



Oasis Splash!

Childcare

Grace Village

The School

Ruth walked into grade 1 and 2 combined class, listening to Benyam reading so loud and clear, when she saw a little movement between two of the 2nd graders... There sat Ribka, one of our 3 year olds thinking she was smart enough to be there but she was trying to hide knowing she should not be there! Ruth simply pointed to the door and asked her to go back to KG – she went and Benyam just went right on reading! Everyone loves school! This morning as the Big children sang their patriotic song at the flag raising, Ruth heard and echo from the babies who had just kissed me singing the song right along from across the field. Yes, school is fun!

The children

Mother died last October, never knew his Dad, alone and in a refugee camp – but who is he? Could he be resettled in another country, was he refugee or Ethiopian... No one seemed to know, his care givers were leaving for USA, but what of Henock? He came to us... One young man who had lived for six years in the refugee camp visited to say goodbye. The man wept the little boy stroked his hands telling him all would be well and that he was just fine 'thank-you and this is a good place – there is food, blankets and other children...' Danyit and Yordanos are his house sisters and Tsega is his house mother, guests painted wonderful pictures in their house and the home is called Cherenet – Kindness. May kindness be found therein.

Community Care

The Office and Study Centre

The town office and library cum study hall is working very well! The library is a success with many children coming to study. In the afternoons we have a teacher in the study hall to help them with points they cannot understand about school work.

Motor Bike for Childcare Worker

We have been able to buy a motor bike for the childcare worker so that he can go and visit the schools and children in their homes with greater ease

Refugee Child Protection

The children

Children everywhere, in shelters, on the road, in the playing fields, in the houses and still more arrive between 20-30 youngsters per week... Tents were put up but were not safe even though the tent dwellers were rotated so as to not have

to sleep all the time under canvas. Now the older teens have moved out to start building their own houses, thus making room for the newcomers. This last Easter they bought a cow and ate meat – what luxury! The usual diet is ground pulses over the Injera bread. Onions and potatoes... We sent popcorn, yellow stuff to add to their water and sweeties – party time at the camp!

The workers

Today Bethel has gone to ensure the rations come through for the children, so that they have food and fuel for the next month, together with her superb band of workers they play the role of substitute mother and father. They take it seriously and do a grand job.

Volunteers

Frits and Diane from Netherlands came and helped out at the camp with skills training in woodwork and providing some counsel for the handicapped children.

Health

Grace Village Health

A whirlwind has arrived in our village, Ato (Mr.) Mehari and old friend of Karin's from when she worked at the local hospital. He has done sanitation campaign – 'clean the compound day' and everyone was there to do the work! He has checked the children, follows their growth, teaching health and hygiene to mothers and at school and finds time to write leaflets about hygiene in the dairy for our girls cooperative!

Maternal Health Outreach

In addition to the above, he is busy travelling has held one workshop in Tselemti (near the refugee camp), a very remote place with high incidents of maternal death and disabilities. He taught the use of and distributed clean delivery kits to the rural health workers. He has identified seven women with obstetric fistulae and referred them to Mekelle Fistula Centre. He has also planned for two more workshop in Medebaye Zana and Asgede Tsimbla for the same type of awareness raising. Word is out and the women are coming, the telephones are ringing and the local hospital is calling us frequently!

Kelakil

Mehari has been to advise and raise moral in Kelakil and being a man from nearby they are hearing him and are encouraged.

Farming

Grace Farm

Hadgu our new agricultural agent is getting excited about what is happening here. After a run of inadequate employees



to manage the garden, a decision was reached that this would be an ideal training for our older lads. Allowing them to manage, water, weed and harvest the crops and market them and share profits with the organisations towards savings for their future school or work.

Emnet / Faith Coop as taken off! Johnny is chairman... and doing a good job getting his brothers to work and prepare the land and weed etc. The lads are out there every day doing their chores. Yesterday a neighbouring farmer let his cattle and goats into 'our' land and the boys rounded them up and charge the defaulter for the misdemeanour, we kept well out of the way and watch them negotiate. It was great to see them deal with this conflict in such a honouring manner. We don't think the farmer will let his animals stray onto our land again in a hurry, he realised that he is dealing with young able men! Not two foreign women!

This month the older girls have started to run the dairy as their coop. They have called is Kebir / Glory. They are rising at 5.30am to collect the milk and working until 7pm to prepare butter and sterilise the milk! We are very pleased with this beginning. We hope to sell to folk from UNHCR and IOM and perhaps some of the bigger hotels...

Female Headed Households

Gebre Mehdin, our excellent agricultural agent who works in the community has been diagnosed with diabetes, not easy to handle in any country but especially tough in remote Ethiopia. We have a very good internist at the local hospital who is Gebre Mehdin physician. So we are grateful for that and Gebre Mehdin has returned to work and is doing his usual high quality work with the women headed householders.

A new project is that of Kelakil rehabilitation, this hurting and sick community has now some fine researchers taking over the work we had been doing therefore we now change focus to help in the community and the school. The women will be making various crafts, cotton spinning and wool carding as well as mat making and other local crafts. The school will open a small school supplies shop that may supply simple household items such as soap, matches etc, so that children can buy these upon return from school thus helping their mothers.

Buildings

School Extension

This has made a huge difference to our little school building and we have moved grades 1-7 into the new building, we now have teachers room, science laboratory, computer laboratory and grade 8 has a bigger room. The design is so in keeping with our other building, and both teachers and students are pleased.

Multipurpose

We celebrated Palm Sunday and Easter in the Hall and that was special as the European Easter and Ethiopian Easter were

the same this year! We had our children and the mothers all there looking so beautiful in the traditional white clothing! The library has started with the older children using it for their studies in the evening. KG has yet to be opened as our KG teacher Harag is leaving to get married so we thought new place, new teacher would be good. Other guests have painted the walls there with some fun pictures for the children to look at. Lovely white tiles will make it a safe place and hygienic for our babies to crawl around on. The whole building is around beautiful and we are so grateful to those who have given so generously to make this possible!

Reservoir and Wells

Water, water, water seems to be our constant plea! We believe that we have finally clinched it though. The storage reservoir is nearly complete all but the opening and steps. Then in the rainy season we can pump the abundant water supplies into this storage reservoir and hold it until February through May for the dry months of the year and have enough water for all!

The large lake that we had relined has held water until now, this is being used for the gardens and we are pleased about this!

Our Ato Teklaye is still digging away down in the bowels of the earth, chipping away at rock until he meets the floor of the valley when surely there will be water to recompense his hard work.

Our Donors

When we think there isn't enough money, we look at the accounts and find out that we can move a little from here to there and stretch this money a little further and cover most of the costs. Our main concern for the upcoming year is for Grace School, however when the time comes we find that we have enough money for paying salaries. Kitting out the school does cost money as we are finding out.

What impresses us most is that when we think we are pinched, the required amount comes in and we know that God Almighty is looking out for the fatherless, the widows and the orphans and we rest assured!



Easter Sunday celebrations!



You are of enormous value to us, thank you!

Karin v Id Bosch & Ruth C. Kennedy