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ACT FOR PEACE
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PEACEMAIL
 BRINGING YOU A MESSAGE FROM THE FIELD

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 CM 19200317 | PH 1800 025 101



LOCAL PARTNER PROFILE

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (EOC-DICAC)

Ethiopia hosts over 800,000 refugees, most originating from the war-ravaged countries of Congo, Somalia, Eritrea, and South Sudan. Some of the most at risk are survivors of sexual or gender-based violence (GBV), people living with a disability, and those with serious or chronic illness.

Act for Peace's partner on the ground, The EOC-DICAC is supporting these refugees to overcome the challenges and trauma they have faced and take control of their lives.

The EOC-DICAC provides emergency medical assistance, including transport to Addis Ababa, financial support for medical expenses, temporary accommodation, supplementary food and access to specialised medical treatment for serious cases. Survivors of sexual GBV can access psychosocial support, as well as HIV/AIDS testing, and financial support for treatment, if needed.

The EOC-DICAC also provides refugees with vocational training, helping to build their confidence and social networks, develop livelihood skills and ultimately improve their potential income; through courses such as tailoring, hairdressing, and food preparation.

YOUR SUPPORT IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE:

In May, 940 Act for Peace Partners like you came together and raised **\$44,827.70** to support people uprooted by conflict and disaster around the world, including Syrian refugee families in Jordan, who continue to suffer the effects of the protracted crisis in their homeland. Thank you!

Act for Peace gratefully acknowledges the support of the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).



Australian Government
 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

PLEASE PRAY:

- For Hermela, that she may continue to help refugee communities, and be an ongoing source of inspiration to her colleagues and all of those whose lives she touches.
- For our local partner in Ethiopia, that they may continue their vital work with refugees in communities that are most at risk.
- For the staff, that they may continue to share their knowledge and support, to help refugees overcome the challenges and trauma they have faced and rebuild their lives.



PEACEMAIL
AUGUST 2022

Dear friends,

My name is Hermela. I was born and raised in Ethiopia in the capital Addis Ababa. I work for The Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (EOC-DICAC) as a gender advisor. My role is to oversee that anyone who is victim of gender-based violence (GBV) gets the right service, focusing on a survivor-centred approach.

At DICAC we have more than 5,000 refugees come to our office to receive our services. The Act for Peace project is targeting urban refugees. We try to reach survivors of GBV, people at risk of GBV, people living with a disability and minorities in general.

We have lots of people coming forward, needing counselling services and other psychosocial support. Through this counselling service, you see a really great change happening in people's lives. I remember the day where this person at risk came to me for a counselling service and, at the end of just one session said, "Today, now that I spoke to you, I'm starting to see hope". So, these counselling services are changing lives.

As part of our services, we also provide medical consultations, and cover transport and medical costs for refugees. For them, having this opportunity to get medical treatment is also really helping them a lot. We provide hygiene kits and we also give supplementary diet assistance and one-time emergency cash assistance. We also have awareness raising workshops on the areas of GBV, HIV/AIDS prevention, and sexual and reproductive health.

The most important thing we have is the safe house for survivors, for people at risk and for those with serious medical issues. And we also use it for protection. Act for Peace is playing a huge role in supporting the safe house by providing accommodation, food and support to those vulnerable refugees.

We also have this livelihood project that we integrate with the gender projects. We provide skills training in hairdressing, food preparation, mobile maintenance, tailoring, and fashion design and photography.

Not only does this give them the opportunity to be independent and to be economically empowered, it also gives them the chance to really interact with other people, and they see that they're not alone. I think that's one of the most beautiful things from this project. Sometimes they feel there's nobody out there to understand them. So, services like this really gives them hope.

If you can change the life of one person, that's really amazing, right? Because that one person may be able to change their family, then the family can change the community. And so, one person really matters. Being in this position, and having the opportunity to have an impact, even just on one person, is really the most satisfying thing ever.

I really want everyone to understand how much of an impact Act for Peace is bringing to the lives of refugees here in Ethiopia. And so really, without Act for Peace's support, DICAC wouldn't be able to reach as many refugees as much as we have in the past couple of years.

Thank you,

Hermela



Hermela, pictured "We grew up hearing and knowing about these kind of things. Growing up as a local helps you to really understand the context."

ACT FOR PEACE
PARTNERS