Dir Biyabir Quarterly Update

2nd Quarter 2017

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April 18, 2017

Dear Members

In Q2 of 2017 we have some updates on two key projects in Ethiopia that were visited by our Chairperson, Haeran Fisseha. Her extended self-funded trip has provided an invaluable opportunity to personally monitor Dir Biyabir projects and meet with the project beneficiaries. Projects visited include our largest project, the Integrated Environmental Rehabilitation and Economic Empowerment project in Weyniye and a poultry project at Gethsemane Betedenagil Tebabat Nunnery in Sebeta. The poultry project will be 100% funded by membership fees and donations so a big Thank You to our members!!

Vegetable Garden – Debir Gott

11-day old chicks - Nunnery

Environmental Project

We are currently in the second year of a 2 year Integrated Environmental Rehabilitation & Economic Empowerment project in the rural kebele (sub-district) of Weyniye in Northern Shewa. Funded mostly by a grant Dir Biyabir received from The Christensen Fund (TCF), the project is implemented by ADHENO. On March 30, the Dir Biyabir Chairperson Haeran Fisseha, along with the ADHENO team had the opportunity to visit Debir Gott in Weyniye which is located in a steep valley about 2.5 hours hike from the nearest road. The impact of our project was more visible and satisfying in Weyniye than in any other kebele. Planted trees are clearly flourishing, protected lands are quickly recovering their indigenous flora, farmers are making excellent use of the water reservoirs, backyard gardens are full of fresh vegetables and fruits, and women in Self Help Groups are generating good revenue raising chicken and goats as well as processing foods and spices. Farmers have shown exemplary initiative by planting and caring for trees, and contributing their own funds to purchase plastic piping to connect to the reservoir funded by Dir Biyabir. The community not only treated the team to a delicious lunch, the farmers also packed them a big sack full of fresh vegetables. Based on the impressive results, Dir Biyabir is evaluating additional projects in Weyniye based on the requests of the community including additional reservoirs, and plastic water pipes.

Poultry Project

The Gethsemane Betedenagil Tebabat Nunnery in Sebeta was founded in 1960 and is located about 24kms from Addis Abeba. There are currently 85 Ethiopian Orthodox nuns raising 225 orphans from all over the country. This nunnery is very unique in it's ability to sustain itself via various enterprises run by the nuns including teff farming, horticulture, dairy farming, bee-keeping, textile weaving, embroidery, bakery etc. These hard-working nuns also run a school that is attended by children from surrounding communities including some who are Moslem. In 2014 Dir Biyabir had purchased an incubator for the nunnery based on a proposal they had submitted. The goal was to help them expand their current poultry farm which has only 50 chicken laying 35 to 50 eggs per day. This is clearly not sufficient for the 225 kids. Unfortunately a lot more than an incubator was required so the machine stood idle. In July 2016, Haeran accompanied 2 nuns on a visit to a much larger poultry farm in Debre Zeit so as to view and understand the end-to-end requirements of a poultry farm. Based on this insightful visit she worked with the nuns to prepare a proposal for a poultry farm that would include 300 egg-laying chicken and 100 meat chicken (both for consumption and sale). Once the proposal was completed, the nuns invested significant effort to test the incubator with 150 eggs. 90 of these were successfully hatched and Haeran saw the chicks on her April 10 visit to the Nunnery. Dir Biyabir has decided to move forward with funding this project including building a structure to house the incubator, a large modern chicken house, and purchasing a generator. We wish the nuns much success!