

Vita Newsletter



November, 2017

Vita is an international non-governmental organization working to achieve thriving rural economies in Africa with access to services, markets and livelihoods for all.

Vita delivers projects with our partner communities that achieve sustainable livelihoods via integrated water, household energy and agriculture programmes. Our programmes impact on the lives of thousands of families through our innovative food, water and energy security work. We improve the capacity of our local partner

communities and develop solutions that are replicable beyond the boundaries of our projects. Vita is funded by the Irish Government through Irish Aid, the European Union, philanthropic organisations, religious communities, the Irish agri-food sector, public donations and private individuals.

Message from our CEO



Life is ever challenging for women in rural communities in Eritrea and Ethiopia. The drought is biting hard, food is short and menfolk are often absent.

Vita is proud to have supported over 50,000 people in accessing sustainable energy, water and food during the third quarter of 2017. Our work is expanding in scope and ambition and we are preparing the ground for

a massive scale up of the Green Impact Fund. Our aim is to reach up to two million rural people in Africa by 2020.

Vita is very grateful to its staff and partners who are making this ambitious work possible.

John Weakliam
CEO



Vita and the transformation of Anseba Region, Eritrea



Families in Anseba before their well was fixed

The programme, once completed, will supply clean water to approximately 140,000 people across Eritrea and contribute to overall carbon emission reduction of 300,000 tonnes per annum under the Vita Green Impact Fund.



A rehabilitated hand pump



Local stakeholders at a meeting to discuss project implementation

Vita has been working in Eritrea since 2000 and has implemented various projects in the country. We recently commenced water pump repair work in a third region of Eritrea, Anseba.

Following on from huge successes with repairing some 233 broken water points in two other regions, Maekal and Debub, this is the next step in the water programme, which aims to repair all broken water points across the country. There are 104 fully fledged water supply systems in the Anseba region, 53 of which are broken.

Other Vita projects in Eritrea include:

- * pond and dam construction for communities in Hagaz and Hamelmalo;
- * construction of more than 12,000 fuel efficient stoves;
- * rehabilitating of Geleb tree nursery site and construction of two micro dams;
- * supporting farmers to conduct furrow irrigation;
- * construction of market yard centers in Elabered and Geleb;
- * income generation projects for women; and
- * multiplication of potato seeds and other cereals.

Come and experience The Great Ethiopian Run

The last week of November is always a very busy one, when we take a large group of Vita supporters to the Great Ethiopian Run (GER) in Addis Ababa. Nothing can prepare you for the raw excitement that is the GER. It takes place on a sunny November morning in Addis Ababa (where, to be fair, it's nearly always sunny!) and upwards of 40,000 Ethiopians tog out in their national colours to take part. It's an extraordinary sight to see - a massive column of green and gold, snaking through the hills of this incredible high altitude city, Africa's fourth largest and its defacto capital.

The 10km run/ walk is organised, hosted and promoted by the great athlete Haile Gebrselassie, Ethiopia's most famous son and most ardent champion, and his presence is everywhere. He runs with the elite athletes, who get a 'head start' on us mere mortals – this is a race after all! Then, at nine sharp, the great mass of runners and walkers starts to move forward.

This race belongs to the Ethiopian people and they are extremely proud of it. Although the odd foreigner can be spotted in the crowd (organisers

say that they make up about 0.02% of participants), this is predominantly an Ethiopian celebration.

And celebration is the right word, because the whole 10km is punctuated by bands, dancers and cultural performances that transform the experience into one big party. The footpaths that border the course are thronged with locals who step outside to cheer you on, mostly by singing and dancing alongside you for a few minutes of your journey. As the sun climbs higher you will see the finish line, tucked inside a large park in the centre of Addis. You will get your medal and some water before you throw yourself on the grass to take a breather. But don't dally for too long, because the party is really only getting started.

Besides participating in the run, our team members get an opportunity to visit Vita programmes in Ethiopia. For details on how you can be a part of Vita's team at the next Great Ethiopian Run, please get in touch with ciara.feehely@vita.ie.



The Vita Team during a previous GER



Haile Gebrselassie during the launch of the 2017 Great Ethiopian Run

Celebrating 10 years with Bank of Ireland Staff Fund

In October 2017, the Bank of Ireland Staff Fund had their first open day across all the bank centres to highlight the amazing work that they do. Vita was delighted to be asked to represent the Fund in the Cabinteely Operations Centre in Dublin.

A day long programme of events kept the 400 staff there informed and entertained while we explained the impact of Vita's 10 year partnership with the Staff Fund and encouraged newer staff to join.



Speaking at the Responsible Innovation Summit 2017



John Weakliam speaking at the event

Vita participated in the Responsible Innovation Summit 2017 which was held at Croke Park on 10th October. The annual summit brings together leading thinkers and doers to discover new dimensions of innovation and ways of turning actual challenges into responsible solutions.

Our CEO John Weakliam was one of the speakers and he spoke about the Vita Green Impact Fund which is an innovative model of financing development that provides great social benefits while reducing climate impact and realises a financial return on the investment.

Vita's involvement with IFIAD

Vita is one of sixteen founding members of the Irish Forum for International Agricultural Development (IFIAD). The Forum was established in early 2016 as a voluntary, multi-disciplinary platform to share knowledge and good practices, capitalizing on Ireland's excellence in the agri-food sector for the benefit of development programming and policy. This year's IFIAD Conference was held on 23rd October under the theme, '*The Role of Agriculture in the Delivery of One Health*'. The *One Health* concept is a worldwide strategy for expanding interdisciplinary collaborations and communications in all aspects of *health* care for humans, animals and the environment. The main message from the event is that human health is inextricably linked to animal and environmental health hence the need for concerted action from all stakeholders in order to develop appropriate policies and programmes.



The Keynote Speaker, Dr. Delia Grace of International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) speaking at the event

Meet Tsehayu Kassie of Vita Ethiopia



Tsehayu has worked with Vita for twelve years. He is Vita's field office coordinator for the Arba Minch office in the Southern Region. He joined Vita after working as technical advisor on a large scale fruit farm project in Northern Ethiopia. Before that, he had worked in different capacities with the Ministry of Agriculture in Ethiopia and with several private companies and NGOs.

Tsehayu holds a BSc. degree in Agricultural Engineering and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Climate Change and Development. The desire to help farmers in his community by improving their productivity and economic returns is what prompted him to get into development work. He is glad that Vita has given him the opportunity to enhance the livelihoods of thousands of smallholder farmers in rural areas of his home country.

Tsehayu is married to Firewoin Gebre and they're blessed with four boys. We asked him what he would change if he had the power and he said, "If I am given the power, I would stop the gender imbalance in my family. I would have at least one daughter." Well, let's hope he gets that power because besides his work, Tsehayu's family is the source of his happiness. He enjoys reading history and fiction books in his spare time.

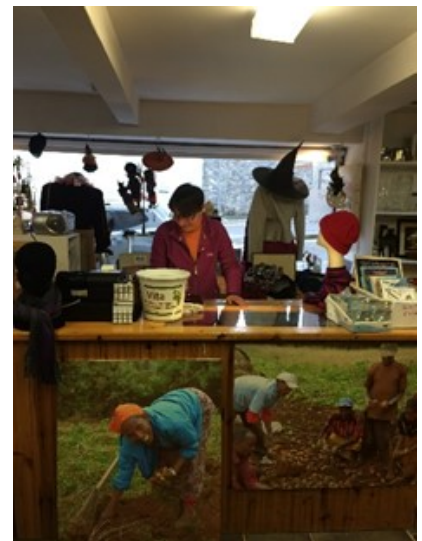
Visit the Vita Charity Shop in Kilkenny



Nestled in the heart of Kilkenny is the Vita Charity Shop. Newly decorated, it is difficult to miss the shop's bright blue exterior. The charity shop is one avenue for raising funds to carry out Vita's activities that provide energy, water, food and sustainable livelihoods for rural communities in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The shop is open from Monday to Saturday and we have an excellent team of staff and volunteers to receive your donations and give them a new lease of life by selling them at reasonable prices to our customers. We depend entirely on the generous donations of our loyal supporters and your support would be greatly appreciated. If you're ever passing through Kilkenny, please pop in and look around.

To donate used items or to volunteer at the shop, send us an email on communications@vita.ie.



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Vita Green Impact Fund

Climate change is a huge driver of poverty, producing erratic weather conditions that lead to drought and food insecurity that undermine the integrity of our planet and people. There is simply too much carbon in the atmosphere and The Vita Green Impact Fund reduces this while delivering sustainable livelihoods to farm families in East Africa. It is a next generation model of aid which shifts away from traditional grant models towards social impact investments by creating a sustainable funding model.

The Vita Green Impact Fund invests in high impact projects that reduce emissions, generate funds in communities and provide a return to investors through the provision of improved cook stoves, clean water, solar lights and sustainable tree planting schemes. This innovative, next generation model of development provides investors with a triple bottom line:

Green — Climate Change Mitigation (400,000 tonnes of CO2 emission savings)

Impact — Social, health & financial transformation for 200,000 people in Africa

Fund — 10% cumulative return on investment

For more information please check out www.VitaGreenImpactFund.com

The United Nations 'Lazy Person's Guide to Saving the World'

It is commonly stated that '*Change starts with you*'. There's no better time in history when this statement has been more relevant than now. In order to achieve the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), each one of us needs to engage more actively. Every human on earth-even the most indifferent, laziest person among us is part of the solution. To get us started, the United Nations (UN) has proposed a list of super easy things which if we adopt in our routines, will make a big difference. They propose a list of things that you can do from your couch, things you can do at home and things you can do outside your house. Follow this link (<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/takeaction/>) to explore more things that you can do to make a personal impact on achieving the SDGs.

You can also visit the [Vita website](#) to find out how to calculate your carbon footprint.

