

Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)

Grace Village

Solomon, Helen, Angosum and Haben came this last quarter;



siblings whose parents have died. The two older ones have created stability for the two younger ones; but they miss their mother so much... The older teen lad is living in Emnet House and has bonded well with the boys there. The three younger ones are living with Rehwa and have settled in well.

A little one week old baby girl, Nahomi joined us a month ago; she is settling in and will also stay with Rehwa.

News came that there is another baby whose mother has died; sadly the time it takes to process these little ones sometimes jeopardizes the life of the child, but we dare not interfere with the government / court methods. Getachew, our Psychologist, has reviewed all the Grace Village Children advising how we can best help them. The more seriously affected he has set up counselling sessions with them in order to seek resolution for their heartaches.

Grace School

First lot of exams are now over and all have passed; except that is Dawit from Axum. This wee lad has multiple problems and needs to be with family. We are trying to find a special needs teacher to help the whole family to learn sign language. Rosa has moved into the village because her home life was unstable, she has settled in very well.

The calibre of school is so much better; the children are being pushed to their maximum and the slow learners are being given extra tutorials. It is wonderful to see!

Polly from USA has been with us for six weeks, working along side the English teachers, helping the children directly with their spoken

English and building some lovely relationships with both children and teachers.

Grace Farm

The Emnet Home has really taken running the dairy to heart. Sadly however, Foot and Mouth Disease from the fattening farm next door nearly decimated our small herd of five cows, the vet we had engaged for the charity showed his lack of experience and we were obliged to call in another vet who managed the disease and the cows very expertly and as a result saved the animals for us. The cows have now returned to the pre-illness quota for which we are grateful. Today we heard that two cows are on heat; so we hope we'll have calves this year.

We are facing constraints from local officials regarding the granting of permits to expand the dairy. So we simply wait patiently a decision is reached for us to proceed.

Community OVC

Nehetsenant was struggling to get to school in her rural community as she is lame,

so we moved her nearby, gave her sister a job and found her a

wheelchair and she now attends 4th Grade at Grace School.



Yemane, our Sociologist, is busy, meeting with the children, speaking to them, encouraging them and ably reporting back to us. He makes the monthly payments and ensures they are attending school through close collaboration with the local schools.

Sheraro is a community north of us with many orphans and vulnerable children eking out an existence. Funding has come through our partners in Italy to cover the costs of sponsoring twenty

eight children there. The Social Affairs is handling this in a very professional manner and we visit once a quarter for supervision and payment directly to the concerned children.

Elementary School Support (ESS)

Degana School (Phase Two) has now been approved to establish a retail shop. The Parent Teacher Association went and saw how well Kelakil had set up shop and turned it into an income generation activity. We can now go ahead and provide them with the money and they can move ahead.

The Kelakil School has now started to develop the second retail shop with the final contribution made to them. We are so pleased with the work effort of the PTA in this impoverished community!

Women in Need

Maternal Health



This is still a grim topic; Ato Mehari returned yesterday telling us he was at a health meeting

when he heard that during the last quarter (three months); twelve (12) mothers died in childbirth. There was no mention of their babies... This is Tselemti Woreda, such a needy and heartrending area. Selecting this area is not by hazard but heard realities of the exceedingly vulnerable status of pregnant/labouring women.

Women with Childbirth Injuries

The most recent cook, Tedji has decided to return to her family; we are sad to lose her and are now looking for someone to replace her. Wubete and Yenenish appear to be making good progress after the surgery they underwent in 2011. Wubete's father is very ill and she has gone to see him; we advised her to cover her mouth and nose and not eat with him because it was

after visiting him last that she came down with tuberculosis.

Assembly / Dissemination of CDK



We have just heard that we have received the grant from the Australian Government through the Birth Kit Foundation and Zonta Clubs for ten thousand kits to be assembled here for distribution Zone wide. This is great news for us and our wee mothers around the rough countryside of North-western Zone of Tigray!

Gender Based Violence Awareness

The self help focal groups are doing better in some areas and are very slow in others. In Sheraro Commercial Sex Workers attending the focal groups discussion have gone to find their friends and take them for HIV testing; three rape victims have found the courage to return to school. In another Woreda two women have started up small business, selling tea and or cookies and sweets.

Donors

"I love this place, Sr. Ruth" says Selamawit, tall beautiful and gracious lass from Kelakil, father died mother ill and this gorgeous child of 13 years is going blind. To help such a one warms our hearts; to know you care enough to help financially, through packages, through letters, cards, hands on help here at the village means we have the joy of helping girls and others such as Selamawit (the woman of peace). Thank you from all of us!

Karin van den Bosch /
Ruth C. Kennedy

