


HEALING HANDS OF



2022

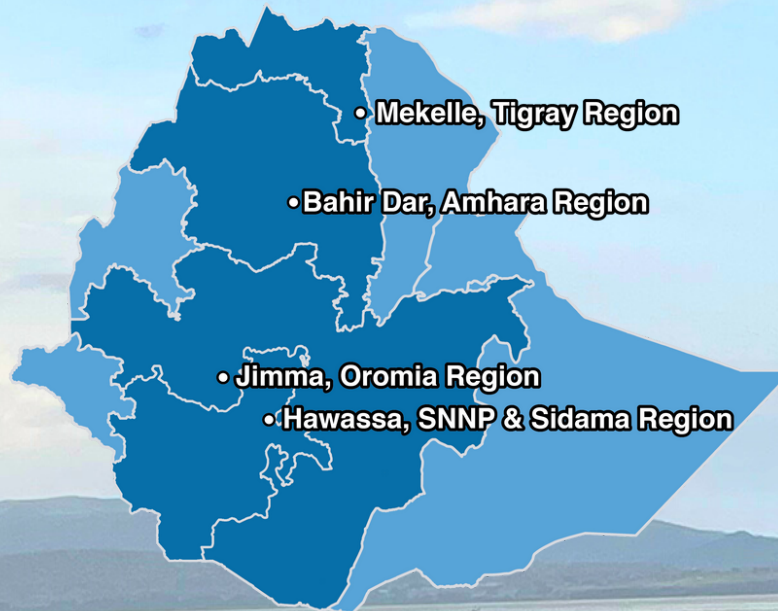
ANNUAL REPORT



Our inspiration comes
from the unconditional
love of God and His call
to bring *healing* and *joy*
to those who suffer as
exemplified by Jesus
Christ.

We are committed to
working with partners
and individuals of all
faiths and beliefs.

Healing Hands of Joy's Operational Regions



“Healing Hands of Joy is playing a central role in improving regional collaboration and coordination on prevention, identification linkage, and overall elimination of obstetric fistula from the region.”

Ashenafi Mekonnen, SNNP Regional Women and
Child Affairs Bureau Director of Administration



Our *Vision* is to eliminate
obstetric fistula in Ethiopia by
ensuring all women achieve
safe motherhood.





Our *Mission* is to improve maternal child healthcare in Ethiopia to eliminate preventable childbirth injuries including obstetric fistula.



Dear Friends,

We hope that this letter finds you and your family healthy and your year is off to a great start.

2022 was an extraordinary year for Healing Hands of Joy thanks to your faithful support!

A peace agreement was signed for stability and reconciliation in the Tigray Region of Northern Ethiopia. The capital, Mekelle, is where we opened our first Healing Hands of Joy Rehabilitation Center 13 years ago! We are grateful for your prayers for our staff, partners and over 680 Safe Motherhood Ambassadors we have trained in the Tigray Region since 2010. Thank you for your continued support as we provide emergency support to our SMAs and their families, rebuild our maternal health networks and re-establish our Mekelle rehabilitation center for the many new cases that are being identified.

We officially expanded to the Oromia Region of Ethiopia and celebrated our groundbreaking work with partners including Jimma University, the Regional Health Bureau, and Women and Children Affairs. Thanks to your support in our expansion we've been able to reintegrate and rehabilitate 140 fistula survivors since the center's opening, meeting the critical need of women in the region.

We were able to conduct an endline evaluation of our 3-year Strategic Plan (2019-2021) which highlighted Healing Hands of Joy's success including increased facility based delivery rates and greater awareness about obstetric fistula. Factors that were identified as contributing to our achievements included: commitment and appreciation of partners and beneficiaries, capacity building trainings, pregnant women conference and male family member training programs, our center based rehabilitation support to Safe Motherhood Ambassadors, and strong collaboration with the local government health infrastructure. Amazingly, 95% of our Safe Motherhood Ambassadors interviewed felt fully welcomed and accepted by their families.

We are excited to launch our new four-year strategic plan with the mission to improve maternal child healthcare and eliminate preventable childbirth injuries such as obstetric fistula. We will continue to work in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Health to move forward the plan to eliminate obstetric fistula in Ethiopia by 2025. Thank you for continuing to partner with us to make these next four years of progress possible.

We are most grateful for our Safe Motherhood Ambassadors who continue to transform their communities with education and patient identification. They truly are an inspiration, not only to us but to each other.

Blessings,
Allison Shigo, Co-Founder & CEO
Meselech Seyoum, Country Director

Allison Shigo *Meselech*



TIGRAY UPDATE

A peace agreement was signed November 2nd, 2022 between the Ethiopian government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front after a two-year armed conflict in the Tigray Region. This positive step forward marks the end of prolonged disconnection within and to the region. Our team in Ethiopia recently conducted a preliminary assessment of the situation on the ground; having conferred with the Hamlin Fistula hospital, the Regional Health Bureau, the Bureau of Finance and Economic Cooperation, the Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs, and the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Rapid Assessment Findings

New Fistula Case Numbers:

333 new cases of fistula treated since May 2021

320 of the 333 developed after the conflict began

238 of the 333 cases were **obstetric** fistula

95 of the 333 fistula cases were caused by rape

Health Center Status:

3% of Health Centers are functional


As of February 2023, 9,178 pregnant women occupy centers for persons displaced by the violent conflict. Without intervention, the vast majority of these women will not receive adequate pre and post-natal care.

Healing Hands of Joy's Plan of Action

- Reopen our Healing Hands of Joy rehabilitation center in Mekelle with a focus on trauma and healing
- Support rural health centers with medical supplies
- Support clinics established in Internally Displaced People (IDP) centers as well as facilities supporting IDP centers with medical supplies
- Conduct a baseline evaluation

- Provide emergency food support to Safe Motherhood Ambassadors
- Continue to monitor Safe Motherhood Ambassador's status and encourage SMAs to return to their SMA community leadership role
- Conduct pregnant women conferences at IDP centers in collaboration with health facilities
- Resume case identification through SMAs in collaboration with health facilities



A woman with a warm smile, wearing a bright orange hijab and a purple long-sleeved top, is the central figure. She is gesturing with her hands as if speaking or explaining something. The background is slightly blurred, showing an indoor setting with other people in the distance.

"After the training, I want to be a role model by helping women with fistula, teaching pregnant mothers, and prevent women of childbearing age in my community from obstetric fistula."

- Safe Motherhood Ambassador Muradi Kedir Aba Gero

HEALING HANDS OF JOY JIMMA CENTER GRAND OPENING

While Healing Hands of Joy Jimma has been operating since October of 2021, the center rolled out a grand opening celebration in May 2022. The Healing Hands of Joy team including CEO Allison Shigo, Fundraising Co-Chair Nigest Haile (top row, second to the right), and Country Director Meselech Seyoum had the pleasure of meeting our remarkable 4th Safe Motherhood Ambassador Jimma class to join the festivities, along with a few SMAs from previous classes. Shemsiya (pictured here in a pink) and Alima (in green) returned to the center as graduates of Jimma's first class for the occasion.



2022: YEAR IN NUMBERS



379

Safe Motherhood Ambassadors
rehabilitated and trained

137 SMA Continuing Education
workshop participants



152 SMAs received economic
support



205
SMAs received aftercare
support



112
New cases of obstetric
fistula identified



244
SMAs received emergency
food support in Amhara



122
Health professionals
trained on fistula
diagnosis



366
Male Family Member
workshop participants



24
Health centers supported
with medical supplies



32
Community Partners
workshops

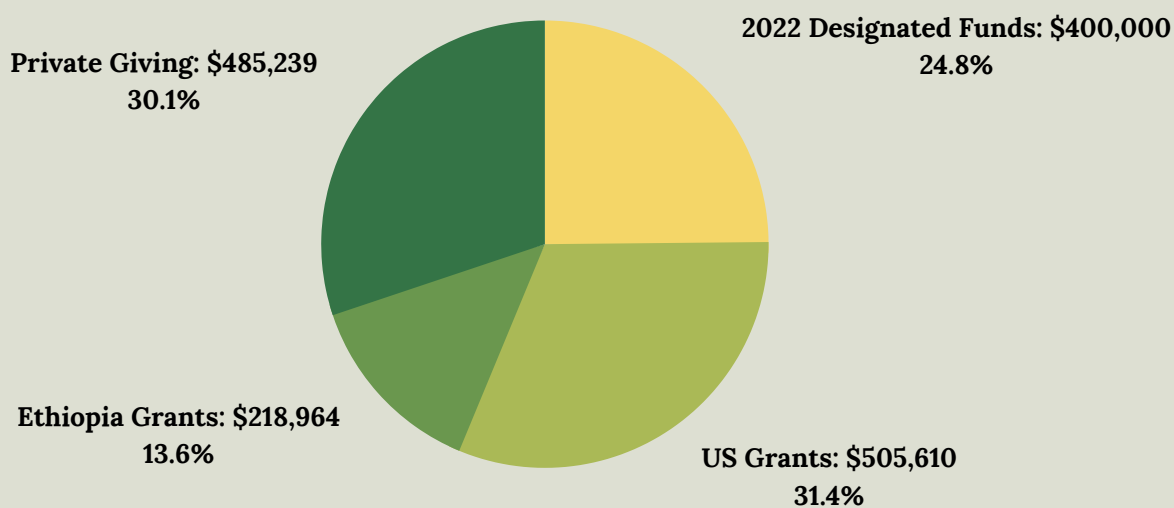


204,446
Community Engagement
Event attendees

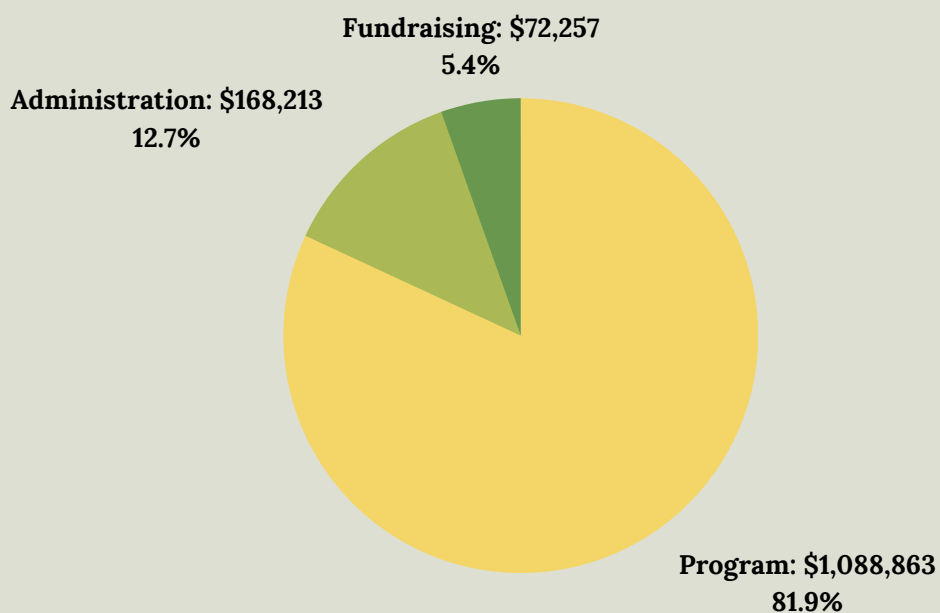
2022 FINANCIAL REPORT



2022 Income



2022 Expenses



OUR IMPACT

Endline Evaluation

Healing Hands of Joy worked with an external consultant in 2022 to conduct an evaluation of our strategic plan's period of January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2021. This consultant collected data from our Safe Motherhood Ambassadors as well as local residents, local leaders, health professionals and officials in Healing Hands of Joy's operational regions.

“The project contributed significantly to improving lives of women. It has prevented disintegration of many families due to obstetric fistula. This in turn has prevented the occurrence of different social ills that women and their children may have gone through.”

- Ato Taglo Layew, Planning and Monitoring Officer at Women, Children and Social Affairs Bureau, Amhara Region

Key Findings:

95% of Safe Motherhood Ambassadors were reaccepted by their families after completing the program

The percentage of people who believe the treatment for obstetric fistula should be provided by traditional healers decreased

30% to 1%

The percentage of women who received institutional treatment increased

0.5% to 81%

The project contributed to increased utilization of maternal health services

49% to 80%



Healing Hands of Joy's Male Family Member Workshops provide additional support for the Safe Motherhood Ambassadors' reintegration into their communities

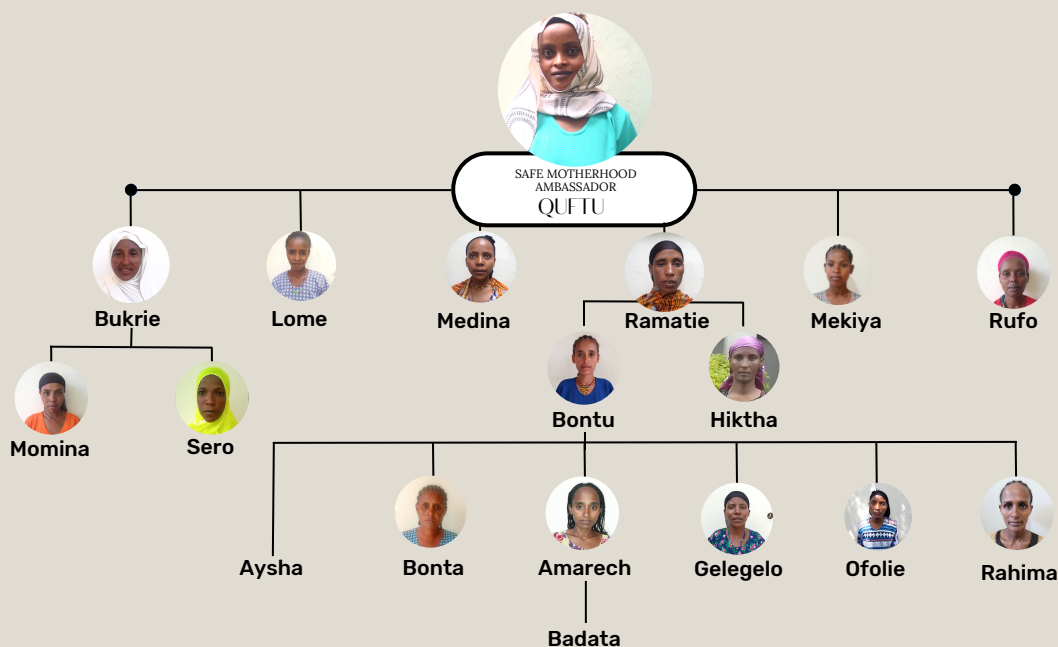
THE SAFE MOTHERHOOD AMBASSADOR EFFECT

Healing Hands of Joy recognizes the power that our Safe Motherhood Ambassadors have to affect change, which in turn creates the sustainability of our Safe Motherhood Ambassador program. Safe Motherhood Ambassadors complete training to help them use the incredible gift only they possess: empathy informed by experience. This alone has convinced some women to seek treatment when all other attempts at intervention have failed. "I used to hate myself," Safe Motherhood Ambassador Marheta told us. "Thanks to Chenequ, after she shared her story with me I became hopeful again."

The Safe Motherhood Ambassador model is sustainable by design. After graduation, SMAs go into their communities to spread the word about the causes of childbirth injuries like fistula and the importance of ensuring safe motherhood by institutional delivery. They are able to identify new cases due to their experience and training; and bring these women to the HHOJ center to be taken to treatment.

This life-changing work expands upon itself when those women come out of treatment and enter the Safe Motherhood Ambassador program, where they too will learn how to rescue other women.

The flow chart below demonstrates one Safe Motherhood Ambassador's multiple "generations" of impact through new case identification.



STRATEGIC PLAN

2023 - 2026

We are excited to announce our new Strategic Plan for 2023-2026. The findings and recommendations of our endline evaluation were used as inputs in the development of the new strategy. The strategy has broadened its scope in addressing wider maternal and child health issues to continue our work in preventing obstetric fistula and other childbirth complications. We will continue to train fistula survivors as Safe Motherhood Ambassadors and raise awareness about safe delivery practices through community mobilization work. We will also be working to improve the quality of care at rural health facilities by training health care professionals, health volunteers and launching new initiatives to improve the infrastructure and condition of existing maternity waiting homes.

Our Objectives



Increase in the utilization of key maternal health services in HHOJ's operational districts



Reduce maternal birth complications including obstetric fistula in HHOJ's operational districts



Improve the Quality of Care at Rural Community Health Centers



Ensure successful rehabilitation & reintegration after treatment for obstetric fistula

THE EXISTING MATERNITY WAITING HOME RESTORATION INITIATIVE

The Problem

In Ethiopia, up to 67% deliveries take place at home. One of the greatest barriers to institutional delivery is the significant distance rural women must travel to reach health facilities, a trip that at times would require hours of walking during late-stage pregnancy.

Maternity waiting homes provide expecting mothers a safe place to stay near health facilities in the weeks prior to childbirth. Additionally, these women will be receiving medical attention during the last stages of their pregnancy.

Poor infrastructure and unsanitary conditions are commonly found in these facilities today.



A maternity waiting home in Amhara before HHOJ's renovation



The Solution

Maternity Waiting Home utilization is linked to a 77% lower risk of childbirth complications.

Healing Hands of Joy is partnering with rural health centers to renovate existing maternity waiting homes to make these critical facilities safe and sanitary; thereby making them a viable option for expecting mothers.



The maternity waiting home in Amhara after HHOJ's renovation

The Impact

More mothers utilizing maternity waiting homes

Lower incidence rate of maternal death and complications

Lower incidence rate of perinatal death and complications

Better access to maternal health services and health information

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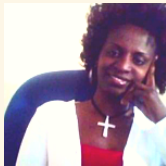


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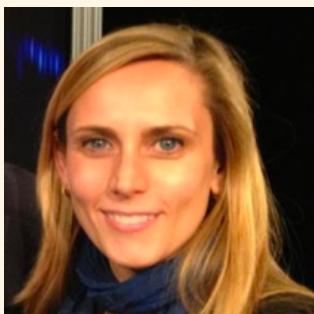
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Thank you for
supporting Healing
Hands of Joy



*Pictured: Safe Motherhood Ambassador Jemila from
the Southern Region*

