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Dir Biyabir 2021 Annual Report

January 30, 2022

OVERVIEW

Message From The Chairperson

A year ago in my message in the 2020 Annual Report, I had hopefully stated that "2021 has the potential to be the year of the healing of all wounds inflicted and exposed by 2020". Tragically that was not to be. For Ethiopia 2021 was a year not of healing but of horrific trauma, death, and destruction. The tragic conflict intentionally triggered by TPLF in November 2020 to destroy Ethiopia, expanded as TPLF from it's base in Tigray (with help from another terrorist group OLA-Shene) invaded the neighboring regions of Amhara and Afar. It brutally attacked, murdered, raped and looted at a scale never before seen in the history of Ethiopia. Women, children, farmers, even farm animals and crops in the field were not spared. Thousands of civilians were killed, and over 2 million were displaced from their homes. Almost every hospital, school, clinic, factory and airport within the reach of TPLF was either destroyed, damaged, or looted. The impact on the infrastructure in these 2 regions runs in the billions of dollars, the trauma inflicted on the people is incalculable.

During these horrific times, the average Ethiopian citizen in the Amhara and Afar regions, as well as the regional and national defense forces showed immense courage and resilience in fighting back against the terrorist groups, and Ethiopians in the diaspora mobilized to fight back against the tsunami of disinformation in the West. TPLF has been pushed back to Tigray, and though the tragedy is far from over, in 2022 we can finally start the healing and rebuilding process. Dir Biyabir normally focuses on long-term sustainable projects, but in 2021 this emergency situation required us to fund some emergency relief projects which are outlined in detail in this report.

In February 2021 we funded a small COVID emergency food relief initiative in Addis Abeba. In April we did a fundraiser for emergency relief for Ataye and surrounding areas that were victims of terror attacks by OLA-Shene. In November we ran a fundraiser for the people of the Afar region who had been at the forefront of repelling repeated invasions by TPLF resulting in large civilian casualties and destruction of infrastructure. Thankfully in 2021 we were also able to fund our regular projects: school-girl sponsorship, micro-enterprises for women, and a new project with Zagol Book Bank.

In the first half of 2022 we will be running a fundraiser for the Amhara region, another major front-line region in the war against TPLF. This region has faced the largest destruction in the number of civilians killed and displaced as well as destruction of infrastructure. Dir Biyabir is working with our long-term partner ADHENO to identify a specific school or clinic in Northern Shewa that was destroyed, and that we can completely rebuild. The focus of our fundraiser will be on this effort.

Though we are disheartened by the scene of destruction in Ethiopia, we are energized by the opportunity to "build back better". We hope you will join us by contributing to the fundraiser, spreading the word, and becoming a Dir Biyabir member.

Leadership Team

In 2021 we were very pleased to welcome Eminet Ayele and Yared Mengistu as our new Secretary and Treasurer respectively. We thank our outgoing Secretary Seena George and Treasurer Ksenia Siegel. In particular many thanks go to Ksenia who volunteered as our Treasure for 12 years! Ksenia applied the same rigor and discipline to her volunteer work at Dir Biyabir as she did to her paid job. She set up our accounting system and in her legendary diligence, every year she reconciled our accounting books down to a few cents! Many many thanks to Ksenia for her incredible work!

The current Dir Biyabir Executive Team and Board includes : Chairperson - Haeran Fisseha, Secretary - Eminet Ayele, Treasurer - Yared Mengistu. The Board consists of: Dr. Tadesse Wolde, Sam Smith, and Dr. Asrat Tesfayesus. All Dir Biyabir positions are voluntary and uncompensated. The Executive team continues to cover 100% of Dir Biyabir operational expenses, so that all membership fees and donations are directly utilized to fund projects in Ethiopia.

MEMBERSHIP

On January 14 2022 we updated our membership levels. The Silver level ($100/year) has been dropped and the Gold level was updated from $200 to $250/year. Given the immense need to expand the scope of our work in Ethiopia, this change was necessary to increase our capacity to fund projects. **We encourage existing members to re-subscribe at these new membership levels.**

- Diamond: $1,000 per year
- Platinum: $500 per year
- Gold: $250 per year

Membership fees are our only reliable and consistent source of revenue to fund projects in Ethiopia so we very much appreciate all of our members. As always 100% of membership fees and donations are allocated to fund one of our grassroots projects in Ethiopia.

Reminder to Members: Membership is annual and can be renewed simply by paying membership fees within the calendar year. Members are strongly encouraged to renew their membership as early in the year as possible. Membership is simply a mechanism to fund our projects in Ethiopia via membership fees. There are no additional responsibilities or benefits for being a member.

Membership fees and all other donations (via check or PayPal) are 100% tax deductible and eligible for corporate match programs so please do check with your employer if they have such a program and request a match.

We highly encourage our members to use our **PayPal Subscribe feature** on our website: http://dirbiyabir.org/page/become-a-member . This way your membership will auto-renew every year and you won't need to remember to renew your membership. This also frees up our scarce volunteer resources to focus on project execution rather than reminding members to renew, so we highly appreciate all auto-renewals!

New or Renewing Membership can be paid by:

1) Sending a check (please include your email address for receipts) payable to Dir Biyabir to:

Dir Biyabir, PO Box 914, Mountain View, CA 94042

2) Via Pay Pal on our website: http://dirbiyabir.org/page/become-a-member

PROJECT STATUS

Emergency Relief - Ataye

In mid-March 2021, armed terrorists from the OLA-Shene group targeted and attacked Amhara civilians in Northern Shewa residing in the towns of Ataye and Shewa Robit, as well as several rural areas in the Efratana Gedem and Kewet districts. In the last two years, Ataye was attacked more than 6 times by OLA-Shene terrorists. In the March attack alone hundreds of civilians were killed and more than 35,929 people were displaced from their homes and had to be settled in temporary shelters. The town of Ataye was tragically burned down.

Dir Biyabir's long-term project partner ADHENO, was contacted by the local government North Shewa Zone Food Security & Emergency Response Coordination Office, and requested to provide help in responding to this humanitarian emergency. In April 2021 Dir Biyabir held an online fundraiser and a total of $47,510 was raised. This includes a donation of $4,681 from Dir Biyabir's own coffers. Corporate matching programs as well as a hugely generous donation of $12,000 from a single anonymous Dir Biyabir member made it possible to meet our fundraising target!

Teff flour being distributed

The total $47,510 was wired to ADHENO in 2 phases in April and May 2021. The funds converted to two million two thousand birr (2,002,000). ADHENO had visited the displaced folks and discussed their key needs, so items were purchased accordingly. Led by Isayias, the ADHENO team based in Debre Birhan purchased and personally delivered the following items in 5 deliveries from May through October 2021.

Food Items Purchased and Distributed:

- 4,000 kgs of Teff flour + 5,000kg of wheat flour
- 3,000kg of rice + 2,000kg of Macaroni
- 50 kg of ground chili pepper (Berbere)
- 200 kg split pea flour (Shiro)
- 1,330 ltr oil + 4,080 ltr bottled water

Cooking Utensils Purchased and Distributed:

- 624 cooking pots and 312 kettles
- 5 large roasting pans (biret mitad)
- 15 serving dishes +20 ladles
- 240 plastic plates +240 plastic mugs
- 10 Jugs +10 plastic tubs (for washing dishes)

Bedding, Hygiene Products & School Supplies:

- 100 mattresses + 300 bed sheets + 200 pajamas
- 81 diapers + 576 sanitary pads
- 1,550 soap bars and 1,550 ltr liquid soap
- 4,000 exercise books + 1,578 pens

Relief was provided to 1,263 internally displaced people from Ataye and various parts of the district of Efratana Gedem including: 455 Men, 467 Women, 36 Children under ten and 300 students. These folks were housed in 8 tents at Ataye high school, at Karakore primary school, and at relatives. No other organization were helping them in their time of extreme need so we are gratified that we were able to help. Many thanks to all our donors. Tragically the towns & residents of Shewa Robit & Ataye were brutally attacked again in November, this time by TPLF terrorists. We will help rebuild!

Purchased mattresses being distributed

Emergency Relief - Afar

The Afar people have been playing an invaluable role in fighting the expansion and aggression of the TPLF terrorist group in Ethiopia. Civilians including women and children have paid a heavy price with hundreds of deaths and tens of thousands of displaced. Schools, hospitals and water supplies have been intentionally destroyed by TPLF. The population needs urgent assistance however relief from any UN or governmental agencies has been severely limited if at all available.

A local non-profit known as Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA) has been trying to help as much as possible. APDA was co-founded by a remarkable woman who is doing great work to help the displaced and suffering people in the Afar region. Valerie (aka Maalika) is a nurse from Australia who has been living among the Afar people for over 30 years. She is married to an Afar leader Ismael Ali Gordo, and together with him and other members of the community they founded APDA in 1994.

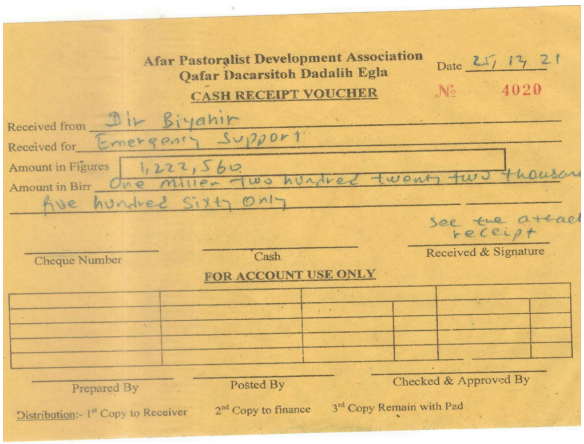
Dir Biyabir reached out to Valerie on November 17, 2021, proposing that we run a fundraiser for APDA to fund it's emergency relief efforts for the Afar people. We committed to sending 100% of funds raised PLUS an additional $5,000 from our own coffers.

The online fundraiser was closed on December 18, 2021 and on December 22 we wired $25,000 to APDA which included the $5,000 donation from Dir Biyabir. After the fundraiser closed on December 18, additional donations and corporate matches were received and we are waiting for even more additional pledged funds to be sent. Once all remaining donations are received, we expect to be able to send an additional grant to APDA estimated at between $8,000 to $10,000 by early February 2022.

Valerie has confirmed receipt of the $25,000 which translated to 1,222,560 birr and on January 4, 2022 she sent us a receipt confirming the funds.

Once the remaining funds are sent to APDA Valerie has committed to sending us an update regarding the use of the donation to provide some much needed relief to the Afar people and to rehabilitate the devastated Afar Region.

Many thanks to all who donated to this fundraiser and demonstrated support for the Afar people in their time of need.



Afar Pastoralist Development Association
Qafar Dacarsitoh Dadalih Egla
CASH RECEIPT VOUCHER
Date 25/12/21
№ 4020

Received from Dir Biyahir
Received for Emergency Support
Amount in Figures 1,222,560
Amount in Birr One Million Two hundred twenty two thousand five hundred Sixty Only

See the attached receipt
Cheque Number | Cash | Received & Signature

FOR ACCOUNT USE ONLY

Prepared By | Posted By | Checked & Approved By

Distribution:- 1st Copy to Receiver 2nd Copy to finance 3rd Copy Remain with Pad

Receipt for $25,000 sent to APDA

School Sponsorship - N.Shewa

Dir Biyabir continued support for a school sponsorship program that was kicked-off in 2012. The program was proposed by our local partner ADHENO to sponsor the education of girls in seven kebeles in Bassona Worana Wereda in Northern Shewa. ADHENO identified that there are many girls in the area who wanted to attend school but were unable to afford even basic school material. In 2014 Dir Biyabir had sponsored 139 elementary school girls and 28 secondary school girls. Dir Biyabir sponsorship starts at 9th grade and covers all of high school, then continues to the end of university or college/technical training for each sponsored girl that continues her education.

Due to Covid, the education of these sponsored girls had been suspended along with all other students in Ethiopia. However in January of 2021 with the resumption of school, Dir Biyabir resumed the school sponsorship program for the remaining 2020-2021 academic year as well as the 2021-2022 academic year

2020- 2021 Academic Year

Starting in January 2021 the school sponsorship program resumed to support 5 university students, 2 college students, 7 high school students and 139 elementary school students. All sponsored students are girls from families who can not fund their education. Funding extended to June 2021 when the academic year ends.

The **total** cost for each student for the period January to June 2021 was as follows:

- $114.23 (4,520 birr) per student for the 2 college and 7 high school students. This covered rent, uniforms, stationary, sanitary products, masks/ sanitizer, and tutorial support.
- $12.64 (500 birr) per student for the 139 elementary school students. This covered stationary, masks, and sanitizer
- $555.98 (22,000 birr) total for the 7 university students combined. Cost per student ranges from 1,040 birr to 5,000 birr depending on how far the university is located from home and the date of graduation (2 students graduating by February 2021). It includes transportation, stationary, academic handouts, and sanitary products.

  Total cost including 20% overhead for managing the program was $4,008 (158,616 birr)

2021- 2022 Academic Year

In October 2021 Dir Biyabir funded the school sponsorship program for the 2021- 2022 academic year to support 4 university students, 1 college student, 6 high school students waiting for national exam, and 139 elementary school students. Dir Biyabir realized that funding for these kids had not kept up with the rapidly increasing inflation in Ethiopia so we requested that ADHENO revise funding for each student as follows:

- $145.62 (6770 birr) per student for 1 college and 6 high school students.
- $14.73 (685 birr) per student for the 139 elementary school students.
- $408.26 (18,980 birr) total for the 4 university students combined. Cost per student ranges from 3,500 birr to 5,480 birr depending on how far the university is located from home and the date of graduation.

Total cost for the 2021-2022 academic year including 20% overhead for managing the program was $4,171 (193, 902 birr).

We wish our students much success in their academic programs!

Grace for All (GFA)

In 2021 Dir Biyabir partnered with GFA for 2 projects: COVID Relief and Micro-enterprises. GFA was founded in September 12, 1992 and is based in Atlanta, Georgia. It aims to rehabilitate disadvantaged street and homeless children into becoming self-sufficient members of the community. GFA has been sponsoring the education of several kids. It also has a center in Addis Abeba where it was providing books and reading space for hundreds of kids from very disadvantaged backgrounds to read and study. It was also providing them free meals. A few of the kids who are homeless were also housed in this facility. In the past, Dir Biyabir funded the purchase of books, desks, and chairs for this facility. Due to COVID and cost constraints, the facility moved to a much smaller house and operations have scaled back However GFA continued to support the kids and their families including providing food.

COVID Emergency Food Relief

During the pandemic, GFA has been providing emergency food for the families of the kids it serves in Addis Abeba as well as others in the community who are living in extreme poverty including homeless or disabled people. Most of these folks including the kids under GFA care come from the extremely poor Mariam Wonz neighborhood in Addis Abeba (which is nearby the Shiro Meda area). GFA has been handing out teff and wheat flour, pasta, pasta sauce, soap salt and tea.

In February 2021 Dir Biyabir wired $5,000 to GFA for the purchase of emergency food including: 2,000kg teff flour, 2,000kg wheat flour, 1,588 packs of pasta, and 200 liters of cooking oil. This is a one-time emergency relief. Though the focus of Dir Biyabir is on long-term sustainable projects, the devastating economic impact of COVID on kids and families living in extreme poverty necessitated this emergency relief. Though it is a drop in the bucket compared to the need, we are pleased that a few families were helped in their time of need

Micro-enterprise for Young Women

Several of the kids sponsored and supported by GFA have managed to graduate from university and secure jobs. However jobs are very hard to come by in Addis Abeba and several of the kids have not been able to get a job. The goal of this project is to provide young women who have been in GFA's care the opportunity to make a living by starting a small business so they can support themselves and their families.

GFA provided a proposal that would allow 4 young women to start their own businesses in Addis Abeba. Eyerusalem was to start a spice and incense shop, Betesfa would start a hair salon, Zahira would start a coffee shop and Dibora would start a vegetable stand or coffee shop. Total cost for these 4 micro-enterprises would be $4,970 (233,800 birr) and would include the cost of 6 months rent for a space for each business as well as required items such as tables, chairs, plates, cups, shelves and a startup fund to purchase perishables and other inventory.

Eyerusalem in her new spice & incense shop

In October 2021 Dir Biyabir wired the total requested amount of $4,970. This project was made possible by one generous donation of $5,000 from Sam Smith, a Dir Biyabir member and Board member who specifically wanted to help the kids from GFA. What a great way to help by giving these four young ladies an opportunity to help themselves! Many thanks to Sam for his generous support. We wish these 4 young ladies much success as they launch their businesses!

Books for Zagol Book Bank

In 2021 we are excited to launch a project with a new partner in Ethiopia, Zagol Book Bank. Zagol Book Bank was founded by renown Ethiopian author Endalegeta Kebede. The Dir Biyabir chairperson was privileged to have met Endalegeta in Ethiopia back in 2017 (prior to the establishment of the book bank), and was able to re-connect with him in 2021 and initiate this joint project.

The goal of Zagol Book Bank is to alleviate the severe shortage of books in libraries throughout Ethiopia, by serving as the central source of books. To this end Zagol has so far supplied books to libraries in schools, jails, and other establishments throughout the country. Zagol also helps to set up book clubs and encourages youth to engage constructively in their community. When Zagol donates books it encourages community libraries to be setup under the name of a famous Ethiopian book (e.g "Ke Admas Bashager", "Mahlet", "Mintiwab" etc). Zagol initially donates some seed books to start a library. For the libraries that show the most impact Zagol donates an additional 981 books. This is in memory of the 981 Ethiopian books the British looted from Emperor Tewedros' library in Meqdella when they invaded in 1868. It serves to remind us all of the lost knowledge in these stolen books.

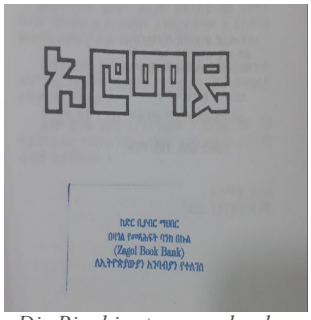
Endalegeta at Zagol

Books are donated to Zagol from individuals as well as organizations. Zagol accepts only books that are positive in building a healthy, inclusive society, and places special emphasis on books that build harmony across religions and ethnicities. It also places special value on books that are written in various Ethiopian languages and that highlight and respect Ethiopian cultures and traditions.

We reached out to Endalegeta and requested that he send us their wish list of books they would like to purchase along with their cost. Given the quality, wisdom, and wide popularity of Endalegeta's own writing we specifically requested that he include some of his own books in the list. Endalegeta provided a list of 776 mostly Amharic books including poetry, fiction, memoirs, and historic books, as well as academic books for math, Amharic, and English.

Some of the books purchased

In November 2021 Dir Biyabir wired $2,496 (120,000 birr) to cover the cost of purchasing these 776 books locally plus the cost of transporting them to the book bank. The books have now been purchased and have been stamped with our name, Zagol has prepared a program to hand-over these books to schools and universities that were damaged and looted by TPLF terrorist forces in the Northern area, as well as certain reading rooms in Addis Abeba. We are especially gratified to be able to help these schools that were deliberately destroyed.



Dir Biyabir stamp on books

Over the last 13 years, Dir Biyabir has funded the purchase of thousands of books for rural schools and community libraries all over Ethiopia, so we are excited by this opportunity to widen our impact. The impressive Abrhot (Enlightenment) Library inaugurated by the Prime Minister in Addis Abeba on January 1 2022 is a significant step in encouraging a culture of reading and learning. Much smaller community libraries such as those supported by Zagol Book Bank are critical in expanding access to books and spreading this culture of reading and learning to every segment of society.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021

Revenue		
Membership Fees (Gross before PayPal Fees)		10,900.00
General Donations from Individuals (Gross before PayPal Fees)		6,195.00
Ataye Fundraiser - Donations		31,666.99
Ataye Fundraiser - Corporate Match		11,162.50
Afar fundraiser - Donations (Gross before PayPal Fees)		24,735.00
Afar Fundraiser - Corporate Match		1,500.00
Corporate Match for General Donation		5,500.00
Total micro-grants (Amazon Smile, United Way, PP Giving Fund)		219.81
Donation for 2022 Amhara Rebuilding Fundraiser		1,150.00
Donation from Dir Biyabir management team for operating expenses		1,000.00
Total 2021 Revenue		**94,029.30**
Expenses		
Grants Paid Out		93,155.00
Women's Micro-Enterprise - Grace for All	4,970.00	
School Girl Sponsorship - ADHENO	8,179.00	
Books for Community Libraries - Zagol Book Bank	2,496.00	
Emergency Funding for Ataye - ADHENO	47,510.00	
Emergency Funding for COVID Food Relief - Grace for All	5,000.00	
Emergency Funding for Afar - APDA	25,000.00	
Operating Expenses		575.18
Tax	49.99	
Bank/Wire Fees	300.00	
Paypal Fees for donations and membership fees	185.85	
Web Hosting Fee	39.34	
Fundraiser Expense - PayPal Fees for Afar Fundraiser	290.92	
Total 2021 Expense		**94,021.10**
Total 2021 Revenue Less Total 2021 Expense		**8.20**
Adjusted Ending Balance From 2020 ($116.46 adjustment)		48,583.07
2021 Adjustment for balance discrepancy	205.00	
Total 2021 Revenue – Total 2021 Expense		8.20
2021 Ending Balance		**48,386.27**

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2021

Stated 2021 Goals	Actual 2021 Accomplishment
Provide emergency grant for COVID relief food distribution for those living in extreme poverty in Addis Abeba (via our partner Grace For All)	$5k grant provided for emergency food distribution in Mariam Wonz neighborhood in Addis Abeba via GFA
Re-start Northern Shewa school sponsorship program that was interrupted due to school shutdown to prevent spread of COVID-19	School-girl sponsorship re-started in January at school re-opening for 2020/21 academic year
Identify new funding partners for Dir Biyabir or ADHENO	No new funding partners identified. Goal not met.
Fundraise from individual donors and supporters of Dir Biyabir	Over $70,000 total raised in two emergency fundraisers for the Amhara and Afar regions
Identify new and compelling projects to support in Ethiopia with existing partners	New projects funded with Adheno for Emergency relief, and with GFA for micro-enterprise for young women in Addis Abeba and emergency COVID food relief
Identify new and compelling projects to support in Ethiopia with new partners	New project completed with new partner Zagol Book Bank
Grow 2020 level of membership	No growth in membership. Goal not met.
Successful transition of a new Treasurer and Secretary	New Secretary (Eminet Ayele) and new Treasurer (Yared Mengistu) have been successfully on-boarded
Re-establish regular reporting and Website/ Social Media updates	Website updated with details on emergency fundraisers as well as new membership structure. Fundraiser updates sent via Twitter. No quarterly/semi-annual reports published in 2021, this needs to be re-started in 2022.

GOALS FOR 2022

- Drive specific rebuilding efforts in Amhara region:
    - Identify specific areas where Dir Biyabir can play a role
    - Identify local partners to implement the project
    - Fundraising drives
    - Implement and monitor progress
- Identify new funding partners for Dir Biyabir or ADHENO for Environmental projects
- Grow membership
- Fund new projects with current partners like Zagol Book Bank
- Enhance presence on social media: Twitter, FaceBook
- Re-start the publishing of Quarterly/Semi-Annual Reports. More website updates

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Thank You To Our Donors and Members !

Dir Biyabir's projects are funded by the membership fees and donations of our members and supporters. A special **Thank You** goes to all our members. By renewing their membership year after year, our long-time members have been especially critical in giving us a continued stream of revenue to fund our projects, so we are always gratified and encouraged by their support. If you like what we do, the best way to support us is by joining us as a member, diligently renewing your membership annually, and encouraging friends and family to join. For our part, we will continue to commit that 100% of your membership fees and donations will be allocated to projects in Ethiopia.

Banner thanking Dir Biyabir & ADHENO (from Ataye relief site)

"Dir Biyabir Anbessa Yassir" - "When Spider Webs Unite, They Can Tie Up a Lion". Our name is inspired by a popular Ethiopian proverb that reminds us that when we work together, we can overcome great challenges. "Dir Biyabir" means "when spider webs unite", and the more webs we have the stronger we are. So if you are already a member a big Thank You! If you are not yet member we invite you to be a part of our web!

We are praying and hoping 2022 will be the year of healing and rebuilding for Ethiopia. We are energized to do our share in the rebuilding effort, do join us so we can do more together !!