



wellwishers

Saving and enriching lives in Ethiopia



Covid-19 response in WellWishers' areas, Tigray, Ethiopia

Friends,

I thought I would send you this brief photo Newsletter about Covid-19 and the community response in Tigray. During the Covid 19 pandemic health experts from The Relief Society of Tigray (REST – our wells partners) are working around the clock with local woreda (district) health experts to ensure rural communities are provided with hygiene and safety training such as hand washing and physical distancing, as well as suitable equipment.

As I write this in late May, Ethiopia has reported over 500 cases nationally, 120 recoveries and 6 deaths. Fortunately it is one of the least impacted nations compared with its neighbours. Kenya has over 900 confirmed cases.

A state of emergency lasting five-months has been imposed by the Prime Minister. All land borders have since been shut as a virus control measure with a raft of restrictions and enforcement of physical distancing and mask wearing measures.

National elections planned for May this year were also postponed citing the effect of the pandemic. This delay has not been without controversy and Tigray Region intends to go ahead with elections, arguing that delay is neither necessary nor constitutional.

As at May 19, statistics across all countries on the African continent were:

Confirmed cases = 88,264; Number of deaths = 2,832; Recoveries = 33,898; Active cases = 51,534

This is most likely just the start of a massive problem across Africa, where most countries lack testing and medical facilities to adequately manage the crisis.

In our program area of Tigray, the Regional Government has been very active with education programs, manufacture and distribution of masks and the provision of hand washing facilities wherever possible.

Stay safe, Graham Romanes

PICTURE above: Handwashing demonstration for girls at Kilite Awlaelo, Tigray

The following pictures give a glimpse of some of the story:



ABOVE and LEFT:

- Workers washing at work compound
- Handwashing at the well
- Waiting to collect water
- Social distancing at registration for food-for-work distribution
- Social distancing at the well near Hawzien

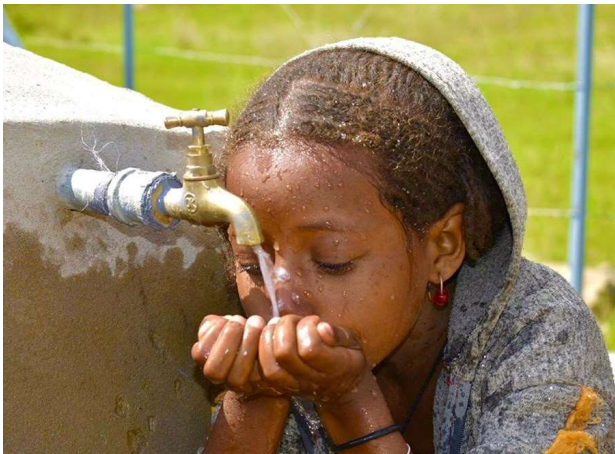
BELOW

- Handwashing in the street. Mekele
- Priest blessing at a distance. The usual blessing and greeting involves the parishioner kissing the priest's cross.





Our partner REST (The Relief Society of Tigray) has played a key role in the response to Covid-19 in Tigray Region. REST's primary function remains work with communities on sustainable livelihoods. Our wells program with REST is an important component. Animals and vegetable production are other vital activities for REST. Photos in this newsletter courtesy of REST. Thank you!



Clean water is one of the key elements for the prevention of Covid-19.

To see a short video of REST's response to Covid-19, go to www.instagram.com/p/CAXY-ueAwNb (and then choose **Full Screen). You may require Instagram, but please try it. WellWishers is delighted that our clean water program can support REST's fight against Covid-19.**

In 2020 we will provide funds for the provision of clean water to 7000 Ethiopians in over 40 villages.

During 2020 REST health experts are working around the clock with local woreda (district) health experts to ensure rural communities are best prepared to deal with Covid-19.

CLEAN WATER IS VITAL TO THE FIGHT AGAINST Covid 19 !

Our wells program in 2020 and a report from 2019

To see the proposal for our 40 wells program with REST for 2020 go to

www.wellwishersethiopia.com/images/RESTproposal2020.pdf

WellWishers has agreed to the proposal and the program is now underway.

A report from our monitor on the 2019 program:

"Clean Water is a Medicine": The case of Zenebu Desalegn

Zenebu Desalegn, 70 years old, lives in a village called Kolea Mishe in Saherti Samre Woreda. She is living with her son and four grandchildren. "In 2019, together with our friends we built a new hand dug well". Zenebu is serving as a chairperson of the Well Committee. She said, "We were no better than animals in the previous times" before the intervention of this project. Zenebu said that the whole village was sharing an open and unprotected water with their livestock animals. As a result, people like her, the elderly, and small children were suffering a lot from diarrheal diseases for many years. "We were spending quite a lot of money out of our poverty for buying medicines in those bad times. Our health was deteriorating, and we were sick from the unsafe water we were drinking. However, we are now blessed with clean water in our village and I am the *Ado-Wenber*" (meaning chairwoman, of the WASHCO, the Well Committee). "I am always here for the daily follow-up. The water is sufficient for our village and is clean for our consumption. We are enjoying it since September, and we are no more sick from dirty water like the previous time. This water has given us back our health. **Clean water is a medicine.** I am very much thankful to REST and WellWishers, and አዝዮ እየ ዘመስግነኩም! (Thank you very much!)"

PHOTO BELOW: Zenebu at the well in Kolea Mishe.



End of the tax year approaches...

All donations over \$2 to WellWishers are tax deductible. Please remember us before June 30 if you are thinking of donating. 98% of donations go directly to support our program work in Ethiopia. Receipts for July 2019 - June 2020 will be posted or emailed early July.

A little help goes a long way

\$30 will ensure a permanent supply of clean domestic water for someone in northern Ethiopia, **\$150** supplies a whole family with water. Behind these figures is a lot of voluntary support and effort and goodwill both here and in Ethiopia. Thank you for your continued support.

Contact: Graham Romanes, WellWishers PO Box 2088 Fitzroy VIC 3065

Email: info@wellwishersethiopia.com

Phone: 0419 559 138

Website: www.wellwishersethiopia.com