

# SDATE

BRINGING YOU OUR LATEST NEWS

Vita 

Building Sustainable Livelihoods

Issue No. 4

April 2008



Children gathering clean water.  
Eritrea

VITA NEWS  
FROM ERITREA

VITA NEWS  
FROM ETHIOPIA

FUNDRAISING  
& EVENTS

In this issue, you can read firsthand how Vita's work impacts the lives of people in Eritrea and Ethiopia.

**From the award winning fuel efficient stoves to Moringa trees and our poultry programme, Vita continues to work with communities to build sustainable livelihoods.**

# VITA NEWS FROM ERITREA

Reported by Tesfalem Abbay, Tegist Weldu and Tsehail Afewerki  
Vita Eritrea



Tesfalem Abbay



Women construct the stoves themselves from local materials

Below: **Cooking bread on the new fuel efficient stove.**



## The community even named the fuel-efficient stove 'Adhanet' meaning 'Saviour'.

### The Fuel Efficient Stove

In Eritrea, especially in the rural areas, wood is used for heating, cooking and baking purposes in open fires and inefficient smoky stoves. These fires and stoves require large quantities of wood and emit health damaging smoke within the household.

Vita, as a partner of the Ministry of Agriculture, started introducing the improved fuel-efficient stoves in 2007 with the general objective of empowering communities and regional governments to reverse the trend of deforestation. The environmental impacts of using improved and efficient stoves include reduced deforestation, reduced carbon emissions and minimized soil erosion.

95% of the beneficiaries of the stove project are women.

In order to make the project sustainable and have long-term effects, local women have been trained in the construction and use of the improved stove technology. Once a woman is trained, she will train another five women and the process continues. The stove is constructed using local resources.

Mrs. Ezigiamin Asfaha from Adi Tekelezan, a town in the Anseba region is one of the first beneficiaries of the new stove. She is a 45 year old mother of six children. When she was using the traditional stove, Mrs. Ezigiamin

had to travel to another town to collect wood fuel twice a week to meet her weekly requirement. Since the introduction of the improved stove, she only collects wood every two to three months. An additional benefit is that she doesn't have to keep her children out of school in order to help her collect the wood.

The toxic smoke that was emitted is a main source of eye disease that sometimes leads to blindness and other respiratory problems. Now she and her family don't worry about any diseases related to smoke and the frequency of their visits to clinics has been significantly reduced. She told us that the community even named the fuel-efficient stove "Adhanet" meaning 'Saviour'.

Another member of the community to receive the new stove is 80 year old Mrs. Abeba Giliom. Mrs. Abeba has eye problems and she wears an eyeglass.

She hopes that the fuel efficiency of the new stove and the decreased smoke emissions will help her eyes get better. She also hopes the stove will reduce the burden on her young grandchildren who used to travel a long distance to collect firewood.



Above: **Mrs. Ezigiamin helps measure the area for her new stove.**

# The Moringa Tree is a multi-purpose tree with a tremendous variety of potential uses.

## The Moringa Tree

The leaves and pods of the Moringa have great nutritional value and yield many vitamins and minerals. Parts of the tree can also be used as animal forage, as household cleaning agent, perfume, dye, fertilizer, medicine, water clarifying agent, fibre for rope, and as an agent for tanning hides. Oil can be extracted from its seeds and used as a condiment, as a hydrant and as a lubricant. The seeds can be used as fertiliser, and the litter from the leaves can be used in the prevention of plant pests.

Vita in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture conducted a farmers' day introducing the Moringa Tree to community representatives in different regions where Moringa trees have already been planted. The fact that Moringa leaves could be consumed either cooked or raw has helped in increasing its popularity in a very short period of time.

Mrs. Regat Gezae, a mother of seven lives in a small town of Mai Dima, Zoba Dehub, Sub-zoba Areza. Mrs. Regat suffers from hypertension and she was having difficulty eating any food. After the introduction of the Moringa tree, she planted a couple of Moringa seedlings in her compound. She has two recipes for preparing the Moringa leaves and she eats it three times a week. Once her health started to improve, Mrs. Regat's husband realized the benefits of the Moringa tree and committed to take care of it.

Mrs. Abrehet Kidane, a mother of three lives in Geza Keren, Sub-zoba Adi Quala. The first time that she heard about the Moringa tree was during the farmers' day. Once she tasted different recipes of the Moringa

leaf, she was encouraged and planted a couple of Moringa seedlings. Mrs. Abrehet said that when she can't afford to include ingredients such as eggs or meat, she simply cooks the leaves and add some garlic and the taste is terrific. She recalls a neighbour who was criticizing her because she had a misguided understanding about the tree.

One day, Mrs. Abrehet invited her neighbour to taste the Moringa leaf and her neighbour was amazed at how good it tasted. She took some Moringa leaves from Mrs. Abrehet's tree and now she nurtures her own Moringa tree. Mrs. Abrehet concluded that the introduction of the Moringa tree is very beneficial to the community in general and to the poor women

in particular. It provides essential nutritional content and it can be prepared with minimum cost and in a short period of time. She recommends that this tree should be introduced in all parts of Eritrea.



A woman collects her Moringa Tree from Vita

# VITA NEWS FROM ETHIOPIA

Reported by **Alemitu Golda**

Monitoring and Reporting Officer, Vita Ethiopia



Left: **Mrs. Adanech Qito and her husband take care of their hens as part of Vita's poultry programme**

## Vita's Poultry Programme

Mrs. Adanech Qito is a woman from a marginalized class called 'Degela' in Shama kebele and one of Vita's poultry component participants. In April 2007 Mrs. Adanech received three cocks and three hens. She received training in poultry management. After two months of proper feeding and good poultry management, the hens started producing eggs.

The hens have produced 480 eggs during the eight months from June 2007 to January 2008. When the hens first started producing eggs, Mrs. Adanech used them to feed her family. As production increased, she started selling some of the eggs. So far, Mrs. Adanech has earned 240Birr (about 20 euros) from her sales and this is new income for her family. She spends her income firstly on poultry feed to keep the hens healthy and then she buys food items for household consumption.

In addition, Mrs. Adanech has been able to buy a school uniform for her son as well as his monthly writing materials for school at a cost of 20Birr per month.

At this time, Mrs. Adanech has a plan to sell some of her cocks to buy a sheep so that she will be less dependent on cocks and hens alone.



**After two months of proper feeding and good poultry management, the hens started producing eggs.**

# Word has spread about the success of the village and now other villages have started to follow their example.

Ethiopia's most important root crop

## What is a False Banana Plant?

Below: Mr. Asfaw Amare outside the newly constructed latrine.



### Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) at Kulba Village, Chench

Mr. Asfaw Amare lives in Kulba village which has 30 households that depend on agriculture with the production of barley, wheat, enset (false banana plant), potatoes and other crops.

Before CLTS, Mr. Asfaw incurred monthly medical bills and his children were missing school due to diarrhoea and other open defecation related diseases. After the introduction of CLTS he and his family experienced

positive changes in their lives. Mr. Asfaw has constructed a latrine for his family, as well as mobilizing all villagers to stop open defecation.

The village successfully declared 100% total sanitation within a few months of starting the campaign. This is the beginning of a new approach from villagers to organize themselves and work together to improve the quality of their lives.

Mr. Asfaw and his family can now save the money previously spent on illness related to open defecation and his children

Enset (*E. ventricosum*) is commonly known as “false banana” for its close resemblance to the domesticated banana plant. It is Ethiopia's most important root crop, a traditional staple crop in the densely populated south and southwestern parts of Ethiopia.

The root is the main edible portion as its fruit is not edible. Each plant takes four to five years to mature, at which time a single root will give 40 kg of food. Due to the long period of time from planting to harvest, plantings need to be staggered over time, to ensure that there is enset available for harvest in every season. Enset will tolerate drought better than most cereal crops.

Mr. Asfaw Amare with the False Banana Plant



regularly attend school. The villagers were so motivated by the results of the CLTS effort that they formed joint labour groups to work together on further improvements.

One of these projects has helped Mr. Asfaw increase his crop production, so that now he feeds his family from his own production. The cooperation continues and two houses have been constructed for poor widows by their fellow villagers' contributions.

The village members have also constructed a communal latrine for passers-by, who used to defecate inside the wooded area in the village. As a result the wooded area can now be used for recreation. The village has received an award from the Woreda Administration for their actions and far sighted development plans. Word has spread about the success of the village and now other villages have started to follow their example.

# VITA FUNDRAISING & EVENTS

## For further information on Vita please contact:

Vita, 73a Blessington Street, Dublin 7.  
Phone 01 882 0108 Email [info@vita.ie](mailto:info@vita.ie)  
[www.vita.ie](http://www.vita.ie)

## Vita's Classical Music Concert at the National Concert Hall, Tuesday June 17th

For the first year, Vita is joining up with the Hibernian Orchestra for their annual charity concert at the National Concert Hall. The concert will feature international star, Finghin Collins, for a programme of romantic classics including the scintillating piano concerto in G by Ravel.

The artistic director of the concert is John Finucane and the delightful programme will include Maurice Ravel's "La Valse", Piano Concerto in G and Modest Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" as arranged by Ravel.

**If you would like to reserve tickets please contact;**  
**Jenny Douglas at (01) 882 0108 or email [jenny.douglas@vita.ie](mailto:jenny.douglas@vita.ie)**

## Vita's Ethiopian Challenge: 23rd October – 2nd November 2008

In October 2008 the inaugural trip to visit Vita projects in Ethiopia will take place. This trip is designed to introduce you to the many facets of Ethiopia and the difficulties faced by its people. Its purpose is to challenge your views of the developing world, to promote a better understanding of Vita's work and to see what can be achieved with your support.

The trip will include visits to some of the wonders of ancient Ethiopian civilisation. You will also visit modern developed Ethiopia and be able to compare this with the areas of the country in great need of sustainable livelihoods development which form the major part of the trip.

The cost is €4,750 and this includes your flights, accommodation, meals, internal transport and support for Vita.

Approximately 60% of the fee goes back into the Vita projects that you will visit.

**If you would like to reserve a place, or for more information, please contact;**  
**Jenny Douglas at (01) 882 0108 or email [jenny.douglas@vita.ie](mailto:jenny.douglas@vita.ie)**

## 2008 Flora Women's Mini Marathon – Do it for Vita!

Walk, jog or run for Vita on the 2nd June 2008. Take part in this fantastic day out and help raise funds for Vita. You will be making a lasting positive change in the living conditions of poor and marginalised people in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

**If you would like to take part, please contact;**  
**Jenny Douglas on (01) 882 0108 or email [jenny.douglas@vita.ie](mailto:jenny.douglas@vita.ie)** to receive your Vita Mini-Marathon Volunteer Pack including sponsorship cards and a Vita T-shirt.

## Trees for Life

Looking for that unique gift? 'Trees for Life' is a novel approach to honour life's many occasions whereby an oak tree is planted in Marlay Park, Dublin for you or a loved one. The trees are planted as gifts for birthdays, weddings, christenings, anniversaries, communions, confirmations as well as Christmas presents.

Trees may also be planted to celebrate the arrival of a newborn or in memory of a loved one.

For €100, an Oak Tree will be planted in the recipient's name in Marlay Park in Dublin and a personalised gift card will be sent with details of where the tree can be viewed. For each oak tree planted in Marlay Park, the funds can be used to plant 35 Moringa trees in Eritrea or Ethiopia thereby having a meaningful and lasting impact on many families struggling to cope with poverty and starvation.

**Call Vita at (01) 882 0108 for more information or visit [www.vita.ie](http://www.vita.ie).**

## Call for Volunteers for Africa Day – 25th May 2008

As part of Africa Day festivities, Vita will take to the streets of Ireland selling their "Angels for Africa". The angels come in four different colours - white, red, blue and green and are the perfect trinket or gift idea. Vita is currently looking for people around Ireland to volunteer on the day to help sell these "Angels for Africa" on May 25th.

**If you would like to volunteer please contact;**  
**Jenny Douglas on (01) 882 0108 or email [jenny.douglas@vita.ie](mailto:jenny.douglas@vita.ie).**

## Vita Charity Shops in Dundalk & Kilkenny

Vita shops stock a wonderful array of the latest fashions for all the family. And what's more- the prices are right. Pick up a fabulous designer dress for a knock down bargain price. Vita Kilkenny is located at 12A Parliament Street and Vita Dundalk is at 6A Church Street. Donations are very welcome.

## Recycle for Vita

Your trash is worth cash for Vita! Your office trash can be worth thousands of euro to Vita. Join the Vita recycling appeal today and recycle you printer/ fax cartridges and mobile phones. Simply visit [www.recyclingappeal.com](http://www.recyclingappeal.com) and click the 'Recycle Now' button. If you have product to send in, you will either receive a freepost envelope or a call from a member of the Recycling Appeal team to coordinate a free collection. To ensure the funds your products raise are directed to Vita simply insert 'Other' in the 'Collecting for' field and then type Vita.

**You can also call 1800 933 616 to join Vita's Recycling Appeal. Alternatively you can drop off or send your items to Vita's head office in Dublin or the Vita's shops in Dundalk and Kilkenny.**

## Vita joins Legacy Promotion Ireland

Legacy Promotion Ireland is a consortium of Irish charities that have come together to inspire more people to leave a charitable bequest in their wills.

By leaving a donation to a charity in your will, not only will you be supporting a cause that you care about; you will be leaving a lasting legacy that will create a better future for others.

**[www.legacypromotion.ie](http://www.legacypromotion.ie)**

Vita is registered in Ireland, No. 152968. Registered office is 73a Blessington Street, Dublin.7.

Vita has been granted tax exemption from Irish Revenue Commissioners and has a charitable tax exemption No. CHY 9670