



MUMS for MUMS stands  
"on the side of mums in need"

# Newsletter

October - December 2006

## NOTHING STANDS STILL WITH MUMS FOR MUMS

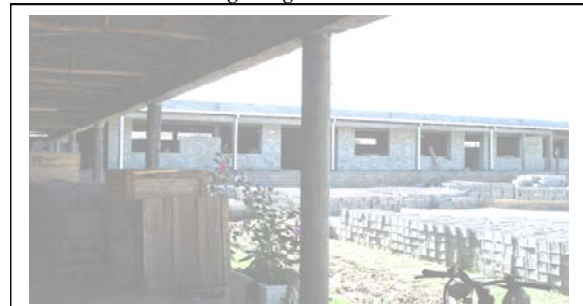
Nothing stands still with Mums for Mums and work is continuing on the construction of the new centre. Back in July when we moved in half finished but workable of the first wing of the centre, we squeezed our skills training into one room at the end of the new wing, as well as the yellow container, which had also made the move with us from the old site.

Now, in the last few weeks, construction work has started on the second wing, a wing dedicated to skills training, with four main classes for - embroidery, dress-making, knitting, plus one for the bakery and pastry training - all the skills training units apart from the catering. Mindful of our budget, we're building the new wing with the minimum frills and limited finishing, manufacturing the breeze blocks for the walls on site, with the help of Engineer Bayray Taddesse.

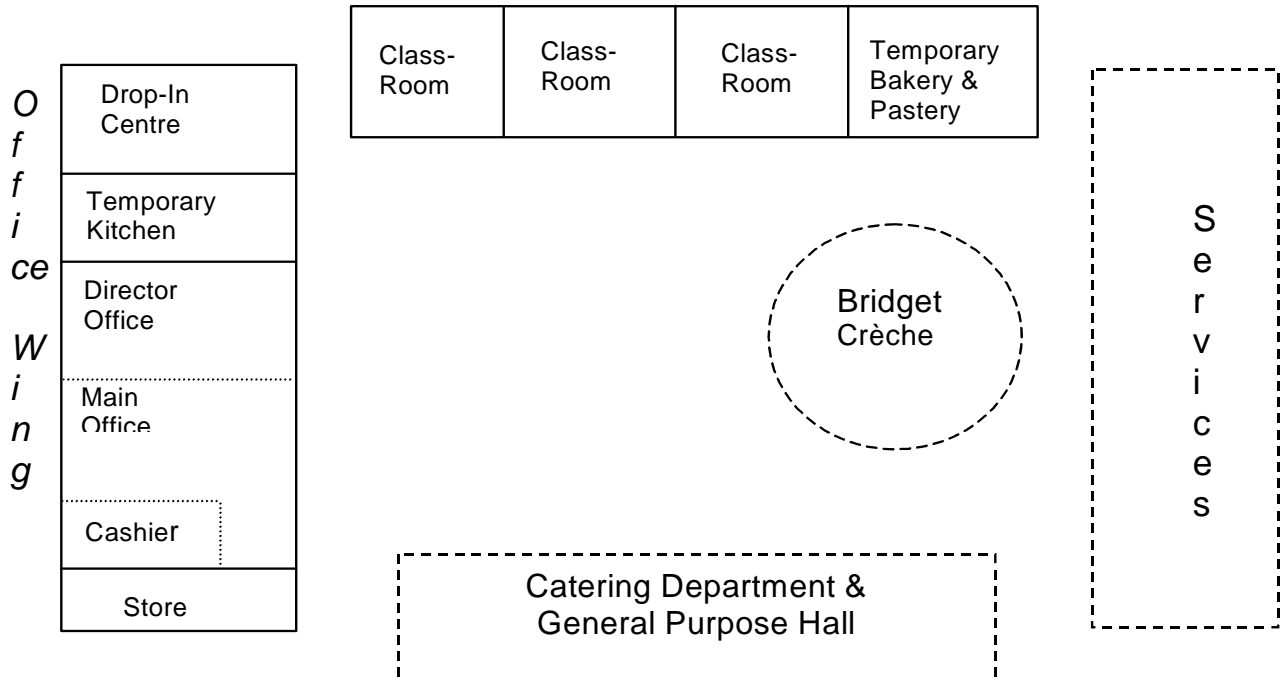
In the meantime, anticipating the good things to come in the new wing, the knitting training has moved out of the yellow container into a bigger grey container. This grey container, a gift to Mums for Mums by TDA (Tigrai Development Association), had previously sat on the new site storing building materials.



The new skills training wing:



Updated Site Plan – Showing building progress to date (Workable wings as shown with solid lines; planned wings with dotted lines..)



## *News Round Up*

### **UN Volunteers' Day, Mekelle**

In early December Mums for Mums was one of the contributors at a special UN Volunteers workshop, held at the Martyrs Memorial Hall, in Mekelle. Organized by "United Nations Volunteers" as part of UN Volunteers Day, the two-day workshop promoted volunteer involvement at the community level as "volunteerism to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS" - participants from different parts of Ethiopia listened to presentations and participated in discussions on how volunteer involvement can boost the work of community-based organizations in the fight against HIV-AIDS.

In a special presentation of MfMs work, Tebereh presented the activities of MfMs, emphasizing the valuable contribution of our volunteer campaigners in providing care and support at the community level, free advice and counseling across the community on HIV-AIDS related issues, plus badly needed day-to-day care for many of the HIV / AIDS patients in the cities of Mekelle, Adwa and Axum.

MfMs were also represented in the exhibition area with a well-stocked stand, manned by our campaigner Azeb. Displaying photos and other materials related to the Home-Based Care work, the stand also had newsletters, leaflets and other material describing MfMs work.

### **Skills Trainees Graduation**

Recently we celebrated the graduation of our latest batch of trainees, after completing six to nine months' training in the Knitting, Embroidery and Dress-Making programs. So far, six of the girls have secured work; Mums for Mums has given start-up capital to a number of the girls without work, to help them start up on their own.

Now 41 new group of women have embarked on the next skills-training programs - of these ten are sponsored by CRDA (Christian Relief and Development Association), twelve by Pathfinder International Ethiopia, one by MfM with the remainder funding themselves.

### **On the njob training by MfM Volunteer Supporter from Ireland:**

Ms. Ruth Watters from Ireland gave on the job training to our skills training teachers. Ruth has vitalized our skills training program. Our skills training teachers have gained so much that they have requested the office to organize periodic training similar to this

### **Farmers Exhibition in Bahir Dar**

Whilst communities around the world were preparing for Christmas, Ethiopia, basking in its proverbial sunshine, was celebrating Ethiopian Farmer's Day – a gathering in Bahir Dar where model / top-performing farmers were commended for their contribution to Ethiopian Agriculture.

Connected with Farmer's Day, Mums for Mums were guests at the Farmers Exhibition (December 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>), having our own stand displaying different skills training products and demonstrating cactus food preparation.

Tebereh, Voluntary Executive Director, with Mums for Mums staff and two beneficiary female farmers, manned the stand and were kept busy for the whole three days, answering a range of enquiries from interested visitors. Overall it was a good contact to spread the message about Cactus food and extend our range of contacts.

Mums for Mums would like to thank the Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO) for funding our participation



*Mums for Mums demonstration and visitors at the Exhibition*

### **Parliament Members of the Federal Government of Ethiopia Visited MfM**

The government of Ethiopia is paying attention to population and related issues as important factor for development. As part of the government's intervention, members of the parliament of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia have visited different HIV/AIDS and Reproductive health/Family Planning interventions in Tigray, out of which Mums for Mums was one to show its different activities. This is also the result of the advocacy works done by different governmental and nongovernmental organizations and professionals.

### **New staff:**

Azeb Abrha and Asqual Abay have joined Mums for Mums as salaried staff, for the Drop-in centre and Enderta project assistant supervisor, respectively. Both were volunteer HIV/AIDS campaigners of MfM.

## **CRDA (Christian Relief and Development Association) funded project - CRDA Supervisor pays a visit**

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At the end of October Ato Yosef Girma, from the CRDA Irish Aid HIV/AIDS prevention program coordinating unit, together with a delegate from Tigray HAPCO (HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office), visited Mums for Mums in connection with the CRDA funded project. The CRDA project has a number of components, including ... support for the Community-Home-Based Care Programs and HIV/AIDS campaigning in Adwa and Axum, training of vulnerable particularly single women in Cactus food preparation and bread / cake-baking in Mekelle:

In Adwa and Axum, the visitors met Kebele representatives and beneficiaries of the Home-Based Care Programs. CRDA has boosted the work of this program by giving a transport allowance to the 36 campaigners and funding a full-time supervisor for the campaigners. The visitors were able to assess the contribution of the MfM campaigners in tackling HIV / AIDS in these towns – at an individual level the care given to house-bound patients and, amongst the community, increased recognition of the HIV / AIDS problem and reduced stigmatization of patients.

In Mekelle, the visitors saw the Embroidery and Dress-Making skills training programs and the cactus food preparation centre. In relation to this they discussed the plan within the CRDA project to set up a Cactus Food Restaurant and Café for some of the Cactus skills training graduates.

### **Latest news on the CRDA project**

Since the CRDA visit progress has been made on several parts of the CRDA project:

1. Drop-In centre at MfM centre has started providing service networking a customer to all our holistic intervention. Azeb Abrha, community counsellor, is appointed for the drop-In centre.
2. Cactus food preparation training has taken place, with five graduates of the program now preparing to start their own businesses.
3. Plans are progressing to open our own bakery, not as a commercial venture, but to give vulnerable women training in bread-making and cake-baking in a commercial standard bakery. Following a market assessment of the available ovens in Addis Abeba, we have purchased the oven, with all its accessories. These are currently sitting in boxes and crates in and around our offices – in the next few weeks they will be assembled into a working bakery, in one of the classrooms of the skills-training block.

## **Campaigning in Enderta Woreda.**

As part of MfM project on HIV / AIDS Reproductive Health in the Enderta Woreda (funded by Pathfinder International), we have just finished a 17-day campaign around the Enderta Woreda. This campaign visited 17 districts of the Enderta Woreda, with a film presentation on HIV/AIDS, Reproductive Health, Family Planning and STIs (sexually transmitted diseases). The film presentation used a special vehicle, equipped with a DVD player, film projector and screen, powered by a portable generator.

As well as the film presentation, the campaign provided a free VCT service for those requesting it and advertised a special Fistula service, available to any woman in the Enderta requiring help with a fistula problem - MfM (with the help of Pathfinder International) will provide travel and medical costs for treatment at the Fistula hospital in Addis Abeba.

The campaign also included special supervision and additional guidance for the MfM campaigners working in the Enderta Woreda, linking them with the Woreda expert on HIV / AIDS, as well as administrative officers from the Woreda and Health institutions.

Overall, something like nine thousand three hundred people attended the health education program on HIV-AIDS and Reproductive Health, with over four hundred receiving Voluntary Counselling and Testing – an encouraging number for a rural community.

With these heartening numbers attending the program, it is hoped that the campaign has raised overall community awareness about HIV-AIDS, Reproductive Health and the Mums for Mums project across the Woreda.



*Preparation for Video shows to the community*



*People watching the show*

## Ashenafi Interview



When asked about his dream for the future, Ashenafi responded “to see our communities fully-equipped to tackle the threat of HIV/AIDS”. What does this mean in practice? – “ to see our people fully informed about the

risks, living wisely in the light of the risks and cooperating to support those living with the Virus”.

Ashenafi joined Mums for Mums six months ago as the project supervisor on the newly established Enderta-woreda Integrated Project. When asked at his interview about his own family, Ashenafi pointed out that he is his mother’s biggest fan – although one sister and brother have left home, he still prefers to live with his mother in Mekelle town, along with his two remaining sisters.

What excites Ashenafi about the new Enderta project? – Its potential to reach the many Tigrian in the rural areas with badly needed advice and teaching on HIV / AIDS, Reproductive Health and other related subjects - the project combines teaching and campaigning on a range of related issues - Reproductive Health, Family Planning, HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases.

With behavioural change so important in combating HIV / AIDS, how according to Ashenafi, does it work in practice? – firstly it involves practical advice on how people conduct themselves. In addition, the level of teaching should be carefully tailored for the different age-groups, with wise counseling for the sexually active – presenting people with the consequences of their actions.

Since joining Mums for Mums, Ashenafi sees the Enderta-wide Integrated Project as a major opportunity to reach rural Tigrian with suitable advice on HIV-AIDS and related issues. The Enderta Woreda is typical of much of rural Tigray – where over eighty-five percent of Ethiopians live in widely dispersed rural communities.

## Visits and Donations:

**Visitors:** To mention some- Muriel and Bernard –Belgium, Prof Pia Foglia – Italy, Philip Scholler –Belgium, W/ro Teshalech Zeleke –Addis Ababa, Staffan Russel –Sweden, Ruth Watters and Kate Doherty-Ireland,a Ventunowi – Italy.

**Thank you again to our generous donors over the last quarter** – FECIN –Cambridge UK, Engineer Bayray – Mekelle, Mary O’Sullivan, Ruth Watters and Kate Doherty from Ireland, Prof. Pia Foglia from Italy, Jan Greenaway from UK.

## Feedback from our visitors:

“ Congratulation for this initiative, the most for it is directed to young women, A real hope for a better future. I will try to help your organization by what I can. Thank you”. Sara Ventunowi - Italy

## How you can help

You can help Mums for Mums in different ways:

- You can send a one-off donation for our much-needed new training and daycare centre.
- You can sponsor a young mother for skills training @ 50 Birr per month for 9 months.
- You can sponsor a young mother with children @ 3,600 Birr for a year.
- You can sponsor a counsellor @ 300 Birr a month .

The current rate of exchange means that:

You can send a one-off donation for our much-needed new training and daycare centre.

- £1.00 = approximately 16 Birr
- Euro 1.00 = approximately 11 Birr
- \$1.00 = approximately 8.6 Birr

### You can send your donations directly to the Mums for Mums Bank Account

Account number: 3388  
Commercial Bank of Ethiopia  
Mekelle Branch, Tigray, Ethiopia  
(Please note there is no sort code)

### Or to the following account in the UK:

Mums for Mums c/o FECIN  
Abbey National plc, Cambridge Branch  
Sort Code: 09 00 00  
Account Number: 0005 0005 and also quote  
Account Number K2356359 FRI  
Account Name: Friends of Ethiopian Children in Need



### For further information please contact us:

c/o Tebereh W/Gabriel, Kahsu Bekuretsion

### Mums for Mums

P.O. Box 1284, Mekelle, Tigray, Ethiopia  
Telephone: 251-344-41-02-63  
Fax: 251-344-40-17-53  
email: mumsformums@fastmail.fm

or look online at: [www.mumsformums.com](http://www.mumsformums.com)