

H.E.A.L.-ing through the Climate Crisis

90% of surface water sources in Kenya have dried up. The Horn of Africa faces a dramatic shift in climate patterns that negatively impact humans and animals alike. Droughts are happening more frequently and heightening existing vulnerabilities driven by chronic poverty. **After three straight years without consistent rainfall, 22 million people who rely heavily on livestock and agriculture face food insecurity, disease outbreaks, malnutrition, widespread animal death, and water scarcity.** Children are getting water-borne diseases. Nursing mothers are malnourished. Animals are dying from dehydration.

The continent that produces the least amount of carbon emissions in the world is facing some of the harshest consequences of climate change. **The situation is dire, but Amref is helping the area H.E.A.L.**

The Human, Environment, Animal, and Livelihood (HEAL) Project provides needed services to humans and livestock through a 'One Health Approach', which increases access to human and animal health services and strengthens pastoralist preparedness for health-threatening events.

Through the One Health Approach, Amref Health Africa's interventions include:

FOOD & NUTRITION:

- Giving the most vulnerable communities cash to buy food and nutrition supplements.
- Providing those who are acutely malnourished with supplements and multivitamins.

EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS:

- Establishing weather stations in all health facilities in the project area.
- Gathering disaster-specific information, geolocation, and impact on the land for a central database.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH:

- Providing reproductive health education for women who are expected to deliver at home.
- Teaching women how certain infections brought on by drought are transferred to their babies.

ANIMAL HEALTH:

- Checking livestock for diseases and infections and providing livestock vaccination.
- Monitoring animal-to-human disease transmission and educating the community on animal disease outbreaks.

GENERAL HEALTHCARE SERVICES:

- Getting children under five preventative immunizations.
- Providing health screenings for various noncommunicable diseases and conditions.
- Treating residents of all ages with health services as needed.



The Horn of Africa includes, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda



“We do not even have anything to breastfeed our babies.” For lactating mothers like Salo, the lack of a consistent food source has led to underweight mothers struggling to feed babies, denying them nutrients at a critical stage.



“For those who say climate change is a lie or hoax, let them come here and see what we are going through.” Guyo says his community in North Horr lost thousands of livestock to the drought. With milk from livestock being an essential commodity, the community is losing an important source of protein.

With our One Health Mobile Unit, our health workers and local veterinarians deliver essential services to remote villages like Yaa Sharbana in North Horr, which is over 13 miles from the nearest clinic. The health of each patient that attends the community outreach is recorded and updated to help monitor progress and assess medical needs.

“For us, to get health service, it is only during the mobile clinic outreach that the sick people are given drugs, children are immunized [and] screened for weight, the underweight [are] given supplements. And even expectant women are given injections during the clinic, and underweight women are given supplements. The only healthcare support we are getting right now is through the mobile clinic outreach.”

From income stabilization for increased food costs to providing livestock vaccination, Amref is doing what we can to respond to the drought crisis.

Kefeta: Great Progress is Being Made to Elevate Ethiopia's Youth

Amref's *Kefeta* Project in Ethiopia is **creating a network of services to reach two million young people** aged 15-29 by 2026. Nearly 67% of Ethiopia's urban population is under 29, and 40% of the country is under 15 years old. *Kefeta* is giving young people the skills, tools, and support to shape a better future for themselves and their country.

Amref USA is focusing on *Kefeta's* Youth Empowerment Fund (YEF), the first Fund co-owned by young leaders in the country that specifically targets grants and loans to spur youth advocacy and job creation. The YEF's main interventions are to provide two types of financial grant support (**Seed Grants and Social Grants**) along with low-interest loans and high-interest savings accounts tailored for youth, through what are called **Youth SACCOs**.

WHAT IS A SACCO?

The *Kefeta* Youth SACCO is the first ever youth-led, youth-managed, and youth-owned Savings and Credit Cooperative Organization (SACCO) that offers youth savings accounts with high-interest rates and provides access to affordable credit – i.e., loans with low-interest rates. These SACCOs promote a savings and efficient money management culture, reduces poverty, and empowers young people by making finance more accessible. Operations and administration are all covered by Amref.

WHAT ARE SOCIAL GRANTS?

The *Kefeta* Social Grants are small matching grants of up to \$5,000 that help youth groups and coalitions address their communities' challenges head-on. These matching grants are awarded after the youth receive training on community mobilization and engagement.

WHAT ARE SEED GRANTS?

We are using Seed Grants to build and remodel 22 youth and career centers in 18 Ethiopian cities to provide respite for young people and to foster better health, friendship, and community. The centers have various training rooms, a library, workspaces, a cafeteria, sports and art spaces, an event hall, locker rooms, and more. These Youth Centers also include health clinics where we are improving access to comprehensive, youth-friendly, and gender-sensitive health services and sexual and gender-based violence support. SACCO registration tables can be found in many of the Centers as well.

On any given day, you will find youth playing soccer, painting, taking basic literacy courses, learning about savings, or meeting with *Kefeta* Youth Coalition members to talk about their advocacy work.

Kefeta will benefit the lives of so many young people across Ethiopia, building their agency and capacity for advocacy, linking them to economic opportunities, and improving their access to youth-friendly services. Together with our donors, our approach will not only deepen skill development, improve youth job placements, and create new youth-led businesses, **but also redefine norms and catalyze youth-led economic change at a vast scale.**

Since October 2022, *Kefeta* has:

- Added SACCOs in **4 new cities**, with **667** total founding members.
- Trained **277 youth** on financial literacy and SACCO operations.
- Increased the total membership of the SACCOs to **950 youth across 8 cities**.

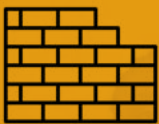
Kefeta launched a **Social Grant Proposal Competition in two cities, Assosa and Gambela**.

- The winners used the award to distribute school supplies to **400 students** who dropped out of school due to lack of income.

Since October 2022, we have:

- Fully remodeled **13 youth and career centers**.
- Trained **56 youth-friendly service providers** on gender, sexual and reproductive health and family planning (86% of these trained were women).
- Trained an additional **113 service providers** on youth-friendly health service and empathy.
- Reached **41,502 youth** with appropriate health services (72% female and 31 youth with disabilities).

Buy a Brick and Help Change a Life!



BRICK
BY
BRICK



We need your help to finish a *Kefeta* Youth Center, and \$100 is all it takes!

For \$100, you can buy a brick to help get a Youth Center up and running. Each donor will have their name (or that of a loved one) engraved on a plaque at the Center.

Nearly 67% of Ethiopia's urban population is under 29. Together, #BrickbyBrick, we can make a difference.

Buy your brick today!



SAVE THE DATE!

Learn more about *Kefeta* from our Amref Ethiopia Staff!

Look out for an email about our supporter call next month to hear updates and stories from the field directly from our collages in Ethiopia!

RSVP by emailing Correale@AmrefUSA.org with the subject line: **RSVP for Supporter Call**, or call +1-212-768-2440 and leave us a voicemail saying you want to attend!

COVID-19 UPDATE

Bringing COVID Vaccines and NCD Screening to the City!



Through a grant from the Moderna Foundation, we are using our mobile clinics to bring COVID-19 vaccines and screening for non-communicable diseases (NCDs) into the heart of urban communities in Kenya. As Deborah, The Amref Project Officer, says, “because diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure don’t [always] show symptoms until it’s too late, getting screened for NCDs is not a priority for many Kenyans.”

With a long drought season and widespread job loss due to the pandemic, we are seeing a rise in NCDs across Kenya. Climate change’s ripple effects have impacted the amount of harvested food available. More people, as a result, are consuming cheaper, processed foods that we know all too well are not the *healthiest* options for us. And, because temperatures are so hot, people are not as active as they used to be. This combination increases the chances of developing common NCDs, like diabetes or hypertension, which tend to make the impacts of COVID-19 more severe.

By bringing our mobile clinics to areas like Kawangware – a densely populated urban community in Nairobi, Kenya – we can provide access to COVID-19 vaccines directly to people who work during common clinic hours or cannot travel to their nearest clinic while simultaneously offering testing, education, and referrals for advanced care so people can prevent and address NCDs.

Deborah states that “people want to know their status, but finances are very tight right now. If they don’t have symptoms or signs of sickness, they won’t get checkups.” Fortunately, with help from Moderna, our mobile clinic services are free of charge, and we can continue **bringing care closer to communities**.

(Above) Patients waiting in the clinic, (L) Deborah, the Project Manager, (R) A Community Health Working sharing information with community members.

EVENT UPDATE

ArtBall 2023: A Huge Success!

On Saturday, February 25th, in Brooklyn, NY, we hosted our annual ArtBall fundraising event and adjoining contemporary African, Pan-African, and Black art auction, creating a connection between African culture and philanthropy to celebrate and highlight the talent of the African continent.

Young Prince hosted the event, and artist Tariku Shiferaw presented world-renowned Ethiopian-American artist Julie Mehretu with the Rees Visionary Award. This award is named after our late founder, Dr. Thomas Rees, a pioneering reconstructive surgeon, pilot, musician, and sculptor. The Rees Visionary Award is given to artists we feel create exceptional work that educates, inspires, and emboldens the viewer through these challenging times.

Guests ate West and East African food from Teranga and Bunna Cafe. Drinks were provided by Ten To One, McBride Sisters, 21Seeds, Ode To Babel, Clifton Dry, Habesha, and Stella Artois. We are proud to say that almost 95% of the vendors across the event were minority-owned and operated. This year, everyone danced the night away with live music by Chop and Quench -The Fela! on Broadway band including Tony Award-nominated frontman Sahr Ngaujah, and DJs Eden and TAO.

Proceeds from the ticket sales, sponsorships, and auction went toward our Ethiopian youth empowerment program, *Kefeta*. **In total, we raised \$239,000! [Click here to view our photos!](#)**



(L) Julie Mehretu (R) Fariyal Abdullahi, Tariku Shrifaw, and ArtBall Event Coordinator Nadia Nascimento (Bottom) Amref USA & Ethiopia staff with Julie Mehretu.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Meet Dr. Jack McConnell

Dr. Jack McConnell, an Amref legend, led a life straight out of a *New York Times* best-seller! After medical school, he suffered two bouts of tuberculosis, inspiring him to go into research—where he met his wife, Mary Ellen. Dr. McConnell’s many medical accomplishments include the co-invention of the tine test (used to detect tuberculosis), participation in the early stages of the polio vaccine development, and directing the development of Tylenol tablets.

Jack’s career led him to travel the world in search of new healthcare products and technology, and while in Nairobi, he met the founders of Amref, creating countless memories camping with treatment teams in Kenya! Dr. McConnell served on the Amref USA Board of Directors in the 1980s and, after retirement, founded the Volunteers in Medicine clinic in Hilton Head, South Carolina, helping 10,000 patients each year. More than 100 of these clinics have been replicated across the country.

Jack and Mary Ellen had three children; one happens to be the keyboardist of the band Phish. Scan the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/AmrefJackTap> to check out Jack tap dancing and singing with the band!

Though Jack passed away in 2018, Mary Ellen is still contributing to Amref’s success and keeping his legacy alive. **Thank you, McConnell Family! Keep Rockin’!**



Mike Wood (L) & Jack McConnell (R) in a plane flying over Kenya.



thanks for reading!

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