

"I am you and you are I, & what have we done to each other?"



It's been awhile since you've heard from us, but our behind-the-scenes activities have continued fast & furiously, with different goals because of changing conditions. All of Africa has been hard-hit by pandemic, resultant economic collapse, man-made famine, war. Harambee's motto is "We give not a handout, but a hand UP." Yet these are extraordinary times & extraordinary measures are called for. So we've given much to the most vulnerable without asking anything in return. History shows that our beneficiaries will "pay it forward" to neighbors when they're able.

This update is a mix of wonderful news & not-so-good news. First the good: our appeals for emergency donations received hearty response. People in several African countries are alive today only because of your compassion & generous hearts.

In Kenya we continue to offer support to the women's craft groups, though our ability to visit & purchase goods has been limited. It's 2 1/2 years since we've seen our friends, a great loss! Miraculously, because of widespread precautions fewer than expected have contracted Covid, despite sparse immunization programs. Yes, there are deaths, but not as many as feared. We've sent funds for soap & mask-making, food, & school fees for the neediest, food for teachers on leave from closed schools. We do have Kenyan crafts shipped to us (see below) in time for holiday giving.



Anne & Waithira, making soap for distribution during the Covid shutdown



Your donations provided sewing machines for making protective masks

Pig project in Zambia, supporting education for girls, is doing well. Our organizer, Father Richard Phiri, received his Covid vaccination thanks to one of our sponsored graduates, Nurse Maureen Busiku. Your donations make a difference in many lives, in many ways.

PLANT A SEED & GROW A DOC continues to thrive in 3 countries. We have another new M.D. (our second), with a total of 24 graduates (nursing, clinical officer, m.d., pharmacy, health educator) and 18 students currently enrolled in universities. A great shout-out is due to Dr. Sam Mbaso, a 2014 Clinical Officer graduate, who recently opened his own clinic serving the poor in Naivasha, Kenya.



Sam in 2010: smart, ambitious, but without funds for education. You supplied them.



His dream come true: Now Dr. Sam, with his clinic in Naivasha



More dreams come true: wife Caroline & baby Dylan

Three of our students are in Ethiopia, safe at least for the moment. Here's a note from one, Betelhem:

*Dear Dr Keen,
How are you? How is everything with you? Here i am fine but we are not a good time in our country because the terrorist group is controlled north Wollo and many peoples fled to here in Bahirdar and other city and i am really broken my heart to that. I received money sent for my fees and thank you very much for your everything. With out Project Harambee i didn't see where i am today so you are a bridge of my life . *Education is the key of life* Thank you very much once again!! Please convey my best wishes to you all, Best regards--Betelhem...*



Our 3 Ethiopian Grow A Doc students: Tringo, Betelhem, Tesfaye



Maureen Keraa, MD, Mount Kenya University



Meshack Mesea, newest MD student, University of Nairobi *see his letter below*

Ethiopia is our greatest concern. The civil war in the north continued to spread, halting our fledgling development programs in Lalibela. Beginning late last year due to hardships imposed by the pandemic, war, & famine, more than 2,000 children were left wanting, more than half of them refugees displaced by war. We sent funds for food & school fees to provide some semblance of normalcy for the children. Sales & donations enabled us to send several thousands of dollars each month. And you know that every penny of your donations goes over to Africa.

In late August this year the Tigray rebels (TPLF) invaded Lalibela, cutting all communication. Having heard of the brutality of the TPLF, we feared the worst; for weeks we heard nothing & didn't know if our friends were dead or alive. Mercifully, we heard from one, then another, then finally another as they were able to escape Lalibela & flee to the safety of Bahir Dar. They told us of widespread displacement, suffering, hunger. Whereabouts of many are still unknown.

War becomes intensely personal when you know names & faces. Tibebe, Zala, Tilahun,

Abebe, Dani, Afework, Amare, Desiye, Fikru, Yalelet. And many more whose names & faces I don't yet know, yet for whom I feel responsible. We've heard epic tales of courage & resilience, enough for an encyclopedia of grief & goodness.



I'm often asked "What are people in Africa like?" My answer: "If you want to know, go look in a mirror." Names, dress, culture, language, food may be different from what's customary & comfortable for us, but experience shows that inside we are far more alike than different. These are our brothers & sisters & I can't be at ease with my warm bed, full stomach, & bank balance while they are hungry & homeless.

10,000 Internally Displaced People (IDP's) in Bahir Dar alone: disabled, babies, pregnant & nursing mothers. Our funds dwindled, but an appeal brought us \$10,000, fabulous, yet not much for 10,000 mouths--but how can you feed some & not others? This is a time for a loaves & fishes miracle...except we need loaves & EGGS. All wanted only bread, the cheapest food to fill empty bellies, but nurse Abebe taught about the critical need for protein & iron for development. And so off he & Desiye (another friend & helper) went, to an egg farm, then contracted with local women to boil & bring eggs. And to bakeries, for best prices on bread. We so are grateful. Whatever would all these good people do without our prior chance encounters with Abebe & Desiye?! Their organizational skills are amazing. Below is the email describing their work & photos they've sent.



Abebe & Desiye at the egg farm





Dear Prof. Keen

We found 2 hardworking women selling boiled eggs around the city of Bahir Dar every day, we communicated with both and took a contract for 7 days providing boiled eggs for displaced vulnerable women. At the same time, we are able to create job opportunities for women. We have distributed today the egg for pregnant and nursery women and we even gave 1 egg for each child under age 5. The first day egg feeding for pregnant, nursing women and children was successful. We achieved our feeding plan just as much as our targets.

We found that all mothers displaced from rural areas have low nutrition awareness. Each of them understood that it was 1 egg, but they didn't realize the benefit. They laughed when we talked about feeding 1 egg for mothers. Instead, they wanted us to buy something to fill their stomach. We were opposed, said how do you give 1 egg and take a picture for your purpose? They told us that many other people photographed them and promised to help but never come again.

So our first step was to raise awareness of the importance of eggs for pregnant, nursing and children aged <5 and Project Harambee offers realistic. Once they understood Project Harambee interest, offer, purpose and capacity, they asked us for many more interests.

1. About 30 age 6-12 orphans are in their camps, and they have no helper and needs special attention as women
2. About 25 people with disabilities were displaced with them, including 1 deafer and 1 blind and needs special attention as women
3. There are some people who live with chronic disease, HIV, DM, HTN and recently operated that needs attention
4. Children over the age of 5 also told us that they needed to be included for our help especially if they wanted us to provide them with bread as a women and children.

We listened carefully to all the questions and we told them that we will present their case to project harambee. But we have made it clear they shouldn't hope that Project Harambee foundation doesn't have the capacity to satisfy many requests because it is a very limited source of funds. They are actually very poor and deserving, but we couldn't satisfy this large number of people to give food. We have done a very effective job! It is worrying, however, that the demands are increasing day by

day.

As the bread fund was received for us today in the afternoon, we told them we would start to feed them bread on Thursday. They were very pleased with our offer.

In our work today, mothers in particular have expressed their gratitude for the support from Project Harambee and care they have received.

We think we have done fair and have resolved, or reduced grievances. We have followed Project Harambee's goal of serving the people equally, never left behind and the fund flows to all as a pipeline! The people of Ethiopia proved that Project Harambee foundation is beside wherever they are during the crisis! The seven- ten day life-saving dining is very effective! Now the people here are praying for the people left in the war zone.

Challenges

- Still have inaccessible displaced people
- Fund for continuity
- The continuation of the war resulted in an increasing number of IDPs

Strength

- Being able to benefit women and children and give a priority
- Being able to feed a large crowd
- The coordination with the interim delegated and the Project Harambee teamwork effectiveness
- Completely avoided sleeping on the street
- Project Harambee and Ethiopia people's family bonding strengthened!

Des and Abe

Then I received this compelling email from a young man I met during my last visit in Lalibela, a waiter in my hotel restaurant:

Dear to my beloved Dokter Kathleen.

I say a big thank you for your kindness, I were in refugee camp since I came to here in Bahr Dar, but now thanks to God for sending a kindness person who could share our life problems I rent home and setup to live there with my family on you in hopefully that your help will continue until our country will make peaceful and return back to Normal life situation! my baby were too sick while we were in lalibela and through our wars, that also made me nervous, although since I receive your help be able to give him good treatment! now he is getting better! thank you again for your thoughtful support !

I meet with Abebe and make good discussion, He is so brilliance and good man, we talk for better solutions of challenges too!

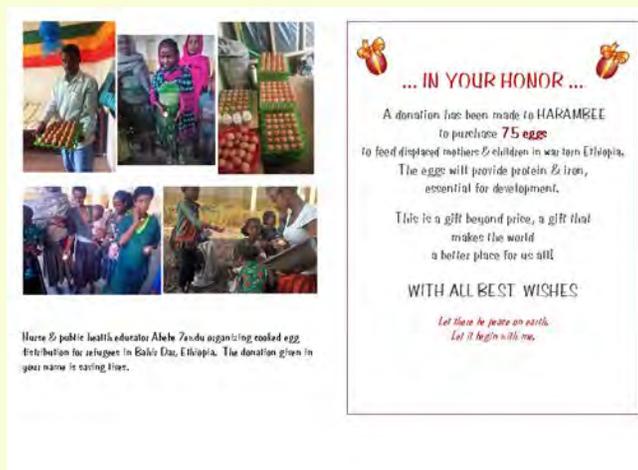
And I will help him with work what he need.

May God bless you richly!!

So...we do what we can...wherever we can...as best we can & as long as we can. People here have been generous. Yet these are the ongoing needs. I recall Luke's gospel: *"If your son asks for an egg, would you give him a scorpion?"*

(Luke wrote it just for us, of course!)

We need lots of eggs, & wow, we have a great offering for you for holiday giving. Please consider alternative gift cards this year. *Who* needs more stuff?! For \$15 you'll get a handmade card to give someone who already has everything & you're giving something precious & priceless--5 dozen eggs--a gift of love & life for the hungry. Here's what the card front & inside look like:



Cards are available online at <https://project-harambee.myshopify.com/> or phone (708) 983-4159. Also via email, keen@projectharambee.org. And you'll see our full range of alternative gift cards on our website, www.projectharambee.org

And...just now, this news from Abebe. Project Harambee--your donations--are God's wallet!

UPDATE FROM ETHIOPIA, November 6, 2021

Fresh bread for IDPS (war refugees) breakfast

How is your weekend? I hope you are in the church with your friends and praying for Ethiopia! We are grateful for help.

Millions of people have been displaced by the ongoing war in Ethiopia. Particularly many people displaced by the area's invasion by TPLF, North Wollo, South Wollo and Wag-Himra zones. The war is still ongoing and displaced people are still fleeing everywhere.

We shared a fresh bread breakfast for IDPS today, morning. We have reached 2479 IDPs 1 fresh bread for each. Our plan was to feed 2001 IDPs, but recently Dessie and Kombolcha fell under the TPLF occupation, and in the last three days many IDPs have come from South Wollo. So we distributed bread to an additional 478 IDPS. We feel that many IDPs are still inaccessible for our program.

We can deliver boiled eggs every other Day, because it is nutritionally important as it is an even small amount. I think we have enough for this program. They don't have food, unless otherwise we are supporting. They are very hungry. If you have seen their pictures, you can understand how they stretched out their hands and begged! To the best of our capacity, I believe we should continue feeding fresh bread every morning. They need our fresh bread badly!

Tibebu, the Project Harambee boy, was distributing the bread with us today. He is helping us very well. We have a strong commitment and the Coordinators are helpful for making the distribution easy.

Thank you very much indeed!

Abebe and Des



Abebe & Desiye are God's hand on earth...



and Project Haramabee--your donations--are God's wallet!



Bread for the hungry. Watch for an alternative gift card, Bread for Ethiopia

As always, there's more news to share, & I worry I'm exhausting your interest. I'll take that chance, adding the first report from our new MD student, Meshack, pictured above. His story mirrors all those before him. YOU have erased the despair of impoverished but promising youngsters who have good values & great dreams. You've not only given them a future, but you've helped all those whose lives they will touch in their professional careers--numbers known only to God. Your gift will keep giving indefinitely. How many will *not* be helped, their potential lost, because they're without funds for education?

Our PLANT A SEED & GROW A DOC alternative gift cards are \$25, available locally, on our website or via email. And ...we'll have a full selection at the St. Giles Holiday Fair, Oak Park, IL. December 4 & 5.

From Meshack--

I grew up in the slums of Kibera and Kawangware . Life here was survival for the fittest. I grew up with ambitions to be a great person in the republic of Kenya one day by God's grace. I was taught to be contented with what I had. I was taught to work hard and struggle to better myself and others. I went to Damside preparatory school (a school located in Kibera then which supported needy and

bright students) I did my national exams and emerged the best student in the school with 372 marks.

Joining form one was like climbing a mountain but by God's grace I managed. Before, I saw only the end of my future and education due to financial problems but God has good plans for all.

My passion and desire to pursue medicine was ignited by the inequality that I saw when medical services were being given to the poor and how unaffordable it was to them. I was connected to Project Harambee by high school after performing well and seeing that I had passion to pursue medicine. Currently I am pursuing bachelor of medicine and surgery in the University of Nairobi. My best experience as a medical student is discovering that what we believed that was medical facts were myths which lack medical backing.

My advice to those who desire to work medical field is that they should have desire to serve the humanity at hand and this should be there priority. Also I can advice them that medical field is not for the faint hearted but strong hearted since there are many heart breaking events and most things you will find will be against your expecting.

If I go back to when I was 10 I will tell myself that I want to be a doctor again. So far as a medical student I can not say that there is most difficult situation I have encountered yet but I know there are much heart breaking situations to come. I can describe myself as dedicated to serve humanity.

Hardworking, self motivated, result oriented, humble and prayerfulness are qualities that have enabled me to be where I am .I wish that people would know that I am not kative but I am if understood by others. My last words are to thank the supporters of Project Harambee and hope that they will continue supporting dreams that might be in danger of desolation. May the Lord bless the Project Harambee. Thank you and thank you again.

Yours faithful,
Masea Meshack

From western Kenya, we have new members of our Harambee family sending us items made from soapstone. Many types of carvings to choose from; we're featuring those specific to the coming holidays. We can get them to you for Christmas. Prices do not include U.S. shipping.



Nativity set #1, \$25
star is 5" tall,



Nativity set # 2, 6" tall, \$35



Nativity set #3, 6.5" tall, \$25



Nativity set #4, \$35



Kisii, western Kenya

Friend Tabaka carving soapstone

Of course our usual woven & beaded items are available, along with goat cards, chicken cards, pigs, beehives (with your name on the hive) & much more. Let us know your interest so that we can be prepared & you won't be disappointed. *(Tip: we do it better than Heifer, Int. because we have no overhead--100% of your donation goes where it's most needed. And...when you donate for a goat, YOU get to name the goat & we take your photo over to the receiving family!)*



stretch beaded bracelets \$20



beaded gourd tree ornaments, \$10



Hanna's Angels & Crosses, \$10



Maasai style necklace & earrings \$80





Woven kiondo baskets, all sizes & colors, made by grandmothers raising their orphaned grandchildren.



Painting by handicapped tist Daniel Mutinda'!



Lots of jewelry, made of kazuri beads & paper beads.



Buy a pig in Zambia to support girls' education! \$50--who wouldn't want one?!



Yes, GROW A NURSE cards also available.



\$15 for a pair of chickens will put a Kenyan mother in business, feeding & educating her family. (Also available for Hannakuh)



\$160, perfect for grandkids! They'll have a blast choosing a name.

Sure, I could go on forever. I've related only half of all that's transpired since our last

update. I'll send this tonight so that another 3 months don't pass without more news. Amidst all the sadness in the world, this work in Africa sustains our joy and optimism. You are a major part of the equation because without you, none of this good work would be possible. I can never thank you enough, but our friends in Africa can. They know God understands Swahili...

...because you are an answer to their prayers.

*Ever,
Keen*



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