



Dear Friends and Supporters!

After a long silence on the Emmanuel side, I would like to send you warm greetings from all of the Project Emmanuel members in Ethiopia. Thank you so much for your messages, your donations and prayers, particularly during the past months! The political, economic and health situation in Ethiopia has been very tense for quite some time. Unrests between the different tribes and the government flare up continuously. Due to the Corona lockdown, drastic measures were enforced just like everywhere else. The cases of infection are rising, although tests are not available everywhere in the country, nor exact statistics. Many businesses and economic sectors have been closed down, schools and universities were also closed until recently. For countless workers, the lockdown means a loss of income, hunger and unemployment. So many schoolchildren in poor districts went hungry, because they receive their only meal of the day in the schools run by the relief organisations. Many of the poorest inhabitants starved... Many different Swiss relief organisations in Ethiopia that Project Emmanuel knows and works with faced enormous challenges. Despite the emergency situation, I received brief messages and news from Project Emmanuel and its members, which I gladly share with you. I continue to wish you all a protected time – and enjoy reading below ☺!

News from Project Emmanuel, Soddo

In the last months, work was fortunately able to continue in both workshops. The disabled men and women did not become unemployed, although the orders and thus the income of the food and mobility aid workshops did decrease. There were no Corona cases amongst the disabled, and none of the persons in the men's and women's shelters lost the roof over their head or their daily bread.

According to Melese, the manager, there is even Good News! Once again, there was a wedding between two of the disabled persons. This is a strong signal that a normal life is possible for the disabled, and it is a strong sign of hope! Individual disabled members have been able to continue and complete their education or vocational training, which they had had to break off due to immobility or contraction of polio.

News from the Men's Workshop/Mobility Aid Production:

Thanks to your support, the disabled on the streets continue to receive mobility aid equipment: they thus become more mobile, have more work possibilities and a new outlook for the future, as well as experience appreciation and dignity within the Emmanuel community.

Here I would like to add some **Life Stories from the Persons Concerned**. Text and photos from Melese, Manager of Emmanuel.

This is **Abayneh Dola** (photos below), he lived on the streets of Hawassa. One day, he was involved in a terrible traffic accident. No one came to help him in time. Both of his legs were severely burned and he was unable to walk after that. When I met him for the first time, he was crawling along the stony road. I asked him if he would like to be able to stand and walk again. He answered: "Please help me, before, I was able to walk and I would so much like to be able to do that again. Please help me! (Note from RR: in the meantime, he has received the necessary orthopaedic help and surgery as well as crutches from the BENEVOLENT FUND = the Project Emmanuel support fund that provides free mobility aids to destitute disabled persons. Melese has told me that now he is doing well and he can walk again thanks to the crutches. As he has no family of his own to provide him with food and a roof over his head, he continues to live on the street. I told him that as soon as he has recovered from his accident, he can ask for work manufacturing mobility aids at the men's workshop, for which he is very thankful!!!

Photo l.: Before the treatment



Photo r.: after surgery and fitting the crutches



Bezabih Bekele (below) is a 13-year-old boy. Both of his legs have been deformed since birth (bandy legs = varus). Because of this, it was very difficult for him to move around. He has now received his own wheelchair from the Emmanuel mobility aid workshop. Thanks to this, he can go back to school again. He also already has an appointment with the Soddo Christian Hospital for orthopaedic surgery to correct his legs.





This is **Zerihun Debebe** (photo l.), who has different names. In earlier years, he was able to walk with crutches and foot braces, despite his severe disability. He recently had an accident which cost him both legs. One leg had to be amputated above the knee and the other below the knee in order to save his life. That meant he was completely unable to walk anymore. He asked the Project Emmanuel workshop for a wheelchair so he would be able to move around again. He is very thankful and happy for it!

Here is **Merihun Mekasha** (below l.). he comes from the faraway village of Kambata. He begs for his daily bread on the streets every day, as well as for generous donations from the passers-by. Up to now, no one could help him get a wheelchair, until some villagers told him about Project Emmanuel. They said if he would go to Soddo, to Project Emmanuel, he might be able to get a wheelchair. That is how he came to us. He has now received a wheelchair from the men's workshop, thanks to the Benevolent Fund (support fund). He would have never been able to get one by himself. In addition, he asked for work within Project Emmanuel. I promised to speak to the Project on his behalf. He is very happy now.



Musa Alasar (above r.) comes from Hadaro, which belongs to the Kambatta region. He is 60 years old. Until 20 years ago, he had a wheelchair, but at some point, it was broken. So, for all these years he did not have a wheelchair anymore. He heard about Project Emmanuel from his neighbours and made his way there to ask for a new wheelchair. He is now very happy and thanks God for it!



This is **Bergene Kassa**, from a very remote region. He tried to get by on all fours. Unfortunately, he did not have a wheelchair in which to move around. He listened to the news on the radio every day and somehow hoped to hear about a relief organisation project where he might get a wheelchair! One day, the radio station FM 99,9 reported about the fate of disabled persons in Ethiopia. He listened very carefully. After this, he managed to get to Soddo and to Emmanuel, and he told us all about himself and his disability. We were able to procure a wheelchair for him through our support fund. He now is very happy that he was able to fulfil his life dream and is very thankful and glad.

Melese recently wrote that the necessary machines could finally be procured for the manufacture of braces and prostheses. There had been a long delay with the manufacturer due to the lockdown and Corona. The equipment and the electricity in the men's workshop could also be improved after the fire there, in cooperation with the municipal administration.

News from the Women's Workshop / Food Production:

The workshop did not have to be closed down here either, but production continued on a lower scale. There were fewer orders and mandates (from hotels, tourism as well as schools and universities in Soddo, which were closed due to Corona). The workers hope that when the schools and universities open again as from September 2020 (start of the new school year), they will also receive more orders. In meantime, talks are being held with the management of the Soddo Christian Hospital about the possibility of Emmanuel providing the staff cafeteria and hospital patients with bread and foods from Emmanuel.

The medium-term and long-term consequences of the political uprisings and the Corona crisis are impossible to assess at this time. But especially in such uncertain times, the support from Switzerland, all of your donations and help are a great encouragement as well as concrete life support and means of survival for the disabled persons at Emmanuel and many other disabled persons on the streets.

News from Verein Emmanuel Switzerland

Due to the emergency situation and the long Internet ban in Ethiopia, communication with the Project Emmanuel management team and the SCH Hospital management was very difficult. Everyone involved is hoping for better times! On the other hand, the Swiss relief organisations in Ethiopia had lively intercommunication and experienced great mutual solidarity and encouragement.

So much from my side in this brief newsletter. Many thanks again to ALL of you on behalf of Emmanuel – God bless you!

Blessings – or “shoulder to shoulder 16x”, as my Ethiopian friends say!
Rahel Röthlisberger

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- Cancelled: EMMANUEL CHARITY EVENT Saturday Sept. 27, 2020: Due to the continuing extraordinary situation, this year's CHARITY EVENT to benefit Project Emmanuel has been definitely cancelled.

Any donations to encourage the project work of Emmanuel are most welcome.

Donations: A payment slip is attached. Many thanks from Emmanuel for all of your support!

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

Verein Emmanuel Schweiz: tax-exempt in the Canton of Bern since August 15, 2015

Sale of **Charity cheese from the Alps** to benefit Emmanuel: Please send your orders to Rahel Röthlisberger via the website: www.Project-emmanuel.ch