

CONCERN  
PHILANTHROPIC  
CIRCLE

Pathways  
out of  
extreme  
poverty



**CONCERN**  
worldwide

**ENDING  
EXTREME POVERTY  
WHATEVER  
IT TAKES**

# Join with us in the fight to end extreme poverty

Around the world, people living in extreme poverty not only lack the basics to live day-to-day, but also the means to escape poverty in the long-term.

In lower income countries, many children have limited access to education, healthcare and the opportunities to build a better future for themselves - a self-perpetuating cycle that traps generation after generation in poverty.

With limited land, education, skills or tools, people living in extreme poverty are often unintentionally excluded from traditional development programmes such as livestock provision or improved farming techniques.

We believe that no one should be left behind. Our focus is on working with those 'furthest behind, first' as we aim towards our goal of ending extreme poverty, whatever it takes.

**We are looking for motivated, dedicated individuals to join the Concern Philanthropic Circle and support people living in extreme poverty to create sustainable livelihoods and break the cycle of poverty.**

This is more than a donation – it is an investment that will make a significant, tangible difference. Your support can change the lives of some of the world's most vulnerable people for good.



*Dinbulo with her three children. They re*



Photo: Kieran McConville/Concern

## For people living in extreme poverty, every day is a struggle

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Abuhay lives in the remote area of Kinfañz with his wife and four children. Their home stands alone in an arid and volatile landscape, with little vegetation and few other inhabitants nearby.

The family live in a dilapidated home, something which embodies their togetherness in the face of struggling to meet basic needs on a daily basis. Although they have half a hectare of land, erratic rainfall patterns and other effects of climate change have hindered their yields, reflecting the harshness of the region's conditions – and meaning Abuhay is unable to provide enough nutritious food for his family.

He said assistance from Concern would enable him and his wife to transform their children's lives. **“I will be able to feed my family with nutritious food three times a day,”** he said.

Abuhay and his family are one of 9,360 vulnerable people in Central Gondar to be selected for Concern's Green Graduation Programme to launch at the end of 2023.

Zelalem Tefera, Concern's senior livelihoods officer, highlighted how the programme could transform Abuhay and his family's situation. He said: **“We will work to enable them to improve their living conditions and also to regenerate the watershed activities of the community. Hopefully after two years, Abuhay and his family will graduate from the extreme conditions of extreme poverty.”**

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Photo: Eugene Ikue/Concern

# Invest in a sustainable solution

'Graduation' refers to the movement of individuals or families out of extreme poverty and into sustainable livelihoods that enable them to meet their basic needs, not only to survive but to thrive.

Originally piloted by the BRAC organisation in Bangladesh in 2002, the Graduation Model has been tailored by Concern to meet the unique needs of each community that we work alongside. We have been implementing Graduation Programmes for over 13 years, adapting the approach to achieve maximum impact. Currently, Concern is carrying out Graduation Programmes in Ethiopia, Burundi, DRC, Haiti, Malawi and Rwanda.

Concern's programme offers an integrated and intensive package of support over a period of 18 months to three years. Targeting extremely poor households, this sequenced package of support begins with cash transfers, followed by business coaching and skills training, with participants gaining access to capital grants, savings and loans, and fixed assets.

The aim is not only to move people above a certain income/asset threshold, but also to address the root causes and obstacles that prevent them from escaping poverty. For example, in Rwanda, we work with local partners to engage men and boys on women's empowerment and gender equality, and in Burundi, we aim to reduce risk and vulnerability by working with communities to develop disaster-risk reduction plans.

## Core components of Graduation:



### Identification of participants

A rigorous process involving consultation with local communities is used to identify the poorest families and individuals, followed by robust verification.



### Financial support

Households receive small, regular payments throughout the duration of the programme. This allows participants to meet their basic needs while they invest their time and effort in the programme and develop their livelihoods.



### Training

Business and vocational skills training is provided to facilitate income generation either through a small business or by accessing employment.



### Coaching

Households receive regular coaching and mentoring to help them meet their goals, encourage positive behaviour change and offer guidance on how to address problems they face, including facilitating access to basic services such as health and education.



### Savings support

Families are also taught to save and use microfinance institutions or Village Savings and Loan Associations so they will be better prepared for potential livelihood disruptions such as illness or poor harvests.



### Start-up grant

After their training, each participant receives a grant to set up a small business that has been specially matched to the needs of the community to ensure sustainability. These might include animal rearing, making clothes or bicycle repair.



Asmara (70) and his son Erstie on a makeshift bed made from leather just outside their house. They sleep here during the dry season due to the limited space inside their house.

Photo: Eugene Ikua / Concern

## Proven impact

A key outcome of the Graduation Programme is the ability to diversify livelihood options and help participants become more resilient to shocks and stresses which often make it difficult for them to break the cycle of poverty. This is why Concern is asking you to partner with us to expand the Graduation Programme in Ethiopia, where an estimated 30 million people are living below the poverty line, with over 80% of the rural population dependent on rain-fed agriculture, meaning a strong resilience on one source of food which is problematic.

Concern's Graduation Programmes are cost-effective and lead to significant sustainable gains in economic and social outcomes, resulting in increases in food security, savings and assets; increased social status and higher levels of resilience to future economic shocks.

### Graduation impacts

In the first 13 years of Graduation, **110,971** programme participants across 9 countries were directly supported to graduate out of extreme poverty.

In Bangladesh, household scores on an aggregated set of indicators that measures gender equality had improved by **53%**.

In Rwanda, the hunger gap for families who finished the Graduation Programme had reduced from **4.04** months at the start to **2.4**, once complete.

In 2022, we worked alongside **17,300** people across both Rwanda and Burundi to help them graduate out of poverty.

**We know Graduation works. Now, we need members of the Concern Philanthropic Circle to help expand the programme to transform the lives of more families in need.**

# Why Ethiopia?

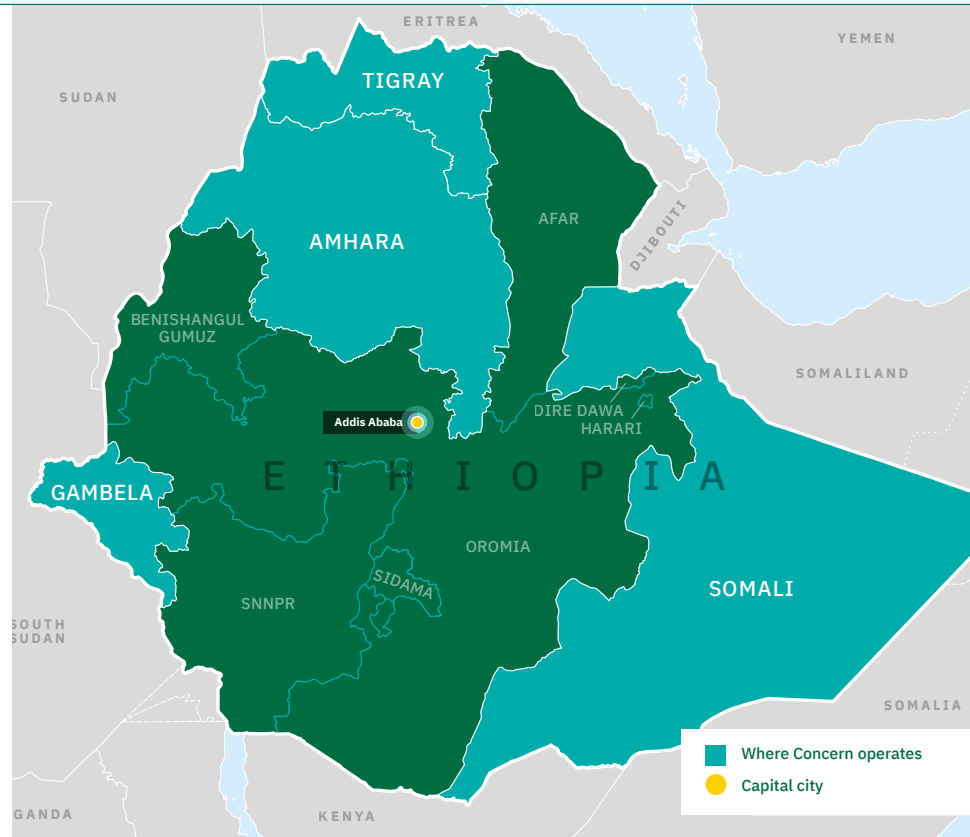
After two highly successful phases of Graduation funded by the Concern Philanthropic Circle, our attention now focuses on Ethiopia, a country where over 7.2 million children are waking up hungry each day, and 69% of the population are living in poverty.

At present, Concern is carrying out our tried and tested Graduation Programme with the support of the community, helping to provide people living in extreme poverty with a pathway out - from situations often defined by food insecurity and threats to sustainable livelihoods.

The Graduation approach encompasses four main pillars: social protection, livelihood promotion, financial inclusion and social empowerment. They provide a step-by-step package of support to help people address the barriers they face while moving towards a self-reliant way of life. Participants will be supported to develop new income-generating activities, through technical training, coupled with business and financial-management skills.

In addition to the key component of our Graduation programming, Concern teams will be implementing our new 'Green' approach. Given the critical links between the aims of Graduation and environmental protection and sustainability, this means:

- Understanding the risks and challenges associated with climate change and the contexts in which we are working to understand how they may affect the success and impact of the Graduation Programme.
- Minimising the negative effects (pollution, degradation) programmes have on the environment (land, water, air, biodiversity) while also reducing larger environmental impacts such as climate change and resource scarcity.
- Enhancing positive environmental practices and promoting sustainable natural resource management.
- Increasing the community's capacity to anticipate and adapt to hazards which would put them on the front foot.



- Ranked **175** out of **191** on the Human Development Index (2021/22)
- Over **800,000** refugees hosted from other countries have compounded food insecurity and increased hunger levels
- **69%** of people live in poverty
- Over **80%** of the rural population depend on rain-fed agriculture

**Will you join the Concern Philanthropic Circle and commit to fund this vital project in Ethiopia over the next 3 years?**





Bosena and her family live in a watershed area in West Belesa district.

Photo: Eugene Ikua/Concern

## Help a family like Bosena's

Bosena Adino has lived in her home in West Belesa in Ethiopia for more than two decades. She shares the space with her husband, four children and their grandmother.

Outside, leather mats provide a makeshift sleeping area during arid periods of the year and when space inside the house is limited.

Feeding a household of seven with the backdrop of devastating climate change poses a formidable challenge for Bosena Adino.

Bosena said: **“We have been living in this household for over 20 years now. Our livelihood is dependent on agricultural production and due to erratic rainfall and climate change, the productivity of the soil is low and this is why we are unable to meet the food demands of the family”**

**“We eat once per day, and provide for our children first, which means sometimes we may not get any food in a day at all,”** she said.

The effects of climate change have brought profound changes to Bosena's family, drastically altering their way of life. Once able to engage in farming and reap the rewards of their labour, the reality for them today is in stark contrast, with the possibility of cultivating food having all but disappeared.

**“We used to cultivate sorghum, chickpeas and teff, and at the time, productivity was high, and my family was able to eat three times per day. Currently, that is not possible,”** she said.

Despite the struggles that Bosena and her family have faced, she still clings to the promise of a brighter future.

**“Thank you to Concern for choosing us. In the near future, we will be able to meet the food needs of the household. Hopefully after a while, and with the support of the programme, we will change the status of our family,”** Bosena said.

## Your role

As a member of the Concern Philanthropic Circle, your support will allow us to help the most vulnerable people in the poorest regions of Ethiopia through our tried and tested Graduation Programme.

In an increasingly volatile and unpredictable climate, your help will enable us to reach even more families in extreme poverty with this unique package of life-changing support. Around 85% of people in northern Ethiopia depend on agriculture as a major source of food and earnings; they have weak resilience capabilities if flooding or drought were to occur.

Help is needed now more than ever to support participants to diversify their incomes, provide support in climate-smart agriculture techniques, and most importantly, to give people a pathway out of extreme poverty.

Working alongside the community to utilise local knowledge, this funding opportunity addresses the need to provide access to income-generating opportunities during a global cost-of-living crisis, compounded by the impact of the Covid pandemic.

Your generous support over the three-year programme, together with that of other dedicated Circle members, will help us give families the opportunity to build a sustainable livelihood, feed their families, access clean water and begin to feel a valued part of their community – providing the opportunity to lift themselves out of extreme poverty for good.







Photo: Kieran McConville/Concern

Dajew and Bayushe, with their children, who have been selected to participate in the Graduation Programme in Ethiopia.

## See the **lasting** **impact** of your gift

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As a member of the Concern Philanthropic Circle, you have the opportunity to play a vital role in this life-changing project you are helping to support, and see the impact of your investment first-hand. All members receive:

- A bi-annual programme report and regular updates detailing the progress that Circle members are helping to make possible in Ethiopia.
- Invitations to attend and take part in digital and in-person briefings with Concern staff involved with the Graduation Programme.
- An invitation to an annual reception where you can meet other members of the Concern Philanthropic Circle, speak to Concern staff and find out more about the work you are making possible.
- A dedicated member of staff to answer queries and provide updates.
- An opportunity to visit the programme in Ethiopia, to meet programme participants and local staff to see first-hand the transformative impact of your support.

# Making your philanthropy go further

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Following the overwhelming success of Graduation Programmes funded in both Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) by the Concern Philanthropic Circle, we are now asking for your support to fund the Graduation Programme in Ethiopia – a commitment that will have a real, lasting impact on the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in the world.

We know that tackling extreme poverty is challenging – but is achievable. It requires an integrated and committed approach, like Graduation, to provide families with a pathway out of poverty, into a self-sufficient future.

The Graduation approach is an example of a ‘big push’ intervention designed to move people out of conditions of extreme poverty by simultaneously boosting livelihoods and income, providing access to financial services and improving social wellbeing.

It requires significant, and ongoing investment from people like you.



*Wubut and her family live near the Suhi community micro watershed in West Belesa which will benefit from the Green Graduation Programme.*



Photo: Kieran McConville/Concern

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*In 2019, I got the opportunity to visit Burundi to witness the Graduation Programme in action. A quick online search will tell you that it is one of the world's most impoverished countries, so it was with great trepidation that I accepted the invitation to see the work that Concern is doing there.*

*One of the first families we met was Jacques and Sophie and their two small children. They were day labourers who sometimes got work from landowners, gathering bananas or doing odd jobs. On days that they didn't find work, they didn't eat, and would tell their children "maybe tomorrow." They were living in the type of extreme poverty we can barely imagine.*

*This is where Concern comes in – Jacques and Sophie's family were identified to be participants in Concern's Graduation Programme. They were given a small monthly allowance for the first year while they took part in business training and mentoring. It also included training on growing vegetables, the importance of hygiene and gender equality as well as identifying and developing participants' own strengths and skills. Upon completion of the programme, families receive a grant to set up a small business.*

*The trip was a profound experience for me and since returning home I often think about these families who benefited so much from having completed the Graduation Programme. I am convinced that helping families 'graduate' out of poverty is one of the best ways to enable people in remote towns and villages to help themselves. This is a programme well worth supporting.”*



**Anne Doherty**  
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