



# EGG POWER



**PROJECT MERCY FALL UPDATE 2019**





# Poultry Program

Eggs are VERY expensive in Ethiopia! The cost of one egg is equivalent to 18 cents. We rarely pay \$2.15 for a dozen of eggs at the grocery store in the United States....can you imagine this in Ethiopia?

Due to the cost in the Southern region of the country, where we work, many children suffer from the lack of animal protein in their diets. By the grace of God, we were able to launch the Poultry Program in March of this year.

This project would never have been completed without the help of seed money for research and planning from a private donation. We also learned so much from the expertise and support from Tyson Food and OneEgg. They have been invaluable in helping us make this program successful. Thank you!

## How It works

Children in grades Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten are served one egg a day throughout the year. (We implemented a full year school program for Pre-K and Kindergarten to ensure there is no disruption in their healthy meal program and to help prepare them for the first grade.) Families who receive chickens will be able to collect the eggs and use them for their family. The extra eggs can be sold at market in a neighboring village and provide a second source of income.

## The Project Begins

In the fall of 2016, a barn that was vacant was repurposed for the community of Yetebon. The dairy barn was transformed into a chicken coop for the Poultry Program. Ray and Matt, from Tyson Foods are pictured here helping with Project Mercy plan the barn renovation.

A staff of four was hired and trained by three experts from the Debre Zeit Poultry Farm Research Center. In Ethiopia, those who have disabilities are normally beggars. Not in Yetebon! Working in a poultry farm is a perfect opportunity for the disabled members of the community. One of the members of our staff is partly disabled too, and doing excellent work. Giving someone who struggles an opportunity is a gift. A gift that you gave one of the staff at our Poultry Program.



## Chicks Arrive

On Monday October 8, 2018, Project Mercy received 1,020 day-old brown chicks along with feed and vaccinations for forty-five days. The second batch arrived just nine months later in June of 2019. The third batch is planned for the end of this year.



## The Eggs are Coming

February was an eventful month. The nests were installed at the coop on the Project Mercy Compound. Sample chicken homes were built for the community families to replicate and put in their yards. Project Mercy met with elders from local communities for their recommendations on who should receive the hens.

## Family Distribution

Families who were in need along with a few elderly and disabled men were selected by the village elders. Most of those selected were women. Ethiopia lacks social services and programs for their elderly. Most have to support themselves or rely on their family. Women have challenges in gaining work while tending to the needs of the family. Your support helped many elderly and families have a second income.

All were required to go to training through the government's Livestock Development Team and we had a 100 percent participation rate. Over 300 families were selected to receive five productive hens. Staff will follow up with families during the second round of vaccinations to check on their progress.

## Eggs are Served

It was the children's turn! On March 22, the Pre-K and Kindergarten lined up for breakfast and received their first egg ever (hard boiled to be exact). In total, 280 children in Pre-K and Kindergarten are served every day and an additional 1,200 children in grades 1st to 8th are served based on weekly production capacity.

## Today

After seeing wonderful results in giving one egg a day to children in grades Pre-K through Kindergarten, we have expanded this program all the way through the 8th grade. On the family distribution side, we would like to give out more chickens to families. Before the end of the year, nearly 400 families will be participating in the Program.



# Why Eggs?

- Children who regularly eat eggs grow taller and eggs help prevent stunted growth in malnourished children.

# Why Eggs in Ethiopia?

- One egg costs five Birr (about \$0.18) thus making a dozen eggs cost \$2.15. When you think of a developing country, that is a lot of money compared to a dozen eggs being sold for \$1 close to our Fort Wayne office.
- Thirty-nine percent of children in the SNNPR region where we work have issues with growth stunting due to malnutrition.

*\*Information gathered from the following sources:*

Los Angeles Times, One egg per day could boost babies brain function, <https://www.latimes.com/food/sns-dailymeal-1864165-healthy-eating-eggs-boost-babies-brain-function-122217-20171222-story.html>

Ethiopia, a Demographic and Health Survey, 2019. Page 190.







**Project Mercy**  
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## Overview of Other Project Mercy Programs

### **Education:**

School has started and we are expecting about 1,650 students to enroll in the Medhane-Alem School.

### **Healthcare:**

We hired a new Chief Surgeon and Hospital Administrator to fill the position vacancies when our previous doctor left at the beginning of the year.

### **Adult Skills:**

Adult learners finished the Adult Literacy Program in August. Because of you, over 200 adults were taught to read and write in the national language along with health education.

### **Infrastructure:**

We are working on building new school buildings and converting the well to electricity from a generator which is unreliable and expensive.