



Verein
Emmanuel

Emmanuel Newsletter

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Newsletter (written on March 14, 2017 / Simplon area in deepest winter!)

Dear friends and acquaintances, kind benefactors!

It is 5:30 a.m. I appreciate the stillness of the wonderfully beautiful full moon night here in Rothwald VS, where I am able to get new energy and inspiration at a ski tour camp! I want to use the leisure time to invite you to come along with me to Soddo/Ethiopia and see what is happening in the lives of the disabled men and women of Project Emmanuel. In January 2017, Project Emmanuel celebrated its second anniversary, and I am simply thankful for everything that has come about during this time. Happy birthday & blessings, dear "Emmanuel"!



Heartfelt thanks from Project Emmanuel for all of your support! ... and two happy recipients ☺

News from Project Emmanuel, Soddo:

Food workshop (workplaces for disabled women):

Below I.: The food workshop – Women at work... with men helping!



What joy! The new workshop for women could be completely equipped thanks to the donation of a foundation and has already started up (food production). Thanks to the procurement of dishes, tables, tools and ovens, a variety of foods can be prepared: snacks, bread, and of course injera (flatbread made of teff, an Ethiopian grain), THE main food in Ethiopia! The women are overjoyed and highly motivated. Their products are sold on the market, in the neighborhood and in the city. The University of Soddo even asked Emmanuel if they could supply 10,000 pieces of injera. We are not quite that far yet, but we are working on it ☺!

The women are also thankful for the “emergency accommodations” integrated into the workshop: these are simple but tastefully arranged sleeping nooks, where they can spend the night if they have no nearby or safe place to stay outside of the workshop. The workshop thus not only offers them a place to work, but also a roof over their head as well as protection from rain, cold nights and being attacked and raped on the streets ...



A place to sleep for mother and child ...



A proud injera baker :)



Freshly baked bread in the shop

Hospital staff members Duane, Gary and Adam provided lots of help to set up the women's workshop (just like for the auxiliary aid workshop), many thanks! More big thanks go mainly to Melese and his Emmanuel members, who have now taken charge of the workshop. Once again, my description of Melese and his team is fully accurate: "running here, running there, running everywhere!!!"



Community... food ... fun after a hard working day!

Auxiliary aid workshop (jobs for disabled men):

It is very busy here: crutches, wheelchairs and hand-driven bicycles for the disabled (Twikes) are constructed and assembled on a daily basis. In addition, the workshop carries out a variety of repairs for hospitals (fixing beds, special customized orthopedic equipment). Last year, the staff even visited the Mother Theresa hospital "Home for sick & dying destitutes" in Sidst Kilo/Addis to repair different equipment and hospital amenities... This was a very special sign for me: disabled persons serving the Mother Theresa Sisters who treat the ill and despised beggars of the city ...



Manufacturing crutches in the workshop: Lower and upper arm walking sticks....

Belay making wheelchairs



Custom-made hospital bed frames ... made by "Emmanuel" ... or a walker... & crutches!

Birhanu Simon and his deputy Belay Techa lead the workshop. Their staff consists of disabled men like Tamirat and Asrat, who construct auxiliary aids and do carpentry work. Thanks to Tagrow Bajaj (a mini taxi, a gift from a foundation), Tamirat, the severely disabled father with a family up on the hill, can work in the workshop every day! By the end of 2016, we could provide Twikes and 12 wheelchairs (donated by the Swiss Tropical Institute) to penniless disabled persons. In return, these persons or members of their family work for free in the workshop. The happy new owners were interviewed and asked how they had heard about Project Emmanuel and what their "auxiliary aid" means to them. I was deeply touched as I read their stories and by these persons' joy and thankfulness that they no longer need to crawl on the floor! It was also interesting to hear that many of them had heard about the Emmanuel Workshop from friends and acquaintances, some from the media (TV, radio) or via municipal agencies and social services. We hope that in the future, many more disabled persons in remote areas of Ethiopia can find out where they can get auxiliary aids and work...

A great encouragement for the workshop members is the practical support that they have been receiving for several months now from professionals from the SCH (Soddo Christian Hospitals). Surgeon Duane Anderson develops prototypes for the auxiliary aids, Gary Vanderkoi helps with electrical installations and the installation of toilets and sanitary amenities. He also keeps a watchful and helpful eye on the Emmanuel accounts. Adam, another hospital employee, regularly lends a hand when practical help is needed. I had asked several expats unsuccessfully to act as contacts and intermediaries locally between us Europeans and the Ethiopians. It is such a valuable and great gift that the SCH employees have slipped into this role voluntarily and without being asked!



The media visiting the auxiliary aid workshop: TV, radio... & the city authorities honoring the staff (Emmanuel staff in the front row, with awards and diplomas :)

Another Workshop?

Both workshops are large halls that the municipal government has provided free of cost to business upstarts within the framework of their small business promotion efforts, for a period of 5 years. There are still many other such large halls in the provincial capital of Soddo.

For Project Emmanuel, both halls are very precious “loans”, because Emmanuel would never have the funds to construct such a hall on its own. Thanks to donations from foundations, both halls could be equipped with machines and infrastructure and put into operation.

There is a great demand for auxiliary aids, seeing as there is no other place in the surrounding area where people can obtain crutches wheelchairs, hand-driven bicycles etc. The food production also answers the growing demand in the expanding capital of Soddo, and includes the large regional university with around 10,000 students.

The critical point is the evaluation of both workshops after the end of the 5 years. According to the agreement with the government, the period of operation should be prolonged by another 5 years if there is a good business result after the first five-year period.

Should the right of use not be renewed after the 5 years, then the user must clear out the workshop and seek other business premises elsewhere. This can happen even if there are no concrete reasons (such as bad or incompetent business management), for example, due to political arbitrariness or ill will. In such a “worst case” scenario, Emmanuel would have a huge problem: where would they put all of the machines and infrastructure, and where would all of the workers find new jobs?

We of the Association and Project Emmanuel hope that the auxiliary aids as well as the food production will continue to develop well, and that they can produce them with an orientation towards the demand and the market, so that Project Emmanuel can continue to use the halls for 5 more years. We are now already thinking about alternatives for the “worst case”!



Due to this uncertainty, we will first wait out the first five-year period before we make use of other buildings. We first need to see how concrete the municipal government’s intentions are regarding business promotion. If the business years are good and the operation of both workshops can be prolonged, Project Emmanuel has further ideas for employment: seamstresses, sewing studios, crafts workshops, trade and repair businesses...

The Emmanuel project management in Soddo stated that the government has offered a further workshop hall for use. Emmanuel is dreaming of a further workshop with a sewing studio and seamstresses. We will examine this request at our planned visit in the autumn.

Request for 20 new MCAs (microcredit based income generating activities):

The demand for workplaces suitable for disabled persons as well as for microcredits to start small businesses is unchanged. In the meantime, we have around 20 disabled men and women who have approached Project Emmanuel and asked for MCAs. Until now, we have had 40 members who have been accepted for the MCA program. Each one receives a small credit as starting capital. From these funds, they buy basic equipment they use to set up their own small business. Favorite occupations are shoe shiner, seamstress, carpentry or food vendors. The MCA participants receive training, sign a contract and are obliged to repay the microcredit on a monthly basis until it has been fully repaid.



Staff in individual MCAs: a shoeshiner, Bazinessh knitting, Dawit the street vendor... Wolde

In 2015, 20 participants began with their MCA small businesses, and in the summer of 2016, we were able to accept a further 20 disabled men and women for the MCA Program.

When the request for a further 20 MCA petitioners was transmitted to us, the board of Verein Emmanuel Switzerland decided to first simply integrate these people as workers into the already existing workshops. On the one hand, they can work there, receive meals and accommodation, get the necessary knowhow and prove themselves.

On the other hand, in view of the rapid growth of the entire Project Emmanuel, we felt it appropriate to first let the model MCAs and workshops run for a few years before planning new expansions. We must be able to keep up the training of all MCA participants and the controlling (accounting, documentation of the repayments) within the expanded MCA Program. We need dependable workers here as well as further Western contact persons who can monitor these processes on location.

At our planned board trip to Soddo in October, we will discuss the acceptance of the 20 new MCA participants.



Regular training sessions of the Emmanuel members – with exchanges and mutual encouragement

I dream that with Project Emmanuel, lasting models and structures can be created, so that in the future, for example, annual “series” of new MCA participants can be accepted.

I dream that the previous MCA participants can pay back their credits in around 5 years and can secure their living as independent small businesspersons.

I dream that the successful small businesspersons can offer other new members apprenticeships and train them in successful business management.

I dream that thanks to auxiliary aids, microcredits and workplaces, many other disabled persons in Ethiopia can move from begging on the street to becoming independent businesspeople ... (both men and women ☺!)

Transportation: Motorcycle and Tagrow Bagaj (mini taxi)....and?!

The new motorcycle has been in full use for some time already, it moves quickly through the entire city with Melese and his passengers and is a great help for Project Emmanuel in many ways. We could finally also start using the mini taxi (Tagrow Bajaj) sponsored by a foundation last year. After numerous trips to the responsible bureau, the authorities finally gave Melese the required license plate!!! The Tagrow Bajaj is now in daily use; a driver employed by Emmanuel drives the disabled to their workplaces at the two workshops, fetches goods and materials for the workshops, but also provides regular taxi service in the city.

Tamirat, the severely disabled head of a family, is one of the happy mini taxi passengers. Because his arms are paralyzed, he was too weak to hold on when sitting on the back of Melese's motorcycle to ride to work. He was working at his mud hut home, sewing, embroidering, and making all kinds of small wooden furniture. Tamirat can now ride every day to work at the auxiliary aid workshop, making wheelchairs and crutches. He is so happy and thankful!



In memoriam... 2 photos of the old cycle –

... and the wonderful new one!

The motorcycle and the mini taxi had just started their service when the wish for a larger delivery truck was raised, which could also be used as a transport for larger deliveries of merchandise from the capital of Addis (crutch handles, steel pipes for crutches and wheelchairs, etc.). It should also deliver the manufactured wheelchairs, crutches and foods to major customers in Soddo and the surrounding area, such as hospitals and the university.

But the hospital professionals Duane, Gary and Adam, who support Project Emmanuel, as well as we from the Swiss board felt that such a delivery truck should first be leased for a while. Purchase, operation and maintenance would currently exceed our transportation budget and the available personal resources! Maybe later?



The Tagrow Bajaj is used in many ways: transporting materials, customer services (even visitors from Switzerland!), as transportation to and from work for the most disabled staff at the workshops!

Emergency Accommodation:

There is no new news in this area. Homeless members of Emmanuel have a place to stay in one of the workshops as they have until now, in the raffia hut with the corrugated steel roof, or at Melese's home. He lives with in 2 rooms with 4 roommates and says that he always has room for disabled homeless people in an emergency, the others simply have to squeeze together a bit more!

I am still dreaming of a large house—a "Home for the homeless"—where disabled street beggars can have a home and protection from the cold and violence. We wish for land that is granted to us. We could use old containers as buildings, or we could build huts with wooden frames and clay in the local way, or with Selam bricks (a type of cement and earthen brick)...

Up to now, we were only offered property at unaffordable prices. Now, the municipal government is promising to donate land to us as long as we set up a bank account with lots of foreign cash as proof of our liquidity?! With these kinds of proposals, we continue to dream on, pray, plan but also to wait until the project is ripe.



Emergency accommodation... repaired family home... my dream: chickens!... still many homeless outside ...

Communication Soddo – Switzerland:

The Internet has been functioning well in recent times, which makes our work and the communications with Project Emmanuel much easier. There is frequent email traffic back and forth, between Melese, the manager of Project Emmanuel and myself (Rahel Röthlisberger). There are also valuable exchanges with the three hospital employees Duane, Gary and Adam – their long years of professional experience, their know-how in dealing with local authorities and their profound knowledge of both Ethiopian and Western culture are priceless and we are so thankful for their support!

News from Verein Emmanuel Schweiz:

Presentations: Project Emmanuel was presented at different events and supported with donations. We were very happy about the invitation to the annual meeting of the VIS Foundation; we had valuable encounters and received repeated financial support from them. We would also like to express our thanks to the “Dreiblatt” parishes (the towns of Wynigen, Koppigen, Seeberg) and Ittigen, as well as Vineyard Bern for their encouragement, interest and donations. This year’s annual meeting of Verein Emmanuel Switzerland was additionally enriched by a benefit concert for Project Emmanuel. Thanks very much to the two professional musicians Martin Jufer and Sandy Patton for their service!

Activities:

Project Coaching Emmanuel Soddo: The focus in the last months has been procuring the mini taxi, working out the employment contract for the taxi driver, and the planning and equipping of the new women’s workshop/food production center.

Documentation material and powerpoint presentations were created for the different presentations. The annual report and the financial report were compiled and prepared for the annual meeting of March 25, 2017. Once again, great thanks to Jürg Roth for designing the Project Emmanuel website! Just a little hint for the future: as from summer 2017, the website will have a new look!

Inputs and Exchange:

I (Rahel) continue to receive valuable ideas from different people with project and international experience. An elderly lady with many years of experience in Africa often helps me with my questions and gives advice. Christoph Zinstag from Selam, friends of Bright Future, Mission at the Nile (Misrach Center—work with the disabled), staff from several microcredit organizations and many more... your examples, input and suggestions are very precious and help us to develop Project Emmanuel. THANK YOU!

And to all of you: heartfelt thanks for your support!

Dear friends, foundations and benefactors! Great big thanks for your encouragement, prayers, financial and other support, critical feedback and ideas... to benefit EMMANUEL.

Last but not least please see our documentation & website:

- All **forms** can be downloaded from the website and filled out electronically. Bernard Junod (Treasurer Verein Emmanuel) will gladly send you a paper version on request: bernard.junod@bluewin.ch
- **Annual report and financial report 2016 Flyer Emmanuel** (Project description)
- **Charity cheese: order form**
- **Membership Verein Emmanuel Switzerland:** registration form – new members are always cordially welcome!

Donations: Pay slips for the Postfinance account – thanks for your support.

Verein Emmanuel CH-3472 Wynigen; Konto Postfinance 89-710260-0 / CH 49 0900 0000 8971 0260 0

- Verein Emmanuel Schweiz **tax exempt** in the Canton of Bern since August 15, 2015 (retroactive) – also valid for all of Switzerland
- Website Link (just double click): <http://www.emmanuel-soddo.jimdo.com/>



Verein Emmanuel **Benefizkonzert**
What a Friend

Benefiz- Gospel-Konzert von Sandy Patton (Sängerin) & Martin Jüfer (Pianist) zugunsten "Projekt Emmanuel" / Äthiopien

Samstag 25. März 2017, 19:30 Uhr
Casappella, Langgömming 14, 3086 Worblaufen

Lok. soll fern mit 800,- nach Worblaufen, dann zu Auto 5 Min. in Fahrt, Richtung rechts der Gefälle Hügel hoch, Wegweiser "Casappella" folgen!

Eintritt: frei - Kollekte zugunsten Projekt Emmanuel, Äthiopien

Interessierte sind ebenfalls herzlich eingeladen auf vorangehenden Montag: Solenensammlung Verein Emmanuel Schweiz (25.03.2017 um 17:00 Uhr in der Casappella / Worblaufen)

Veranstalter:
Verein Emmanuel Schweiz

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Projekt Emmanuel Äthiopien
an der ETH Zürich, Bern, Langgömming (Südwesten)
Vollzeit- & Teilzeit-Experten (Ingenieure, Bauingenieure, Maschinenbauingenieure, Elektrotechniker, Informatiker, Mediziner, Sozialwissenschaftler, Juristen, etc.)
Schwerpunkte: Entwicklung von Wasser- & Stromerzeugung, Gesundheitswesen, Bildung, etc.
Wiederholung von Projekten für bestehende Menschen aus Äthiopien

Sandy Patton (Sängerin)
Martina Jüfer (Pianist)
als Solisten/Ensemble-Mitglieder
als "Gospel Duo" seit 2010
konzertieren auf dem Gebiet der
Schweiz mit professionellem
Musik- & Licht- & Tontechnik-Team
und Orchester

Web: <http://www.emmanuel-soddo.jimdo.com/>

