SEPTEMBER 2021, VOLUME II

FICDO

FIKIR INTEGRATED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

ፍቅር የተቀናጀ የማህበረሰብ ልማት ድርጅት

SEPTEMBER 2021

2 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

እንኳን አብሮ አደረሰን

A MILLION THANKS FOR YOUR TRUST AND SUPPORT

CONTENTS

ይህንን መጽሄት በአማርኛና እንግሊዝኛ ለማቅረብ ተሞክሯል። ነገር ግን፤ በግዜ እጥረት ሁሉንም ገጾች መተርጎም አልቻልንም። በተጨማሪም፤ የእንግሊዝኛና የአማርኛው ይዘትና ሃሳብ ተመሳሳይ እንዲሆን ጥረት የተደረገ ቢሆንም፤ ቀጥታ ትርጉም አለመሆኑን አስቀድመን ማሳሰብ እንወዳለን።

5
Message from the Board
የቦርድ መልእክት

6
A Year of Walking in Love: A Reflection
የ2013 የፍቅር ጉዟችን

7
Get to Know FICDO

11
Education Program
የትምህርት ፕሮግራማችን

19
***SOUL-2-SOUL* Befriending Program**
"ፍቅር ለአረጋዊያንን"

23
COVID-19 and Emergency Response
የአስቸኳይ ግዜ እርዳታ ስራዎች

26
Health Care Service
የማህበረሰብ ጤና መድህን አገልግሎት

27
Mobilization
የማስተባበርና ማነቃቃት ስራዎች

34
A Passion to Serve: *Interview with Founder of God's Mercy House*

37
Join the Movement
የፍቅር ጥሪ

38
Critical Analysis of FICDO's Community Care

SEPTEMBER 2021

መልካም አዲስ አመት

መልካም አዲስ አመት

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

የቦርድ መልእክት

Since FICDO started its operations in June 2019, we have been running social inclusion projects in Fitche town, Central Ethiopia. 2020/21 has been an exceptionally challenging year for everyone due to COVID-19. Hence, we needed to redouble our efforts to provide much needed service to vulnerable members of our community as much as we could. We mobilized our communities, the diaspora and friends from fields afar. We don't claim we have done everything perfectly, but we believe that we demonstrated practical love. Above all, we hope that we nurtured relationships and impassioned several kind-hearted people in our communities and elsewhere. I would like to thank all who stood by us during these tough times. Thank you for your trust, solidarity and friendship. You inspired us. Wishing you a happy New Year, we look forward to walking with you in our journey of love in the years ahead.

ፍቅር የተቀናጀ የማህበረሰብ ልማት ድርጅት (FICDO) ከተመሰረተበት ከ2011 ጀምሮ፤ በፍቼ ከተማ ማህበረሰብ-ተኮር ፕሮጀክቶችን በማከናወን ላይ ይገኛል። 2013 ግን ከCOVID-19 የተነሳ እጅግ ፈታኝ አመት ነበር። ከዚህ የተነሳ፤ ከባለፈው አመት በላይ፤ ያለ የሌለ አቅማችንን በማስተባበር በመሃከላችን ለሚኖሩ እና ለችግር ለተጋለጡ ብዙ ቤተሰቦች፤ ህጻናት እና አረጋዊያን ለመድረስ ሞክረናል። ብዙ ቢቀረንም፤ የከተማችንን ማህበረሰብ እና ድርጅቶች ለበጎ ስራ በማነሳሳት፤ የበጎ ፈቃድ ሰራተኞችን ለማፍራት እና በጎነትን ለማበረታታት የተቻለንን ሰርተናል። ህብረተሰባችን በመተሳሰብ እንዲተሳሰር እና አንዱ ሌላውን እንዲያገለግል አበረታተናል፤ የፍቅር ዘር ዘርተናል። ከከተማችን ውጭ፤ በሃገር ውስጥና ውጭ ከሚኖሩ የኣካባቢው ተወላጆች እና ሌሎች ደጋፊዎቻችን ጋር ግንኙነት በመፍጠር ከማህበረሰባችን ጎን እንዲቆሙ ለማስተባበር ሞክረናል። በዚህ የበጎ ስራ ለተሳተፋችሁ የበጎ ፈቃድ ሰራተኞች፤ የከተማው ማህበረሰብ፤ ድርጅቶች፤ የመስተዳድር አካላት፤ ፍቅር ግድ ብሏችሁ ከኛ ጋር ለቆማችሁት በሩቅ እና በቅርብ ያላችሁ ደጋፊዎቻችን በድርጅቱና በራሴ ስም ከፍ ያለ ምስጋናና አድናቆቴን ልገልጥ እወዳለሁ። ያሳያችሁን ፍቅር ለበለጠ ስራ አነሳስቶናል። በአዲሱ አመትም በበለጠ መልካም ስራ አብረን እንድንቀጥል እያበረታታሁ፤ 2014 የሰላም፤የደስታና የፍቅር አመት እንዲሆንላችሁ በራሴና በድርጅታችን ስም እመኛለሁ።

Ayele Deneke, Chairperson, FICDO's Board of Directors
አየለ ደነቀ፤ የFICDO ቦርድ ሊ/መንበር

የFICDO ቦርድ አባላት፡
አየለ ደነቀ/ንጋቱ መረቀ/ ታደሰ ወልደማርያም(ዶ/ር) /አርቲስት አብርሃም ወልዴ/ ላቀው ረጋሳ/ የሻረግ ቸርነት
ሃይሉ ቶላሳ/ መሰረት ስዩም/ እውነቱ ኤርምያስ/ ካሰች ተስፋዬ / አርቲስት ትግስት ማሞ

A YEAR OF WALKING IN LOVE

A Reflection

የ2013 የፍቅር ጉዟችን

In FICDO, we continually reflect on who we are as an organization, what we are doing and why we do what we do. Given that "serving and living out love" is at the heart of our mission, we believe that these reflective practices help us to internalize our organizational identity and stay on the right path. The work summarized in this magazine is just that - a reflection.

In a world where performance is measured in numbers and figures, our work may seem like a drop in an ocean given the huge demands in our communities. Yes, we have met the practical needs of some vulnerable people and showed unconditional love, but there is still much to do. However, we are sure of one thing; that our work is formative. i.e. through experiences, it develops understandings, nurtures relations and empowers individuals and communities, all of which may not be directly measured. We hope that we inspired our communities and you. We are certainly inspired by you, especially those who have committed to walking the journey of love with us despite having no immediate connection to the communities that we serve! We hope to continue to work together to inspire several others.

"ፍቅርን በተግባር መኖር እና በፍቅር ማገልገል" የአገልግሎታችን ዋና እንደመሆኑ መጠን፤ ስራችንን ለመገምገም ሁሉን በሚያየው ፈጣሪ ፊት ግዜ እየወሰድን ውስጣችንን እንፈትሻለን። ይኼም፤ ካለፈው እየተማርን፤ ስራችንን እያሻሻልን በመልካም ጎዳና እንድንራመድ ያግዘናል ብለን እናምናለን። የዚህ አመታዊ መጽሄታችን አንዱ አላማም ይኸው ነው።፡

በ2013፤ በማህበረሰባችን ውስጥ እገዛ እና ፍቅር ለሚያስፈልጋቸው ቀላል የማይባሉ ሰዎች በትክክለኛ ግዜ እንደአቅማችን ትክክለኛ እገዛ እንዳደረግን ቢሰማንም፤ በአካባቢያችን ካለው ዘርፈ ብዙ ተግዳሮቶች አንጻር የኛ ስራ "ባህርን በጭልፋ" እንደመሞከር መሆኑን እንገነዘባለን። ነገር ግን፤ በFICDO ስኬትን በቁጥሮች እና በፐርሰንት አንመዝንም። ስራችን የመልካም ሰዎችን እና የማህበረሰቡን ልብ ለበጎ ስራ የሚቀሰቅስ፤ የአመለካከትና የአስተሳሰብ ለውጥ ላይ በጎ ተጽእኖ የሚፈጥር ነው ብለን እናምናለን። የ2013ን የስራ እንቅስቃሴ ስንገመግም፤ ይህን ከግምት ውስጥ በማስገባት እንጂ፤ የምናሳየው የተገነባ ህንጻ፤ የሚቆረጥ ሪበን እንዳልሆነ አንባቢ እንዲረዳልን እንወዳለን። ይልቁንም፤ የበጎ ፈቃድ አገልጋዮቻችን እና ለጋሾቻችን የራሳቸውን ነገርና የቤታቸውን ቀዳዳ ወደ ጎን ትተው ለሌሎች ለመድረስ ያደረጉት ጥረት ብዙዎችን ያነቃቃል ብለን ተስፋ እናደርጋለን። የ2013 ስራችን፤ ብንተባበር ምን ማድረግ እንደምንችል ማሳያ፤ ለራሳችን የማናንስ እና የሌሎችን እጅ መጠበቅ እንደሌለብን እንደ ማንቅያ ትንሽ ምሳሌ እንዲወሰድ እንፈልጋለን። በተጨማሪም FICDO ከሚንቀሳቀስበት አካባቢ ጋር ምንም አይነት ግንኙነት የሌላቸው ብዙ መልካም ሰዎች ካላቸው ቆርሰው ከኛ ጋር ማካፈላቸው፤ ከዝያ ማህበረሰብ ለወጣን ምሳሌ የሚሆን፤ የበለጠ ቁጭትና መነቃቃት የሚያመጣ፤ ልዩነቶቻችንን ከመቁጠር ይልቅ በጋራ ነገሮቻችን ላይ በአንድነት እንድንሰራ የሚያደርግ ነው ብለን እናምናለን። ፈጣሪ ቢፈቅድ አብረን የበለጠ እንሰራለን።

Get to know FICDO

1

A BRIEF HISTORY ABOUT THE FOUNDING OF FICDO

adapted from an interview by Comhlamh

At the end of 2017, Ewnetu Ermias, an IT professional took a career break to pursue a volunteering opportunity in Ethiopia. This experience spurred his desire for change, resulting in the founding of FICDO.

Ewnetu's volunteering experience commenced in his home town of Fitche, central Ethiopia when he returned as a volunteer after two decades of living in Europe. He observed that not much had changed in his home town. Despite the abundance of natural and human resources, poverty is still rampant. Many vulnerable elderly are not only poverty stricken but also suffer from loneliness. Young girls and boys are not attending school for lack of basic resources. In most cases, children as young as seven and eight have to work to support their guardians or other family members. Ewnetu admits that what he saw was not new to him as he grew up in poverty himself. "But," he recalls, "my parents sacrificed everything and gave me an opportunity to go to school". He knows what it means to get an opportunity.

Ewnetu realized that the situation on the ground was overwhelmingly challenging, but he also believed that small hope-filled acts of kindness could improve people's lives. Hence, he started engaging with like-minded people, visiting the most marginalized within the community, the elderly. This kick-started an informal "befriending" service which caught the attention of others in the community. Ewnetu recalls,*"...wherever we went and started speaking about poverty in our community, we saw a strong support and willingness to change the status-quo"*. It seemed many people were aware of the social and economic challenges but did not know how to respond as an individual. However, this is not to say that there were no naysayers. Discouraged by past negative experiences and failed efforts, some were cautious about the new initiative.

Throughout the first half of 2019, the small group who were determined to see change pushed forward and built relationships with community members in Addis, who have been informally organised for a similar cause. In June 2019, a non-profit organisation called FICDO (*Fikir* Integrated Community Development Organisation) was formed and registered. The organisation is completely volunteer-led and run by local community members.

FICDO's core belief is that, with proper support and an enabling environment every community has what it takes to transform and flourish. The goal, therefore, is to embed mutual caring into the everyday life of the community. After all, for transformation to be sustainable, it has to come from within and be embraced by the community.

የFICDO ምስረታ መነሻው በመስከረም 2011 አቶ እውነቱ ለበጎ ፈቃድ ስራ ወደ ትውልድ ስፍራቸው ከመምጣት ጋር የተያያዘ ቢሆንም፤ በአዲስ አበባ የሚገኙ የአካባቢው ተወላጆች ሃሳቡ እውን እንዲሆን ከፍተኛ ርብርብ አድርገዋል። ድርጅቱ ከመመስረቱ በፊት፤ ካለፈባቸው ፈተናዎች አንዱና ዋነኛው "ከዚህ ቀደም ተጀምረው በአጭር እንደቀሩት፤ ይሄም የትም አይደርስም" የሚል አመለካከት ያላቸው ሰዎች መኖራቸው ነበር። ነገር ግን፤ ባለፉት ነገሮች ተስፋ ሳይቆርጡ "የቻልነውን እናደርጋለን" ብለው የተነሱ ሰዎች ድርጅቱ እንዲመሰረት ትልቅ ምክንያት ሆነዋል። ዛሬ ይህ ከድርጅታችን ታሪክ ጋር እንዲታወስ የምንፈልገው፤ ስራውን የሚሰራውም ሆነ የሚሰራለት ማህበረሰባችን በመሆኑ፤ የድርጅቱ ህልውና ከማህበረሰባችን ድጋፍ ጋር የተያያዘ እንደሆነ ለማስመር ነው።

FICDO GOALS

አላማዎች

"To say that on a daily basis you can make a difference, well, you can. One act of kindness a day can do it."

Betty Williams

---

1. To promote positive community values by facilitating volunteering and sponsorship programs.

2. To support disadvantaged children with basic needs so that they break out of the poverty cycle.

3. To reconnect the marginalized and impoverished elderly with society that they might experience love and hope for the remainder of their lives.

4. To empower the community through education and awareness creation.

5. To rehabilitate and empower women engaged in prostitution due to lack of opportunities.

1. የማህበረሰባችንን የእርስ በእርስ የመረዳዳትና የመደጋገፍ መልካም ባህል የበለጠ ለማዳበር ፤ ህብረተሰባችንን ማስተሳሰርና የበጎ ፈቃድ አገልጋዮችን ማፍራት

2. በተለያዩ የኢኮኖሚና ማህበራዊ ጫናዎች የተነሳ ትምህርታቸውን ለማቋረጥ የተገደዱ ወይንም በአግባቡ መከታተል ያልቻሉትን ህጻናትና ወጣቶች አስፈላጊውን ድጋፍ በማድረግ ትምህርታቸውን ማስቀጠል

3. ከእድሜ መግፋት፤ ከጤና እጦትና የተለያዩ የኢኮኖሚ ጫናዎች የተነሳ በብቸኝነት እና በከፋ ድህነት የሚማቅቁና ቤተሰብ የሌላቸው አረጋዊያን ቀሪ እድሜያቸውን በሃዘን እና ተስፋ መቁረጥ እንዳያሳልፉ ፍቅር መስጠትና የተቻለውን ድጋፍ ማድረግ

4. ማህበረሰባችን ራሱን በራሱ እንዲያግዝ፤ እንዲነቃቃና በአብሮነት ለልማት እንዲነሳሳ ብሎም ችግሮቹን እንዲፈታ ግንዛቤ ማሳደግ እና የአመለካከት ለውጥ ላይ መስራት

5. በግንዛቤ እጥረት፤ በስራ አጥነት ወይንም በሌሎች የተለያዩ ምክንያቶች ተገደው እንደ ሴተኛ አዳሪነት ባሉ ያልተፈለገ ህይወት ለሚኖሩ ወጣት ሴቶች ስራ መፍጠር የሚችሉበትን ዕድል ማመቻቸት

**"ልዩነት የሚያመጣ ህይወት በየቀኑ መኖር ይቻላል? አዎን!
በየቀኑ አንድ ግዜ እንኳን ቸርነት ቢያደርጉ ልዩነት ፈጣሪ ነዎት"**

VISION

A society where the physiological and psychosocial needs of all people are met that they may live a wholesome life.

MISSION

We believe that kindness exists in each person and society. Our mission is to tap into this kindness and channel it into sustainable humanitarian and development efforts through social inclusion projects.

VALUES

LOVE

- We are motivated by love to serve others before ourselves.
- We believe in the transformative power of love. Hence we encourage and emphasise on serving in love

HOPE

- We have high hopes that if we are united and serve each other in love, we can bring about positive changes in our community.

HUMILITY

- We recognize that everyone has something to offer; hence we are willing to listen and learn

INTEGRITY

- We practice what we preach...that is love (*fikir*).

COURAGE

- We acknowledge the multi-faceted challenges our communities face. But, we are committed to face them.

RESPECT & INCLUSIVENESS

- We treat and serve everyone, without exception, equally and respectfully.

ራዕይ/ግብ

ለበጎ ስራ የተነቃቃና በመተጋገዝ አካባቢውን ምቹ የመኖርያ ስፍራና የፍቅር ምሳሌ ያደረገ፤ ከዚህም የተነሳ ሁሉም የማህበረሰቡ ክፍሎች መሰረታዊ ፍላጎቶቹ የተሟሉለት ጤናማ ህብረተሰብ ማየት

ተልዕኮ

የበጎ ስራን እና የመረዳዳት ባህላችንን መሰረት ያደረጉ ራስ አገዝ ፕሮጀክቶችን በመቅረጽ በውስጣችን እምቅ ሃብት እንዳለ በተግባር ማሳየት፤ ለማህበረሰባችን እና ለአካባቢያችን ለውጥ ሁሉም እንዲነሳሳ የአመለካከት ለውጥ ማምጣት

እሴቶቻችን

ፍቅር

- ለህዝባችን ባለን ፍቅር እና ቅንአት ተነሳስተን እራሳችንን ሳይሆን ሌሎችን እናገለግላለን
- በፍቅር የተነሳሳ ልብ የራሱንም ሆነ የሌሎችን ህይወት የመለወጥ ሃይል እንዳለው እናምናለን። ስለዚህ ማንም መልካም ልብ ያለው ሰው፤ የበጎ ፈቃድ አገልጋይ በመሆን የድርጅታችን አጋር እንዲሆን አናበረታታለን፡

ተስፋ

- ተባብረን እና በፍቅር ተሳስረን ከተጋን የህዝባችን ኑሮ ይለወጣል፤ አካባቢያችንም ይለማል የሚል ብሩህ ተስፋ ሰንቀን እንሰራለን።

ትህትና

- ማንንም አንንቅም። ለአካባቢያችን መለወጥ ፤ ሁሉም ሰው የሚያበረክተው አስተዋጽኦ እንዳለ እናምናለን።

ታማኝነት

- እንደስማችን ፍቅርን በንግግር ብቻ ሳይሆን በተግባር ኖረን እናሳያለን።

ቁርጠኝነት

- አካባቢያችን ያሉ ዘርፈ ብዙ ችግሮች (ኋላ ቀርነት፤ ድህነት፤ ስራ አጥነት ወዘተ) ተስፋ አያስቆርጡንም።

አክብሮት እና አካታችነት

- ሁሉንም ሰው በእኩል አይን፤ ያለ አድልዎ እና በአክብሮት እናገለግላለን።

EDUCATION PROGRAM

የትምህርት ፕሮግራም

2

ABOUT FICDO'S EDUCATION PROGRAM

ጥቂት ስለትምህርት ፕሮግራማችን

Several children in developing countries must start working from a young age to support themselves and/or even, at times, other family members. Hence they don't go to school. This is no different in the community that FICDO serves. Therefore, one of FICDO's strategic objectives is supporting such children with their basic needs (including food) and ensuring their education. However, feeding several children on a daily basis for an organisation with a meager budget is challenging. Therefore, as done in the previous year, we sought local solutions for these local problems; i.e. pooling every resource in the community to drive the cost low:

- The local authority donated an old building, which we use for storage and dining
- The local authority donated firewood for cooking
- We built a make-shift kitchen
- Two cooks were hired to prepare meals
- We source cheap ingredients locally
- Volunteers run the day to day activities
- Children get meals (breakfast and lunch) before heading to school

We also provide school uniforms, footwear and school supplies for the children.

ሃገራችንን ጨምሮ በብዙ ታዳጊ አገሮች፤ ብዙ ህጻናት እንደሌሎች እድሜ እኩዮቻቸው ትምህርት ቤት ከመዋል ይልቅ የእለት ጉርስ ፍለጋ ይባዝናሉ። የFICDO አንዱ አላማ ህብረተሰቡን እና ቅን ልብ ያላቸውን ሁሉ በማስተባበር ለእንደነዚህ ልጆች የትምህርት እድል እንዲያገኙ ሁኔታዎችን (ምግብ ማግኘትን ጨምሮ) ማመቻቸት ነው። ነገር ግን በጥቂት ቅን ግለሰቦች እርዳታ የሚሰራ ድርጅት ቀርቶ ለሌላውም በየቀኑ ህጻናትን ምግብ ማብላት የማይታሰብ ነው። ለፈጣሪ ምስጋና ይግባውና፤ ይህ ችግር ሳያቆመን፤ የአካባቢያችንን ችግር ለራሳችን መፍትሄ በማበጀት ልክ እንደ 2012 ባሳለፍነው አመትም ያሰብነው ተሳክቶልን ልጆቻችንን መግበናል።

FICDO እንደምን በትንሽ ወጪ ልጆችን አመቱን በሙሉ እንደመገበ እንንገርዎት፡

- የአካባቢው ህዝብና እንደ እርስዎ ያሉ ቅኖች የሚሰጡንን አብቃቅትን አስቤዛ እንሸምታለን
- ሁለት አብሳዮች ቀጠርን፤ ማብሰያ ቦታ በአሮጌ ቆርቆሮ ሰራን
- ማገዶ እና መመገብያ ስፍራ የፍቼ 02 ቀበሌ በነጻ ሰጠን
- ይሄን ሁሉ የበጎ ፈቃድ ሰራተኞቻችን ያለመሰልቸት በነጻ ይሰራሉ
- ህጻናት ቁርስና ምሳ በልተው ወደትምህርታቸው ያለሃሳብ ይሄዳሉ
- አቅም ለሌላቸው አረጋዊያንም ከዚሁ ምሳ እንቋጥራለን
- እግዚአብሄር ስራውን ባረከው፤ጸጋም አበዛልን

ከዚህም በተጨማሪ ህጻናት፤ ዩኒፎርም የትምህርት መርጃ መሳርያዎችና የማህበረሰብ ጤና አገልግሎት ድጋፍ ያገኛሉ።

Quick Facts about Children in FICDO's Education Program

በ FICDO የትምህርት ፕሮግራም የታቀፉ ህጻናት መረጃ

Guardians have no steady Income
ቋሚ ገቢ ከሌላቸው አሳዳጊዎች ጋር የሚኖሩ

One or both parents absconded
ወላጅ ጥሏቸው የጠፋባቸው

One or both parents passed away
ወላጅ አባት ወይም እናት የሞቱባቸው

FICDO's Education Program supports children from disadvantaged families. Of these, more than half are either raised by single parents or close relatives who have little or no disposable income of their own. One or both of parents of 25% of the children have absconded (mostly due to mental illness). The Program not only ensures the children's future through education, but also provides much needed daily meals required for their survival. Thank you for being our partners in changing lives.

በ*FICDO* የትምህርት ፕሮግራም የታቀፉትና የትምህርት መርጃ መሳርያዎች፤ ዩኒፎርም እና የቁርስ እና ምሳ ድጋፍ የሚደረግላቸው ሁሉም ህጻናት አሳዳጊዎቻቸው ቋሚ ገቢ ስለሌላቸው በከፋ የኑሮ ችግር ውስጥ ያሉ ናቸው። ከግማሽ በላይ የሚሆኑት አንድ ወይም ሁለቱም ቤተሰቦቻቸውን በሞት ያጡ ናቸው። ቀላል ቁጥር የሌላቸው ደግሞ ቤተሰቦቻቸው የት እንዳሉ ስለማይታወቅ ጎረቤት ወይም የሩቅ ዘመድ ያሳድጋቸዋል። እነዚህ ህጻናት፤ በርስዎ ድጋፍ የትምህርት እድል ብቻ ሳይሆን፤ ለህይወት እጅግ አስፈላጊ የሆነ ምግብ ጭምር ያገኛሉ።

There is no small donation. Every little helps.

የአቅምዎን ቢረዱ፤ ለብዙ ህጻናት እንደርሳለን። ልግስና በረከት ነው፤ ቸርነት በማድረጉ የደኸየ የለም።

የባንክ ሂሳብ ቁጥራችን፡

የኢትዮጵያ ንግድ ባንክ
1000287498474፤
ፍቼ ቅርንጫፍ

FICDO (ፍቅር የተቀናጀ የማህበረሰብ ልማት ድርጅት) በአዋጅ ቁጥር 113/2011 በመዝገብ ቁጥር 4207 በኢፌድሪ የሲቪል ማህበረሰብ ድርጅቶች ኤጄንሲ የተመዘገበና በበጎ ፈቃደኞች የሚመራ ሃገር በቀል ድርጅት ነው።

BACK TO SCHOOL CHECKLIST

ለትምህርት ቤት መከፈት ዝግጅት

As in all parts of the world, back to school time is busy for all parents. There is a rush to get school supplies, uniforms and all the essentials necessary for their children to start school. It is the same for FICDO's volunteer leaders too. In the picture below, tailors are invited to take measurements for our children's school uniforms.

- School Uniforms
- Footwear
- Stationery
- Volunteer Timetable
- Supplies for meals

ማንኛውም ቤተሰብ ትምህርት ቤት ከመጀመሩ በፊት ለልጆቹ የሚያስፈልጋቸውን ግብአቶች ለማሟላት እንደሚሯሯጥ፤ የFICDO የበጎ ፈቃድ ሰራተኞች በአመቱ መጀመርያ በስራ ይጠመዳሉ። ለልጆች ዩኒፎርም ከማሰፋት በተጨማሪ፤ ለምገባው የሚሆን እህል ሸመታ፤ ማብሰያ እቃና ቦታ ማዘገጃጀት፤ እንጨት ማስጫን ወዘተ። በአመቱ መጀመርያ ልጆቹን ለትምህርት ቤት ለማዘጋጀት ደፋ ቀና የሚል ቤተሰብ፤ ዝግጅቱ የሚጠይቀውን በደምብ ይረዳዋል ብለን እናስባለን። የራሳቸው ትዳርና ኑሮ እያላቸው የሌሎችን ቀዳዳ ለመሸፈን በነጻ እንዲህ ደፋ ቀና ለሚሉ የበጎ ፈቃድ ሰራተኞቻችን ከፍተኛ አድናቆትና ምስጋና አለን። እግዚአብሄር ያክብራችሁ፤ እናንተ የሌሎችን ቤት እንደምትሰሩ፤ ፈጣሪ የናንተን ቤት ይስራ እንላለን። ይሄንን ፕሮጀክት በገንዘብ እና በሞራል እየደገፋችሁ ያላችሁትም ፈጣሪ ወሮታችሁን ይክፈል እንላለን፤ እያደረጋችሁት ያላችሁት ቸርነት በእነዚህ ህጻናት ህይወት ውስጥ ትልቅ ትርጉም አለው።

MAKING THE BEST USE OF LOCAL RESOURCES

"የሃገሩን ሰርዶ በሃገሩ በሬ"

One of the greatest aspects of FICDO's community initiative is that we make the best use of local resources. Fitche Town administration donated to FICDO, a building previously used as a class room for pre-school children. The building has chairs and tables and is perfect to seat the children during meals. However, it lacked sufficient space for cooking. Undeterred by this challenge, our hardworking volunteers rose up to the occasion and sought to resolve the issue by constructing a makeshift kitchen in a small space behind the building. Within a few days, the kitchen was ready for use. Our volunteers also collect and recycle anything they get their hands on including worn furniture shown on the left hand side. Nothing is put to waste by this resourceful team!

የFICDO የምገባ ፕሮግራም፤ አንድ ማህበረሰብ በአንድ ልብ ለአንድ አላማ ሲቆም በአካባቢው ያገኘውን ነገር ሁሉ በመጠቀም ምን ያህል ለውጥ ሊያመጣ እንደሚችል አመላካች የሆነ ትንሽዬ ግን ውብ ፕሮጀክት ነው። የፕሮጀክቱን ጠቀሜታ ከማንም በላይ የተረዳው የፍቼ 02 ቀበሌ አስተዳደር ለፕሮጀክቱ የሚያስፈልገውን የመመገብያ ስፍራ እና ቁሳቁስ ለገሰ። ክፍሉ ወንበሮችና ጠረጴዛዎች የተሟሉለት ቢሆንም ትንሽ ማጸዳዳት ያስፈልገው ስለነበር፤ የበጎ ፈቃድ ሰራተኞቻችን ይህንን አደረጉ። ግን የማብሰያ ቦታና አስቤዛ ማስቀመጫ አልነበረውም። ለዚህም የበጎ ፈቃድ ሰራተኞቻችን መፍትሄ አበጁ፤ ያረጁ ቆርቆሮዎችን ሰብስበው ኩሽና ሰሩ። የተጣሉ እንጨቶችን፤ ቁምሳጥን ወዘተ ጠጋግነው በስራ ላይ አዋሉ። "በጀት ስለሌለን ፤ ይህ እና ያ ስለጎደለ አንችልም" ብለው ተስፋ ሳይቆርጡ ፤ ምንም ነገር ሳይንቁ፤ ባለቸው ነገር አብቃቅተው እና ዘይደው ይኸው አመቱን ሙሉ ማህበረሰቡን አገለገሉ። የሃገሩን ሰርዶ በሃገሩ በሬ ያልነው ለዚህ ነው። ለብዙ ችግሮቻችን ከኛው መሃል መፍትሄ አይጠፋም። ሌሎችን ከመጠበቅ ይልቅ፤ የቻልነውን ማድረግ ትልቅ ጥበብ ነው።

በዚህ አጋጣሚ፤ የፍቼ ከተማ አስተዳደር አካላት ፤ለFICDO የስራ እንቅስቃሴዎች እያሳያችሁ ላላችሁት ሁለንተናዊ ድጋፍ ምስጋናችንን እናቀርባለን። ለዚህ አገልግሎት በተለያየ መንገድ በመሳተፍ እገዛ እያደረጋችሁ ላላችሁ የህብረተሰባችን ክፍሎች እና የበጎ ፈቃድ ሰራተኞች ከፍ ያለ ምስጋናችንን እናቀርባለን።

SERVING WITH COMPASSION

በርህራሄ የተሞላ አገልግሎት

At the heart of FICDO's service is compassion. The team recognizes that the daily meals children get from our feeding center means so much to them and their families. These may be the only meals they get for the day as several parents/guardians may not afford to put food on the table. Hence, beyond ensuring the children's continuous school attendance, these meals are essential for their survival. Recognizing this fact, meals were provided even during short school breaks. We are grateful to our volunteers for their care and love for these children, and to our donors and friends for supporting this worthy cause.

የFICDO አገልግሎት የማህበረሰባችንን መሰረታዊ ፍላጎቶች ከግምት ያስገባ የፍቅር አገልግሎት ነው። በምገባ ፕሮግራሙ የሚጠቀሙ ህጻናት፤ እለት እለት የሚያገኙት ቁርስ እና ምሳ ምን ያህል እንደሚያስፈልጋቸው የበጎ ፈቃድ አገልጋዮቻችን ይገነዘባሉ። ምናልባትም ከህጻናቱ አንዳንዶቹ በቤታቸው በቀን ሶስት ግዜ ላይመገቡ ይችላሉና። ስለዚህ ይሄ ፕሮግራም ልጆቹ ትምህርት ላይ እንዲያተኩሩ ከመርዳት ባሻገር፤ ለህይወታቸው የሚያስፈልጋቸው አንዱና ዋነኛውን መሰረታዊ የሆነውን የምግብ ፍላጎት ማሟላት ነው። ይህን ከግምት በማስገባት፤ ትምህርት ቤት በግማሽ ሴሚስተር ላይ ለአጭር እረፍት ሲዘጋም እንኳን፤ አገልግሎቱን አላቋረጥንባቸውም።

ለFICDO የበጎ ፈቃድ ሰራተኞችና አስተባባሪዎች፤ እንዲሁም ይህንን ፕሮጀክት በገንዘብና በሞራል ለምትደግፉ ሁሉ አድናቆታችንን ልንገልጽ እንወዳለን። እግዚአብሄር ይባርካችሁ።

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

ትውልድ ላይ በእምነት እና በተስፋ መዝራት

The environment in which many of our children are growing is harsh. But we are sowing seeds of hope, by faith, that our small actions would bear fruit. By investing on the children's education, we are investing in their future. We are exercising pro-active care. We hope that the children break out of the crushing poverty that has had weighed down on their parents and generations before them.

ብዙ የማህበረሰባችን ልጆች እጅግ አስቸጋሪ ወደሆነ ህይወት ይወለዳሉ፤ ከእድሜያቸው በላይ በሆነ መከራ ውስጥ ያልፋሉ። በዚህ አስቸጋሪ ሁኔታ ውስጥ በእምነት እና በተስፋ ዘር እንዘራለን። ይህቺ ዘር አንድ ቀን በቅላ ታፈራለች በሚል ተስፋ። ልጆች የትምህርት እድል እንዲያገኙ የተቻለንን ሁሉ የምናደርገው፤ የወደፊት ኑሮአቸው እንዲሻሻልና ቤተሰቦቻቸውን እና የቀደመውን ትውልድ ካጎበጠው ድህነት ቀንበር እንዲላቀቁ ነው። ትውልድን ከድህነት እናስመልጥ።

MSW is seven. Her father passed away when she was one. Her mother is visually impaired and lives off street begging. For MSW and her siblings, attending school is unthinkable since getting a daily meal is a priority. Hence, MSW's elder sister is working as daily labourer to supplement the family income. MSW's fate would not be any different.

Thanks to FICDO's education program, MSW has been enrolled in a nearby primary school since last year. FICDO covered her expenses including school materials and a uniform. Above all, she gets two meals a day from our feeding program. She is now in 1st class and thriving.

MSW የ7 አመት ህጻን ናት (ፊቷን ያላሳየነው ሆን ብለን ነው)። አንዲት ታላቅ እህት እና አንድ ወንድም አላት። አባቷ ከዚህ አመት በሞት የተለዩ ሲሆን፤ እናቷ ደግሞ ማየት የተሳናቸው ስለሆነ የራሳቸውን እና የ3 ልጆቻቸውን ህይወት ለማቆየት ልመና ላይ ተሰማርተዋል። የMSW ታላቅ እህትም የቤተሰቡን ኑሮ ለመደጎም በቀን ስራ ላይ ተሰማርታለች። እንደ MSW ላሉ ልጆች፤ የእለት ጉርስ ማግኘት ራሱ ከባድ ፈተና በመሆኑ፤ትምህርት ቤት መሄድ እንደ ቅንጦት ነው።

ለፈጣሪ ምስጋና ይብዛና፤ MSW ከአምና ጀምሮ በFICDO እርዳታ ትምህርት ቤት ተመዝግባ ዘንድሮ የ1ኛ ክፍል ተማሪ ነች። ቢያንስ በቀን ሁለት ግዜ ምግብ ታገኛለች፤ ትምህርቷንም ቀጥላለች። ባለን አቅም የምንችለውን ለማድረግ ተረባርበን፤ በእግዚአብሄር ጸጋ እና በርስዎ እገዛ ብዙ እንደ MSW ያሉ ህጻናትን ህይወት ልንታደግ እንችላለን።

FROM EUROPE WITH LOVE

Shem Romanowiski is originally from Poland. He now lives and works in Dublin, Ireland. Shem has been our monthly supporter of FICDO's Education Program for over a year. We convinced Shem that his story will inspire our readers and supporters. So he kindly agreed for an email interview. Nuhamin Ermias has compiled his responses as follows:

Shem

FICDO: How did you hear about FICDO?
Shem: I first heard about FICDO from Ewnetu about a year and half ago (winter 2019/2020) when we were volunteering for a charity in Dublin. Ewnetu told me about FICDO and its social inclusion projects supporting communities in central Ethiopia, especially children by providing breakfast and lunch as well as school materials and uniforms. As I am already a project coordinator with another organisation providing social inclusion projects to immigrants in Ireland, I immediately let Ewnetu know I wanted to get involved with FICDO.

FICDO: What made you decide to reach out to children in Ethiopia through FICDO?
Shem: I am originally from Poland and arrived in Ireland in 2004 in search of a better life. I experienced difficulties in accessing jobs in Dublin because I didn't have a good education. Through my personal experience, I can say that education improves lives, broadens horizons and brings wealth and progress to the individual, his/her family as well as to the community. I always wanted to support children in an African country by helping a small, grassroot organisation. With this in mind, FICDO became the organisation of my choice and I am delighted to be able to support children in central Ethiopia.

FICDO: Your support not only ensures the wellbeing of a child through provision of basic daily meals but also gives educational opportunities for children to break out of poverty. How does that make you feel/affect you?
Shem: As mentioned above, I truly believe the only way out of poverty is through education. Knowing that there would be a child that will receive an opportunity for education is very important to me and I am glad I can support FICDO in its effort to deliver this promise to children that it serves.

FICDO: How do you know that your money is well-spent (goes to the right place)?
Shem: I was reassured by Ewnetu that donated money are spent directly in the community. Also, there is an annual newsletter as well as Ewnetu's posts and updates on Facebook where I can inform myself about the developments of the project.
But also, it would be great to know more about the children that receive support; their names, their family circumstances etc. That way closer ties could be established.*

FICDO: Any message for the community and the children that you are supporting?
Shem: I just hope the children avail of every opportunity to learn and discover. Never stop dreaming and be brave! I hope to see you very soon!

*Note from FICDO: *All donations go to services we provide for children and elderlies under our care. We have no overhead costs as we are volunteer run and have no paid staff so far. Since some of the services that we provide are labor intensive, our volunteers dedicate their times exclusively on those. Lack of resources means we do not have dedicated staff and social workers who could facilitate/manage sponsor-child interactions on a regular basis. Resources permitting, we intend to move in that direction in the near future. For the time being, we use social media and e-zines to update our supporters.*

SOUL-2-SOUL PROGRAM

ፍቅር ለአረጋዊያን

Imparting love, renewing hope, connecting people to people

ABOUT SOUL-2-SOUL PROGRAM

ጥቂት ስለ "ፍቅር ለአረጋዊያን" ፕሮግራማችን

Millions of men and women who are engaged in casual and unpredictable employment for all of their adult life are less likely to have pensions or savings in their old age. Usually, extended family members support such elderly persons. However, those who have no close family often live in dire conditions. In addition to material poverty, the elderly can also suffer from loneliness. FICDO's *SOUL-2-SOUL* program is designed to address these issues:

- We strive to mobilise the community to befriend elderlies who have no family. The idea is connecting one person to another, hence we named the program *SOUL-2-SOUL*.
- We also strive to connect those who have limited or no income, and struggle to get daily meals for survival, with sponsors who may support them with their financial needs. For those who have no sponsor, we try to provide small monthly cash supplements.
- For those with mobility issues due to ill-health and old age, who may not be able to prepare meals for themselves, we do our best to bring packed lunch (usually from the little excess at the school feeding program that we are running).
- We do community sensitization and advocacy, highlighting not only issues the elderly are facing but also the fact that they deserve a life of dignity

ዘመናቸውን በቤት ሰራተኝነት እና በቀን ስራ ተቀጥረው የሚኖሩ ብዙ ወገኖች አቅማቸው ሲደክም የሚተዳደሩበት በቂ መጦርያ የማጠራቀም እድላቸው አነስተኛ ነው፡፡ ምክንያቱም የሚያገኙት ከቀን ተቀን ማኖርያ ፈቅ አይልምና፡፡ እድለኛ ሆነው ልጆች ያደረሱ፤ ልጆቻቸው ይጦሯቸዋል፡፡ ልጆች ወይም የቅርብ ዘመድ የሌላቸው ግን ህይወታቸውን ለማቆየት እስከ መንገድ ዳር ልመና ድረስ ይደርሳሉ፡፡ ይህ ብቻ አይደለም፤ከእርጅና እና ጤና ችግር የተነሳ መንቀሳቀስ አቅቷቸው ማንንም ሰው ሳያገኙ፤ ሰው በሞላበት ሃገር በብቸኝነት ሊማቅቁ ይችላሉ፡፡ በድርጅታችን “ነፍስ-ለነፍስ” /soul-2-soul/ ብለን በምንጠራው እና አረጋዊያንን ያማከለ አገልግሎት፤ እነዚህን ችግሮች በተቻለ አቅም ለመቅረፍ እንጥራለን፡

- አስታዋሽ የሌላቸው አንድ አረጋዊ፤ በወር አንድ ቀን እንኳን ግማሽ ሰአት ሰጥቶ የሚጎበኛቸው እና የሚያዋያቸው ሰው ቢያገኙ ቀላል አይደለም፡፡ አረጋዊያን በመጨረሻ የህይወት ዘመናቸው በሃዘን እና በብቸኝነት እንደተቆራመዱ፤ ሁላችንም ወደማንቀርበት ቦታ እንዳይሄዱ የአቅማችንን በማድረግ፤ ፍቅር በማሳየት ተስፋቸው በጥቂቱም እንዲታደስ ከበጎ አድራጊ ሰው ጋር እናገናኛቸዋለን ፡፡ አንድ ነፍስ ለሌላዋ ነፍስ እንድትደርስ!
- የእለት ጉርስ ለማግኘት ተቸግረው በከፍተኛ የኑሮ ጫና ውስጥ ላሉት፤ የቻሉትን ያክል የሚደጉሟቸው ስፖንሰር እናፈላልግላቸዋለን፡፡ ስፖንሰር ላላገኙ አረጋዊያን የኑሮ ድጎማ እንድትሆን በየወሩ 500 ብር እንሰጣቸዋለን፡፡
- ምንም አይነት ብርም ሆነ ሌላ ቁሳቁስ ቢያገኙም ከጤና እጦት የተነሳ ምንም ማድረግ ለማይችሉ፤ በቻልነው አቅም ለተማሪዎች ምገባ ከምናዘጋጀው ምግብ ምሳ እንቋጥርላቸዋለን፡፡
- አጋጣሚ ባገኘን ሁሉ አረጋዊያን ያለባቸውን ፈተና ብቻ ሳይሆን፤ ክብር ልንሰጣቸው እንደሚገባ ድምጽ እንሆናቸዋለን፡፡

አረጋዊያን ከገንዘብ እና ቁሳቁስ ድጋፍ በላይ ሰው ያስፈልጋቸዋል፡፡ ስለዚህ ህልማችን፤ በጤና እና በተለያዩ ችግሮች ቤት የቀሩ፤ ምንም ረዳት እና ጠያቂ የሌላቸው ወገኖቻችንን ከህብረተሰቡ ጋር በማገናኘት በፍቅር ማገልገል፤ ባይወልዱንም "ልጆች" እንድንሆንላቸው ህብረተሰቡን ማነሳሳት ነው፡፡ የምንሰጣቸው ብዙ ነገር በእጃችን ባይኖርም ፍቅር እንስጣቸው። እርስዎም ይህንን ማድረግ ይችላሉ። ኑ፤ አብረን መልካሙን ስራ እንስራ።

A LIFE OF DIGNITY

Most people, including the elderly, want their independence and would do anything to support themselves. No one wants or chooses to live on handouts. At the age of 96, Mr Z lives on his own and works hard to make ends meet. He is a traditional weaver, a proud man with unique skills and tenacity. However, due to ill-health and old age he struggles to make enough to pay for his basic needs.

Thanks to one of our private donor, who supplements his income, Mr Z's life has become that of hope and gratitude. Unsurprisingly, Mr Z got emotional when we asked him how he was getting on with life. He marvels, "how did a family I have never met before do this for me? Surely that family must have been sent from God!". It is such testimonies, that keeps the FICDO team going. To sponsor an elderly like Mr Z with whatever you can, please email us at fikirintegratedcdo@gmail.com.

"I owe my survival to your support..."

" እናንተ በምትሰጡኝ እርዳታ ትንፋሼ ቀጥሏል..."

The above statement was that of one of the elderly person's under the care of FICDO's *SOUL-2-SOUL* program, which is enabled by our generous donors like Dr Tadesse Woldemariam's family.

Tadesse's family live in Addis. Tadesse himself is one of FICDO's trustees. After receiving the list containing the profiles of the elderlies selected for the *SOUL-2-SOUL* program, his family sponsored one elderly. However, after visiting and witnessing the dire condition in which the elderlies live, Tadesse's family would go on to donate a lump-sum. This donation supported ten elderlies for the entire 2020/21 budget year.

It is indeed such generous donations that help several elderlies in our communities cope with the harsh realities of poverty. We thank Tadesse's family for not only renewing the hopes of vulnerable elderlies but also inspiring us all.

ይሄ ከላይ ያለው የምስክርነት ቃል፤ በFICDO የታቀፉ አንድ አረጋዊ በቅርቡ ሊጎበኟቸው ለሄዱት የFICDO የቦርድ ሊ/መንበር የተናገሩት ነው፡፡ በእርግጥ ለእኚህ አረጋዊ ትንፋሽ መቀጠል ምክንያት የሆኑት፤ የFICDO "ፍቅር ለአረጋዊያን" ፕሮግራም እውን እንዲሆን የደገፉን እንደነ ዶ/ር ታደሰ ወ/ማርያም አይነት ቤተሰብ ያሉ ለጋሾች ናቸው፡፡

ዶ/ር ታደሰ እና ባለቤታቸው ስናፍቅሽ ኑራቸው አዲስ አበባ ሲሆን ከድርጅታችን ምስረታ ጀምሮ ለFICDO ከፍተኛ ድጋፍ እያደረጉልን ይገኛሉ፡፡ ዶ/ር ታደሰ የድርጅቱ የቦርድ አባልም ናቸው፡፡ በመጀመርያ የአረጋዊያኑን ፕሮፋይሎች በላክንላቸው ግዜ በርህራሄ ተነሳስተው አንድ ሰው ስፖንሰር አድርገውልን ነበር፡፡ ከተወሰነ ወራት በኋላ ደግሞ፤ ዶ/ር ታደሰ ለግል ጉዳይ ወደ ፍቼ ከተማ በተጓዙ ግዜ የአረጋዊያኑን የኑሮ ሁኔታ በአካል የመጎብኘት እድል አገኙ፡፡ በጉብኝቱ ወቅት ያዩት የአረጋዊያኑ አሳዛኝ አኗኗር ልባቸውን ስለነካው፤ ለድርጅታችን ተጨማሪ የገንዘብ ድጋፍ አድርገውልናል፡፡ የዶ/ር ታደሰ ቤተሰብ የለገሱትን ገንዘብ ለአስር አረጋዊያን፤ በየወሩ ለአንድ አመት ያክል የገንዘብ ድጎማ ልናደርግላቸው ችለናል፡፡ የአረጋዊያን ተስፋ እንዲታደስ ምክንያት የሆኑትና ለብዙዎቻችን የፍቅር ምሳሌ የሆኑትን የዶ/ር ታደሰን ቤተሰብ እያመሰገንን፤ ሁላችንም በተቻለን አቅም ድጋፍ ለሚሹ ወገኖቻችን እንድንደርስ ጥሪ እናቀርባለን፡፡

አረጋዊያንን በየወሩ ስፖንሰር ለማድረግ ወይም በቻሉት ግዜ የአቅምዎን ለመደገፍ በስልክ ወይም በኢሜል ያግኙን፡፡ ዛሬውኑ የቻሉትን ያክል ለመደገፍ፤ በሚቀጥለው የባንክ ቁጥራችን ገቢ ያድርጉ፡፡ የአረጋዊያኑን ኑሮ ሙሉ በሙሉ ባንለውጥም ፤ ትንሽ ቀዳዳ መድፈን እንችላለን፡፡

የባንክ ሂሳብ ቁጥር:
የኢትዮጵያ ንግድ ባንክ፤ ፍቼ ቅርንጫፍ፤
የደብተር ቁጥር፡ 1000287498474

COVID-19 RESPONSE

አስቸኳይ እርዳታ

RESPONSE IN A PANDEMIC

የአስቸኳይ ግዜ እርዳታ

2020 was an exceptionally challenging year for many of us. Even in 2021, the Coronavirus has continued to impact on the way we live.
Although every community has been affected, some are more vulnerable than others. Efforts to contain the virus during the early days of the pandemic shocked the community that FICDO serves to the core. People needed to make a very hard choice between risking catching the virus by going out or going hungry by staying in. A climate of fear gripped the community. That was when FICDO started a pledge to collect donations to support the community. Thanks to your generous donations, throughout 2020 and early 2021 we could serve and save the lives of hundreds of people during those harsh times. Restrictions have since eased in 2021 and people have returned to work.

የኮሮና ቫይረስ በሃገራት ኢኮኖሚ ላይ ከፍተኛ ቀውስ እና የኑሮ ውድነትን ያስከተለ ሲሆን፤ ሃገራችንም ከዚህ አልተረፈችም። በተለይ በመጀመርያ አካባቢ ቫይረሱን ለመከላከል የተወሰዱት እርምጃዎች፤ ብዙዎችን ከፍተኛ የኑሮ ቀውስ ውስጥ ከቷቸው ነበር። በተለይም በዝቅተኛ የኑሮ ደረጃ ላይ የሚገኙና ቀድሞውንም ኑሯቸው ከእጅ ወደ አፍ የሆኑ ወገኖቻችን ጦማቸውን እንዳያድሩ እርዳታ በማሰባሰብ፤ በ 4 ዙሮች ወደ 250ሺ ብር ግምት ያለው የአስቸኳይ ግዜ እርዳታ አድርገናል። ድጋፎቹ ከአካባቢያችን ማህበረሰብ፤ የንግድ ተቋማት፤ ግለሰቦች እና በውጭ ሃገር ካሉ ደጋፊዎቻችን የተገኙ ናቸው። ምንም እንኳን የቫይረሱ ነገር ባያበቃም፤ እግዚአብሄር ይመስገን አሁን ወጥቶ መግባት ተችሏል።

COMPASSION IN THE AGE OF COVID-19

የርህራሄና የፍቅር አጭር ታሪክ

When COVID-19 was first reported in Ethiopia, in March 2020, Rebecca Ewnetu was very much concerned for the children under FICDO's care. She was stricken by a photograph showing anxious children attempting to cover their mouth with their hands for fear of catching the virus. By then, little was known about the virus and what impact it would have on people of various age groups.

Rebecca teamed up with her school friend Olivia who had just set up a crafts business dedicated to hand making reusable face masks. Altogether the girls donated 120 euros worth of individually crafted masks which we then distributed to 30 children partaking in our education program.

We are greatly inspired by these two young girls' generosity and compassion. Let's remember that just as COVID-19 is contagious, so is compassion. How did you impact your "neighbor" today? Were you compassionate?

ርብቃ እውነቱ በአየርላንድ የሁለተኛ ደረጃ ተማሪ ነች። የCOVID-19 ሃገራችን እንደገባ ሰሞን፤ በFICDO የታቀፉ ልጆች በአንድ ቪዲዮ ላይ ከፍርሃት የተነሳ በሚመስል መልክ፤ አፋቸውን በጃቸው ለመሸፈን ሲጨናነቁ ታያለች። ይሄ ለቀናት እንቅልፍ እንደነሳት ያወቅነው ከሳምንታት በኋላ ነበር። "ለእነዚህ ልጆች፤ የፊት ጭምብል (ማስክ) መግዛት አለብኝ" ብላም ትወስናለች። ኦሊቪያ ከተባለች ጓደኛዋ ጋር በመሆን በበይነ መረብ አነስተኛ የጌጣጌጥ ንግድ በመጀመር ያገኙትን ገቢ በመጠቀም፤ ግምቱ 180 ዩሮ የሚያወጣ ማስክ ለግሰዋል።በግዜው ህጻናት ማስክ ባያደርጉም ችግር እንደማይኖር ስለማይታወቅ፤ እኛም ለትንንሾቹ ጭምር የፊት ጭምብሎችን (ማስክ) አከፋፍለናል። የእነዚህ ሁለት ወጣቶች ርህራሄ ልብ የሚነካ ሆኖ ስላገኘነው ታሪኩን አቅርበነዋል። በዚህ አጋጣሚ፤ ሁሉም ሰው ማህበረሰባችንን በሚጠቅም ዘርፍ የአቅሙን እንዲያግዝ እናበረታታለን። ልብ እንበል፤ የCOVID-19 እንደሚተላለፍ ሁሉ በጎነትም እንዲሁ ነው። እኛ በጎ ብናደርግ፤ ልጆቻችን፤ ጎረቤቶቻችን እና የስራ ባልደረቦቻችን ሁሉ ይነቃቃሉ። በጎነት ይተላለፋል።

HEALTH CARE SERVICE

የጤና አገልግሎት

The **Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI)** scheme in Ethiopia is highly important as it aims to increase access to healthcare for the most destitute. It is heavily subsidized by the Government, with members expected to pay an annual premium of just seven euro per household. Unfortunately, even seven euro per annum can be too much to afford for the most vulnerable in our community. Taking this into account, FICDO has added "Health Care Service" as one of our core social inclusion projects. All elderly and children under FICDO's care are now covered. We thank our friends who stepped in to support this project.

በሃገራችን የግል የጤና አገልግሎት መስጫ ተቋማት አገልግሎት ማግኘት ለብዙዎች የሚታሰብ አይደለም። ስለዚህ፤ በከፍተኛ የመንግስት ድጎማ የሚደገፈው የማህበረሰብ የጤና መድህን አገልግሎት፤ ዝቅተኛ ገቢ ውስጥ ላሉት የማህበረሰባችን አባላት ያለው ጠቀሜታ እጅጉን የላቀ ነው። አንድን ቤተሰብ ለአንድ ድፍን አመት የጤና መድን ሽፋን ተጠቃሚ ለማድረግ ወጪው 310 ብር ብቻ ነው። ይሁን እንጂ ምንም አይነት ገቢ ለሌላቸው፤ ይሄም ቢሆን ከባድ ነው። ይህንን ከግምር በማስገባት፤ በድርጅታችን የታቀፉት አረጋዊያን፤ ተማሪዎች እና ቤተሰቦቻቸው የጤና መድን ሽፋን ተጠቃሚ እንዲሆኑ ይህንን እንደ ቋሚ ፕሮጀክት ይዘናል። በዚህ አገልግሎት ከጎናችን ለመቆም ለተረባረባችሁ ሁሉ ልባዊ ምስጋና እናቀርባለን።

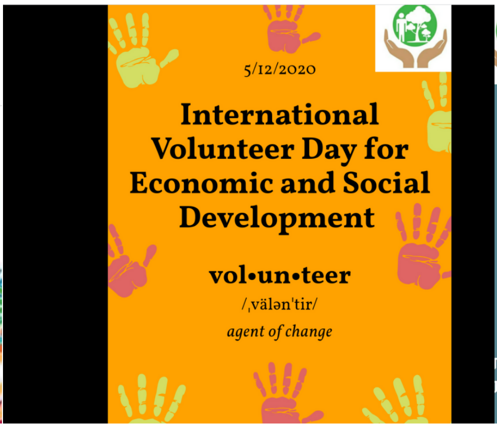
MOBILIZATION

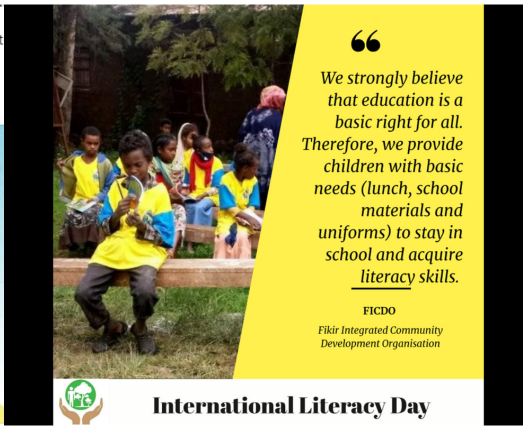
የማስተባበርና የማነቃቃት ስራ

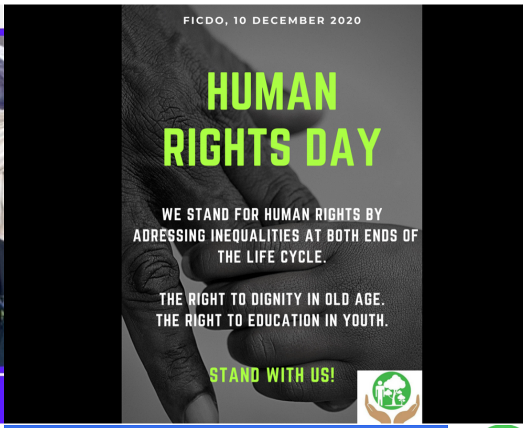
Awareness Creation Campaigns

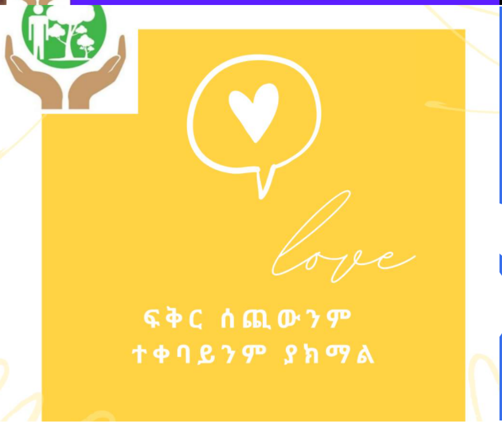
sample posters

ግንዛቤ ማስጨበጫ ፖስተሮች በከፊል









CELEBRATING FESTIVITIES TOGETHER

አመት በአልን ከማህበረሰባችን ጋር

Christmas and Easter are two of the biggest holidays of the year in the communities that FICDO serves. On these days, people usually host lunch parties and celebrate the festivities with close friends and family members in their own home. These festive times are seasons of joy and celebration for many. However, some struggle with the harsh reality of deep poverty and loneliness. In solidarity with these members of our community, FICDO's volunteers host lunch parties for those we serve. We also invite city officials and other dignitaries to join the celebration so that everyone can sit together and enjoy the festive atmosphere. For those who are not strong enough to attend in person, our volunteers bring packed lunch. In this manner, we have committed to nurturing a community spirit.

አመት በአል በማህበረሰባችን ጨምሮ በመላው ሃገራችን በድምቀት ይከበራል። በአመት በአል፤ ሰው ሁሉ ከወዳጅና ዘመዱ ጋር ቤት ያፈራውን ይቃመሳል፤ ቀኑን በደስታ ያሳልፋል። ምንም ቤተሰብ ለሌላቸው አረጋዊያን እና ብቻቸውን ለሚኖሩ ሰዎች ግን አመት በአል የትካዜ እና የብቸኝነት ቀናቶች ሊሆኑባቸው ይችላሉ። አንዳች የሚቀመስ ከቤታቸው ለሌላቸው ደግሞ ሃዘኑ ድርብ ነው። ከዚህ የተነሳ፤ አመት በአልን ከምናገለግለው ህብረተሰብ ጋር መዋልን እንመርጣለን። ስለዚህ በየአመቱ፤ አቅም በፈቀደ መጠን ምሳ ደግሰን የምናገለግላቸውን እና የከተማችንን አስተዳደር ጨምሮ ሌሎች እንግዶችን ጠርተን አንድ ላይ እናሳልፋለን። በግብዣችን ትልቅ እና ትንሽ፤ ያለውና የሌለው ተብሎ ልዩነት የለም፤ ሁላችን አንድ ቤተሰብ ሆነን በአንድ ላይ ማዕድ እንቆርሳለን። ከአቅም እና ጤና ማነስ የተነሳ መምጣት ላልቻሉት በሳህን እናደርስላቸዋለን። በዚህ አገልግሎት፤ "የራሴ ቤተሰብ እና እንግዳ አለብኝ" ሳይሉ ከማህበረሰባችን ጋር ለማሳለፍ ለወሰኑ የበጎ ፍቃድ ሰራተኞቻችን እግዚአብሄር ይባርካችሁ እንላለን። ግብዣችንን ሳትንቁ ለምትገኙልንና እርስ በርስ እንድንያያዝ ምክር ለለገሳችሁን የከተማችን አስተዳደር፤ ባለሃብቶች እና ቅን ነዋሪዎች ልባዊ ምስጋና እናቀርባለን። ይህቺ ትንሽ ጅምር ከፍ ወዳለ መተባበር እና ቤተሰባዊ መተሳሰብ እንድታድግ የሁላችንም ህልም ነው። ለዚህም ጠንክረን እንሰራለን።

PLANNING WITH THE COMMUNITY

ከማህበረሰባችን ጋር ምክክር

Community mobilization is one of FICDO's core objectives. We started the year by holding a public consultation /community engagement event, during which key issues were identified and resourcing were discussed. Certificates were also handed to volunteers and key partners. We were encouraged by the various pledges, including a pledge by the community to cover the cost of the 2020/2021 academic year's stationery supply for all students in primary and secondary schools in the town. Seven representatives were also named during the gathering, to work with FICDO.

የFICDO ዋና አጀንዳ፤ የምናገለግለውን ማህበረሰብ (ግለሶቦችን፤ የግል እና የመንግስት ተቋማት፤ የመስተዳድር አካላት ወዘተ) ለበጎ ስራ በመቀስቀስ በከተማችን ማህበረሰብ ላይ አዎንታዊ ለውጥ ማምጣት ነው። በዚህ መሰረት፤ 2013ን ከማህበረሰቡ ከተውጣጡ ባለድርሻ አካላት ጋር በመመካከር ነው የጀመርነው። በእለቱም ከድርጅታችን ጋር በመተባበር ከማህበረሰባችን ጎን ለቆሙት የእውቅና ሰርቲፊኬት ከተሰጠ በኋላ፤ በአዲስ አመት ማህበረሰባችንን በመወከል የFICDO የስራ እንቅስቃሴ የሚመሩ የበጎ ፈቃድ ሰራተኞች ተመድበዋል። በእለቱም ተሰብሳቢዎቹ፤ የFICDO የስራ እንቅስቃሴዎች እና ማህበረሰባችንን በሚችሉት ሁሉ እንደሚደግፉ ቃል ገብተዋል።

THE UNSUNG HEROES OF OUR COMMUNITY

ማህበረሰባችን የማሳተፍ ስራና የከተማችን የፍቅር አገልጋዮች

Our community didn't disappoint when it came to keeping the pledge they had made at the beginning of the year! In addition to school materials, Salale University donated food supplies, footwear and 400m fabric worth 57,567 birr for the children's clothing. *Samson Furniture* - a local business - covered the cost of tailoring of the fabric. The association of business owners in Fitche town donated food supplies (pasta, flour, oil and spices) towards our feeding program.

Several business owners and citizens made multiple one off donations in kind and cash. Half a dozen public servants signed up for monthly support despite the high cost of living and generally low wages they receive. Several volunteers, in addition to giving their valuable time, paid out of their own pocket to cover urgent expenses. Some rose early in the morning, throughout the year, to ensure breakfast was served to the children. We are inspired by these unsung heroes, and excited by the overwhelming support. This has encouraged us to hope for the best in the times ahead!

ማህበረሰባችን በአመቱ መጀመርያ የገባውን ቃል በማክበር አመቱን በሙሉ የተለያዩ ድጋፎችን አድርጎልናል። የሰላሌ ዩኒቨርስቲ፤ ከትምህርት መርጃ መሳርያዎች በተጨማሪ፤ የተሰፉ አልባሳት፤ ጫማ፤ 400 ሜትር ብትን ልብስ እና በተለያየ ግዜ ለምገባ ፕሮግራማችን የሚውሉ እህል (ፓስታ፤ ዱቄት፤ዘይት፤ በርበሬ፤ ሽሮ፤ ስኳር) ለግሶናል። በከተማችን የሚገኘው ሳምሶን ፈርኒቸር፤ ሰላሌ ዩኒቨርስቲ የለገሰንን ብትን ጨርቅ ማሰፍያ እና ለስራ ማስኬጃ ጥሬ ገንዘብ ለግሶናል። የፍቼ ከተማ ነጋዴዎች ማህበር፤ ለተማሪዎች ምገባ የሚሆን ፓስታ፤ ማካሮኒ፤ ዱቄትና ዘይት ለግሰውናል። የመንግስት ሰራተኞች፤ የቤት እመቤቶች በጥሬ ገንዘብ እና በአይነት ለግሰዋል። አንዳንድ በከተማችን የሚኖሩ የመንግስት ሰራተኞች፤ የኑሮ ውድነቱ ሳያግዳቸው ከደሞዛቸው በየወሩ ተቆራጭ እያደረጉ ይገኛሉ፤ ያላቸውን እያካፈሉን ነው።

ከሁሉ በላይ፤ ግዜያቸውን ጉልበታቸውን እና ሁሉ ነገራቸውን እየሰጡን ያሉ የበጎ ፈቃድ ሰራተኞቻችን የፍቅር ጀግኖቻችን ናቸው። ለተቀማጭ ሰማይ ቅርቡ ነው እንድሚባለው ከሩቅ ሲታይ ስራቸው ቀላል ሊመስል ይችላል። አስቤዛ ይገዛሉ፤ እንጨት ያግዛሉ፤ ይፈልጣሉ፤ ሂሳብ ሰራተኛም፤ ማናጀርም፤ ጽዳትም ሆነው ያገለግላሉ። ቤታቸው ቁርስ ሳይበሉ፤ በማለዳ ወደምገባ ቦታ እየሮጡ ልጆችን ቁርስ ያበላሉ። ምሳ ሰአት ላይ ከስራ ወደቤታቸው ከመሄድ ይልቅ፤ ወደ ምገባ ስፍራ ሄደው ያስተናግዳሉ። ለአረጋዊያን ምሳ ያደርሳሉ። ስራው በሙሉ በጫንቃቸው ላይ አርፎ፤ ያለምንም ክፍያና እረፍት ይሮጣሉ። አንዳንዶች ከኪሳቸው ጭምር እያወጡ ክፍተት ይሞላሉ። እነዚህ የበጎ ፈቃድ ሰራተኞቻችን፤ ያገለገሉት በእርግጥ ሰውን ብቻ ሳይሆን እግዚአብሄርን ነውና እግዚአብሄር ይባርካቸው እንላለን።

DIASPORA MOBILIZATION

ከከተማችን ውጭ የሚኖሩ የአካባቢው ተወላጆችን ማሳተፍ

"የተነሳበትን የማያውቅ፤ የሚደርስበትን አያውቅም..."
"He who does not know how to look back at where he came from will never get to his destination" - Jose Rizal

---

In FICDO, we aspire to provide a platform to impassion not only the local community but also the diaspora so that they make a difference in the community they came from. By doing so, we believe that we are enabling the diaspora to show solidarity with our communities back home. We strongly believe that we have also a moral obligation to remember the community that raised and helped us to be where we are today.

So, we have been putting every effort to connect with our compatriots within and outside the country. Although we have a long way to go, we have received encouraging responses from both within the country and our diaspora communities. We would like to thank those who have already joined us in this journey of love (*fikir*).

በFICDO ለበጎ ስራ ማነቃቃት የምንፈልገው፤ በከተማችን በቀጥታ የምናገለግላቸውን ማህበረሰብ ብቻ ሳይሆን፤ በውልደት ወይንም እድገት ከምናገለግልበት ከተማ ጋር ትስስር ያላቸውና በአሁኑ ግዜ በተለያዩ የሃገራችን ክፍሎችና በውጭ ሃገር የሚኖሩ ወገኖችን ጭምር ነው። ይህን የምናደርገው፤ ለበጎ ስራ ብንተባበር የፍቅር እና የለውጥ ሃይል እንሆናለን በሚል እሳቤ ነው። ሁሉም ሰው ያሳደገውን እና ዛሬ የደረሰበት ደረጃ እንዲደርስ ያደረገውን ማህበረሰብ የማስታወስ የስብዕና ግዴታ አለበት ብለን እናምናለን። የተነሳበትን የሚያስታውስ መልካም ሰው ነው።

በዚህ መሰረት፤ በተለያዩ የሃገራችን ክፍሎችና ውጭ ያሉ ወገኖቻችን ጋር ግንኙነት ለማድረግ ተሞክሯል። ገና ብዙ የሚሰራ ስራ ቢኖርም፤ እስካሁን ያናገርናቸው በተለያዩ የሃገራችን ከተሞችና በውጭ ሃገር ያሉ ወገኖቻችን ትልቅ የገንዘብ እና የሞራል ድጋፍ አድርገውልናል። ወደፊት ከእምቅ ልምዳቸው ተጠቃሚ እንሆናለን ብለን እናምናለን። በዚህ አጋጣሚ፤ በጀመርነው የፍቅር ጎዳና አብረውን ሊጓዙ ለተቀላቀሉን፤ በምናገለግለው ህብረተሰባችን ስም ልባዊ ምስጋና ልናቀርብ እንወዳለን።

PROMOTING LOVE AND KINDNESS ON ALL FRONTS

ስለፍቅር እና በጎነት በፍቅር ማስተዋወቅ

Although we strongly believe that our community has what it takes to flourish, we value and appreciate all support from friends and partners. We place a special emphasis on building relationships and greatly value your friendship. The range of support we received from our diverse supporters all over the world bears strong witness to the truth that love has no boundaries. Our supporters hail from Addis and various parts of Ethiopia, some with no previous direct connection to the region we serve. Outside Ethiopia, we have friends from Eritrea, Ghana, Kenya, Djibouti, China, UAE, Canada, the US, Ireland, Poland, Belgium, Italy, Romania, Norway and Australia who directly support our cause. We are humbled to know that we have your trust. You have enabled us to enable others. Together we have become a force for good!

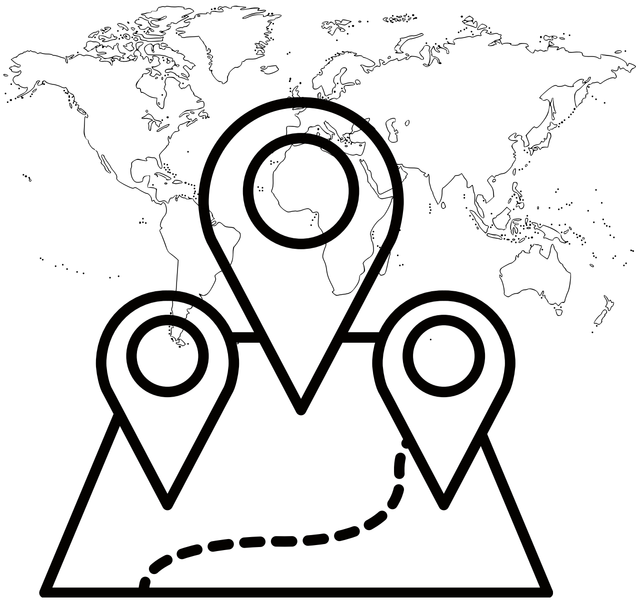
FICDO፤ “እኛው ለኛው” በሚል መርህ ላይ የተመሰረተ ስለሆነ የሌሎችን እጅ ተስፋ አድርገን አልተነሳንም። ይሁን እንጂ በፍቅር ተነሳስተው ከኛ ጎን ለመቆም የተነሱትን ሁሉ እናበረታታለን። ግን ከሚሰጡን ስጦታ ይልቅ፤ ወዳጅነታቸውን እናደንቃለን። ስለዚህ ምንም አይነት ስጦታ አንንቅም፤ ዋናው ሃሳቡ ነውና። ከአካባቢያችን ጋር ምንም አይነት ትስስር ሳይኖራቸው ስለፍቅር ከኛ ጋር የቆሙት፤ ፍቅር ድንበር የለሽ ለመሆኑ ማረጋገጫ ናቸው። ስማቸውን ለመዘረዘር ቦታ የለንም። በአዲስ አበባና በክልሎች የሚኖሩ፤ ከኤርትራ፤ ጋና፤ ኬንያ፤ ጅቡቲ፤ ቻይና፤ ዩኤኢ፤ ካናዳ፤ አሜሪካ፤ አየርላንድ፤ ፖላንድ፤ ቤልጅየም፤ ጣሊያን፤ ሩማንያ፤ ኖርዌይ እና አውስትራሊያ ወዳጆች አሉን። ለበጎ ስራ በፍቅር ተያይዘን፤ የፍቅር ሃይል ሆነናል።

liffey valley vineyard

WHEN LOVE AND COMPASSION CROSS BOUNDARIES

Liffey Valley Vineyard (LVV) is a community church in Liffey Valley area, Dublin, Ireland. Compassion runs deep in the heart of this small community of faith, as witnessed by their action.

It was actually a heart for the vulnerable that brought LVV's Ann Marie and Seamus Kerr and FICDO's Ewnetu Ermias together for the first time as they met while volunteering in Dublin. Following that, in April 2020, when COVID-19 brought chaos to communities around the world, Ewnetu started a fundraising campaign to support those whose livelihoods have been impacted by measures taken to contain the pandemic in Fitche town where FICDO operates. LVV's donations helped several families get by during those tough times. Later in May 2020, the partnership grew into LVV supporting FICDO's social inclusion projects in Fitche town. Since then, LVV has been a most valued partner.



Through LVV's support, FICDO has been able to not only reach out to the most vulnerable but to also empower and mobilize the local community in Fitche town.

LVV's support to FICDO has a number of positive effects. The physical impact on the lives of the direct beneficiaries of FICDO's social inclusion projects is obvious. However, there are also enormous psycho-spiritual benefits. The beneficiaries are deeply touched when they realize that the support has been enabled by a small church in far away Ireland who shared their valuable resources for the sake of love. This same realization has also inspired FICDO's volunteers to work even harder and walk in love for their own community in Ethiopia. LVV's love and compassion surely has crossed all known barriers and boundaries to touch people on the other side of the world. In one of FICDO's volunteers own words, "we have preached and been preached to about love. The LVV folks have shown us how to live out love".

We can only say thank you to them for inspiring us and our community. We hope you are inspired too!

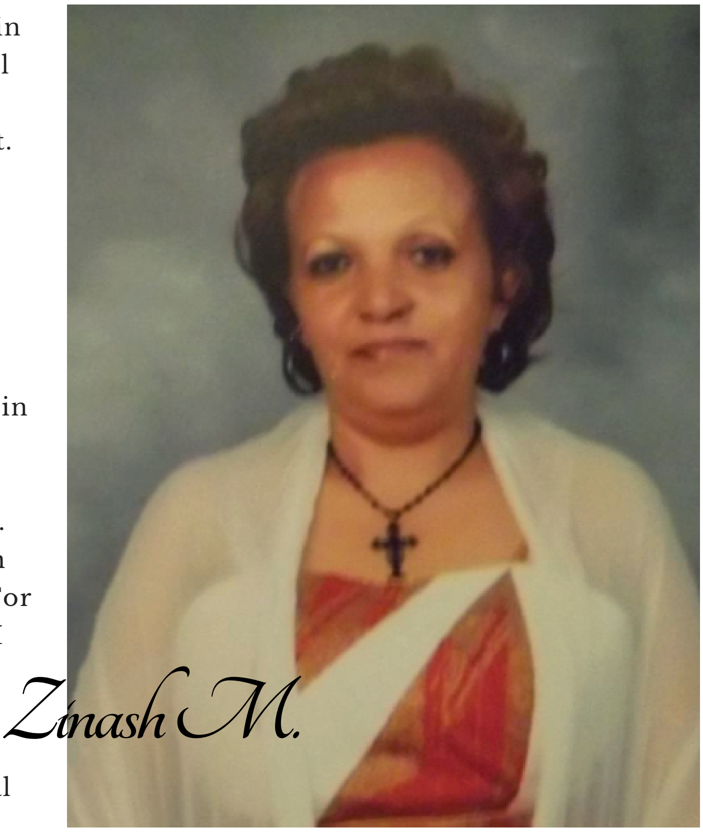
A PASSION TO SERVE

Interview with Zinash Mekonnen, founder and President of God's Mercy House (GMH)

Zinash Mekonnen is a Canadian originally from Ethiopia. Her organisation, GMH, is a ministry focused on supporting the most vulnerable members of communities (children and single mothers) in several regions in Ethiopia. GMH has been a valuable partner of FICDO for the last two years. Nuhamin Ermias from FICDO's media team has compiled an email interview with Zinash as follows:

FICDO: Tell us a little about yourself.
Zinash: I was born in Ethiopia and lived there for most of my young life. Although I am now living in Canada with my children and grand children, I still spend most of my time in Ethiopia, except the last two years when the pandemic made travel difficult.

FICDO: Tell us about GMH and how/why it was founded.
Zinash: GMH was founded and registered as non-profit in June 2009 in Canada. Before I came to Canada, I was a single-mother with two boys. Life can be quite hard for children and single-mothers in Ethiopia. I know that. It is even worse for young children who lost their parents to HIV and other diseases. So, I wanted to do something about that. Initially, I started helping just three children, then six and from there the numbers kept increasing. For several years, I simply shared the small resources I have had. After a couple of years, I got friends and partners. Today with the support of my two sons and several Canadian friends we are supporting hundreds of children and single-mothers in several regions in Ethiopia. (Continued to next page)



A PASSION TO SERVE GMH

Signing of MoU with FICDO

FICDO: How/why did you partner with FICDO?
Zinash: I always pray for God to lead me in my work. I have had this strong feeling for quite some time to expand GMH's ministry to the north (all GMH's work are concentrated in southern Ethiopia). The problem is I had never set foot to the north (of Addis) and had no knowledge of the region. One fateful day, an old friend [who happens to be FICDO's board chairman] asked me if I was interested on a 100km drive outside Addis to visit the work of a small charity (FICDO) that he was volunteering in. I agreed and we set a date for the journey. As we drove out of Addis, I asked him which part of Ethiopia the road is heading as it was all new to me. He replied, "to the north". [He knew nothing about my fascination with the north and long-held dream of expanding GMH's work to the north]. I was a bit emotional as I felt that that journey was an answer to my years of prayers. Once we arrived at the town, I was moved by the deep poverty in which several elderly and children live. That was how it all started.

FICDO: what kind of support are you providing for FICDO now?
Zinash: initially, GMH started with sponsoring the cost of school uniforms since we did not have the budget. But the sight of those children never left my mind even after I went back to Canada. So I decided to pay from my personal savings towards the cost of meals for 16 children.

FICDO: how does that make you feel, reaching out to these children?
Zinash: I can't describe it in words. Even though what I am doing is not much, I know as a mother that it means so much to these children just to eat a meal a day.

FICDO: Any advice for our readers?
Zinash: Don't feel that you cannot have an impact, do what you can do. Your contribution matters!

FICDO: Advice for FICDO?
Zinash: Keep on doing what you are doing!

FICDO: Thank you for your time.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT!

የፍቅር ጥሪ!

ስልካችን:
(00251) 91 177 5015 (አቶ ሃብታሙ)
(00251) 91 162 7411 (አቶ አየለ)
(00353) 87 770 7824 (Ireland)
Email: fikirintegratedcdo@gmail.com

የባንክ ሂሳብ ቁጥር:
የኢትዮጵያ ንግድ ባንክ፤ ፍቼ ቅርንጫፍ
ፍቅርየተቀናጀ የማህበረሰብ ልማት ድርጅት
የደብተር ቁጥር: **1000287498474**

GoFundMe page:
https://gf.me/u/x62f8b

ፌስቡክ : @fb.me/FICDO.org

We are constantly seeking partnerships with organisations, groups or individuals who want to make a real difference in peoples' lives:

- You can make a one off donation or donate regularly through our GoFundMe account or directly (please email us for details). We provide receipts and details of how your funds are spent.
- You can sponsor a child or an elderly for as low as 20 Euro per month.

In the medium to long-term, we plan to provide basic skills training to community members to ensure their economic independence. You could help us raise funds or even train trainers.

FICDO (ፍቅር የተቀናጀ የማህበረሰብ ልማት ድርጀት) በአዋጅ ቁጥር 113/2011 በመዝገብ ቁጥር 4207 በኢፌድሪ የሲቪል ማህበረሰብ ድርጅቶች ኤጄንሲ የተመዘገበና በበጎ ፈቃደኞች የሚመራ ሃገር በቀል ድርጅት ነው:: ስንተጋገዝ ብዙ ማድረግ እንችላለን። ለማህበረሰባችን እርስዎም የሚያበረክቱት አስተዋጽኦ ስለሚኖር ይምጡና ይጠይቁን። FICDO የርስዎ፤ ለርስዎና የሁላችን ነው።

Annex

Critical Analysis of FICDO's Community Care

Critical Analysis of FICDO's Community Care

Disclaimer: This piece is my (Ewnetu Ermias) personal perspective. This reflection specifically focuses on community services that the FICDO has been providing since it started operating in June 2019. I will take personal responsibility for any unintended omissions or additions. Part of this essay has been presented recently to IBI/York St John University as academic work.

Introduction

Need and context are critically important in provision of care. The importance of context cannot be emphasized enough in FICDO's case - an organisation founded to "care for communities" in a region endowed by vast human and natural resources, and yet, ironically affected by deep-rooted poverty. In addition to poverty, the complex socio-economic and cultural settings in the area within which the organization operates demand a unique approach to community care. FICDO's care model also recognizes the African worldview that highly values community above individualism, without neglecting the uniqueness of an individual.

Within this context, community care in FICDO aims "***to nurture relationships, and support and impassion the community to care for each other. To demonstrate unconditional love, acceptance and encouragement for the whole community, particularly the most vulnerable, in a manner that glorifies God*".**

What is involved

As shown in Table 1 and 2, FICDO's care constitutes a wide range of care services that are hoped to lead towards healing, sustaining, guiding and reconciling care recipients. The services in Table 2 are particularly addressing the facilitation of growth-enabling environment in the community.

Table 1. Range of direct and indirect care available to vulnerable elderlies and school-age children with no families

Type of care	What is involved/resources*
Psycho-spiritual support	Befriending (dubbed *Soul-2*-Soul) program aimed at providing company to lonely elderlies
Practical day-to-day support	Help with domestic work
Monthly cash subsidy	Support to elderlies in extreme economic circumstances (where a sponsor is not available, the organization allocates fixed amount for each care recipient)
Medical care	Government subsidized community-based insurance for elderlies and schoolchildren (premiums paid by donations from the community)
Ready meals**	Community-run school feeding centre. - Children get daily meals before going to school - Volunteers bring meals from feeding centre to elderlies suffering from extreme health and economic issues
School materials (stationery, uniforms) for children	Aimed at keeping children in school (Paid for by donations from community/supporters)

* All services (care), including day-to-day activities, provided by volunteers. All cost covered by donations

** Meals prepared by hired cooks, using resources donated by the community

Table 2. Direct and indirect care for caregivers and the wider community

Type of care	What is involved/resources
Provision of enabling environment/platform to care for others	Organizational structure that allows anyone to volunteer or give (time, knowledge, in kind, money, etc)
Awareness creation/ sensitization	Social media campaigns, monthly e-zines carrying regular updates of positive stories and reflections of care practice
Mutual encouragement	Weekly reflections with core-leadership /oversight team/; Training of trainers via zoom*
Volunteer and partner recognition	Annual awards and certificates recognizing the good work of individuals, businesses, and organizations
Volunteer training	In person training of volunteers from the wider community (informally done, but not implemented regularly)

* Includes core leadership from within and outside the community.

Critical Analysis of FICDO's Community Care (Cont'd)

Underlying Beliefs and Framework

The key characteristics and underlying beliefs of FICDO's community care strategy include:

1."Every member" care strategy

FICDO's care strategy seeks to include care into **the natural life of all people within communities**. The care services listed in Tables 1 and 2 require mobilization of every resource that is available. There is a recognition that everyone created in the image of a loving God can be useful to his/her neighbor in one way or another. We recognise that simple practical support can make a huge difference in another person's life. With this realization, the following statement appears under one of FICDO's core values as a clear commitment to encouraging "every member care strategy":

"We believe that everyone has something to offer; hence we will listen."

The model encourages everyone in the community to view themselves as caregivers and participate in community care according to their gifts and interests. Areas volunteers can be engaged in include, but are not limited to, one-to-one care for elderlies in their own homes (befriending), volunteering in community feeding centres, taking part in multilingual campaigning and awareness creation, training others, supporting the work financially and through prayer. All caregivers are obliged to adhere to the organization's core values - love, hope, humility, integrity, courage, respect and inclusiveness. An oversight committee meets weekly via zoom, for mutual encouragement, formative reflections, review progress and provide directions.

2. Compassion

FICDO's community care model is designed to respond to human pain and struggle with understanding, compassion and grace. We take seriously the socio-economic dimensions of life as experienced by the impoverished and most vulnerable in the community.

While each life stage has its own challenges, developmental crises can increase the vulnerability of children and the elderly. These groups are particularly dependent on others for survival and could be exposed to rampant poverty if they don't have immediate/extended family members who may care for them. Thus, FICDO's care for these vulnerable groups is a compassionate response to their needs for warmth, nurturing support and caring.

3. Emphasis on Transformation

Beyond support during crises, FICDO's care aims at transformation, generating hope and growth in love for both caregivers and receivers.

"Giving" is often associated with physical/financial resources and regarded as something the "resource-rich" would engage in. However, acts of kindness such as "giving time" to listen to, or be with someone, checking up on a lonely neighbor and helping with domestic work, which do not require material/financial resources are equally important. These simple acts can make significant differences in the lives of many people, especially lonely elderly. Thus, by strongly emphasizing on "being with" rather than "doing for", large sections of the community who feel "inadequate" to contribute to the well-being of their community for lack of resources can be empowered . As a clear commitment to this empowerment, statements like the following are included in FICDO's core values and campaigns:

- *"We believe that a loving heart is what it takes to serve others and transform lives"*
- *"We believe that everyone has something to offer; hence we will listen."*

For the resource-rich in the community, too, FICDO provides organised platform to reach out to their compatriots. Hence, the care model creates new possibilities by sparking a new way of thinking and doing for both resource-poor and resource-rich in the community. It allows proactive nurturing, and the facilitation of caring environments within which people can grow and develop to their fullest potential.

4. Pro-active Care

Working towards prevention (pro-active care) of problems/issues is usually preferable than reacting when they happen. In a number of places, community relations are deteriorating partly due to lack of/poor communication. FICDO's care model aspires towards transformation/nurturing of community relations. Experience from around the world show that volunteering and partaking in activities can bring together people, who otherwise would have no chance to come together. This can open up conversations that make people learn about each other and be aware of each other's physical, spiritual, emotional and practical needs. In FICDO's context, bringing volunteers from different faith and ethnic groups, who often see each other with suspicion, together for a common cause can nurture relationships and prevent/minimize tensions. Community care in terms of sensitization regarding peaceful co-existence and Godly- living, and the provision of a platform to care for each other are major investments towards achieving "shalom" in our communities.

Critical Analysis of FICDO's Community Care (Cont'd)

5. Putting "Love" at Center-stage of care

In FICDO, everything is about “love”. The emphasis on “love” is so much that even FICDO’s name ‘*Fikir*’ literally translates to “love” in one of Ethiopia’s national language. Love takes centre-stage as there is no better way to imitate a loving God, than leading a life of love.
The reason “love” is an organizational mantra is also to highlight the motivations behind the organization’s work and emphasize the transformational power of care rooted in love. The following statements appear in the organization’s core values:

- *“We are motivated by love to serve others before ourselves”*
- *“We have high hopes that love can transform those who give and receive.”*

FICDO’s communication strategy also stipulates the use of “terminologies” that pays special attention to *love* in the organization’s work. Whatever caregivers do in their caring duty (giving time, donating in kind or cash), it is referred to as a “*gift of love*”. This is to emphasize the **motive rather than the task and/or the material** that is exchanged as a gift. Furthermore, caregivers are encouraged to refer to their tasks as “*giving/receiving love*”.

6. Respect and Inclusiveness

FICDO’s community care model strives to be inclusive and respectful by embracing anyone who would want to serve. This has been affirmed in the core values as well as practically involving volunteers in all aspects of care. However, given that FICDO serves a multi-faith community and our caregivers hail from diverse backgrounds, FICDO’s care policy strongly advises caregivers to exercise caution and wisdom and not to use the platform to proselytize. i.e. caregivers are strongly advised to respect the care-recipients’ choices and rights. As the old adage goes, "action speaks louder than words"; so we believe "love in action" speaks louder and, hence, encourage everyone to rather live their faith in practice. On the other hand, we don't hide, for the sake of political correctness, the fact that we are inspired by our faith in God to do what we are doing. After all, our entire community, one way or another, has faith in God.

The inclusion of love, humility and respect in FICDO’s core values is also to ensure both care-recipients and caregivers get due respect. When discussing care-recipients, one critical issue comes to the forefront: the manner in which care recipients are viewed. FICDO’s care policy strictly prohibits the use of any kind of demeaning language such as “needy” when referring to care recipients. Even the term “beneficiary” is not used to refer to care recipients as a way of recognizing that everyone in the community (including the caregiver) benefits when one person is cared for. We believe that caring in love is partnering with God, who unconditionally loves and actively works in the life of the care recipient.

There are many reasons for a caregiver to walk in humility when caring for others. First we recognize that we are just like the one we reach out to care for. It is one needy person reaching out to another. Honest personal reflection on this reality helps caregivers maintain a posture of humility. Second and most importantly, we believe that God is there and working in the hurting person seeking our help and we are there “to cooperate”.

FICDO’s advocacy and awareness creation/community sensitization campaigns (see Table 2) ensure respect, dignity and well-being of senior citizens. Active campaigns on social media (in multiple languages) address not only the challenges the elderly face but also highlight their legacies and their potential contribution to society (as living libraries of wisdom). These campaigns aim to bring changes in attitudes and behaviors towards the elderly.

7. Recognizing Limitations

At FICDO, we recognize that we do not have “all the answers” and we cannot “fix” all problems. That is why the emphasis, especially in the befriending program, is “*being with*” than “*doing for*”. Although resources are shared to save lives in extreme cases, being present with, listening to and journeying alongside care recipients are what the care model emphasizes. Showing genuine interest and listening to the stories of those being cared for is a powerful support one can give and FICDO is trying to do just that.

In a nutshell,

FICDO’s community care model is relevant and contextual:

- It takes into account the African worldview where a communal way of living supersedes individualism, without neglecting the uniqueness of individuals.
- It brings back care to the community itself, to understand their needs and perspectives.

- It takes the socio-economic dimensions of life as experienced by the poor and vulnerable and builds care around these by:

1) addressing their critical needs, and
2) enabling and empowering those that “disqualify” themselves from serving others because of lack of material resources

- It is inclusive, mobilizing and pooling all resources in the community.
- It sheds a ray of hope and nurtures relationships by bringing together community members from various ethnic groups, political and religious views, for a shared goal.
- It embeds proactive-care, self-awareness, respect, humility and reflective practice
- It respects local cultures, norms and beliefs

Critical Analysis of FICDO's Community Care (Cont'd)

Weaknesses

Although FICDO's community care model is relevant and contextual, it is far from perfect:
The deep-rooted poverty in the community FICDO is operating adversely affects the quality and provision of care in two ways:

- It necessitates the prioritization of meeting the physical needs of care recipients that are in extreme conditions, overshadowing the need for deep psycho-spiritual and sustainable development, and rendering the care to a mere provision of physical/material support. While FICDO's care model looks good on paper, the reality on the ground is far more challenging requiring patience, time and resources.
- Overwhelming conditions exposing to risk: Feedback from majority of caregivers engaged in *Soul-2-Soul* befriending program indicate that caregivers hardly contain their emotions as the conditions in which the elderly care recipients live are overwhelming. Most caregivers admitted having resorted to drawing from their personal resources to cover urgent needs of care recipients, as "they could not look away and do nothing". While such help may be done with insight and the ability to discern wisely, our volunteer caregivers bear the brunt of the burden. This may expose them to the risk of unintended suffering, eventually leading to disillusionment, burnout or "compassion fatigue". Even when FICDO's policy strongly encourages for self and other awareness and the realization of personal limitations to safeguard against what many call "dangers" in care, the risks remain high because of the reality on the ground.

Issues inherent in the very foundation of the organization could also expose it to various risks impacting the quality and provision of care.

- Over-reliance on donations means, the sustainability of some of the care packages such as direct financial subsidy to the elderly cannot be guaranteed. If our volunteer caregivers fail to adequately communicate and set clear expectations,
  - It may create unwanted dependency (although this becomes irrelevant with regard to the elderly care-recipients who have zero income and thus remain totally dependent on handouts).
  - The reliability and integrity of the organisation and/or the volunteer caregivers may come into question when the level of care cannot be maintained.
- Over-reliance on volunteers: The nature of volunteering makes planning difficult since commitment cannot be fully guaranteed. This can impact the quality of care by adversely affecting the reliability and integrity of the organization and its care services. Furthermore, where there is a shortage of volunteer caregivers, the few most dedicated volunteers would be burdened to keep the service going.This could result in burnout.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Models of care that are individualistic cannot adequately cope with the systemic, cultural and psychological dimensions of the contextual needs of care recipients in the community FICDO is operating. Thus, FICDO's community care strategy rightly involves community mobilization as a pragmatic real-life effort towards minimizing the suffering of the most vulnerable. The care model is fairly comprehensive with strong evidence of reflective practice. However, the overall strategy has inherent weaknesses that may expose it to risks that could adversely affect the quality and provision of care by the organization. Hence, the following are recommended to minimize the risks:

- While the embedding of caring within the community is important, over-reliance on donations can expose to major operational and reputational risks. Hence, the organization may need to look into other options such as ways of generating permanent income. Until permanent income generation is in place, the organisation may need to consider concentrating on the provision of care services that could bring significance to care recipients' lives without requiring extensive financial resources.
- Sustainable and meaningful work and timely reporting, as required by law, may be hampered without a dedicated permanent staff. Hence, it is recommended that at least one full-time permanent staff be hired although this may pose extra resource challenge on the organisation.
- While setting expectations and clarifying the purpose and nature of the care are critical at all times, support in terms of direct cash subsidy may need to be reviewed. When cash is involved, there is a potential for misunderstanding.Thus, an alternative approach that may not involve cash may need to be further investigated.
- Reflection and support at core-group /oversight committee/ level is strong and should be continued. However, there is a strong need for a planned approach to support and train volunteer caregivers who are interacting with the community. Training should cover self- and other-awareness, limitations, the need for setting expectations and boundaries, self-care and other measures that safeguard against dangers in care. The painful situations that some care-recipients live can be disheartening and can be overwhelming for caregivers. Thus, time and effort should be invested in equipping caregivers in terms of emotional growth and an awareness that can protect them from unintended and unnecessary suffering in the process of helping others.
- In addition to training and creating awareness on self-care, the organization should enforce a system (for example rota) that will allow volunteers to take breaks and recharge.
- A clear vision statement and care and mobilization policy with a strong conflict management framework should be in place given that diverse groups are embraced to provide care. Such systems and procedures not only handle conflict appropriately, but also enable robust and fruitful collaboration among different stakeholders.
- Emphasis need to be given on campaigns in all local languages, especially Afaan Oromo, as it is the dominant language spoken in the community.

ፍቅር የተቀናጀ የማህበረሰብ ልማት ድርጅት

FIKIR INTEGRATED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (FICDO)

FICDO Issue 2
September 2021

About FICDO:

FICDO is an all-volunteer run and volunteer-led community-organization registered and operating in Ethiopia (Registration # 4207). Since we started operating in 2019, we have been running social inclusion projects in the town of Fitche, Central Ethiopia.

FICDO (ፍቅር የተቀናጀ የማህበረሰብ ልማት ድርጅት) በአዋጅ ቁጥር 113/2011 በመዝገብ ቁጥር 4207 በኢፌድሪ የሲቪል ማህበረሰብ ድርጅቶች ኤጄንሲ የተመዘገበና በበጎ ፈቃደኞች የሚመራ ሃገር በቀል ድርጅት ነው። ስራ ከጀመርን ከሰኔ 2011 ጀምሮ፤ የተለያዩ ማህበራዊ አገልግሎቶች የሰጠን እንገኛለን።

Registered address:
FICDO, Fitche town,
North Shoa zone, Ormoia Regional State,
Ethiopia.
Phone:
(00251) 91 177 5015
(00353) 87 770 7824 (Ireland)
Email: fikirintegratedcdo@gmail.com

@fb.me/FICDO.org

Bank A/c: Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, Fiche Branch,
A/c number 1000287498474

©FICDO 2021. Edited and designed by Nuhamin E. Ermias