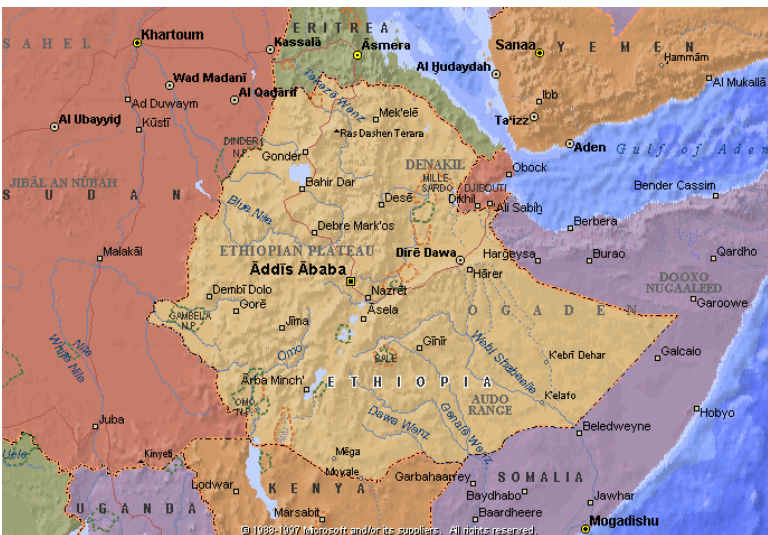


# New Life Ministries and Women's Vocational Program; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## ***Background***

Along a street in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital city, stood a vacant factory. Designed to produce bottled water, it had never been used for its intended purpose.

One man saw its potential. It was designed to produce bottled water," he told us, "but God wants to use it to provide living water."



"He" is Dr. Betta Mengistu, overseer of a large church in Addis Ababa. His vision was to use the factory as an outreach center for the women and children on the streets of the city. Over half of Ethiopia's 57.7 million people are under the age of fifteen. Due to drought, lack of education, and the country's involvement in civil wars, many children in the country are deprived of fundamental needs like food, clothing, education and medication. The majority of children living under such alarming circumstances are orphans and destitute. Many women in this city are unemployed and often turn to prostitution and other related vices to make a living. Dr. Betta's church was determined to make a difference. The Mercy Center's dedication was held January 7, 2001.

## ***Ministry to Women***

The outreach to women focuses on helping them change their lifestyles by fostering an alternative income through the adoption of small-scale enterprises. Women who enter the program study the Scriptures, learn skills and values like hard work, budgeting, and grooming, and also train in a craft. They are able to choose from several vocations, including tailoring, food preparation, childcare, hairdressing, home care, and secretarial training. Another part of this outreach provides loans to poor women in the community who desire to begin their own business as a means of providing income for their families.

The ministry now involves 116 ladies. In fact, the first class of 59 women has recently graduated. These women spent their first four months in intense study of the Bible and the rest of their time focusing on an occupation. They are now finding jobs in hotels,

homes, schools and shops. One of these graduates, employed in a home, was such a testimony to her employer that her employer has just become a Christian. Mission of Mercy's annual commitment to this ministry is \$44,000 a year, or \$3,670 per month. From your contribution Mission of Mercy provided \$30,000 for this ministry in 2000 and would like to use \$39,600 to further assist this ministry in 2001.

### ***Ministry to Youth on the Streets***

Outreach to the youth on the streets of Addis Ababa began with weekly Bible studies. During one of these meetings a homeless young man stood up and challenged his peers.

“We may not come from big houses,” he said, “but we are important to God. We are the ones God wants to use to reach other street people.”

And with medical and nutritional programs already in place, the church has expanded this outreach to ensure a more lasting and long-range impact—by providing vocational training and Christian discipleship. The outreach also includes attempts to establish contact with parents or relatives so those youth can be reintegrated into their families. Vocational training options include woodwork, weaving, fashion design and seamstressing.

This ministry to the youth has impacted 96 children so far, and Mission of Mercy has committed to provide \$2775 each month to help run this program. Through your contribution Mission of Mercy has utilized \$30,000 for this program.