

The Hamlin Newsletter

Hamlin
Fistula
Ethiopia



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Message from the CEO



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2020 to our partners, donors and stakeholders! I am also extending my Christmas and New Year wishes to you all on behalf of Dr. Catherine Hamlin, Board of Trustees, staff and fistula survivors.

For all of us at Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia, 2019 was a year of success. We achieved a number of changes and new developments in fistula treatment, prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration, and our progress was possible because of your efforts. We thank you-our partners, donors and stakeholders-for your tireless work and commitment to moving our cause forward.

Let us take a moment to celebrate our successes, savor our accomplishments, and look onward the opportunities that await in 2020. In 2019, we hit a number of milestones:

- stepped up our efforts in fistula identification;
- increased the number of treated fistula and prolapse patients;
- completed groundwork to launch MSc in Clinical Midwifery;
- designed cost minimization strategies and started implementing them;
- celebrated our 60th anniversary;
- erected a statue of Dr. Catherine Hamlin and her late husband, Dr Reginald Hamlin;
- started implementing prevention exit strategy;
- continued our support package to government rural clinics;
- strengthened our mentorship service;
- conducted studies to enhance performance and efficiency, and bring operational excellence;
- and many others.

As we enter 2020, our staff at Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia are committed to continue making a tremendous difference to our fistula patients and the maternal health care services of Ethiopia. We assure you that we embrace 2020 with determination, optimism and gratitude, and will keep working for all our poor young girls and mothers.

We are incredibly fortunate to have such great partners, donors and stakeholders. As always, we thank you and appreciate your commitment to our communities, and look forward to the New Year.

Happy New Year and Merry Christmas!

Tesfaye Mamo,
Chief Executive Officer
Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia

What Makes HFE Unique?



Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia (HFE), throughout its 60 years, has grown into an exemplary and reputable organization across the globe. In all its three pillars, namely treatment, prevention, and Rehabilitation and Reintegration, HFE has now become a standard setter for many organizations working on maternal health-care services in Ethiopia.

Free and Holistic Service

HFE provides free and holistic service to fistula patients.

Holistic Care

Clean clothing

Nutritious meals

Fistula repair

Life skills trainings

Physical and physiological rehabilitation

Seed money to start their own businesses upon reintegration

Transportation fees



Our Patient Centered Quality Care

A woman with fistula usually experiences ostracized and ashamed life before she makes her way to Hamlin. As soon as she arrives at one of our hospitals, her experience starts changing for good. This happens mainly because of the Patient Centered Quality Care Hamlin provides.

HFE's patient-centered quality care is about treating a person-receiving fistula treatment with dignity and respect and involving them in all decisions about their health. It focuses on the patient's particular health care needs and empowers patients to become active participants in their care. This requires that physicians, radiologic technologists and other health care providers develop good communication skills and address patient needs effectively.



World Class Midwifery Training



Quality remains central to each and every program HFE runs. The Hamlin College of Midwives, under the umbrella of Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia, commenced its program in 2007, aiming to produce well qualified and clinically competent midwives who are able to improve options for a safe delivery for women in rural areas. The college follows its own unique

way of selecting and training female students from rural areas of Ethiopia, and has succeeded so much so in the process and reached to the extent of developing the 'Hamlin Model of Teaching and Learning'. It provides a very rigorous 4-year midwifery-training program with an emphasis on hands-on clinical experience.



BSc in Midwifery Program

Scholarships to train for four years

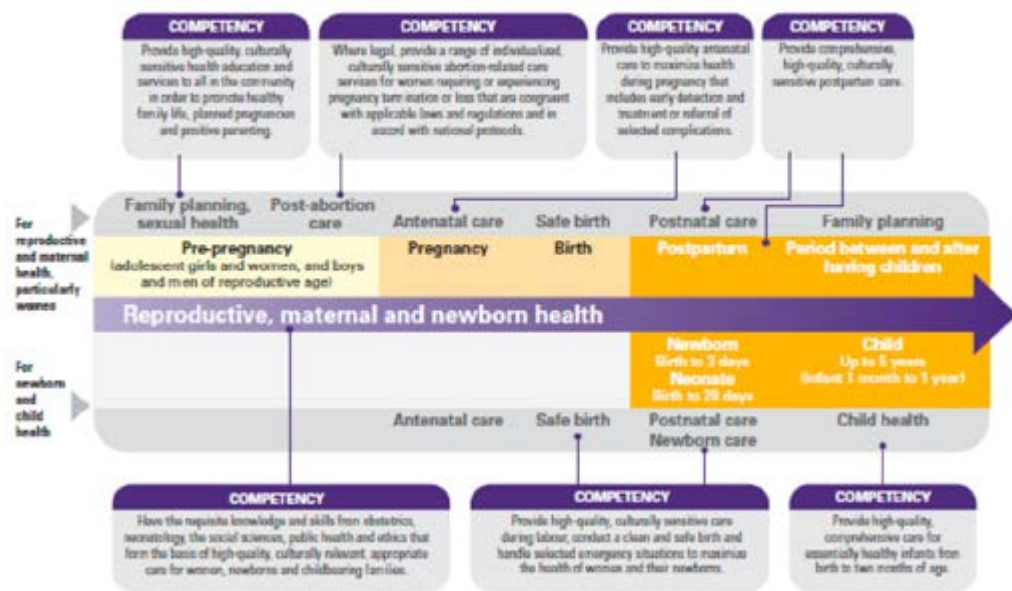
Recruitment from female high school graduates, mainly from rural areas

Entrance examination

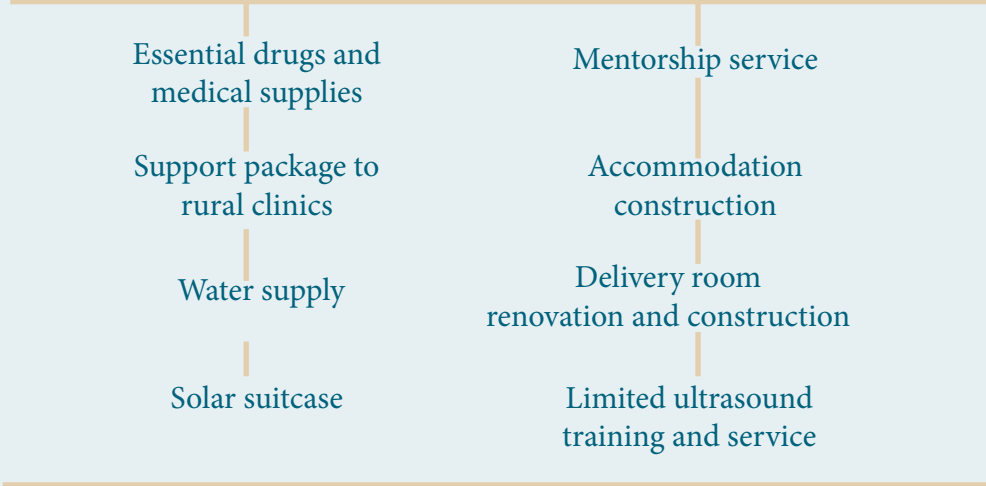
Theoretical and practical learnings

Deployment of midwives after graduation to rural government health centers

FIGURE 1.1 WHO's essential care packages and the role of midwifery competencies across the continuum of care



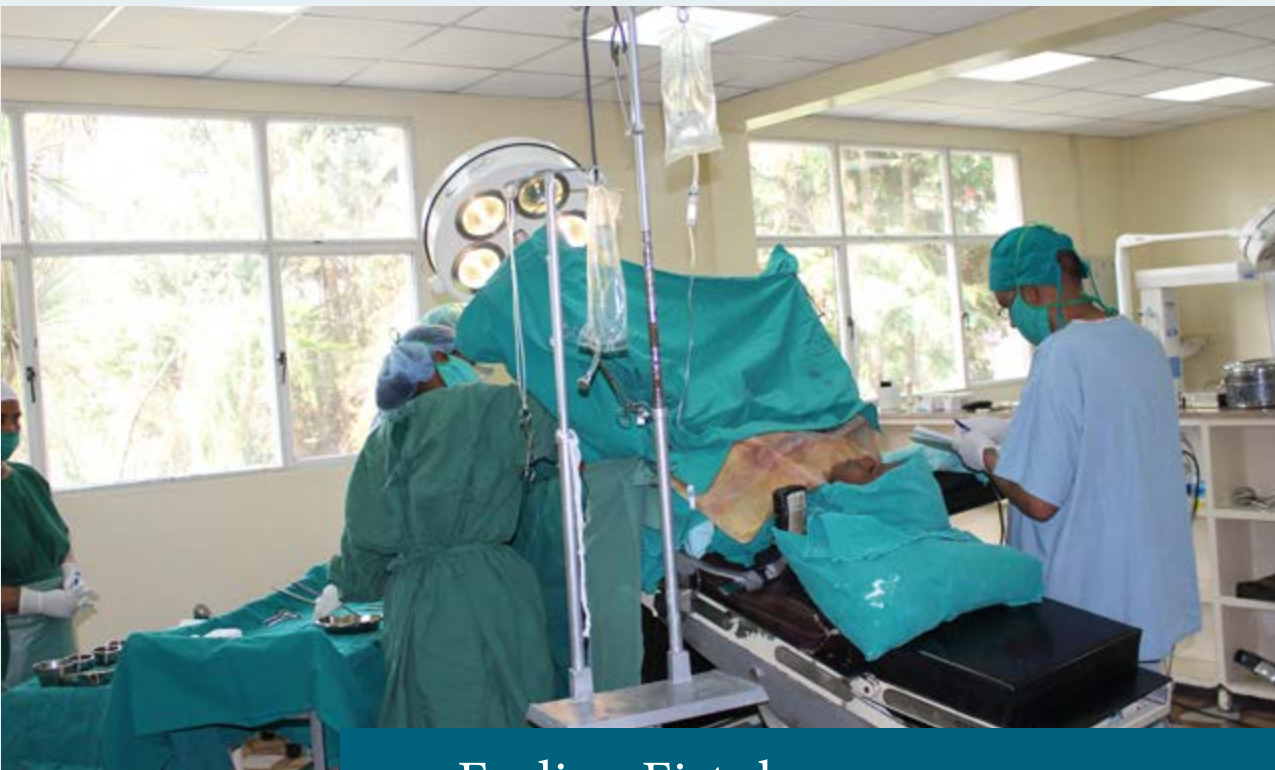
Maternal Healthcare



Quality Maternal Healthcare Services in Rural Ethiopia

Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia (HFE) is also recognized for its provision of quality maternal healthcare service in rural Ethiopia. As part of its prevention program, HFE supports rural government clinics, largely where Hamlin graduated midwives are deployed to.





Ending Fistula

Obstetric fistula is a preventable and in most cases, treatable childbirth injury that leaves women incontinent, ashamed and often isolated from their communities. It occurs when a woman or girl suffers prolonged, obstructed labour without timely access to an emergency Caesarean section. A debilitating condition that has left—and continues to leave—hundreds of thousands of women suffering in solitude and shame, obstetric fistula is undeniably one of the most telling examples of inequitable access to maternal health care and, until recently, one of the most hidden and neglected conditions.

Without intervention, obstructed labor can go on for days, sometimes longer than a week. Left untreated, it will most often result in a stillborn infant, and either kill the mother or, if she survives, leave her body severely damaged. With untreated obstructed labor, the baby is wedged tightly in the mother's pelvis, compressing the bladder and rectum against the pelvic bones. This pressure destroys the tissues separating the vagina from the bladder or rectum.

Until the early 1900s, obstructed labor was a common occurrence and a top killer of pregnant women everywhere in the world, including women in wealthy nations. As part of the transformation of obstetric care (and anesthesia) in North America and Europe, techniques were developed to treat

it early, preventing bodily damage or death. Eventually, the first fistula hospital became obsolete and closed its doors—today it is the site of the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City.

Generally accepted estimates suggest that 2-3.5 million women live with obstetric fistula in the developing world, and between 50,000 and 100,000 new cases develop each year. All but eliminated from the developed world, obstetric fistula continues to affect the poorest of the poor: women and girls living in some of the most resource-starved remote regions in the world.

10 facts on obstetric fistula

Fact 1

Obstructed labour accounts for up to 6% of all maternal deaths. It is a cause of maternal mortality and morbidity.

Fact 2

Obstetric fistula is a hole in the birth canal caused by obstructed labour. It is estimated that more than 2 million young women live with untreated obstetric fistula in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Fact 3

Each year, between 50 000 to 100 000 women worldwide develop obstetric fistula

Fact 4

Women who experience this preventable condition suffer constant urinary incontinence which often leads to social isolation, skin infections, kidney disorders and even death if left untreated.

Fact 5

Obstetric fistulae can largely be avoided by delaying the age of first pregnancy, by the cessation of harmful traditional practices and by timely access to quality obstetric care.

Fact 6

Most fistula occur among women living in poverty in cultures where a woman's status and self-esteem may depend almost entirely on her marriage and ability to bear children.

Fact 7

Obstetric fistula still exists because health care systems fail to provide accessible, quality maternal health care, including family planning, skilled care at birth, basic and comprehensive emergency obstetric care, and affordable treatment of fistula.

Fact 8

Health professionals in afflicted countries are continuously being trained in preventing and managing obstetric fistula.

Fact 9

Patients with uncomplicated fistulae can undergo a simple surgery to repair the hole in their bladder or rectum. Approximately 80-95% of vaginal fistula can be closed surgically.

Fact 10

Preventing and managing obstetric fistula will contribute to improved maternal health, the fifth Millennium Development Goal.

Solar Suitcase Project



Pregnancy complications claim the lives of mothers and newborns each year, mostly in Africa and Asia, in regions without reliable electricity. The World Health Organization reported in 2013 that among eight sub-Saharan Africa nations, only 28% of health facilities had reliable electricity.



Since 2014, Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia, in partnership with Green Lamp, has been installing solar suitcases, which are economical compact solar electric systems for medical lighting, mobile communication and essential medical devices, in government health centers, without electric power or showing big cut-offs.

Once installed, the midwives can identify pregnancy complications, conduct routine and emergency obstetric care without delay, and provide life-saving care with greater confidence during night shifts.

2014-2019



221 solar suitcases were installed in 221 government health centers



Over 80,000 nighttime deliveries were assisted as a result

Employee of the Year Recognized



Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia recognized its staff member Kasahun Solomon as Employee of the Year in 2018/19 during its General Staff Meeting held on October 31, 2019 at the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital.



While congratulating him on his well-deserved recognition, Ato Tesfaye Mamo, HFE's CEO, said, "The peaceful and breathtaking Hamlin garden is part of the Hamlin Model of Care and I am glad that Kasahun's contribution and dedication to that is fully recognized. I assure you that Hamlin will continue recognizing its staff who exceptionally contribute to its mission and vision."



Kasahun, who is a gardener at the main hospital, was thrilled by the recognition and thanked all the staff. "I don't think I deserve this but I would like to thank you for recognizing my little contribution to Emaye's huge cause," he said.



Get Involved

Join Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia's effort to END FISTULA. If you want to find out about ways of getting involved, or have any questions about Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia, please contact us.

Editor's Note

The **HAMLIN Newsletter** is published quarterly for the staff, partners, volunteers and visitors of Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia. comments, suggestions and story ideas are welcome.



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