

## Second progress report

I went to Mekele on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February and returned back to Addis Ababa on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2008. The purpose of my trip was to see for myself how much improvement has been done at the Orphanage Center since the last time I have been there on which I wrote my first progress report which still can be read in the home page [www.ethiopiarnsboern.dk](http://www.ethiopiarnsboern.dk). To those who have not got the opportunity to visit the home page I suggest you read the first and this second progress report. The second report I shall read for you now.

During the five days of my stay in Mekele I and Fikre went to the Orphanage Center in two successive days. In the first day Fikre, his staff, and myself discussed on the progress that has been made so far and later I talked to the children who welcomed me enthusiastically and I shook hands with each one of them. On the second day of my visit to the Center a reception was made for us, that is to say Gebremedhin Siyum who is a member of our Association from Aarhus, and who happened to be in Mekele at the time, Ato Zemichael Gebremedhin, top advisor to the Governor of Tigray Region in all matters, and other guests. We were served with soft drinks, food and coffee. The children performed for us various entertainment activities, and made speeches.

Then on an unscheduled day I and Fikre briefly met unexpectedly Ato Tsegay Berhe, the governor of Tigray Region who was with guests, in Mekele's Axum Hotel, who told me that he is looking forward to meeting and seeing the members of the steering committee of the Ethiopian children's Association, who are scheduled to travel and make tour on the historical places in Ethiopia and particularly to visit the Orphanage Center in July 2008.

Later I and a deputy to Fikre and staff member of HAB, by the name of Genet Fikru (a lady), went to the Governor's Office and had a formal meeting with the Governor's top advisor in all matters, Ato (Mr.) Zemichael Gebremedhin, and the governor's Social Affairs advisor, Weizero (Mrs.) Nigisti Wolderufael. We had positive discussion on the children's welfare and well being. Ato Zemichael and W/Z Nigisti have pledged to give whatever assistance necessary to the Orphanage Center as much as they can.

On another day Fikre and I (Gebremedhin Siyum was also with) went to the Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs (BOLSA) and we had a meeting with the Bureau Head, Ato Kefyalew Kinfemichael, and his Deputy, Sister Belaynesh. One of the points that were raised in our discussion was that BOLSA's Office has not been receiving from Human Beings and Brother Hood (HAB) in good time the arrival of the last 3 remittances sent from Den Danske Bank acc.nr. 3001 3001655582. But after I returned from Mekele to Addis I sent a letter to BOLSA with 3 photo copies of the last Bank remittance receipts from my own files to make BOLSA up to date and I assured Ato kefyalew and Sister Belaynesh that in the future they will receive information by e-mail from Denmark in good time every time remittance is made HAB. BOLSA's e-mail address is [lab.off@ethionet.et](mailto:lab.off@ethionet.et). In this way there will be smooth communication between Fikre, Denmark, BOLSA, and myself.

At this point I now would like to make the following statements about what else I have observed and become knowledgeable in my second trip to Mekelle.

1. Last time I was in Mekele the condition the children were living in was what we saw in a CD (DVD) film when we held our first get together meeting (sammenkomst-ethiopere/denskere in April 29, 2007 generalforsamling). The film shows the shelters in the area of the Orphanage Center where the rooms the children were living, eating, sleeping, go to toilet, study and do their home work, and where their food staff supplies were stored. All the structures in the area were poorly built with metal sheets which are cold at night and hot during the day. Uncomfortable to live in.
2. But now a major change has been made during the last year. 6 comfortable dormitories are built and the majority of the children have already moved in them. 3 more dormitories are under construction and when these 3 dormitories are finished in the near future a total of 9 dormitories will be able to accommodate all the children. In addition to these dormitories, dining and recreational Hall, kitchen, food staff supply store room, shower rooms, toilets, rooms for washing clothes are already prepared and waiting for construction depending on potential domestic and international donors hopefully from the following sources:

3. (a) Directly concerned local government authorities such as BOLSA, Regional Government Office, etc.  
(b) Local and foreign private individuals, firms (selskab).  
(c) With permission from PDCVDMA when there could be extra money left from the 65000 Kr. that is being sent every 6 months in accordance with the requirements of the contract agreement
4. The children are now doing very well in their schools and many of them are scoring high grades to be first, second and third in their classes this year. For example there are 7 children who became first 5 second and 7 third in their respective school classes. One senior student from the Orphanage Center was seriously injured in his leg and got help from a private donor who helped the student to be cured after major operation in a hospital in Addis Ababa and paid the bill for him, The student has now passed tests for Nr.1 and nr.2 driving licenses, and he will soon pass nr.3 test and will be able to leave the center and will drive different tonnage cars and earn money for himself as a chauffer and be on his own.
5. Volunteer students from the University of Mekele are coming to the Orphanage Center on week ends and teach the children various subjects and some times use their extra time to be tutors for some of the children who are weak in certain subjects. Besides the university students celebrate X-mass and other important holidays together with the children and contribute money for soft drinks and snacks for the occasion's expenses.
6. While I was in Mekele the following foreign visitors and a local agency who knows the existence of the Center has also donated money to be used by the center. One of them who visited the Center gave 45000 Birr to buy for the newly built 6 dormitories: new 32 beds, 32 matrasses, 32 bed sheets, 32 blankets, 32 pillows with pillow holders, 6 cupboards for hanging clothes, and one big table is placed in each dormitory. The donor's name is Ato (Mr.) Lema. He is an old friend of the governor of Tigray who brought him to the center to visit and asked him if he could do some thing to help the Center. Ato Lema is an Ethiopian Jew (Felasha) who immigrated from Gondor (Amhara Region) to Israel and he is now a member of the Central Committee of the Labour Party in Israel.

7. Another donor who visited The Center while I was there is an American tourist lady who gave Fikre \$5000 in Traveler's Check as a contribution to be used for the unfinished buildings mentioned above.
8. Again while I was there Fikre has been promised to receive soon an amount of money which can be used to buy 5-8 milk giving American cows by HIV/Aids Prevention and Control Office (HAPCO) which is stationed in Mekele.
9. The Municipality of Mekele has already given a piece of land Adjacent to the Center where various vegetables and other Various fruit producing trees are planted in this piece of land, to be used for the children's consumption and whenever there are excesses to be sold on the market This and the above mentioned excesses of milk, milk products, and other animal farming products in the future such as hens, goats, sheep etc. will be the beginning of self generating sources of income in the future. In other words the above indicated activities should be based on the ultimate goal of the Center so that the center can be gradually dependent on self reliance in the future, and not always be waiting indefinitely on domestic and international donors such as BOLSA and PDCVDMA.

At last but not least, I have been asked by Fikre, his staff, and the children to present to the donors and members a certificate of recognition, appreciation and gratitude, addressed to all of us donors and members as PDCVDMA when we are addresses collectively. The meaning of each of the abbreviated alphabet which I have suggested and recommended to be our common official name when we exchange letters or e-mails. The meaning of each alphabet translates to Private, Danish, Citizens, Volunteers, Donors, Members, Association. What is written on the certificate you are welcomed to come by the table here and read it at your convenience. Thank you very much. If you have questions you are welcomed to ask me.

Sincerey: Abraham.

