

AMREF Ethiopia Rebranded to Amref Health Africa



Message from the Country Director, Amref Health Africa in Ethiopia

We are delighted to share with you some of our efforts in Africa. As Africans we are surrounded with many health challenges but also with successes. While we have moved miles with successes in addressing health challenges in Africa, high numbers of maternal deaths remain a standing agenda that needs concerted efforts. Circumstances leading to mothers dying while giving birth are multifaceted. However the value of skilful midwives and frontline workers in curbing the burden of maternal mortality in Africa is no longer debatable. Women residing in furthest communities are accustomed to delivering alone and unassisted, some dying unnoticed and undocumented. *Le-labo Kelema*, a midwifery student from a pastoralist community narrates such incidences as her motive to learn midwifery. Amref Health Africa will continue to work through communities to bridge these gaps. I thank communities in Ethiopia, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and various funders for your support. Welcome our good readers and enjoy the first release our newsletter.

Dr. Florence Temu.

AMREF, the leading international African health organization rebranded to Amref Health Africa officially on 10th April 2014 and corresponding new logo after 57 years operating as the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF).

AMREF Ethiopia rebranded to Amref Health Africa following an official launch at a press conference held on May 29, 2014 at Harmony hotel. The press conference was held in the presence of key partners including Dr. Abraham Endeshaw, Director, Federal Ministry of Health Medical services directorate and Mr. Ali Wuesa, Head of Afar Regional Health Bureau, and media houses. Amref Health Africa senior management and staff were also present. The event was organized after acquiring a certificate of name change with its corresponding new logo from the Federal Charities and Societies agency.

A key reason for the rebrand is to ensure that the organization's name more accurately reflects the nature and scope of our work, which has grown beyond research and provision of basic medical services to strengthening of health systems through training and capacity building and strategic programming in areas such as maternal and child health, HIV, Water and Sanitation, TB and Malaria, and clinical and diagnostics services.

The presence of Amref Health Africa in Ethiopia dates back to the 1960s with extended services by the Flying doctors services. In 1998, it was registered as AMREF, Resident In-



Right to left, Dr. Awoke Tasew, Deputy Country Director, Amref Health Africa, Dr. Abraham Endeshaw, FMOH Medical Services Director, Dr. Florence Temu Country Director Amref Health Africa, and Mr. Ali Wuesa, Afar Regional Health Bureau Head

ternational Charity (NGO) and opened its project office in Addis Ababa. It remained a project office until 2002, when it became a fully-fledged Country Program.

Since 2002, the country program has grown from one project in Addis Ababa city with 11 staffs to about 24 projects in five regions (Addis Ababa, Afar, SNNPR, Amhara and Oromia) with 156 staff in 2014.

Amref Health Africa, Ethiopia office delivers programs on: Maternal health, Child health, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), Communicable diseases, Clinical Outreach services, Emergency Nutrition, HEWs and Midwives Training and Operational Research. The training and the clinical outreach programs are implemented nationally across all regions of the country.

Globally: Since 1957, Amref Health Africa has been providing health services to the most vulnerable communities, working in partnership with a cross-section of stakeholders including governments. With five country offices and two regional offices in Africa and also nine office in the Europe and two in the North America, Amref Health Africa reaches over 30 countries with its work that has impacted the lives of millions of people living in hard-to-reach parts of Africa.

Amref Health Africa is the largest African led international organization on the continent, provides training and health services to over 30 countries in Africa. Founded in 1957 as the Flying Doctors of East Africa to bring critical health services to remote communities, Amref Health Africa now delivers preventative, community-based health care. With a focus on women and children, Amref Health Africa manages a full range of medical and public health programs tackling the most critical health challenges facing the continent: maternal and child care, HIV & TB, malaria, clean water and sanitation and surgical and clinical outreach. Much of our credibility with local communities and African governments stems from the relationship and trust that we have built over the past 57 years. Since our inception, Amref Health Africa has trained over 600,000 health workers.



New logo of Amref Health Africa

Ray of Light to those in darkness

Lelabo Kalemata Dere is a 20 year old midwife student who is attending midwifery training at Arba-Minch Health Science College (AHSC). She joined the college through the opportunity created by Amref Health Africa -via CIDA project to address the identified shortage in the number of midwives at South Omo Zone.

She explains the meaning of her name as “a day of satisfaction and happiness”. Lelabo was born and raised in Salamgo, specifically in a place called Hayloha. She said, “my father died when I was 10 years old and my mother was the one who used to take care of me and my siblings. However, my mom also died two years back and this had made life to be very difficult for my siblings”. Lelabo attended her primary and secondary education (5th-10th grade) at Arba-Minch boarding school. The school provides free education to marginalized pastoralists’ children with the aim of addressing the education need of the community.

In explaining why she joined midwifery training, Lelabo said, “In our community women give birth alone in the forest. To deal with the pain, they use a kneeling down position and hold a stick to support their body. The suffering they pass through is unimaginable. I even remember many women dying alone in the forest due to heavy bleeding and some even lose their children”. She proceeded with the explanation and said, “Seeing that experience has made me to aspire of becoming a health professional, who help women during delivery”.

As Lelabo pointed out, the education which is being provided at the college is very good and it is enabling her to gain many theoretical and practical knowledge and skill, which will be useful to help her community after graduation. Lelabo describes her desire after graduation, by saying “After I complete my education, I want to go back to my village and as my name indicates, I want to be a ray of satisfaction and happiness to my family and whole community.

I can do this, by teaching women to have antenatal follow up and give birth at the health facilities. I also will work to ease the pain and prevent the occurrence of various complications which arise during labor and delivery”. Lelabo also said that, in addition to fulfilling her child-



Lelabo Kelemat, in the class rooms

hood dream (helping women during delivery), completing her education will enable her to help her siblings economically, who hardly make a living through cattle rearing.

Amref Health Africa being funded by CIDA is currently teaching 78 midwives at AHSC with the objective of improving maternal and child health at South Omo Zone by equipping health facilities with skilled man power. This will enhance the capacity of health facilities in providing high quality service to pregnant women and their children. We hope that as Lelabo said, all of our midwives become a whole time of satisfaction and happiness to their community after they graduate.

Advisory council visits Amref Health Africa’s WASH facilities in Addis

In its efforts to produce healthy urban communities, Amref Health Africa has an urban water, hygiene and sanitation project that envisions the access and use of clean water and sanitation facilities for slum communities in Addis Ababa. The project constructs sanitation facilities in slum neighborhoods, and avails clean water for communities and school children in its aim to promote healthy citizens.

Amref Health Africa Advisory Council (AC) members visited the Addis Ababa WASH project sites on June 26, 2014. The members included Dr. Teshome Gebre, AC Chairman; Dr. Tewabech Bishaw, AC member and member of the International board, and Mrs. Chachi Tadesse, AC member.



A new chapter, a new life

A 48 years old woman with a diagnosis of Utero Vaginal Prolapse shared with us her feelings after undergoing a vaginal hysterectomy repair.

My name is Awagash Ali. I am 48 years of age, married and a mother of 8 children. I live in Bambsi a town located 52 km far from Assosa, Ethiopia. I lived with this condition for 5 years. I was disturbed one day after seeing my uterus outside. I experienced severe back pain. I couldn't stand, sit or walk. While walking, my uterus would go outside and I would experience extreme discomfort. But not only that, I was also very ashamed because while walking, I would frequently use my fingers to put my uterus back inside. Sometimes, I would not be able to control my urine and flatus. Anyone can just imagine how these things embarrassed me. The other thing is, when I would sit down, I would feel as if I'm sitting on a ball. Thus, I would rarely attend social events in my village like weddings, funerals and other social gatherings like *equb* and *edir*. Anyone can recognize that I am very energetic and not very old, but I wasn't able to do any jobs effectively. As a result, I was restricted to home activities.

As a farmer raising 8 children, I needed some sort of income. To supply for my family, I had to help my husband with work but was not able to perform working duties. The only option available to me was to remain at home.

I am very happy to have benefitted from the service at the nearby hospital. Had it not been for this campaign, I would have traveled to Addis which is very far from where I live. I definitely needed this treatment but our life is dependent on hand to mouth survival. We do not have any excess money for transportation, much less the treatment I needed. Although the only available option was to live with my problem, I now thank "Alah" (God) and AMREF for helping me recover from my illness. I'm happy to say I am back to my original personality and now feel satisfied because I am like my friends again.

Mr. Yemam Ali is the husband of Mrs Awagash Ali. Along with her, he also expressed his feelings on her condition. "It was very painful for me to see her in the condition she was in. I was worried and became depressed too, for she was energetic and young but could not do things actively. She removed herself completely from social life in the

community. Now thanks to you (Amref Health Africa) and God, her problem is solved and cured forever."



Above, Awgash in surgery and below, Awgash and her husband, Yemam after her treatment



Advisory council... continued from page 2

The group visited the Lambadena community shower facility around Kechene slum area. The facility was constructed by Kechene WASH project for income generation targeting youth. In this site, the AC members met community members and beneficiaries at the site to acquire all rounded information.

Another site visited by the AC members was TSid site community sanitation kiosk constructed by Amref Health Africa. The AC members expressed that they were impressed on how community is keeping clean and properly managing the kiosk. They discussed with WATSAN committee and beneficiaries of the kiosk. The group visited the Guto meda shower and sanitation service. The members were extremely happy what Amref health Africa Kechene PPP model did. This site is among top successful income generating Kechene PPP model.

They visited the café and small restaurant which is run by Guto meda PLC, a small enterprise organized from the neighborhood. The café and restaurant were built through money generated through shower and sanitation service rental to community members who are not residents in the woreda. In addition, the M-health service provided at Addis Ketema woreda 7 Health center was visited. The health center director has briefed the members how Amref Health Africa is closely working with the government sectors and PMTCT project is the top successful project in their catchment area. Amref Health Africa supported the health center through capacity building including training, medical equipment support, m-health and community level intervention by PMTCT project.

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Lasting Health Change in Africa!



Amref Health Africa in Ethiopia

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Please contact Mrs. Tezeta Meshesha, Communication and Fund raising Manager on tezeta.meshesha@amref.org

Amref Health Africa joins global efforts of training more midwives; and through *Stand-up-for-African- mothers-campaign* we aim at training 15,000 midwives across Africa by 2015. Please join us by signing our petition on <http://standupforafricanmothers.org>

We are on the web

www.amref.org

Ethiopia Highlights Special Photo of the Issue

Amref Health Africa

In Ethiopia focuses on global strategic directions: out of which the first and second strategic directions are: Maternal Health, and Child Health.

This photo was taken in South Omo, Jinka Hospital where the Midwifery training was provided and the maternity wing supported with medical equipments by Amref Health Africa.

The **Maternal, Neonatal , New-born and Child Health (MNCH)** program of Amref Health Africa supports health facilities through physical and monetary means in various regions (Health Systems strengthening).

It also creates awareness of the community to increase MNCH service utilization. (Community system strengthening)

Amref Health Africa
Vision: Lasting Health Change in Africa!

Photo credit : Paulo Puterno,
Amref Canada

