



Open Way

helping people out of poverty

Registered charity 1122055

Annual Update - August 2026



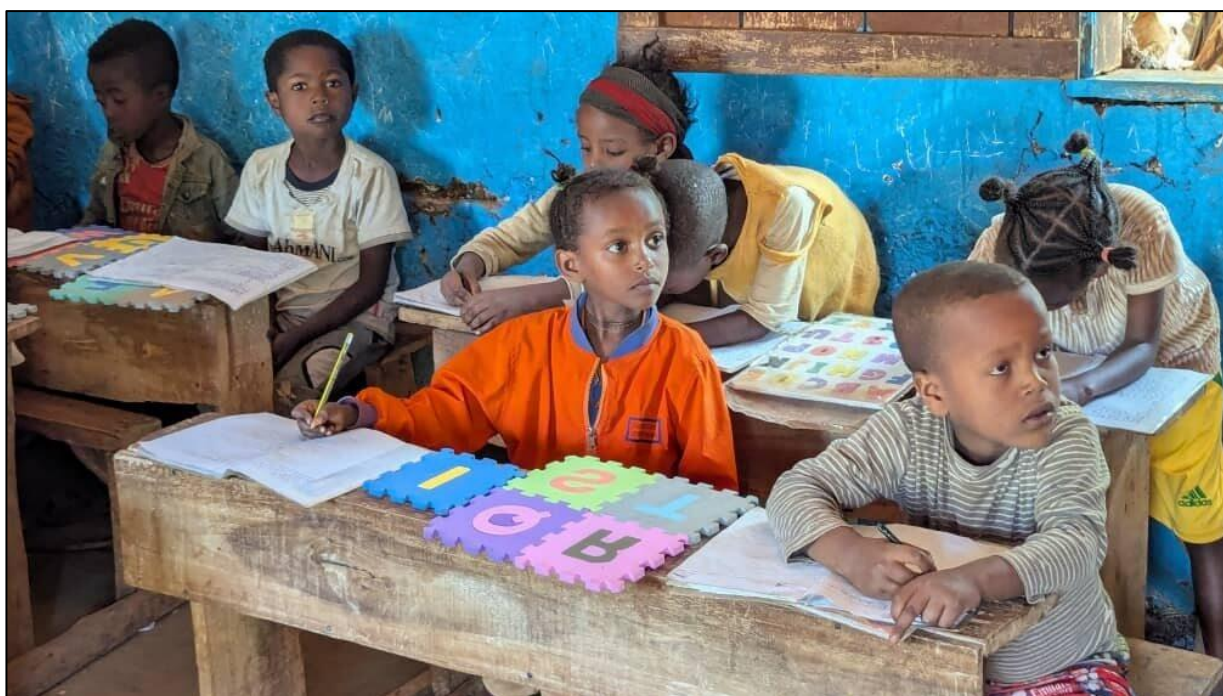
Introduction

The humanitarian situation in Ethiopia has remained difficult over the past twelve months. There are about two million people internally displaced and a further one million refugees displaced from Sudan and South Sudan. There is continuing conflict and localised violence in several regions, recurrent drought and other erratic weather patterns, widespread food insecurity and malnutrition, disease outbreaks and continuing pressure from high food prices. At the same time there have been severe cuts in international humanitarian funding, further limiting the support available to vulnerable communities. All these difficulties make any help people can receive even more crucial.

A lot has been achieved in the last year by the team in Ethiopia in the Sidama area where Open Way is helping. The integrated effort – to provide shelter, staple food, medical treatment and educational opportunities – is both essential and transformative in people's lives in the community.

All this work is only possible because of Open Way's supporters. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all, and we hope you enjoy reading about what has been achieved.

Education project



The ten village schools have had another great year. A total of 1,606 students were enrolled at the start of the academic year 2025/26. Of those more than half were girls.

School	Classes in operation 2025-2026	Number of girls	Number of boys	Total Number registered	library
Shigesho	8	171	144	315	✓
T-K	6	115	131	246	✓
L. Wemerera	4	97	74	171	✓
Lela Honcho	4	67	62	129	✓
Hatabo	3	68	69	137	✓
Kokosa	3	52	58	110	✓
Mi-ke	2	40	55	95	✓
Bentibata	2	51	41	92	✓
Babe Colmocha	4	69	81	150	✓
Tula Hiricha	4	92	69	161	✓
	40	822	784	1,606	10

Mulu carried out a teacher training workshop in September and announced salary increments for all teachers and librarians from the start of the academic year. All the staff were very happy. They also enjoyed a celebration at the end of the teacher training. They received another salary increment in February also.

All schools and libraries were painted, and necessary repairs were done during the summer months.



TK school freshly painted for the new school year

Lela Honcho, TK, Babe and Tula schools all have an extra classroom this year which began use at the start of the year in September.

A battery and solar panel for the Tula school library were bought and installed meaning that all school libraries now have solar-powered TV. This is used for education and for news and general viewing for the whole community.

In June the schools had their end-of-year celebrations. Two of the schools had a joint celebration in the new hall and about seven hundred family members came. It is really heartening to see the growing importance given to education by the community and the recognition of Open Way schools within it.



Joint end-of-year ceremony. The gowns were loaned freely by a friendly local private school.

Tackling malnourishment

Grain distribution

Grain is a crucial lifeline for many vulnerable people. Each month 300 selected families collect their coupon from our TK centre and they themselves collect the grain from the local mill.

This support targets the unwell, the elderly, single parents and other vulnerable people. Many referrals come from the teachers when there are obvious signs of malnourishment or children not appearing in school due to lack of food. Other referrals come from medical centres.



Just a few of the grain recipients with their 15 kg rations.

We were interested to hear that the team in Ethiopia had started an innovative programme to grow papaya seedlings resulting in a large nursery of several thousand young papaya trees in the TK Open Way compound. These have now been distributed to the community.



Mulu at the papaya tree nursery.

The Training Hall

The large training hall which began construction in July 2025 is now complete and is already used extensively for training sessions and other large meetings, such as the end-of-year school ceremonies. It has quickly become an important local asset and is also used by local young people for income generation and other local groups if required.



The training hall nearing completion.

Business training and chicken distribution

In March, one thousand people received business training with a section on rearing chickens. After the training each attendee received two 45-day-old chicks.

The distribution of chicks is always a joyous event. Before distribution, beneficiaries have already prepared a place to look after their chickens.



Top and left: Some of this year's chicken recipients collecting their chickens.

Right: One of last year's beneficiaries with now fully grown chickens.

The team's research shows that in almost every case people had made excellent use of the training and the chickens and that the family economy was benefiting. For example, some beneficiaries sold their chickens when mature and put the funds towards buying a goat, or to start/expand a small business such as selling peppers and spices, or coffee bean husks.

Business training and seedling distribution

Over several weeks in April, about 2000 people received business training including a section on the management of false banana crops. All trainees received false banana seedlings after the training.



Mulu in the middle of business training in the new training hall.



A large false banana training session in the new training hall.

False banana seedling distribution

False banana is a staple, drought-resistant crop in rural Ethiopia.

The approximately 2000 false banana seedling bundles were distributed at various rural sites in Kebado, TK and Tula, so that people did not have to carry a heavy weight too far.



People collecting false banana seedlings from various sites.



The bundles are heavy, but the distribution sites are not too far from people's homes.

Providing Medical Help

Access to medical treatment is at the heart of Open Way's work in Ethiopia. The cost of transport and medicine makes it impossible for many to get help. The medical treatment people receive is often life-changing, and in some cases, lifesaving. It is very heartwarming to hear about patients coming to express their happiness and thanks to the team in Ethiopia when they recover.

The average cost per treatment is about £27.50 although it varies greatly. Very often it is necessary to pay for tests outside of the government clinics and hospitals which lack specialist equipment.

It is also very evident that many people's sickness is due to malnourishment. In these cases, Open Way was able to help them via the grain provision project.

Over the year, 213 patients have been treated for the 293 treatments shown in the table. Of the 213 patients, 140 were female, 73 were male, and 27 were children.

Condition	Number of cases
Abdominal / digestive condition	28
Anaemia / blood condition	1
Cataract	9
Diabetes	6
Heart / circulation condition	27
Injury or burn	5
Kidney / urinary condition	17
Liver condition	4
Malaria	10
Malnutrition	2
Men's reproductive health	2
Mental health condition	1
Neurological condition	3
Other condition	1
Other eye condition	3
Other infection	6
Parasitic infection	11
Pneumonia	14
Respiratory condition / infection	10
Sexual health infection	2
Skin condition / infection	9
Swelling / oedema	2
Thyroid condition	6
Tuberculosis	4
Tumour or growth	14
Typhoid	30
Typhus	26
Unknown / unclear	20
Women's reproductive health	20
Total	293

Mossy Foot

Mossy foot affects bare-foot rural farmers. Small crystals of silicon from the volcanic soil penetrate through the skin and block the lymphatic system. The result of this can be extremely debilitating, causing a lot of swelling of the feet and legs. There is much stigma attached to this illness.

Treatment is simple and includes hygiene, creams, bandages and self-massage which people can be trained to do. Shoes and socks are also provided when necessary.

Open Way is now treating mossy foot patients in two area clinics at TK and Shigesho. People come from far and wide since there is no other mossy foot treatment in the region. In total 409 patients have been treated this year between both clinics.



Above: Amsalu with mossy foot patients at Shigesho.



Right: Adanech with mossy foot patients at TK

A gathering organised by a number of mossy foot patients who had made remarkable progress in their treatment was recently held at the Shigesho mossy foot clinic. The event was their way of expressing gratitude for the care and support they have received.

Four of the patients shared inspiring testimonies, reporting not only significant improvement, but also saying that they felt their condition is almost completely cured. Great to hear about this relief.



Some happy mossy foot patients who came to show their improvement.

Providing Housing

This project provides safe housing for vulnerable people whose existing houses are structurally unsafe, vulnerable to hyena attack or let in the rain. 45 houses have been constructed this year (with five more underway after a delay due to a timber shortage).

Beneficiaries include single parents, the elderly, and people suffering from ill health or disability.

This project provides employment for many construction teams across the countryside.

A few examples below show the beneficiaries outside their old and new houses.



Bizunesh outside her old house (left) and her new house before rendering (right).



Zeritu and family outside her old house (left) and her new house (right).



Tigst and family outside her old house (left) and her new house (right).

Assisting students into further education

This project makes it possible for students from extremely poor backgrounds to continue their education by covering some of the costs such as rent, food, stationery, and clothing. We have now extended the support to reach twenty students. Of those, eleven are university students and nine are high school students.



Deraro is one of the scholarship students studying Geology in her 3rd year.



Teklu is one of the scholarship students studying Natural Science in his 1st year.

The students who have already received their results have all done very well and are really making the most of the opportunity.

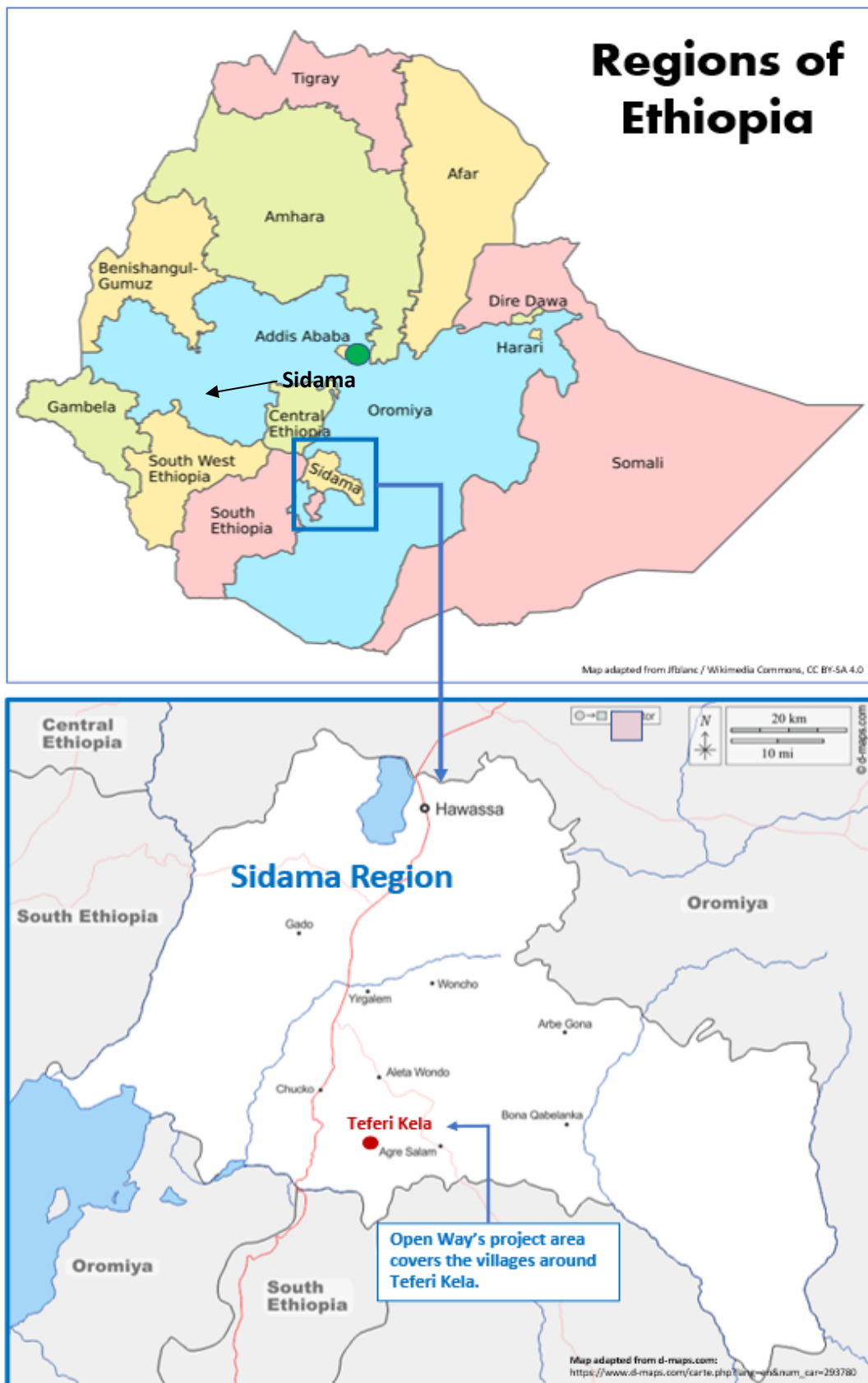
Final word

Thousands of people are impacted by Open Way's work each year.

Thanks again for all your support. It really does make a difference to people's lives.

We are very proud to make every penny donated count. There are no Open Way salary costs in the UK; and admin costs in the UK are virtually zero (limited to unavoidable bank charges and the cost of the (required) independent examination of our accounts).

The Sidama region where Open Way is working in Ethiopia



Open Way is a UK-registered grant-giving organisation.

We support a group of Ethiopian nationals who carry out poverty alleviation work within their own communities.