E Zanele Necklace - Black & White
- H Kazuri Necklace - White
- K Kazuri Necklace - Abby
- C Kazuri Necklace - Stones
- F Kazuri Necklace - Summer
- I Kazuri Necklace - Red
- L Kazuri Necklace - Red

The gift our supporters love to leave



Mavis with Catherine during her Hamlin trip to Ethiopia in 2017

“Women and girls deserve to be protected from obstetric fistula injuries. Thank you for your support and for considering Catherine Hamlin Fistula Foundation in your Will.” – Dr Catherine Hamlin

to retire from being a midwife as it's such a fulfilling career.

I was married and have two daughters, eight grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. I am a domestic violence survivor who has chosen to 'turn my scars into stars' and support women and girls in need.

I first heard about obstetric fistula in the mid 1970s when I read about the need to establish the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital in various newspapers. I began donating there and then.

I travelled to Ethiopia in 2017 and 2018 and our group spent quality time with Dr Catherine Hamlin over lunch at the hospital. I was so inspired by her stories and life time dedication to Ethiopia's beautiful women. Their lives were doomed until the Hamlins healed their bodies and hearts.”

By leaving a gift in your Will, you are helping ensure that Catherine's work will continue until every woman in Ethiopia has a safe, healthy delivery.

Even 1% of your estate to Hamlin makes a lasting difference to the health and wellbeing of future generations of Ethiopian women.

“Women and girls with obstetric fistula need all the support they can get to have life-transforming surgery. I know the gift in my Will is going to change the world for the women in Ethiopia. The gift of life and quality of life is immeasurable and it is an honour and a privilege to care for them.”

For more information about leaving a gift in your Will, call us on **02 9440 7001** or visit hamlin.org.au/wills.

Dr Catherine Hamlin devoted her life to ending the suffering of women with obstetric fistula, giving them health, hope and opportunity. Over 70,000 Ethiopian women have had their lives transformed through her Hamlin Model of Care.

Yet Catherine's work is still not complete. Mavis has left a gift in her Will to Hamlin to achieve Catherine's vision of a fistula-free Ethiopia. She told us:

“I am the middle of three children. My parents instilled in us from an early age to care for the needs of others even if we did without. I'm 77 and unable

Why support Hamlin in your Will?



Your gift costs you nothing today, but transforms women's lives tomorrow.



Provide for your loved ones and make an enduring contribution to the eradication of obstetric fistula.



Become part of a committed community determined to eradicate obstetric fistula in Ethiopia.



Ensure your values live on, whether your gift is large or small.

Honour the life of your loved one with an *Etch in Memory*

To honour the memory of your loved one, you can make a gift that recognises them by etching your loved one's name on a plaque that will be added to our dedicated monument in the grounds of the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital.

An Etch in Memory* will not only be a lasting tribute to your loved one, but it will also have a life-changing impact on many Ethiopian women. To find out more, visit hamlin.org.au/in-memory or call **02 9440 7001**.

*a minimum donation amount applies

Hamlin Midwives are key to Project Zero's success



Never have Hamlin midwives played a more pivotal role in eradicating obstetric fistula and improving maternal healthcare across Ethiopia. Project Zero includes the expansion of Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia's Prevention program, with the goal of establishing a Hamlin-supported midwifery

clinic in every woreda (district). Each clinic is staffed by a skilled Hamlin Midwife who has trained at the Hamlin College of Midwives.

Hamlin Midwife Mentors are conducting mentoring days with local government midwives, which are proving to be invaluable in ensuring better maternal health care for every pregnant woman across the woreda. Health centres are being refurbished with new equipment and supplies, providing long-term

sustainable benefits to each community visited as part of Project Zero.

A comprehensive antenatal program is also being introduced to ensure all pregnant women deliver safely and new cases of obstetric fistula are prevented.

Hanna Tesfaye, Hamlin Project Zero Team Leader, says: "We are working hard to minimise the risks of childbirth for the women of tomorrow and prevent new fistula injuries."

Construction update: Hamlin College of Midwives

Phase 1 of the major expansion of the Hamlin College of Midwives commenced in April and is on track to be completed later this year. The new buildings will include a lecture hall, laboratory, classrooms, library, café and dormitories.

These new spaces will cater for the increasing numbers of BSc and MSc midwifery students now attending the College.



Ayana is a beacon of hope for others

Ayana's story serves as a poignant reminder of the devastating impact that a lack of access to quality maternal healthcare can have on a woman's life.

Ayana is from the Amhara region in northern Ethiopia. She and her husband were looking forward to expanding their family but with no access to antenatal care or medical assistance during labour, Ayana's baby was stillborn and she sustained an obstetric fistula which left her incontinent.

Devastated by the loss of her child and horrified by the constant stream of urine flowing from her body, Ayana was determined to find a solution for her condition. She recalls: "I knew that I had to keep fighting, not only for myself but for my family."

Ayana and her husband visited their local hospital who



referred them to Hamlin's Bahir Dar Fistula Hospital where Ayana received specialist surgery to repair her fistula. She told us:

"The team was truly compassionate and skilled. They provided me with the care and treatment I needed to regain my quality of life. My journey has been a difficult one, but I hope that my story can serve as a beacon of hope for others facing similar challenges."

Hamlin Midwives provide skilled maternal healthcare services to women when they most need it. They prevent obstetric fistulas and other childbirth injuries and educate the women in their community about safe pregnancy and childbirth.

Experience Ethiopia with us!

Spots are filling fast for our March 2025 Hamlin Ethiopian Adventure!

“Being a tour guide I’m always proud to share with people who love to learn about Ethiopia and I’m always passionate to share what my country has to offer to this world. Please come join me for this trip of a lifetime and I cannot wait to have you all here!” - Eyayaw, Founder and Tour Guide, Eyayaw Tours Ethiopia

Join us on a trip of a lifetime to the country Dr Catherine Hamlin called home for over 65 years.

From meeting staff and patients at Hamlin’s fistula hospitals, to witnessing the unique lifestyles and traditions of the tribal groups in the south of the country, this trip will exceed your wildest expectations!

You’ll be in safe hands, too. Our wonderful and highly

experienced tour guide, Eyayaw, has been running Hamlin’s tours for over 10 years!

He is extremely passionate about showing you everything his country has to offer and giving you the best possible travel experience.

To find out more about our 13-day Southern Ethiopian Adventure or to book your spot, visit adventure.hamlin.org.au.



Hear more from Eyayaw, your amazing tour guide, and our March Adventurers about why you should join this incredible trip.



Denise’s Hens for Hamlin hit \$70,000!



For the last ten years, Denise has been using her talent and spare time to raise funds for Hamlin in a fun and unique way. Denise’s knitted Hens for Hamlin put a smile on the

faces of those who buy them and change the lives of women suffering with obstetric fistula.

To mark her recent 70th birthday, Denise set herself a new fundraising goal of \$70,000 lifetime giving - and she achieved it! She told us:

“I love knitting the chickens. People love receiving them and the money raised goes to supporting the Hamlins’ years of dedication and ensuring that the programs and services are ongoing. I will knit until people are no longer interested or my fingers will

no longer allow me to knit.” To buy one of Denise’s Hens for Hamlin, visit her Gorgeous Girls Virtual Garden Party Facebook page.

Huge thanks to Denise and the many other loyal Hamlin supporters who work hard to fundraise for us.



Catherine Hamlin Fistula Foundation

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Photos by Joni Kabana & Sabahar