

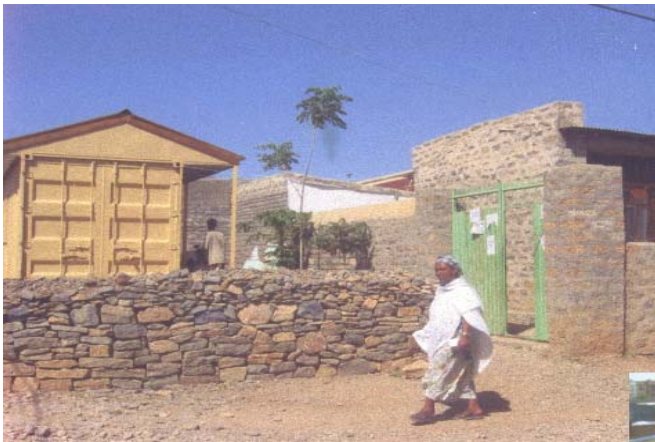
Newsletter



MUMS for MUMS Stands
'On the side of mum in need'

February - April 2010

Mums for Mums 2001 → Mums for Mums 2010



April 7 Mums' Day Celebration

On April 7th 2010 Mum's Day was celebrated for the 9th time. The celebration took place in the new meeting hall. A large number of guests, outreach workers, supporters and Mums for Mums staff enjoyed the proceedings in a suitably care free holiday atmosphere.

Following a welcome speech by Teberah the founder and voluntary Executive Director of Mums for Mums, Hagos the assistant program manager ceremonially lit a firework to mark the start of the celebrations. The occasion was followed by female musicians.

S/r Belaynsh from Social and Labour Affairs Bureau spoke to the guests about the importance of Mum's Day. She spoke of efforts being made through the government to make Mum's Day a holiday. She spoke the problems of women supported with data.

Mums for Mums gave a surprise Mum's Day gift to two elderly mothers. These mothers are 90 and 97 years old. We were very privileged to have them around.



Volunteer corner : Lynn Peterson (UK)

Mums for Mums and Me

On Tuesday, the 26th of January, 2010 is a day I will not forget. It is the day I met the remarkable Tebereh. And to meet Tebereh is to meet Mums for Mums as they are one entity. Here is an excerpt from my diary on this unforgettable day:

This morning Dr Solomon collected me from the school where I am a volunteer English teacher. The mission was for me to meet his wife Tebereh and her charity Mums for Mums.

Now some people are really truly brave. Upon returning from Cambridge, England where she had lived for some 20 years, Tebereh saw the problems in her native country and decided to tackle them one by one. She started Mums for Mums to deal with HIV Aids, street girls, orphans, the lost young souls of Mekelle. In fact, she first set up shop in the very container that arrived with their belongings from the UK. Her work is seriously impressive as she not only takes these women under her wing, but she has developed workshops to train them in baking, dressmaking, weaving and other skills to ensure that they learn how to take care of themselves. Self-reliance...that is her goal. She provides a crèche for the mothers while they are being trained and with her help they get a job or start a business with micro-financing. Mums for Mums now operates from a series of buildings housing the training workshops. Tebereh has every right to be proud of the award she won in the UK last year from the Stars Foundation in the UK. All in all, a very wonderful woman doing truly inspiring work.

Well, that was the start of my friendship with the extraordinary Tebereh.

One week later Tebereh picked me up at 10 o'clock for a trip to the Alshaday Children's Village near Wukro, 40 km north of Mekelle. The orphanage was started in 1988 when the Derg bombed and strafed the village of Hawzen from 10am to 5pm. It was a market day teeming with people and more than 2500 innocent people were killed on that awful day. Friends of Tebereh picked up 15 Orhpn's shell-shocked and wandering the streets, and these lost souls became the first orphans of Alshaday.

The orphanage is on a farm where they grow all their own produce to feed the 200 orphaned children and then sell the surplus.

Once again water is a monumental problem, and they are struggling to irrigate the land with one well and one pump so, at present, some of the crops just won't survive. It is subsistence farming, but they soldier on...what else are they to do? Of course, I have pledged to help find sponsors for some of the children who have no one at all in their lives.FECIN (Friends of Ethiopian Children in Need) in Cambridge Tebereh's friend have been helping this orphanage in many ways such as purchasing school benches, books and pencils paid for water pump, water tank etc...

By Saturday, the 20th of February, I began teaching English to senior members of Mums for Mums staff. While I began teaching in the traditional way, we quickly evolved into a lively English discussion group. The most important thing is for the staff to become comfortable in speaking English, especially with all the foreign visitors to Mums for Mums. One day we had a great discussion about the upcoming elections in May. I learned so much about the politics and economics of Ethiopia, and they did it all in English while I helped and corrected them along the way. This is the very best way of learning spoken English. They were delighted with their progress during an hour and a half and so was I. Lots of new, sophisticated words to learn and define. On another day, the group taught me about the Orthodox Church, and they learned so much more about speaking English.

During these discussions, I have learned even more about the truly wonderful work of Mums for Mums. Perhaps what impresses me most is the proactive nature of all the work. The charity does not sit back and wait until someone comes knocking on the door for help. They are out every day finding people who would not find help in any other way. It is an exceptional approach in a world that always waits for other people to do something. Thanks to Tebereh and her remarkable staff, Mums for Mums is a very different charity. They don't wait for anything! They go out and talk with people who need help...and then they give them the help they need.

Tebereh and her wonderful staff are determined to do good works for the people of her country. I am proud to know her.

Beneficiary corner

Tirfnesh's Story

Tirfnesh is 18 years old and has three younger brothers- Yoseph, the eldest, then Andewerk and Frehewt, the youngest.

When one of MFMs volunteer counselors discovered Tirfnesh, she was all alone in a small rented house, bereft no family and friends, with her self-confidence at very low ebb: in the period leading up to that initial encounter first her father and then her mother had died, leaving Tirfnesh and her brothers without any support. In that vulnerable state, without the means to support themselves, the brothers had left Tirfnesh alone in the house and went to the street.

So when she first met MFMs, Tirfnesh was literally house-bound, with no funds to pay for house-rent or food, no friends or family for mutual encouragement, and with no confidence left to get out and meet people or take any initiatives.

At that point MFMs stepped in with vital practical help- a monthly allowance of vital foods – wheat, pulses, vegetable oil and faffa-and just as important, friendship and encouragement.

With regular encouragement from the MFMs volunteers and staff, Tirfnesh's confidence steadily grew – she took training and then became a volunteer helper herself-working as a home –based care provider around the Mekelle Kebelles. During this time, her growing friendship with the other MFMs volunteers and workers made MFMs like a second family to Tirfnesh. Using the small monthly allowance from her volunteer work with MFMs,Tirfnesh was able to resume her studies in secretarial science – another step in rebuilding her life.



This turnaround in her circumstance brought another welcome, if unexpected benefit – abandoning their life on the street, her three brothers came home and began living again with Tirfnesh. As well as MFMs,Tirfnesh had her own family once again.

Since then, Tirfnesh has graduated with a diploma in secretarial science and taken on the job of receptionist at MFMs drop –in center apposition she filled when the previous worker left.

With her wages, Tirfnesh supports herself and help out with the boys schooling. The brothers still get a food allowance from MfMs and are all attending school –Frehewt in particular, the youngest, is an excellent student and a real help to his sister around the house.

There is real warmth to Tirfnesh's home these days – not just from a wood or charcoal burner, but from the ties of affection of a reunited family and of desolate lives rebuilt.

News roundup

Vision Aid Overseas

Helping the world to see

In April 2010, VAO Team leader Ruhan du Plooy and his team of 3 UK based Optometrists, Caroline Clarke, Elaine Quinn and Colm McGonigle, as well as 15 Ophthalmic nurses from health centers all over Tigray visited Mums for Mums providing eye examination and glasses to staff and volunteers. 79 people were examined, out of which 30 people require eye glasses, one person requires an eye operation and another person requires medicine.

VAO is a UK based charity founded 25 years ago by a small group of volunteers who recognized the immense need for eye care services in the developing world having worked at an eye camp in Tanzania.

Since 1985 VAO has provided eye examinations to over 1 million people and helped them with access to spectacles and other eye care services in 22 countries throughout Africa and Asia.



Waiting for their eye test

Their model for development is inspired by the strategic framework of VISION 20/20: The Right to sight, bringing together international organizations dedicated to improving eye care worldwide. Some 670 million people – 10% of the world population – are disadvantaged by poor vision and the lack of glasses.

The VAO strategy is 3 fold in providing:

1. Outreach services. Teams of Optometrist volunteers from the UK perform eye tests and glasses.

2. Education and research. Support Optical professionals to undertake placements to teach at Universities and Hospitals in the countries VAO work in.
3. Vision centres. VAO is expanding its current network of spectacle producing centres from 12 to 40 in the coming years.



VAO is currently focusing its work on 4 key countries at the moment. These are Ethiopia, Zambia, Ghana and Burkina Faso. VAO has a long history in Ethiopia.

In 2006/7 VAO supported 2 UK based Optometrists, Ruhan du Plooy and Gemma Peters at Gondar University, Ethiopia helping set up the first Optometry training programme.

VAO provides ongoing training to Ophthalmic nurses in refraction (eye testing) at Menelik hospital, Addis Abeba and Quiha Eye Hospital in Makale, Tigray.

In the future VAO is looking forward to an ongoing

Our Friends

Margherita, Daniela & Pietrina from Italy donated two hand looms one small and one big to our weaving training. The trainees in the weaving class are producing excellent scarfs and they are delighted with the gift. Thank you and thank you very much.



Cactus Corner

Cactus is a plant with very thick and fleshy stems and often covered with prickles. Cactus grows in deserts and other very dry places. In countries like Mexico, America, Italy and South Africa there is a long tradition of cactus pear cultivation and utilisation. The uses of cactus pear have evolved through history from wild cactus pear communities to domestic use in home gardens and finally to the management of commercial plantations. Nopalitos are processed into food, cosmetics and medicinal products.



Lentil and Nopalito Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 cup lentil- boiled and slightly mashed
- 4 fresh green chilli pepper, washed, deseeded and finely chopped
- 1 small onion
- 1 cup pre –prepared Nopalitos
- 1 tbsp salad dressing

Method:

- Put all the above ingredients in a mixing bowl.
- Mix well and serve with injera or bread.

Demonstration on Home made Sanitary pad

It is very expensive to purchase imported sanitary napkins , besides it is extremely difficult to get rid.



It spoils the environment and it has unpleasant chemical in the environment.



We are always looking ways and means of replacing this with environment friendly sanitary pad.

SUPPORT THE WORK OF MUMS FOR MUMS/FAMILY SUPPORT PROJECT IN THE ERADICATION OF THE “ABJECT POVERTY”

Mums for Mums is a registered NGO. It is working to help young single and destitute mother to get out of the vicious cycle of poverty. The young single mother is being helped to regain her self confidence and be self – reliant.

You can be a partner in this worthy cause?

Mums for Mums Pledge form

Yes I am interested to help

Name : _____

E-mail: _____

Tel: _____

P.O.Box: _____

I would like to make a regular contribution towards the work of Mums for Mums starting from _____

Amount Pledged _____

Per month _____ per year _____

I would like to make a one off contribution

Amount _____

The current rate of exchange

- GBP 1.00 = approximately 20.00 Birr
- Euro 1.00 = approximately 18.00 Birr
- US \$ 1.00 = approximately 13.50 Birr

You can send your donations directly to the Mums for Mums Bank Account

Swift Code CBETETAA
Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, Mekelle
Branch,
Tigray, Ethiopia:
Mums for Mums,
Account Number 3388



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Please Help Us to Help Others