

Abrahams report December 2009

After I arrived in Mekelle and went around the Orphanage Center the next day, I was shocked and surprised to discover the Real Kitchen which Fikre, his staff, and myself gave number one priority of the 6 priority list projects during my previous visit to Mekele (from 29 June to 5 July), has already been built before between the children's toilets and washing places at the far end, and the Assembly and Dinning hall at the opposite end. The Real kitchen's existence has been there since the entire section of that building block was built, never used as a Kitchen but as a Store room!

In other words it lies in the middle between the Assembly and Dinning hall and the children's toilets and washing places. Just behind the wall where bestyrelesen was sitting on the stage during your last visit from where we attended while the children were giving various performances, and speeches were being delivered. And there is a connecting door on the wall behind the stage connecting the Dinning Hall to the Kitchen behind the stage where bestyrelesen and the invited guests from the governor's office were sitting. The door was covered by welcome pictures at the time. We did not notice the door during our visit but it was there as Fikre tells me now.

This entire building block (consisting of the children's toilet and washing spaces, the Real Kitchen itself in the middle , and the Dinning Hall are combined as one block which is separating the boys and girls dormitories.. I was not aware of the Real Kitchen's existence in the middle of this block. I do not think Neel also was aware of it during her stay there. You can ask her to confirm. I confronted Fikre why he did not tell or show me before when we were making the kitchen as number one priority on our 6 priority list last time I was there.

He was embarrassed and I was embarrassed for not knowing. He taught I knew its existence, also he taught Neel also knew. Again please ask Neel if she was aware of it. Fikre has been and is still using it now as a STORE Room for food stuff (including the newly harvested wheat and tef from the new farm are stored there) plus other types of food stuff for the children and other things. It means that now Fikre has to correct his mistake and tell the Japanese Embassy also which has promised him to build the 3 additional dormitories, the two monitoring rooms for a man and woman social workers, and a Store Room instead of calling it kitchen.

To be sure I now have taken video pictures by paying a video man of the Real Kitchen from the outside and the inside and the rest of the entire buildings in the Orphanage Center in perspective and put them all on a DVD which I will send one copy for you to see by postal mail. I now have specified each building by putting written indication on each building/block in the compound plus the new Big cows' House on the other side of the compound which I now put as a project B following project A (the Septic Tank) which I e-mailed you earlier. The reason why project B is a second priority now, following the Septic Tank, is that the cows cannot be moved from where they are now to the New Cows House, before its integral parts (the main gate, the 2 big doors, cementing the floor, and installing wire sieves mesh on the 9 windows for ventilations) are finished.

The estimated cost for the renovation and conversion of the new office spaces for the staff at the Orphanage Center is now given by a contractor and it is designated as project C. In other words Fikre's new priority list will be reduced from 6 to 3. In sequence they are:

Project A Septic Tank

Project B Integral parts of the New Big House as indicated above, and

Project C Renovation and Conversion of office spaces for the staff.

In other words the estimated total cost of the 3 projects is as follows:

Project A: 43,390.00 Birr ca 17,356.00 DDK

Project B: 72,617.81 Birr ca 29,047.10 DDK

Project C: 198,558.59 Birr ca 79,423.44 DDK

Total 314,566.40 Birr ca 125,826.54 DDK

1. The library is taken care of by an Ethiopian man (Asfaha Hadera) whose headquarters office is located in New York. He is a founder and co-executive director of African Services Committee, Inc. He was on a visit in Mekele and he has visited the Orphanage Center while I was there. He has promised Fikre that Asfaha's company will provide fund for the library. We wait and see until it has materialized. I have met the guy and he has invited Fikre, his representative in Mekele, and me to dinner in Meklele Axum Hotel.

2. Fikre is still hoping the Japanese Embassy is going to build the 3 dormitories, a SIORE Room (which he misnamed Kitchen), and the two monitoring rooms for a man and a woman social workers, but Fikre does not know when work will start.

3. The smooth cementing of the Dinning Hall floor will have to wait until after an opportunity for securing available fund is forthcoming some time in the future..

The partially open air kitchen is located close to the main gate on the left side after entering the gate where the woman have been and are still making Injera and cooking food for the children, is intended to be a workshop in the future when the Real Kitchen I described before is put to function as Real Kitchen connected to the Dinning Hall after its contents are moved to the Store Room when the Japanese Embassy have finished what it has promised to do for Fikre.

In conclusion I would like to say that Fikre's over optimistic expectation from sources who promised to help him is some times back firing on him and hurting. But on the average he is doing his best in his performance of running the Orphanage Center in a dedicated and positive manner. He is becoming aware and regretting of his past inadvertent mistakes and promising to be cautiously optimistic in the future.

I have now returned to Addis. There is nothing I can do by staying there until the fund for each project or for all 3 is remitted and work starts. I will return when work progress has almost been made to take video pictures on DVD for documentation. In the mean time I will keep myself up to date by maintaining close contact with Fikre. By the time I am back in Denmark in April or May. It is my hope good results will be available to satisfy donor firms and our donors and members of our Association.

By the way the new farm is ready again to be sown by another type of corn (sorghum) as a second harvest in 2009/2010. That means there will be enough food for the children for almost a year says Fikre, and that he will be able to save money from the regularly remitted amount every 6 months for urgent requirements. Abraham.