



HFK's Health Officer teaches the Elders proper handwashing technique.

Hope During Covid-19

We are All in This Together

Concern for One Another is Shared Across the Ocean

Many of us around the world are praying, waiting, and yearning for life to get back to normal. More than ever, we all need news of hope and encouragement.

As the coronavirus has extended its grip into Ethiopia, we have been very concerned for everyone in Korah, and we are praying for them constantly. But it has been very touching to hear, that they too are anxious for us and praying for us. As HFK families hear the alarming news of the impact the virus is having in Canada and the U.S.A. they have been asking our Ethiopian staff about the well-being of those they know, especially their sponsors. We are receiving many messages of love and concern from Ethiopia.



Beylanesh sends her love and assurance of heartfelt prayers to her sponsors.

Just this week I received a personal video message that brought tears to my eyes. Beylanesh, whom we sponsor, wanted us to know that she was thinking of us and praying. Her words were moving, as she shared an Amharic expression, " 'Please do not die, as we will all die after you'. May the news we are hearing about the virus not come near you. Stay safe for us. "

As I reflect on her words and the deep concern in her voice, the words 'we are all in this together' suddenly gain a deeper meaning. The knowledge that many whose 'normal' life is fraught with struggles too hard to comprehend, are thinking, and praying for us during this difficult time, fills me with hope for what is yet to come. The hope that through all of this, we will become stronger and more united as we walk in God's strength alongside each other.

We are especially aware that this could be an extremely hard time for our sponsors, supporters and many who have stood with Korah over the years. We are praying for all. We truly are all in this together!

Covid-19 Impact in Korah

Emergency Measures Put Into Place

For the people of Korah, living in an overcrowded slum, where practicing good hygiene and social distancing is not a privilege, but is almost impossible to achieve, this coronavirus pandemic has added an even greater burden to their lives.

Therefore, we have been working to put emergency measures into place while receiving reports of soaring prices and food shortages. Many of our families survive day to day on meager incomes earned in jobs that have halted due to this crisis. Access to medical care is limited as hospitals and clinics prepare for Covid-19 patients, making prescriptions and needed medicines less accessible.



Due to the current water shortage in Korah, HFK has donated two 2,000 gallon water tanks, one for each woreda (sub-city district) we serve.

Caring for basic needs is our top priority: this includes distributing two months' supply of soap, sanitary supplies, and groceries to all HFK families, orphans, and elders, ordering additional medical supplies and masks for all staff and beneficiaries and putting an emergency plan into place at our clinic. All HFK group activities and programs have been put on hold due to government restrictions, but all medical staff, caregivers and essential staff remain on duty.

In addition, staff have been reinforcing proper hygiene



Treasures of Joy for the Heart A Sponsor's Visit to Korah

By Dorothy Townrow - For me, getting involved in HFK's sponsorship program has been a deep joy that parallels the joy of having my own children. I feel that God has matched each family to my heart. Going to visit their community and homes was an extension of the people that I have come to know and love through letters and pictures.

Each home visit had treasures for my heart... the pride of a mother introducing her sons and advocating for them... the joy of finally



meeting her sponsor... spending time with her youngest who was in the hospital being treated for leprosy... visits that were all so welcomed and appreciated.

Another treasure was in Marta and Sedebo's home over a coffee ceremony and popcorn. I heard testimony of thanksgiving and praise to God for all that has happened to their family over the years since foraging in the trash. Through sponsorship with HFK Sedebo has had treatment for cancer, Marta is working full time as a cleaner at a local hospital and all four of their girls are in school, the oldest Bereket now off in university. They now have dreams, hope and a bright future.

In another home visit I met five vulnerable, yet courageous children who lost their mother over a year ago. We listened to their difficulties in coping, their deep appreciation for their sponsors, and to their dreams and joys: a gymnastics class, a soccer player, and one who found significance serving in the orthodox church. The oldest was working and taking night classes to finish high school. And as we left, I was given one more treasure for my heart... ten-year-old Hulubanchi hugged me and whispered in my ear, "I love you. Please pray for me."

I want to honour my Father for the means and courage to go on this trip. I have received so much more than I have given... My great JOY!



practices and social distancing protocols as well as communicating accurate information on this disease. Those living at our Elders' Leprosy Home have been quarantined and no visitors are allowed, but only staff.

Restructuring the Berta Breakfast Program

Feeding Children Under Five, their Mothers and School-Age Children



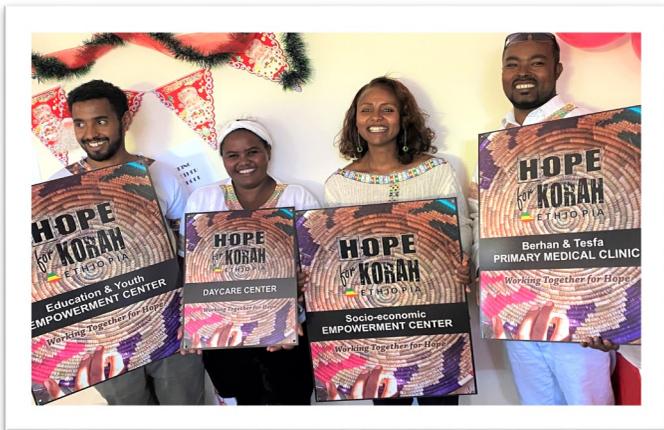
During this school year the Addis Ababa government made some very exciting changes and began serving breakfast to all students attending any government school in the city. This is a huge undertaking and welcome news as there are tens of thousands of children in desperate need of this intervention.

Responding to this new development, HFK has made some changes to our Berta Breakfast Program and we are excited to implement them once the Covid-19 physical distancing restrictions are lifted. **As soon as we can gather in groups again, HFK will move to serving fortified Berta pancakes from five to eight times per week!** The big shift during weekday mornings will be to target undernourished children under the age of five and their mothers. There are many children in this community who are destitute and hungry during these critical developmental years. This greatly impacts their physical growth, brain development and capacity to learn.



In addition, HFK will continue to serve school-age students by offering Berta three times per week during our after-school tutoring program and on Saturday mornings before all our youth activities start. These are strategic times as children return from school hungry and they do not have food accessible at home. And on weekends, most children have no breakfast available, so Berta pancakes will once again be a much-needed source of nourishment.

Life Before Social Distancing Restrictions...



New signs for all HFK compounds.

Celebrating New Beginnings

Highlights of our recent Trip to Korah

In mid-February, as the coronavirus was starting to spread around the world, the last members of our HFK team arrived back home from Ethiopia. We were very grateful for the timing and to have had this month in Korah with our families and staff. We plan to return as soon as travel conditions allow. A highlight of this trip was our Epiphany celebration and sheep feast where everyone came and celebrated the holiday and HFK's new beginning as a licensed International Non-Governmental Organization in Ethiopia. Over the weeks we were there, much collaboration, leadership training, planning, and visioning took place as well as many home visits, times of prayer, special moments with children and families, assessments of current programs, distribution of sponsorship mail and gifts, the Brother Sister Friend party and deworming of all our beneficiaries at our medical clinic.

The Brain Architecture Game Trauma Training for Staff

One of the important areas HFK desires to grow in, is to better meet the psychosocial needs of our children and families. So many have experienced a life full of trauma often beginning early in their childhood. This can be a significant roadblock that prevents them from becoming who God created them to be and from breaking the cycle of poverty. Therefore, we were privileged to have Brenda Dragt M.S.W., a trauma expert with 30 years of experience in the field, join us in Korah. Brenda led care team trainings on topics such as child abuse prevention, complex developmental trauma, adverse childhood experiences and developing child safe policies. We played the "Brain Architecture Game" which helped to build an understanding of the powerful role of experiences on early brain development – what promotes it, what derails it, with what consequences for society. HFK is very grateful to Brenda for coming all the way to Ethiopia to better equip our staff and we are delighted that she is continuing to work with us in helping to develop this essential piece of HFK's programming.



The Kindness Club

HFK Youth Serve at the Elders' Home

Several months ago, our HFK youth formed the "Kindness Club" with the purpose of reaching out with acts of kindness. For one of their first get-togethers, these young people took time out of their day to serve those with leprosy at our Elders' Home... and they thoroughly enjoyed themselves! Compassion and kindness were shown through roasting and brewing fresh coffee by hand, cleaning inside the compound, and providing our Elders with hot tea and snacks.



This was a very significant afternoon, as those with leprosy are considered outcasts in society and often face dehumanizing stigma. Prejudice is even more pronounced in a slum region like Korah. Our youth programs and activities such as the "Kindness Club" are breaking the cycle of brokenness and stigma, while transforming young minds through servant leadership principles. Your support ensures that Korah youth have a place to belong, to connect and to grow, as well as a chance to have some fun!



Making a Gift Where Needed Most During Covid-19

Amidst this time of uncertainty, HFK continues to have many emergency needs and significant ongoing commitments we must support.

So many depend on us as they are impacted by this pandemic and work towards breaking the cycle of poverty.

If it is on your heart and you are able to give it would help to make a difference!