

## 11<sup>th</sup> Progress Report

### Item 1

The whereabouts of a number of children

A number of children who were present on the master list in 2006 during the first visit of the Executive Committee Members (ECM) in March 2008 to Mekele and their second visit in April 2012 are now missing on the list while the ECM were conducting interviews with each child and each staff member. After the ECM returned back to Denmark following their detailed study and evaluation of the children, staff members and other points, Lissi wrote back asking Fikre to submit a list of updated number of children before and after 2006 (the year of establishment of Foreningen Etiopiensboern) that were and are in the Orphanage Center.

During my stay in Mekele (25 Sept. – 5 Oct.), as representative of Foreningen Etiopiensboern, the names of those still in the Orphanage Center and those who left the institution for various reasons are now sorted out, identified, corrected, updated and a new Master List of all children has now been sent to Lissi as an attachment to an e-mail. The main reason why I had been problem to sort out was the lack of appropriate recording system/ documentation of children's arrival and departure dates / years to and from the Orphanage center.

### Item 2

Medical Examination and Treatment of 4 children

Lissi also wrote back about the following 4 children who were interviewed and discovered that they need medical examination and treatment.

1. Mogos Domoze (12 years old) urinating in bed. He should be examined on fysisk or psykisk.
2. Kahsay Gezahegn (20-24 years old) deaf should be examined by ear doctor and neurology. He should start with something. He can perform language signs and he could be language signs teacher.
3. Tesfahun Darge (14 years old) he is missing 2 upper front teeth. He should have them replaced.
4. Haftom Kenaw he is limping with one leg he should be examined to find his defect.

During my stay in Mekele 2 more children who need medical attention were also discovered. These are the following.

5. Mikias Yilma. He limps with both legs-indicating polio sign. He should be examined.
6. Rutana G/Egabher one upper front tooth protruded out of place. She should be examined and have it adjusted or replaced.

Fikre has now promised to have them all examined by respective doctors and let them get the required treatments and forward the expenses incurred to the ECM for payment as soon as possible.

### Item 3

Adoption Policy

During their second visit April 2012 the ECM have discovered that a number of children from the Orphanage Center have been adopted to other countries mostly to the USA and Europe without the ECM's knowledge and me. This was discovered during the ECM's interview of each child. When Fikre was asked by me later why he was allowing children to be adopted, he said in the past before Foreningen Etiopiensboern came into the picture to help the destitute children in 2006 his only policy was to help children found on the streets of Mekele. He did not have definite criteria then for acceptance to his fledgling institution which he named Human Beings Association of Brother Hood (HAB).

He started with very few children whose number gradually rose to 70 to date. The few destitute children he started with his own meager salary while he was teaching Orthodox (Coptic) Christianity made him decide later to stop teaching at the church and he concentrated his effort on his charity work hopping and depending on helps from government, NGOs, and well of individuals in Mekele and other cities including Addis Ababa (Where I first learned to know him and his charity work) with no definite guarantee of sustainable help.

Fortunately he gambled and succeeded on his chance taking mission until Foreningen Etiopiensboern came for him in 2006 and started sustainable help and gradually allowed him to increase the number of the children to be helped up to 70 by sending every 6 months an amount of money ranging to start with from 60000 kr.(180000 Birr) for 60 children and increased to 95000 kr. (285000 Birr) to date due to inflation and the rise of standard of living to be used for food, shelter, clothing, education, health, and salaries for the staff workers in the institution.

But the main understanding and objectives of the establishment of Foreningen Etiopiensboern and the election of the ECM to run the day to day activities of the Orphanage Center in Mekele was based on the following points:

1. To save the lives of Ethiopian destitute children who lost both their parents from dying of hunger.
2. To give them education to help themselves when they grow up by getting professional jobs as doctors, Engineers, Economists, Lawyers, nurses, Mechanics, Carpenter, etc. and
3. To help other orphans like themselves and their own country by contributing their knowledge in different fields of development as integral parts of an educated force of manpower of the country.

Without realizing these understandings and objectives Fikre has been inadvertently (as he said it) thinking that it was good idea and advantageous for him (to be relieved) and the children to be adopted if and when possible to go to developed countries like the USA and Europe where they could have better future life and he (Fikre) be ready to accept new destitute children in their place in the Orphanage Center.

But now we, BOLSA, Fikre and myself extensively discussed about the disadvantages of sending children for adoption as long Foreningen Etiopiensboern can help them and we reached a conclusion which Fikre now fully understood that Ethiopia needs educated manpower by making him realize that they are needed to go to school here in Ethiopia and be educated to be a force of manpower for progress and development of their own country instead of becoming brain drainage by being adopted and leave for already developed countries. With this understanding Fikre has now agreed not to allow in the future without the exception of the following 3 children:

1. Hadas Tekle (a girl 11 years old)
2. Daniel Meresa (a boy 8 years old), and
3. Rutana G/Egzabher (a girl 10 years old)

Who are already under process for adoption to the USA. In fact Fikre has agreed to stop the process of these 3 children who already know the process and will be highly disappointed if we stop the process. BOLSA, Fikre and I agreed not to stop the process with the assumption that ECM, the donors and members of Foreningen Etiopiensboern will also agree with us unless advised otherwise soon.

The above misunderstood situation of adoption policy was carried out by Fikre before strict criteria for acceptance of destitute children to the Orphanage Center were made later for him depending on the availability of budget. These criteria of acceptance to the Orphanage Center

of Destitute children are the following:

1. Those children who lost both their parents.
2. Those children whose parents have not left fortune for them. And
3. Those children who do not have relatives or other people to help them at all.

After these criteria are recognized and certified by the Kebele (Kommune) authorities where the destitute children were found and then forwarded to the Head of Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs (BOLSA) of the Region who in turn asks Fikre if he can take them if/when he has place for them. This is the system Fikre is following in accordance with mutual agreement of all concerned.

#### Item 4

##### 70 Children Budget Policy as Bench Mark

In accordance with the current cost of living due to high inflation and devaluation of the Ethiopian Birr by 20 per cent last year Fikre, his staff and myself discussed the situation in detail and we have worked out the following recommendation taking into consideration by adding various vegetables, milk and meat as recommended by the ECM to the daily diet of the children. We have calculated the required budget for one year (as from 1 September 2012 to 31 August 2013) based on one child per day / per 6 months/year for 70 children as follows. In accordance with the following calculation the available budget increment allowed from 85000 to 95000 Kr. by 10000 kr. as from 1 March to 31 August 2013 is still not enough as indicated here under for 70 children for one year. But much better than what we have been sending so far (85000 Kr.). In other words Fikre is now expecting 95000 Kr. as from 1 March 2013 every 6 months.

From Human Beings Association of Brother Hood HAB) To Private Danish Citizens Volunteers Donors and Members Association (PDCVDMA).

Description Amount Grand Total Remarks

food 191,034.25 -

salary 64,376.86 -

Clothing/ uniform 25,840.00 -

Fire wood 18,000.00 -

medicine 3,714.48 -

maintenance 2,000.00 -

sanitation 32,027.00 -

House materials 12,000.00 -

Legal fee 1,000,00 -

fuel/transportation 12,000.00 -

Rehabilitation/exp. 10,000.00 -

Sport materials 2,000.00 -

Utility/tel/el./intr./water 15,000.00 -

Total per year for 70 children 388,992.00 388,992.00 Per child per day 5.1 Birr

This grand amount of 388,992 is the expense for 6 months. Per year the amount will be doubled  $388,992 \times 2 = 777,984$  Birr. Per day the amount of  $777,984 / 365$  days = 2131.463 Birr for 70 children. Per child per day will be  $2131.463 / 70$  children = 30.449517 Birr. In Danish Kroner  $30.449517 / 3 = 10.2$  Kroner (based on average currency exchange rate 1 Kr. = 3 Birr). In other words to maintain the welfare of each child directly (points written in black above) and indirectly (points written in red) per day it costs 30.449517 Birr or 10.2 Kroner.

The university and vocational education costs per year are those indicated in Item 5. All these costs are paid from the money remitted from Denmark every 6 months and sometimes subsidized by onetime payment from other sources which Fikre receives now and then which

have not been indicated in the statements of account before. In other words in the future they will have to be included and sent to the ECM every 6 months. Because the ECM are now demanding that the subsidized incomes which Fikre receives now and then from other sources should be reported separately or included in the statements of account in the 6 monthly statements of account for future evaluation and planning purposes. Fikre has now agreed to do that.

**Item 5**

**Education Fund Policy**

As from September 2012 to August 2013 the expenses per year required for those children who are eligible for educational fund to go to higher education in universities and vocational schools have been calculated as follows: Thanks to the kind donation gesture of the late Thereses Thomas Boje.

[From Human Beings Association of Brother Hood \(HAB\).](#)

[To Private Danish Citizens Volunteers Donors Members Association \( PDCVDMA\).](#)

Description	Period	Amount	Grand
total			
Remarks			
1.Hair dressing registration	300.00 -		
Yonas GYesus 8 months	2400.00 -		
Akberet G/Mariam 8 months	2400.00 -		
Yrgalem Ewoldu 8 months	2400.00 -		
Hair dressing material	- 555.00 -		
Sub total	8055.00	8055.00	
2. Graduatingclass students			
payment			
- - -			
Solomon Redae	- 3000.00 -		
Nibret Zewdee	- 3000.00 -		
Mulugeta G/tnsae	- 3000.00 -		
G/Medhin Samuel	- 3000.00 -		
Taderos Alemu	- 3000.00 -		
Sub Total	- 15000.00	15000.00	
3.School fee college students - - -			
Amanuel GG/her	10		
months			
	1500.00 -		
Girmay Kiros	10		
months			
	1500.00 -		
Haftom Kiros	10		
months			
	1500.00 -		
Ashenafi Abeje	10		
months			
	1500.00 -		
Bereket G/Zabher	10	1500.00 -	
months			
sub total	- 7500.00	7500.00	

4.School fee high school - - -

Tegist Tekle 10

months

3850.00 - 10x385=3850.00

Daniel Mulashu 10

months

2000.00 - 10x200 = 200.00

Sub/total - 5850.00 5850.00

**Grand Total 36405.00**

As you can see there is something worth noting here. The calculated amount of more or less **36405.00 Birr** per year will now be used from the Educational Fund. Unless substantial sustainable contribution from other sources of income are going to be added regularly to the fund, I cannot help thinking the present amount of the Educational Fund available will be able to continue to sustainably support the project on yearly basis. In other words the Educational Fund will dry up in one or two years unless we come up with tangible answers.

#### **Item 6**

Separate Statements of Account

Separate statements of account of the last 95,000 Kr. (a) 85,000 Kr. the usual 6 months remittance (from 1 March to 31 August 2012) and (b) the 10,000Kr. given as a gift for establishing internet system in the Orphanage Center, buying computer, and related equipment materials have not been taken action on until I came to Mekele and started the process. But now I have got the statements of account of (a) and (b) separately which I have sent them to Lissi by postal mail. The Mekele Telecommunication authority has now established internet system in HAB and Fikre have bought good computer and related materials. We can now have direct contact by e-mail with Fikre and the staff members.

#### **Item 7**

Carrot-Aid - Per's and Marianne's Visit to the Orphanage Center

After the Executive Committee Members (ECM) returned to Denmark in April 2012 there have been a number of meetings and discussions in DK on what they have discovered following interview of each child and staff members and reported back to the donors and members of Foreningen Etiopiensboern Association annual general assembly meetings.

One of the important subjects reported on what the ECM indicated was that there is a need of looking into the children's daily meals. From Fikre, staff members and children's individual, interview conducted the ECM agreed to improve nutritional value by increasing the variety of healthy food ingredients, various vegetables, fruits, eggs, meat, and milk in their meals. One of these recommended nutritional foods by Carrot-Aid which is essential for the eye (vitamin A) is to be included in the children's meals. Carrot-Aid has already provided fund for fencing a piece of land (vegetable garden) and supplied with a water pump for irrigation from closely running river and other related equipments to grow various vegetables, carrot, beets and fruit trees etc.

To make it materialize the ECM and Carrot-Aid authorities have jointly requested and asked to send to Mekele two experienced experts (Per and Marianne) members of Foreningen Etiopiensboern Association who have agreed to travel to Mekele to facilitate these process during their stay in Mekele for two weeks. With this the ECM feel confident that the children will benefit from the assistance of Per and Marianne will give. The ECM covered their travel expenses (23 Nov.- 6 Dec.2012) in Mekele.

The results of their effort remain to be seen some time in the near future.

#### [Item 8](#)

##### Salary Increment for Staff Members

At the present time Fikre is afraid (learning from his past mistakes) to ask for salary increment for staff members (including him) for reasons that there may not be available budget to be remitted from Denmark. His two major mistakes he committed in the past when he built the big Cows House and buying a 6 acres farm without knowing that there were budgets for them. So now he has deferred the salary increment for staff members until the availability of budget will be able to materialize.

1. Fikre already have now received 10,000 Kr. as a gift to establish an internet system which includes expenses one time payment to Mekele Telecommunication for making telephone line connection to HAB; Monthly rent payment to CDMA (Code Division Multiple Access) system whether HAB uses the system or not after it has been established; and for buying new good computer and its related equipments.
2. For having asked and hoping to receive increment for 70 children's yearly budget increased from 85000 to 95000 Birr as from 1 March to 31 August 2013 indicated in [Item 4](#), and
3. For having asked yearly educational fund from Thereses's Educational Fund as indicated in [Item 5](#).

#### [Item 9](#)

##### Visit to the Orphanage Center 20 October 2012

12 donors and members including Thomas Boje of Forenigen Ethiopiensboern Association plus their guide Per G. Larsson visited the Orphanage Center in Mekele on 21 October 2012 following their trips to historical places in Ethiopia as tourists. They were guided and accompanied by Fikre, his staff members, the children and myself during their round in the compound and outside the compound of the Orphanage Center in their short stay in Mekele – including HAB serving them coffee, soft drinks and taking pictures with the visitors.

You will hear their comments and impression on their return to Denmark. Thomas who came with first group in the morning to whom Fikre and I gave briefings was very happy to see Thereses's picture hanging in the library wall. He also gave a nice speech and briefing to the second group who came in the afternoon and on behalf of all them thanked Fikre and the rest of us for the good job we are doing in HAB. All in all I believe they all were impressed to visit the Orphanage Center