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To register to run email lisa@weema.org.

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**Happy Mother’s Day**

The donation made in your honor will support and empower women in Ethiopia.

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**Beeskeeping project success story**

Samson* is a 45 year old beekeeper and a member of the Kololo Belela cooperative. He has more than six years of beekeeping experience. Before he joined the WEEMA beekeeping project, he did not know how to implement modern beekeeping or how to build hives from local materials. After joining, he received trainings and learned how to build modern and transitional hives.

Before joining the project, Samson had four traditional hives. With WEEMA’s support he has expanded his business to 25 traditional and five transitional hives. His hives produce between 28-46kg of pure honey in each harvest and provide a sustainable income for his family. Thanks to WEEMA training, he can continue to construct transitional hives using affordable locally available materials and to improve the quality of honey he produces.

**Development of Mother Tongue Curriculum in Kembata Tembaro Zone**

Teachers and students across Kembata Tembaro Zone are seeing direct benefits from WEEMA’s Mother Tongue Curriculum project. This project supported the development of a new curriculum and textbooks in local languages, and provided training to 642 teachers on how to transition to teaching in mother tongue – an evidence-based and recently adopted strategy of the Ministry of Education. Bekele*, a first grade teacher in Mudula primary school says “there is a big difference in the students’ understanding of the lesson. Teachers and students are very happy to have this chance to teach and learn using our mother tongue language Tembaro.”

**Midwife Deployment and Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) capacity building in Tembaro Woreda**

The community around Gaecha Health Center has seen firsthand the impact of WEEMA programming. The Center has gone from a shortage of supplies to now having newborn resuscitation equipment, a vacuum extractor that prevents fetal distress and c-section, and essential antibiotics for mothers and children. Because of this equipment they now have the ability to provide services, including deliveries, without interruption. Tigist*, one of the midwives supported by WEEMA to complete her education at Hamlin College of Midwives, has been working in Gaecha Health Center. She reports that the project has improved MNCH service quality, and increased the number of women giving birth at the health center rather than at home.

*Names have been changed to protect the individuals’ privacy.

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**WEEMA RUNS CATARACT CAMPAIGN FOR 5TH YEAR IN A ROW**

WEEMA’s Cataract Campaign in partnership with Himalayan Cataract Project performed 976 cataract surgeries for 954 patients in just five days this February.

The day of surgery is a long but exciting one. The hallway is lined with benches full of women and men anxious to regain their eyesight after years in the dark. Although the procedure itself takes an average of only eight minutes per eye, numerous volunteers and healthcare professionals are needed to prepare patients for surgery. Eyelashes are clipped, blood pressure is tested to ensure there are no complications, and dilating eye drops are pipetted into each affected eye. Patients are provided meals and an overnight stay in tents on the hospital grounds. The next morning is full of joyful singing as bandages are removed and patients can see clearly again. The team provides post-op instructions and eyedrops before everyone returns home.

**Meseret gets her sight back**

It was early on the first day of surgery when we met Meseret*, hunched over on a bench waiting to get her eyes dilated. Meseret is double-binary, or blind in both eyes. She developed cataracts three years ago and since then has seen only darkness.

Meseret traveled from Sodo Woreda by bus to get to Hosanna where the 2019 Cataract Campaign was taking place. She grabbed my hand to get a sense of where I stood as she explained the impact this surgery will have on her life.

“I cannot do anything alone since becoming blind, so I stay in the house all day. My two children must take care of me. I cannot walk or even stand up steadily on my own.”

Even in her own household her children must deliver water and cook since it is unsafe for Meseret to make the journey to get water on unpaved roads or to cook by herself on an open flame.

“When WEEMA was advertising this campaign I heard about it from my relatives in Hassana. My children brought me here for the pre-screening to see if I qualified for surgery and thankfully I did.”

The next morning as bandages were being stripped and exclamations of joy burst through the crowd, we found a joyous Meseret sitting tall and soaking in the sights around her and sharing emotions with her fellow patients. Her surgery was a success, restoring vision in both eyes.

“I can now go home and live my own life again,” Meseret shared. “I would like to thank the team who made this happen for me.”
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**2018 WEEMA PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

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