

Fifth Progress Report

After Neel has been in Mekele from February to March 2009 and gave her briefing on her observations of the children in the Orphanage Center, to our donors and members of our Association which was held on 24 April 2009 in the Open Gymnasium School in Valby; I returned to Mekele and made my own observations from 29 June to 5 July 2009, and indicated to Fikre and his staff members about Neel's and my own findings in a meeting at Fikre's Office.

First, I will now report point by point which were raised by Neel to the Steering Committee on 10/06/09 at which meeting I was also present.

1. The memory Boxes to contain the children's life history are already made and painted but they are not yet installed on appropriate place. These boxes were made by paying the 10,000 Kr. budget surpluses given as a gift by the Steering Committee which visited the Orphanage Center in July 2008. Fikre says that the boxes will be installed in the office spaces of the present Cows' House (intended for offices at the Orphanage Center) when it is renovated and converted to offices and the staff members are moved to it from the present rented offices in the center of the town, thereby saving yearly rent of 18,000 Kr. An estimated cost for the office spaces at the Center will be submitted by a contractor and let it be known to the Steering Committee for funding.

2. The Kitchen is in bad condition. The cost estimate for a better Kitchen will also be submitted by a contractor for funding. But now Fikre says that the Japanese Embassy in Ethiopia has promised him that they will build:

(a) The kitchen

(b) Three dormitories each dormitory to accommodate 10 children and

(c) Two rooms, one to be used by a social worker man, the other to be used by a social worker woman to supervise and monitor the dormitories for boys and girls 24 hours.

3. There is no appropriate septic tank in the compound. The scene in the compound does not look good. Dirty water is running on the surface of the compound. An estimated cost for constructing septic tank and sewage system have been submitted by Fikre for funding.

4. Neel has detected 8 children with eye problems. All 8 were examined by an eye specialist doctor free of charge. The doctor says 6 of them need eye glasses. The glasses are now bought from eye glasses shop at a cost of 1440Kr. To cover the expense, the amount was sent by Neel,s mother. 6 of them are now using eye glasses. 2 of the 8 do not need glasses. They can see OK but there are scars in their eyes difficult to handle, says the doctor. He has written the causes in medical terms to be shown to Neel,s mother for information. Thanks for her generosity.

Second, following my experience and observations during my past 6 trips to Mekele, I found it now necessary that the time has come for the following points to be discussed in detail and to have them strictly followed by Fikre and his staff, in order for the Steering Committee and the coordinator to transparently report the day to day administration

system of the Orphanage Center to the Donors/Members of our Association, and particularly to the special **Firms** who have been helping us with financial donations for new construction projects, renovation and conversion of old structures in the Orphanage Center for the overall welfare benefit of the children.

1. On my 6th trip to Mekele from 29 June to 5 July 2009 as I said above I had a meeting with Fikre and his staff members and we have agreed on the following 6 points of priority list in sequence to make estimated cost by a contractor(s) for each item and the cost estimates to be forwarded to the Steering Committee for funding so as to make it easier for future smooth planning depending on the availability of fund. Here are the different project items that required estimated costs to be submitted.

- (a) New Kitchen (now taken care of by the Japanese Embassy)
- (b) The new Cows' House Floor to be cemented, trough installed, fenced etc. (will be Finished before the end of 2009)
- (c) Conversion and renovation of the new office building in the Center (Fikre has not yet submitted estimated cost, he says he will do it soon.
- (d) Construction of septic tank and sewage system (Fikre has submitted estimated cost).
- (e) Dining and Assembly Hall floor to be cemented (Fikre has submitted estimated cost)
- (f) Library hall needs doors, windows, floor cemented, roof cover, reading tables and chairs, shelves for books and periodicals (Fikre has submitted estimated cost)

2. The latest number of Orphan Children in the Center is now 62 with each child's name, age, gender, year of joining the Center, year of departure, and reason(s) for departure rubricated on a Master List. (See the attachment List). I have advised Fikre to make the New Master List up to date whenever there are changes in accordance with the rubricating system and let the steering Committee and the coordinator know about the changes. For example if and when a new child has joined or a former child has left the Center Fikre must make his Master List of the children up to date and let the Steering Committee and the coordinator know. Those children that have already left the Orphanage Center are the following:

Nr	Names	age	Gend	arriv	dept	Reasons for departure
1	Selembe G/Her	10	f	2006	2009	Reunited with family
2	Tewelde Tesfay	16	m	2004	2009	Reunited with family
3	Brhanu Assefa	19	m	2002	2009	Reunited with family
4	H/Mariam Alemu	22	m	2005	2009	Graduated with diploma self dep.
5	Hadgu Desta	18	m	2005	2009	Graduated with diploma self dep
6	Zebina Tewelde	16	f	2007	2008	Joined the deaf school in Mekele
7	Aregawi Araya	18	m	2002	2008	Employed self sufficient
8	Selam Haile	16	f	2003	2009	Reunited with family
9	Asqual K/Mariam	11	f	2006	2009	Reunited with family
10	Haben Kalayu	7	m	2006	2009	Reunited with family

These children were included on the old Master List because at the time of their acceptance to the Orphanage Center, there were no strict criteria on which child should be accepted to the Center. The only single criterion before our Association took

responsibility to sponsor only 60 children as a benchmark due to limited budget at the time of signing the contract agreement was based only on children who lost both their parents in general terms. Since it is not possible to accept children on this only one criterion, the following 3 criteria have been suggested to Fikre and he has agreed with them and promised that in the future he will strictly follow these 3 acceptance criteria.

- (a) Those children that have lost both their parents
- (b) Those children whose parents have not left fortune for them at all, and
- (c) Those children that do not have relatives or sponsors at all to help them

In this way our Association will be able to continue helping the worst affected children depending on the sustainable contribution from Donors/Members of our Association and special individuals and donor **Firms** now and then. These criteria can be amended in the future depending on the number of increased Donors/Members for contribution plus donations from additional **Firms**

In accordance with the above criteria we are hopefully able to continue raising funds every 6 months for the worst affected 60 or more children like we have been doing so far and we will continue to do so until the Orphanage Center is able to self-generate sources of income by various means, like those I mentioned in my **Second** progress Report, to support the children and those that follow them.

In other words when from the standard list of the children leave the Orphanage Center one by one for reasons that are indicated in the above format and other additional reasons, for example, Fikre can admit to the Center new children that are able to fulfill the 3 criteria mentioned above. When such action of change is taken it is important the Steering Committee and the Coordinator should be informed and be up to date to make their work transparent.

The following are those who are working at present at the Orphanage Center, their monthly salaries have been increased by 30% respectively as from September 2009 from our Association's budget:

Nr.	Names	Position	Salaries	Remarks
1	Fikre Assefa	G'Manager	2184.00 Birr	
2	Genet Kinfu	Administrater	1474.20 --	
3	Mihret Kidane	Mother	1183.00 --	
4	Tsehay Kidane	Contact Person	910,00 --	
5	Hilifti Zeweldi	Cook	455.00 --	
6	Birhan Teka	Cook	351.00 --	
7	Eyerusalem Mehari	Cook	422.50 --	
8	Tesfay Kiros	Guard	390.00 --	
9	Welday Abraha	Guard	325.00 --	

The following 11 personnel are also working at the Center paid by CRDA= Christian Relief Development Association, in Ethiopia, HAPCO=Hiv/Aids Prevention and Control Office in Mekele, and other Non Governmental Organization in Ethiopia. In other words there are 20 staff members all in all working at the Center.

Nr.	Names	Positions	Salaries	Remark
1	Yisyak Abraham	Social Worker	700.00 Birr	
2	Slomon Tadese	Coordinator	500.00 --	
3	Tsega Belay	Store keeper	410.00 --	
4	Asegedech T/Haimanot	Cook	270.00 --	
5	LeteabzigibHadish	Cook	270.00 --	
6	Tirhas T/Mariam	Cleaner	270.00 --	
7	Wedebrhan Meresa	Cow Care taker	270.00 --	
8	Zenebe Girmay	Messenger	350.00 --	
9	Mihret Meresa	Cleaner	150.00 --	
10	Fusumbrhan Abreh	Finance	800.00 --	
11	Yared Tadele	P/Coordinator	2000.00 --	

4. At last but not least I would like to comment on Fikre's management conduct. He has been used to single handedly performing his job, as a leader of the Orphanage Center, and apparently his way of doing things by personal and verbal contact with, or by writing letters in Tigrigna (Regional language) and Amharic (national language) to private individuals, firms, government and non government officials who were and are still helping him periodically now and then with money, material, and labour (arbejdskraft) to make the Orphanage Center function as from its fledgling period. This was before we started taking the lion share sustainable responsibility to help the 60 children in the Orphanage Center as from 2006.

Considering Fikre's previous way of doing things and his drawbacks to write in English and make correspondence by letters and e-mails directly himself with the Steering Committee has not been up to the standard. Presently I am doing almost all his paper works on his behalf to be sent to the Steering Committee and receive instructions from the Committee for him and forward all messages by e-mail and telephone to him. I am very happy to help as much as I can until he gets competent and professional staff members who can help him to make direct correspondence with the Steering Committee in English.

His present personnel staff members when they first joined the Orphanage Center to help him were volunteers and employed with low salaries (due to lack of enough fund), but not competent enough to help him with paper works in English in accordance with the Steering Committee's expectation. But now those who are already there have got salary increment by 30% each as from September 2009 and they are very happy.

On the other hand I would like to say that Fikre is dedicated to the children, with no visible and detectable personal gain activities, and he is highly appreciated and respected by all those who know about what he is doing for the children. High officials and

ordinary people with whom I met while walking on the streets of Mekele with him and when visiting offices of directly concerned officials who also have expressed high opinion about him for his work and practically all of them have extended their gratitude to the Danish Donors/Members, Firms of Denmark, for giving generous help through him to the children in the Orphanage Center.