



Oasis Splash!

Abraham's Oasis

It's official now! We are an Ethiopian Resident Charity No. 0905 registered at the Charities and Societies Agency of the Ministry of Justice, of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

Childcare

Grace Village

- **The School**

The school extension is nearly finished! A BIG thank you to Hamilton Hill Baptist Church in USA who gave us the bulk of the money for Grace School! We are praying for enough to make the final payment. We will have more space for the students and the teachers will have their own office. None of these great teachers and students has complained once about the squeeze and more recently the rubble and noise around them – a great group we have!



Some of the slow learners have picked up; but this is due to the enormous patience of the teacher – the brighter students blossom in the small classroom environment and cannot wait to run to school and be with their big brothers and sisters and beloved teachers. A joy to behold!

- **The children**

Karin had a telephone call from Social Services asking if we could take two little girls, five and seven years of age. How can you refuse? Father died and mother left the children with a neighbour and disappeared... Is she alive or not, we do not know. This brings our numbers to fifty one children, so we needed to open another house. Who could mother these wee darlings? We had a new girl with childbirth injuries who could be an assistant but not yet to be leader. We asked one of our older girls – named Grace (Tsega) – her reply was “but of course, this is what I want to do, give me plenty of children!” So now we have our own in-house mother. She knows about fathers who die and mothers who disappear because that is what happened to her own parents – so who better to love these little beauties?

Community Care

- **The office**

The rent for the Shire Town property was coming due and after a review of our work with the community sponsor programme, we decided that we should make some changes. This was to have a more permanent office in Shire Town where most of the children are living or attending school making the office more central. We found an ideal place next to a doctor's clinic and he had two rooms for rent. These rooms open out to the road. We have moved our two community workers into the office and added a part time teacher.

- **The study centre**

The second room has been developed into a study room cum library - thanks to a donation from our Italian sponsors, this has been kitted out with books, chairs and tables and a part time teacher to help these very poor children in lieu of parents who are not around to help with learning skills. Already there are fifteen children using the study room regularly!

Refugee Child Protection

- **The children**

So many children! Far more than we planned for! All of them far from home, in fear and with heartaches. One lad became psychotic – not surprising considering all they have gone through. Crossing international borders, knowing home is only a matter of only a few hours distance but it might as well be eternity away with the obstacles preventing them from returning. We continue to receive up to forty new unaccompanied minors every week, initially we were told we would have thirty children we now have over four hundred! Finding enough food, sufficient blankets and providing adequately protection for them against adult perpetrators, remains a challenge for our Child Protection Officer. She has her refugee-helpers in the camp and recently an additional employee has been engaged to act as her assistant. They have an enormous task before them. Your gifts and encouragement help so much!

- **The kids meet again**

Christmas was celebrated amongst friends, Grace Village children wanted to go again strengthening the bonds of the hurting with hurting. Guests came through and left money for them; so we bought traditional instruments to help them ease their pain through song, and oh my, are they singing!

- **Epilepsy**

Some fifteen children have epilepsy and no treatment is available. These children were falling into the fire and getting injured simply because there was no medicine available. So we are flying up a specialist to see the children this weekend, who can then provide the correct medication for them. It is through friends helping that we are able to help.



Health

Grace Village Health

Ato Mehari, an old friend who had worked in the local hospital with Karin, is now working with us and we are so pleased! He has started classes for the housemothers, teaching them about hygiene and healthy practices in the home. Slowly the children are coming to trust him and he is treating their aches and pains, these include the heartache common to all living in this corner of the world.

Maternal Health Outreach

Already within the first month, this fine nurse manager has visited three health centres, talked to them about maternal health and prevention of death and disability of our mothers. He has spoken at the hospital about collaborating with us in the management of obstetric fistula patients. He has started to collate data from the North-western Zone about maternal health to create a baseline for updating as time goes on to measure potential changes related to the planned activities.

Kelakil

Abraham's Oasis has not received any further funding for the medical coverage of people affected by the unknown liver disease. Therefore, by the end of January 2010 we will no longer be involved in the medical side of this work. However, Baptist Mid Missions has given us money once again to help the exceedingly vulnerable community of Kelakil. We have bought and given out food already.

We do plan to assist with rehabilitation and for this we plan to train one lady in Addis Ababa to supervise the work of the cooperative in Kelakil in wool carding and spinning. The change from farming to this new venture is because until we know what is causing the problem we do not want to jeopardize them any further. One hypothesis is that the illness is due to food related origins.

Farming

Grace Farm

We have made profit for the first time with our tomato production as we bought none this past month for Grace Village. Now if we can do that with onions, potatoes and cabbage etc. we will begin on the self-sustainable road. Send us seeds if you like they are always useful! Anything that grows in dry arid lands will grow. We are also interested in experimenting with new vegetables and plants; so send us your ideas too. Thanks!

Plans are in place for Hadgu and Gebre Mehdin to start the training session with our boys to teach them how to establish their own farm cooperative here at Grace Village. In the meantime twelve lads are doing all the watering of the vegetable gardens, thus preparing them for the bigger job up ahead.

Female Headed Households

Gebre Mehdin will travel to Addis Ababa with Frehiwot to learn about carpet making as an additional component in our Female Headed Household activities.

Yesterday three women from Kelakil came to collect the first instalment of their money to start their cooperative. Once this is completed they will move to the next phase – possibly buying raw wool and supplies to card and spin. This hurting community deserves a profitable business that we are hopeful will supply them not only with income but also regained dignity. The wool would then be used for carpet making in the future.

Buildings

Multipurpose

The contractor for the school building, who has his own business together with his brothers, has been proved honest and so we have entrusted into his efficient hands the completion of the multipurpose hall. We have had to search around for extra funds to do this but we believe we will break even. Thanks to all who have given so generously for this hall!

Reservoir and Wells

One day we will have enough water to drink, wash little bodies and big ones too, do the laundry and clean houses as well as water with liberality our trees and vegetable gardens... That will be a day of great rejoicing at Grace Village! The new unplanned location for the reservoir has now been adjusted in accordance with the Head of Water Resources in Shire, who kindly gave us advice in how to remedy the situation. The contractor is getting ready to begin with lining the location with special sand and walls. Next year in the rainy season we will fill and hold water for the dry season.

Our Donors

As 2010 starts we believe that there are exciting things ahead for Abraham's Oasis, new children in the village, the community and amongst the



refugee protection activities who need our ongoing care and input; mothers delivering babies unassisted in inadequate conditions in remote corners of this land and lone women eking an existence in rural agrarian communities to assist together with you our faithful partners and supporter. It is our joy to be here, to receive kisses and hugs from the children, warm greetings from the women and to slowly see change take place. Friends, none of this would ever be possible if you were not behind us, helping us with your funds, your gifts, your hand-on input and your advice for the way forward.

Thank you!

Karin u Id Bosch & Ruth C. Kennedy