



SUMMER NEWS 2023

## Unprecedented Street Closure - HFK Youth Cycling Race

In June, our Ethiopian staff team put on an incredible community event - the first bike race ever in Korah! They were inspired to do this in support of P.L. and Kristen Meindersma of Cycle 5 to Survive, who are cycling the Continental Divide, a 4300 KM trek, in order to raise funds for HFK's Youth Empowerment Centre.

Inspired by P.L. and Kristen's tenacity and commitment to our youth, and to cheer them on from across the world; our staff invited several other local charities and organizations to participate in the race. Together they all rented bikes for participants as few Korah kids own a bike. Going above and beyond expectations, our staff also arranged for mascots, awards, a church youth group to lead the music and dancing, as well as the Ethiopian Youth Sports Academy

to send their national youth cycling team to lead the way.

It was amazing! An event of this kind has never happened in Korah before, and you can imagine the attention it received from the larger community. The main city street was closed off and the local police managed to hold back traffic for part of the race, but the ending chaos and congestion was a sight to behold! This event brought the whole community together, and sparked such a joyful celebration of singing, cheering, and dancing for all in attendance. To watch a video of the race and all the fun, please check out our blog: [www.hopeforkorah.org/cycling-race](http://www.hopeforkorah.org/cycling-race)

## Back Packs for All

Last month we gave new backpacks and underwear to 380 students in kindergarten to university. Thank you to everyone who helped to make this possible! All of the children's big smiles and thank-yous would warm your heart!



## Youth Summer Programs

Summer programs are in full swing at HFK! In addition to our regular fun activities, this year our staff and volunteers are busy helping our students achieve their academic goals. A major focus is to improve English skills. In Ethiopia, after 6th grade most subjects are taught in English, so additional support in this area can make a big difference!



Jo Van Der Jagt with our students

To support this initiative, Jo Van Der Jagt, Vice Principal / Teacher from John Calvin Christian School, BC and Jaelyn Dragt, Social Work Intern from Dordt University, IA, are serving in Korah this summer. We are grateful for all they are pouring into our youth! Our kids and staff are loving the many new books and educational materials brought by Jo, and her caring, interactive teaching style makes learning so much fun!

## The Housing Crisis in Korah

Rising fear about housing insecurity is a critical issue at the forefront of every family's mind.

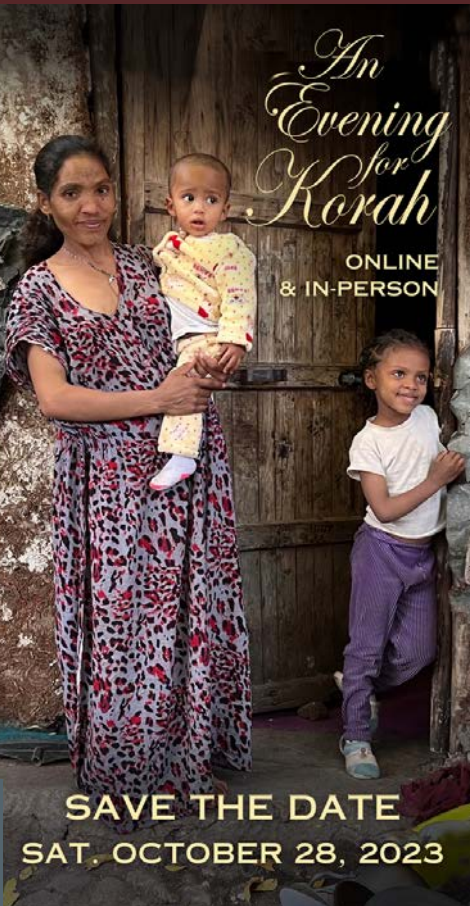
The challenges created by ever increasing rent prices in Korah are alarming; most families cannot make enough money to pay for rent, let alone other basic needs. The situation is made worse due to the ongoing influx of people moving into Korah. Internal conflict within the country has left many displaced and soaring inflation threatens the livelihood of countless others within the city. Because there are not enough Korah homes available, landlords have been able to charge exorbitant prices and frequently discriminate against large families or those with special needs.

close to the garbage dump or near the river where garbage is thrown. These same homes often flood in the rainy season, bringing muck and sewage right into their living space.

It is heartbreaking to see people living in such desperate conditions and the challenge is for our HFK families to stay living in a better place than this. Safe and adequate housing is a basic need and human right. So, please pray that we have wisdom to come alongside these families in relevant and crucial ways. With the ever changing economic and social conditions outside of our control, we are constantly seeking new and innovative ways to increase the earning capacity of our families through economic empowerment.

Even amongst our own sponsored families, the impact of this crisis has become evident. Since HFK began in 2011, rent has increased by over 1,500%. Can you imagine? Just think if your housing payment increased by 15 times!! The situation is forcing the poorest families to live in conditions that put their health at great risk, and leave many with the threat of homelessness. Some homes are made up mostly of tarps and situated

One immediate step we are taking is to raise additional funds to offset what is needed to increase our families' rent allowance. If you would like to give towards this critical need, please indicate "RENT" on your donation. Thank you!



## CAN YOU HELP? WE HAVE 3 MONTHS TO REACH OUR GOAL!

A BIG thank you to all who are Standing with Korah! Much of what is needed for 2023 has been raised. There remains \$207,000 CAD (\$156,000 USD) left to be raised so we can meet this year's commitments in Korah!

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Kiya & Meron



### KIYA'S STORY

Kiya is a vulnerable teen mom with a strong desire to provide a better life for her daughter. Orphaned at a young age, she is no stranger to loneliness, discrimination, and abandonment. Motivated by her love for her unborn child, Kiya continued her pregnancy even at the cost of her marriage, leaving her to raise her daughter alone. In spite of the difficulties she experiences, Kiya is committed to change her future.

Current Need \$130 per month : Sponsor \$130 or \$65 per mo.

Who will walk  
alongside these families?  
Will you be the one?

### SIMEGN'S STORY

A mother of two, Simegn has survived much trauma and hardship. After the birth of her first child, she lived on the streets, forced to beg and sell boiled beans in order to survive. She was later married and had a second daughter, however she ultimately experienced rejection in that relationship too, which left her yet again in a dire financial situation, struggling to feed her two girls. Simegn is motivated to learn and feels hopeful about the future direction of her family with HFK's support!

Current Need \$130 per month : Sponsor \$130 or \$65 per mo.



Simegn & her Girls

### ELSA'S STORY

Shouldering responsibility has been a constant for Elsa since she was a young girl, caring for her brothers while her mother succumbed to fatal illness. Despite a stolen childhood and limited education, Elsa is still determined and optimistic about changing the future for her sons.

Current Need \$195 per month : Sponsor \$195, \$130 or \$65 per mo.

### MISIRAK'S STORY

Misirak has known hard work from a young age, selling fruit as a child to help her family survive; all while trying to keep up with her education. Misirak is now a single mother of a young boy with significant delayed development. The stigma surrounding people with disabilities and the lack of healthcare supports for children with special needs made Misirak's future look very bleak. The improved social and physical development of her son since starting the program has already proven how valuable of a role sponsorship is going to have in their life!

Current Need \$195 per month :  
Sponsor \$195, \$130 or \$65 per mo.



Misirak & Fraol

# BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY

## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

When a sponsored family enters HFK's 3-year Family Empowerment Program, they begin a transformative process of learning and self-development. For Samrawit and Serkalem, this journey presented some unexpected delays and obstacles, making their success all the more inspiring.



Bosco Training Center - Food Preparation Class, June 2023

Once a HFK family has been stabilized, the head-of-household completes 6 months of life skills trainings. The next step in their journey is deciding between two different areas of focus, either business or vocational. Those following the business track receive individualized mentorship, learn basic business skills, and apply for a grant to help them get started. Others, like Serkalem and Samrawit, receive employment readiness trainings and attend a vocational college to earn certification in a particular trade or skill.

One of the beautiful things about our program is that it allows for the additional time and support that some families require for true empowerment. Soon after joining HFK, Serkalem's son began experiencing complications with his breathing, which required serious medical intervention. Having the option to temporarily pause her vocational training while her son's health stabilized, has been essential in Serkalem's empowerment process. Samrawit also needed extra time. As a young widow and mother to three children, she entered the program with many psychological challenges due to severe trauma and loss. Significant counselling, resources and dedicated support from our Ethiopian staff were needed to help Samrawit break free from her past and move forward with her life.

Recently both capable women graduated from cooking school and have begun their internships as cooks at a beautiful hotel! The pride you see in their faces is a pride that we all feel inside as we recognize this accomplishment that took a team; one that is dedicated, loving, and committed to the goal of empowerment, even if it requires creativity and hard work.

## Vocational vs Business Track

Currently HFK has:

14 women in vocational school,  
2 women who graduated in 2023, and  
6 women who are newly employed in  
their trained vocation.

In addition, 12 women are starting a  
business or have recently begun  
working for themselves in HFK's  
Artisan Cooperative.



Samrawit & Serkalem  
GRADUATED WITH LEVEL 1  
FOOD PREPARATION CERTIFICATE

Elsa's Family



TO SPONSOR VISIT  
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