



**Impact and Return
on Health Investment**

Ethiopia



The Global Fund partnership has an exceptional track record of turning donor investments into impact at scale – saving millions of lives among the most vulnerable communities around the world.

But beyond lives saved, the returns are compelling: Every dollar invested in fighting AIDS, tuberculosis (TB) and malaria generates US\$19 in health gains and economic returns, as well as US\$3.50 in productivity gains, strengthening communities, economies and entire societies.

Ethiopia is one of the most compelling examples of what happens when a country puts health first: remarkable, measurable transformation.

Cover: Rural Ethiopia.
Getty Images/John Elk

Below: Aberu Birbirs, a health extension worker, visits 4-year old Edelawit Demise at her home in Koka, Ethiopia. During home visits, Aberu screens for malnutrition, checks for illness and assesses hygiene. Aberu is one of the 42,000 community health workers that have been trained and deployed across Ethiopia over the last two decades, helping to transform community health.

The Global Fund/Brian Otieno



Health Systems Under Pressure

In the early 2000s, Ethiopia's health system was under-resourced and under pressure. Its population faced high maternal and child mortality, minimal access to basic services and pervasive communicable diseases.

The high prevalence of these diseases had a devastating impact on the population. In 2002 alone, 150,000 people died from AIDS, TB and malaria.

In 2002:

- 840,000 people were living with HIV.
- 9.5 million people contracted malaria, with the disease consistently present in 75% of the country.
- 282,000 people were diagnosed with TB, placing Ethiopia among the 10 highest TB burden countries globally.

Investing in Health

Tackling these challenges head on, Ethiopia prioritized investing in health.

The country trained tens of thousands of health workers, expanding the health workforce dramatically – from 46,000 in 2007 to almost 500,000 in 2024, including 42,000 community health workers. In addition, 18,500 new health facilities were built between 1997 and 2019.

The country also rapidly transitioned to digital health systems to better monitor public health trends, identify urgent needs and respond more effectively to the most pressing health challenges. These digital systems are now used by more than 25,000 community health workers in over 8,000 health posts, serving around 22 million people. This shift has already made a substantial

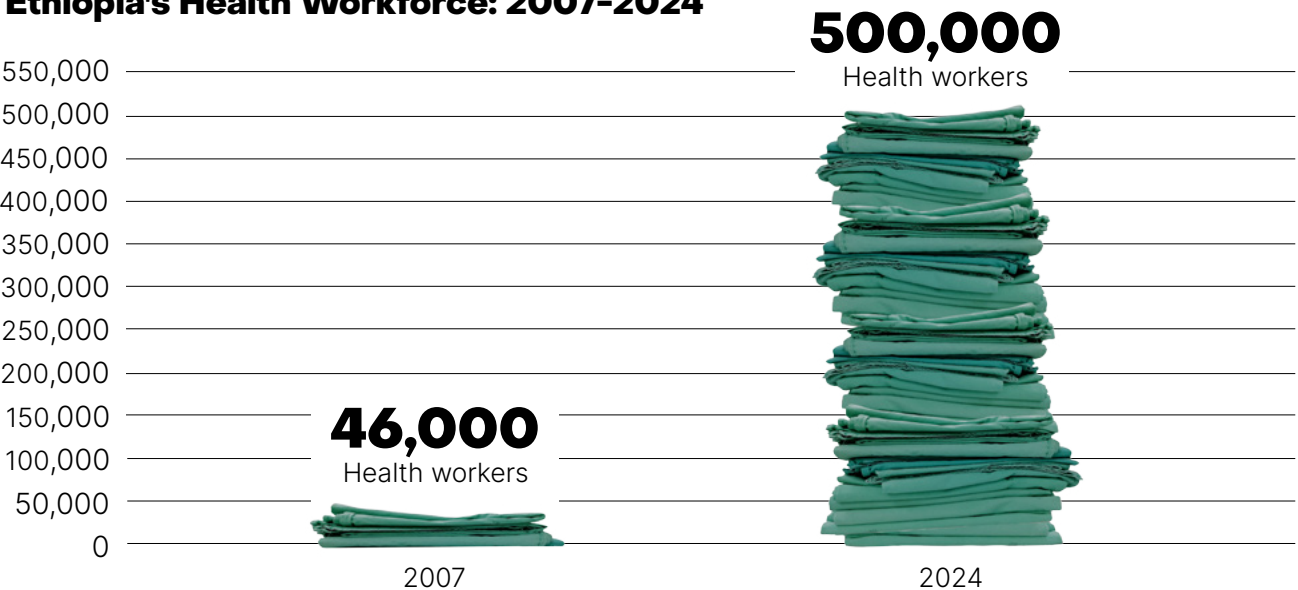
impact, enabling faster diagnoses, better tracking of diseases and more timely care – all of which improve community health outcomes.

The government's health spending per person has more than tripled over the past two decades – rising from US\$2.18 in 2000 to US\$6.84 in 2022.

These investments have been reinforced by the Global Fund. **Since 2003, the Global Fund has invested over US\$3 billion in Ethiopia to combat HIV, TB and malaria and strengthen the country's health systems.**

These investments support Ethiopia's journey toward self-sufficiency – enabling it to tackle the world's deadliest diseases and strengthen global health security.

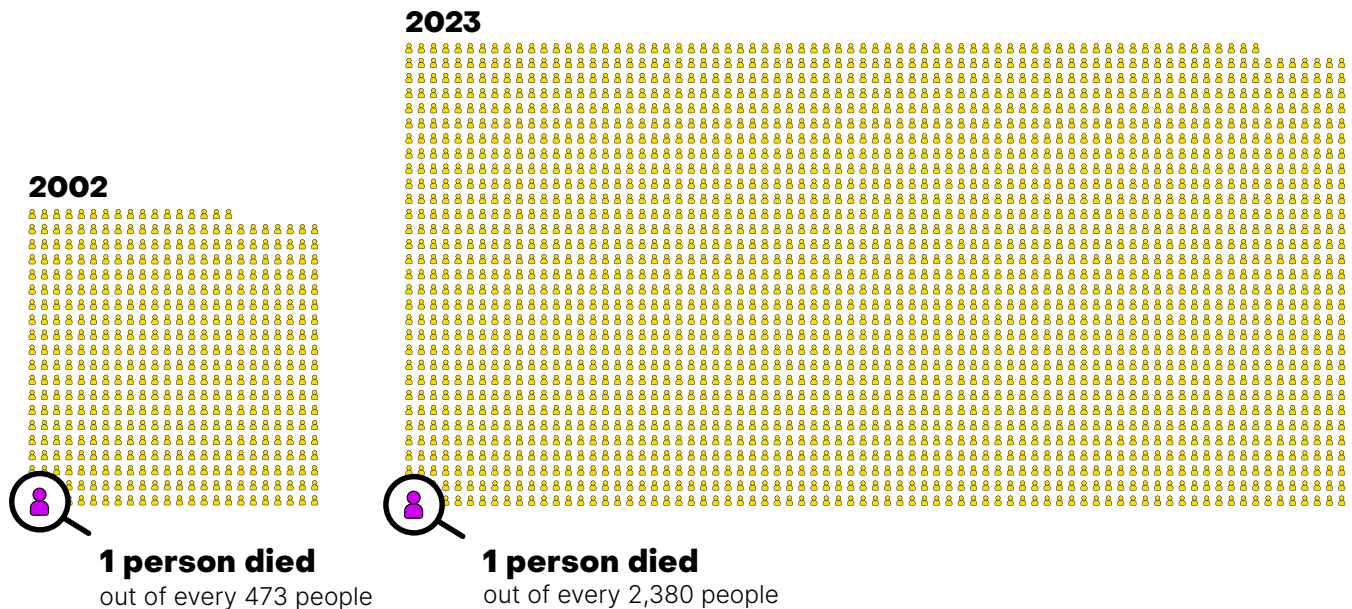
Ethiopia's Health Workforce: 2007-2024



Advancing the Fight Against AIDS, TB and Malaria

By working together, the Global Fund and the government of Ethiopia have achieved tremendous impact in the fight against AIDS, TB and malaria.

Reduction in deaths from AIDS, TB and malaria in Ethiopia between 2002 and 2023



In 2002, AIDS, TB and malaria claimed the lives of 150,000 people – or about 1 in every 473 Ethiopians. By 2023, this number had dropped to 53,000, which is equivalent to 1 death per 2,380 people. This is an 80% reduction in the mortality rate from AIDS, TB and malaria – a stunning achievement especially considering that the country's population grew by 80% during the same time period.

By reducing the burden of the three diseases, Ethiopia has generated powerful results:

71% reduction in under-5 deaths from AIDS, TB and malaria.

A child born in Ethiopia today is almost

3x more likely to survive their fifth birthday than one born in 2000.

Maternal deaths have dropped by

73% over the past two decades.

In 2000, about 1 in every 100 women died during childbirth. By 2023, that number had dropped to about 1 in 500.

Life expectancy has increased by

16 years

In 2000, before the Global Fund's work in Ethiopia started, life expectancy was 51 years. By 2023, it had risen to 67 years, with **21% of this progress due to gains against HIV, TB and malaria.**

This progress hasn't been easy. Ethiopia has faced its fair share of challenges – from conflict to population displacement and food insecurity to extreme weather events. Despite these challenges, these remarkable results prove the transformative impact of sustained investments in health.

Return on Health Investment

As health outcomes improved, Ethiopia saw broad benefits for communities and society. As the burden of these diseases declined, adults and children stayed healthier and life expectancy increased.

Improved education outcomes

When people are healthier, they are more likely to take part in and contribute to society. Healthy children are more likely to attend school consistently and adults are able to remain in the workforce.

Ethiopia has seen primary school enrollment rise from around 50% in 2000 to 84% in 2023, and university enrollment increase by 7% between 2000 and 2014.

More productive and entrepreneurial workforce

The labor force has more than doubled, growing from 3.9 million people in 2003 to 9.2 million people in 2018. This growth has been supported by increased education rates as university graduates are finding it easier to secure jobs.

The workforce is also more productive. From the early 2000s onward, productivity has steadily increased. Research shows that healthier, better-educated children can be up to 38% more productive as adults, underscoring how investments in health and education directly strengthen the labor force.

This increasingly educated and productive workforce is also more entrepreneurial. Since 2011, the annual number of new business registrations has almost tripled.

Health extension workers in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Over the past two decades, Ethiopia's Health Extension Worker Program has delivered dramatic health gains and is recognized worldwide as a best practice for community-based primary care. The Global Fund/Brian Otieno



Increased trade

With Ethiopia's strengthened workforce, the country has also become a significant trading partner.

Over the past five years, Ethiopian exports have risen by 72.4%, climbing from US\$2.25 billion in 2018 to US\$3.88 billion in 2023. This upward trend highlights Ethiopia's growing importance as a commercial ally.

Economic expansion

Ethiopia's GDP in 2023 was almost 20 times what it was in 2000, making it one of the fastest growing economies in Africa. The GDP per capita has quadrupled over the past decade.

Studies indicate that each additional year of life expectancy can boost GDP per capita by approximately 4% over the long term.

Government expenditure, which has contributed to and benefited from the GDP increase, is 96 times greater than it was in 2000. This increase in expenditure has meant greater access to universal health coverage, leading to better access to water, sanitation and health services. Through these investments, people are healthier and more able to contribute to the economy. Economies and health make a loop – each enabling the other to grow stronger and better.

By committing to invest in health, Ethiopia has seen its communities grow stronger, its workforce become healthier, and its economy become more resilient.

The Bigger Picture

Ethiopia's story is powerful, but it's not unique.

Supported by the Global Fund partnership, over 100 countries are seeing returns on smart health investments.

When we talk about return on investment, it's not just about dollars and data; it's about children who live to dream, parents who live to provide and contribute, and communities that rise. Few investments do more to secure a nation's future than investments in health.



When a nation puts health first, and we tackle global challenges together, we all benefit.

Data sources: UNAIDS data, WHO World Malaria Report data, WHO Global TB Report data, World Bank data, country case studies.

About the Global Fund

The Global Fund is a worldwide partnership to defeat AIDS, TB and malaria and ensure a healthier, safer, more equitable future for all. We raise and invest up to US\$5 billion a year to fight the deadliest infectious diseases and strengthen health systems and pandemic preparedness in more than 100 countries. Since 2002, the Global Fund partnership has saved 70 million lives.

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A child born in Ethiopia today is nearly three times more likely to survive to their fifth birthday than a child born in 2000. A major contributor to this success has been a 71% drop in under-5 deaths from AIDS, TB and malaria.

The Global Fund/Brian Otieno





**The Global Fund to Fight
AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria**

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