

SDATE

BRINGING YOU OUR LATEST NEWS

Vita 

Building Sustainable Livelihoods

Issue No. 5

September 2008



Local children gathering clean water from the Adi Mekeda hand pump in Eritrea.

VITA NEWS
FROM ETHIOPIA
VITA NEWS
FROM ERITREA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
FINANCIAL NEWS
FR. KEVIN EVENT
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 bakery programmes, Vita continues to work with communities to build sustainable livelihoods.

With improved stoves now installed in 12,000 homes across Eritrea, communities inform us of huge positive impact on livelihoods and environment.

Chief Executive update

Vita is approaching our 20th anniversary (2009) in great shape, thanks to funding from our loyal supporters and matching funds from the Irish government. With improved stoves now installed in 12,000 homes across Eritrea, communities inform us of huge positive impact on livelihoods and environment.



As you read this, several million trees are being planted in Eritrea and Ethiopia, wells and latrines are being dug, crops harvested and lives changed. Vita's great wish and plan is to build a bridge between our supporters and the communities and projects you are making happen.

We started in Ballyousskill where Fr. Kevin Doherty first started Refugee Trust, and 500 people attended a ceremony and project viewing in July, and Vita intends to visit communities in Kilkenny, Laois, Carlow, Dundalk, Cork, and Dublin to bring more information and get feedback from our supporters.

We are delighted that Fr. Norman Fitzgerald has assumed the position of Honorary President, with Brendan Casey, a former senior executive of AIB, assuming the role of Chairman of the Board. For my part I will be moving from the position of Chief Executive to Company Secretary in September, and John Weakliam, who has returned to

Ireland after eight years working with Vita in Eritrea, will be appointed as the new Chief Executive.

Many thanks,

John Wallace
Chief Executive, Vita

Vita Financial News

2008 has been a busy and productive year to date for the Vita offices in Ethiopia and Eritrea as well as our head office in Dublin. The following is a breakdown of how funds have been allocated so far this year:

In Eritrea €555,000 has been allocated to the following projects:

- Sustainable Livelihoods for communities in Hagaz (Hagaz Project)
- EU project on Improved stoves and forestry
- Sustainable Livelihoods for communities in Hamelmalo (Hamelmalo Project)
- Sustainable Livelihood in Adi Quala (Adi Quala Project)

In Ethiopia, €245,200 has been allocated to the following projects:

- Arba Minch Urban Development project
- Hammar Project
- Shama Project

We also would like to take this opportunity to gratefully acknowledge the ongoing partnership between Vita and Irish Aid and the 3 year block grant which we recently received from them in June of this year.

Through to the end of 2008 and into the coming years, we will continue to work on the above projects to reduce poverty while renewing the environment.



Aisling Sheehan
Financial Officer, Vita

VITA NEWS FROM ETHIOPIA



Vita Ethiopia Team



Mrs. Zenebech working in the Arba Minch region

Arba Minch Income Generation

Mrs. Zenebech is 42 years old. She is a single woman and has no children. She is a member of the Horticulture Production and Marketing Cooperative found in Limate Village, Arba Minch Town.

Before she got involved with the Vita Income Generating Project Mrs. Zenebech was struggling to make a living by working as a casual labourer and selling firewood. However this work was irregular and not enough to cover her basic living costs. Since becoming part of the cooperative she has been able to receive training to further increase her income.

Based on her labour contribution during the process she also received her share of income of 84 Birr which is €5.50.

“I was selling fire wood and labour throughout my life until I joined this cooperative. The income I got from selling firewood was too small and not regular enough to cover household living cost. After I joined the cooperative I was able to start planning for the future based on my regular income for working there.”

“Trees for Life” Campaign – Ethiopia and Ireland

Although native to India and North Africa, the story of the Moringa Tree is known to relief agents and medical workers worldwide. In recent years, Vita introduced the Miracle Tree into Ethiopia as part of our Building Sustainable Livelihoods Program. Under the supervision of qualified horticulturists we are carefully planting and nurturing the growth of thousands of Miracle Trees in local seed nurseries which are then distributed amongst local villagers.

The Moringa Tree – also known as the ‘Miracle Tree’ is one of the keys to ending hunger and malnutrition in many parts of the world affected by poverty, drought, disease and food shortages. It is widely hailed as the world’s most useful tree as it is fast growing, drought tolerant and pest resistant. It is the ultimate multi-purpose plant as every single part of this wonderful tree can be used to alleviate suffering and hunger. The planting of the trees also helps renew the environment.

The “Trees for Life” campaign 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. For €100, an Oak Tree will be planted in the recipient’s name in Marlay Park in Dublin and for each tree planted the funds can be used to plant 90 Moringa

trees in Ethiopia thereby having a meaningful and lasting impact on many families struggling to cope with poverty.

For more information on our Trees for Life campaign please turn to the back page of this newsletter.

Since October 2006 Vita through the “Trees for Life” campaign has been able to distribute over 15,000 Moringa trees in Africa.

Oak Trees planted in Marlay Park, Dublin



Moringa Trees being distributed in Arba Minch



Selling Moringa leaves for cooking in the local market in Turmi

VITA NEWS FROM ERITREA



Vita Eritrea Team

Women members of
the Haikota Bakery

Bakeries

Since 2004 Vita has established three bakeries in the Gash Barka region with women members being selected from the surrounding areas of Tessenei, Haykota and Fortosawa by local government depending on their levels of vulnerability.

Sites for the bakery buildings were allocated and the equipment needed such as ovens, mixers, cutters, and bread bins were purchased and installed.

There are sixty women in each bakery and they are divided into six groups of ten. Each bakery has its own cooperative name and is managed by three women elected from the remaining members who will work as Chairwoman, Secretary and Treasurer. Flour was then provided and the women started to produce quality bread which could be sold to the communities.

All profits from the bread sold are shared amongst the members equally and is a much needed income for their families with emphasis being on their new found ability to send their children to school.

Mrs. Saedia Mohammed is one of the members of these bakeries. She is a single mother with five children to support. Before she became a member of the group she had no income to feed her family, but after Vita supported the group she was able to get bread for breakfast for her family as well as the income they share every month.

The Award winning Fuel Efficient Stoves: Update

These fuel-efficient stoves use three times less fuel wood than the traditional stove. The three-fold decrease in consumption of wood is partly because the new stoves can burn small twigs and branches.

A woman from the Geza Hamle region building her fuel efficient stove



This saves women and children from cutting down or destroying trees, which is estimated at five times the regeneration rate, and also reduces the distance they have to travel to collect firewood.

To date a total of 1,082 fuel-efficient stoves have been constructed in the Anseba region of Eritrea. Moreover the Ministry of Agriculture is committed to constructing another 2,000 during the remainder of 2008 and into 2009.

In the Debub region over 200 stoves have been constructed in Geza Medebai and Geza Hamle Kebabi areas and the training with supervision and support of 250 women is underway in the five regions in Eritrea.



Forestry:

At the moment Eritrea is faced with a severe environmental crisis which is a direct result of massive deforestation occurring mainly due to the 30 years liberation struggle and continued today by a high rate of domestic wood fuel use.

This has resulted in dangerous environmental conditions for the country which is now in urgent need of afforestation programmes.

As part of these afforestation programmes within the country, Vita is supporting:

- Three nursery sites in the Anseba region. To date around 926,563 different types of seedlings have been planted and once ready these seedlings will be distributed to nine sub-regions.
- Twelve nurseries in the Debub region. The Ministry of Agriculture have raised around 2 million seedlings in 12 nurseries sites for distribution to 12 sub-regions.
- Three nurseries sited in the Gash Barka region and The Ministry of Agriculture have raised 500,000 different seedlings which will be distributed to five sub-regions.

Before the rainy season in these regions, members of the local communities are preparing holes for the purpose of planting these seedlings.

Women members of
the Haikota Bakery



Women attending the
nursery in Barrentu.



Moringa:

In our last update newsletter we told you of the stories of Mrs. Regat Gezae and Mrs. Abrehet Kidane and how the Moringa Tree and its many uses helped them in their daily lives. However, Moringa Trees is not only introduced at household level but also on commercial farms. For example Mr. Habte who has a commercial farm in Gash Barka region planted more than 100,000 seedlings on 60 hectares area of land. The purpose of this is to export oil which can be extracted from Moringa. Mr. Habte has already started to export oil to Saudi.

Such commercial farms like Mr. Habte's will encourage other farmers to plant Moringa Trees on their farms for two main reasons of using the Moringa leaves in the preparation of meals and selling the seeds from the trees for extraction of oil.

A tribute to Fr. Kevin Doheny

On Saturday the 5th of July almost 500 people gathered in Ballyou skill to honour the extraordinary life of the late Father Kevin Doheny. Born in nearby Ballinalacken in 1925, Fr. Kevin was ordained in 1953 and went on to live a wonderful life helping those who most needed it all around the world.

After missionary work in Nigeria and his heroic work during the Biafran war Fr. Kevin went on to work in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia, Sudan and Angola and also began to work closely with the late Mother Teresa. He also became involved in crises in Rwanda, Bosnia, Sierra Leone and Kenya.

In 1989 Fr. Kevin and Fr. Norman Fitzgerald together founded Refugee Trust International now Vita under the patronage of Mother Teresa.

Through their leadership thousands of vulnerable people have been given the opportunity to build sustainable livelihoods for themselves – something that Vita today is continuing through their projects.

Many thanks to all those involved in the wonderful celebration namely: The Doheny Family, John Sheerin, Mr. Frank Brennan and the Bally Hall Committee, members of The Firoda Comhaltas, The Castlecomer Male Voice,



Members of The Firoda Comhaltas

The Lisdowney Vocal group, Moveable Feasts, Helen Mooney, Patricia Lee, Noel Cummins, John O'Gorman, Kieran Mooney, Michael Phelan, and Billy McDonald.

Legacy Promotion Ireland

Forty charities, including Vita and other non-profit organisations under the umbrella of Legacy Promotion Ireland, have launched a national TV advertising campaign.

The campaign aims to encourage people to leave a donation in their will to their favourite charity. In doing this, people leave a legacy that lasts for generations.

Irish charities from the developing world, healthcare, childcare, social care and animal protection areas have all joined together for this great cause. To see the new TV log on to www.legacypromotion.ie

Richard Radcliffe, a UK based legacy specialist, spoke at the launch of the legacy campaign and said "This is a really exciting moment in Irish fundraising. All our research shows that up to 60% of people who support charities are happy to consider leaving a gift in their will. Success relies on ensuring the tone is right and privacy is not intruded upon."

Legacy Questions and Answers

Why should I make a will?

Making a will is the best way to make sure that your wishes will be followed when you are gone. Your loved ones will thank you too, as having your affairs in order will reduce risk of complications and added expense. Thankfully, it is easy, quick and inexpensive to have a will drafted by a qualified professional.

When should I make my will?

You can make a will at any time, but often reaching certain stages in life provides the prompt we need, for example buying a house, getting married, getting divorced, having children or retiring. If you don't have one already, now is the best time.

Who should make my will?

Drawing up your own will can be problematic. You may omit particularly important details, such as what you wish to happen if the main beneficiary does not survive.

If you are making a will or just amending your existing will it is worth speaking to a solicitor about your plans in detail. Everyone's circumstances are different and a solicitor will be able to advise you on the best options available to you.

Why give?

By leaving a donation in your will to an organisation that you care about, you will be providing the much-needed financial support they need to continue their work. It is also something that everyone can do.

What type of donation can I leave to a charity in my will?

There are three different types of gifts that are most commonly given to charities through wills. We recommend you discuss each with your solicitor to find out which suits you best.

Residuary Legacy: If you would like to leave a gift from the remains of your estate after you have taken care of your family, friends and loved ones, you can bequeath the residue or part of the residue of your estate.

Pecuniary Legacy: You may decide to leave a specific sum of money to Vita, the sum of which is determined when you make your will.

Specific Legacy: You can also bequeath a particular item of value, for example jewellery, shares or property.

I already have a will – can I change it to include Vita?

If you already have a will, it is easy to make a change to it and include Vita. This is called a codicil and can be drawn up easily by your solicitor.

What should I do next?

If you do not already have a solicitor, please log on to www.lawsociety.ie to find one in your area, from a list provided by the Law Society

VITA FUNDRAISING & EVENTS

For further information on Vita please contact:

Vita, 73a Blessington Street, Dublin 7.

Phone **01 882 0108** Email info@vita.ie

www.vita.ie

Thank You for Your Support!

We would like to take this opportunity to say “Thank You” to all of our supporters both new and long-term who are the lifeline of our organisation.

Contributions from our supporters form the core of our fundraising and in turn allow us to access further funding from Irish Aid and EU funds. They therefore help us to establish long term and sustainable development projects which are helping hundreds of thousands of people in Africa every year.

Without your support we would not be able to continue our work - combating poverty and protecting the environment.

We would like to especially thank those who took part in the Flora Women’s Mini Marathon 2008, those who came to the Vita/Hibernian Orchestra Summer Promenade in June and those who took part in the Schools Buy a Miracle Tree Campaign 2008.

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 100 Moringa trees in Eritrea or Ethiopia thereby having a meaningful and lasting impact on many families struggling to cope with poverty.

Call Vita at (01) 882 0108 for more information or visit www.vita.ie.

Call for Ambassadors/ Fundraisers for Vita

Vita is recruiting Ambassadors around the country to spread the word to their friends, families, colleagues, schools, and colleges about the work we do in Africa and to help raise funds on our behalf so we can continue to combat poverty and protect the environment.

There are lots of different ways you can fundraise for Vita, whether you are a member of your local church or community group or social group. Alternatively you can always organise an event on your own. Vita is always delighted to hear from people who are planning to hold an event or take part in a sponsored activity for our benefit. We are more than happy to provide advice, support and fundraising materials for your chosen activity.

If you would like to become an ambassador or hold your own fundraising event please contact Jenny Douglas on (01) 882 0108 or email jenny.douglas@vita.ie.

Vita Charity Shops in Dundalk & Kilkenny

Vita Charity 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 always very welcome.

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

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 your printer/fax cartridges and mobile phones.

Simply visit 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 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