



Blein Center



PROGETTO CONTINENTI



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# Our mission

Blein Center's mission is to contribute to the reduction of urban and rural poverty in Hawassa, Ethiopia. We operate for improving the socio-economic conditions of the most vulnerable families, women and children.

We empower the community through the strengthening of non-formal education system and through bringing positive changes to maternal and child health conditions in disadvantaged areas of Hawassa and its rural areas.



## Why Hawassa. Why Tabor

Hawassa is one of the most important cities of Ethiopia. Tabor was one of the most peripheral areas of the city, inhabited by families living in extreme poverty and social exclusion. Today, after few years, the centre of Hawassa has expanded exponentially. Tabor has developed from kebelé to sub city managing in turn 5 kebeles.

According to estimates provided by the local government, Tabor has a population of about 44,000 inhabitants, both adults and children. 3.36% of the population is aged less than one year, 11.8% less than 3 years, 18.11% is under the age of 5 years, 23.76% are women with children, 4.26% are pregnant women, while 19.5% are women of childbearing age.



The conditions of the neighbourhood are gradually improving with the construction of water and electricity networks and the asphalt of the main roads. The district is welcoming in its many recent buildings a growing number of middle class families representing recently (according to results of a survey conducted by Progetto Continenti in August of 2010) 25% of the population.

But these positive developments are not benefiting the entire population of the district, on the contrary, the phenomenon is occurring progressive marginalization of the poorest families gradually forcing them to go and live in remote areas without access to key basic services.

The initiative in question is addressed in particular to those categories of vulnerable families, promoting a policy of inclusion and marginalization of the poor who still represent the majority of residents in the district: in fact, 70% of the population is defined under the poverty threshold having on average a daily income of 10 ETB, which corresponds to 0.50 Euro at the current exchange rate.

According to the sub-city of Tabor, in the district there are 850 orphaned children and 1500 children with severe socio-economic hardships. Over 500 children have never attended primary school.

Among the adult population there are 2500 illiterate men, while the number of women who can neither read nor write exceeds 2900 people.

The survey conducted by Progetto Continenti in 2010 and estimates made by the local partner JeCCDO, for years engaged in community development programs, indicate levels of illiteracy far more alarming, especially among adults, recording rates that exceed by far the 50%.

The low schooling of poor families, due to failure to pay the cost of education of its members, is seen as a major cause that prevents to find adequate sources of income to improve their living conditions (and often even for their livelihoods), thus feeding the vicious circle: poverty illiteracy scarce employment opportunities poverty.

This initiative seeks to give an answer to this issue, recognizing education a primary role in combating poverty. In line with the efforts of the Ethiopian government to ensure the formal education or, alternatively, non formal education to its citizens, considered the most effective tools to combat poverty, the project will intervene in the education sector and in particular in the non formal education, in order to improve the literacy levels of adults and children, to encourage the preparation and orien-

tation to the work of disadvantaged young people and promote the integration into the formal school system of vulnerable children in preschool age.

Beside the non formal education component, the project will address also the difficult health situation of the vulnerable families of Hawassa, with a particular focus on maternal health care.

24% of children of Ethiopia is affected by acute respiratory infections; on the total of these, less than 16% receive medical care; only 38% of children with diarrhea receive oral rehydration therapy and a necessary and regular nutrition; only 3% of children who contract malaria receives anti malarial drugs.

The number of infants dying before reaching one year of life remains one of the highest in the world. The spread of HIV/AIDS reaches, as in many other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, alarming levels. According to data from the National Office for Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS of the Ministry of Health of Ethiopia, in the country 4.4% of the population is affected by HIV/AIDS (for a total of approx. 1.5 million people). Of these, 817.000 are women and 96.000 children under 15 years of age. In addition, there are 537.000 orphans whose parents died by AIDS.



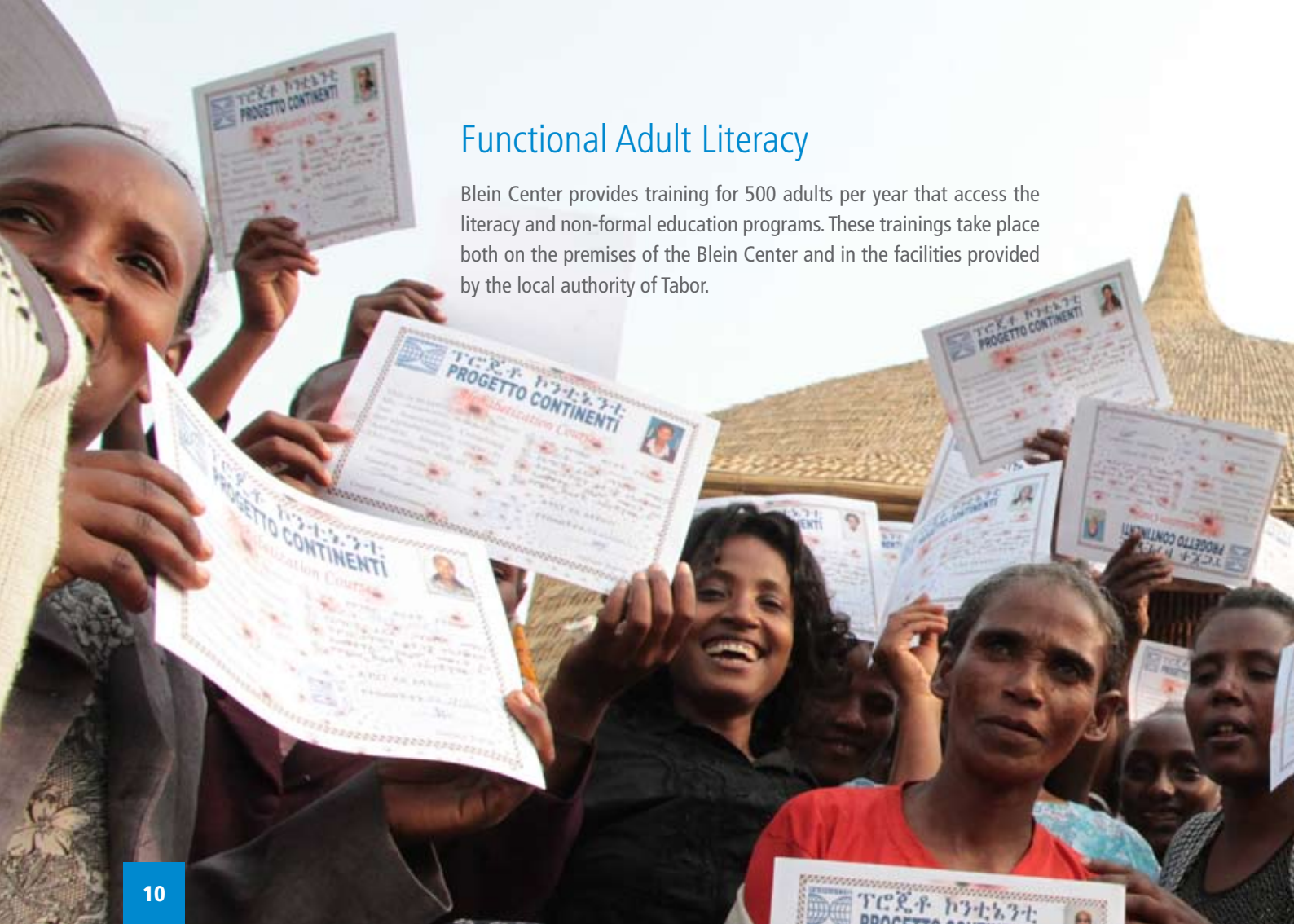




# Education and Training

Blein Center is dedicated to the empowerment of the local Tabor community in the efforts to overcome poverty by providing education and training opportunities to the women and children of this urban sub-city area.

Through language and alphabetization courses, alternative early education, and horticulture trainings, the Center opens the door to greater self-sufficiency, improved living conditions, and the reduction of social exclusion and illiteracy.



## Functional Adult Literacy

Blein Center provides training for 500 adults per year that access the literacy and non-formal education programs. These trainings take place both on the premises of the Blein Center and in the facilities provided by the local authority of Tabor.

## Alternative Basic Education

Blein Center aims to improve quality and increased supply and use of Alternative Basic Education programs for disadvantaged children of Tabor excluded from the formal school system.

## Literacy courses

In the Blein Center we perform alphabetization classes in Amharic for beneficiary women. Mastering the language helps women to enhance everyday life tasks and empowers their role inside their community.











## Horticulture

Through Blein Center's horticulture courses, the recipient are able to learn the basics of growing plants and about all technical, economic and nutritional aspects concerned with it.

The establishment of small home gardens allow the beneficiary families to reach a level of food self sufficiency which ensures the survival of members of their household.





# Health Clinic and Maternal Center

Blein Center's Health Clinic and Maternity Center play an essential role in the community. To improve maternal and child health conditions, the clinic provides prenatal, delivery, and postnatal care and support, as well as health education and sanitation awareness to empower women through birth and infant care.

Health education on sanitation, disease prevention, and nutrition issues are offered along with the health outpost's infant vaccination and family planning services. Our outreach services in the territory take care of the outermost rural members of the community.







## Delivery and strengthening of maternal and child health services

Blein Center provides a new facility dedicated specifically to care for childbirth and labor. These rooms provide a safe and well equipped space for the whole birth process. Blein Center's midwife and assistant are very well trained and offer 24 hours a day and 7 days a week labor and delivery support service. Our clinic and laboratory facilities offer medical care, testing, and treatment for the community.

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**Gynaecology service / obstetrics:** gynaecological check-ups to be carried out during and after pregnancy; diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases; diagnosis and treatment of major diseases related to pregnancy or which are a risk factor to the pregnancy; birth certificate; comprehensive registration of data (bio data, chronological, delivery type, interventions, medications, staff intervened).

**Delivery assistance:** confinement within the structure of Blein Center; delivery assistance service before and after childbirth.

**Paediatric Service:** medical follow up of infants in the first

year of life; visits for children under three years and for immunization; supply clothes and towels for babies. In addition Blein Center offers the purchase of additional sheets and clothes for babies, and gowns for the paramedics.

**ANC (Ante Natal Care) Service:** HIV testing. The service is offered to all pregnant women with pre test counselling. The result, if positive, is referred to the health centre. The woman, in these cases, give birth in the Referral Hospital by caesarean section;

Registration of newborn in accordance with public standards; supply of drugs.



## Training to local staff

The project foresees training and refresher courses for medical and paramedical personnel operating in the Blein Center and external staff from the other health centers, clinics posts of Hawassa.



## Outreach services in the territory

Blein Center, apart providing outpatient services in the facilities of our health post, offers a series of outreach services that reach the semi-urban communities surrounding the city.



## Health courses

These training courses focus on some specific issues as health education, hygiene, nutrition and children caring.

All courses include the application of a mixed methodology that includes a part of theoretical classes (lectures), together with practical training sessions through exercises and simulations.







# Community Development

To promote self-development of the local community, Blein Center provides the skills needed to make effective changes and encourages active participation in all aspects of the projects and services. The success of the Center's projects and objective to improve the living standards of the people depends entirely on the populations role in the process of development.

Through empowered and active citizen participation, networking, and collaboration, the sense of social strength in common goals provides a foundation for a sustainable future for the community.



## Psycho-social support to families

Since the families of children who attend Blein Center are considered vulnerable, we set up a series of psycho-social rehabilitation services dedicated to them. Families have the opportunity to seek advice regarding any type of social and psychological problems that might have with their children and more generally within their own family or with the community.

The presence of these services thereby also facilitates the establishment of good cooperation and trust between Blein Center and the families of beneficiaries. The success in establishing relationships of trust and to involve families in the project is essential to encourage regular attendance and participation in the educational service provided.

## Public awareness campaigns

Blein Center constantly organizes special events to raise awareness of the local community on health and social issues.

With the support of local partners and staff, all services offered by the Health Post are accompanied by campaigns to promote community awareness on the most delicate and urgent health issues (nutrition days, twins survival, harmful traditional practices, etc).

Project staff will therefore be responsible for the design, planning, implementation and communication of promotion campaigns within the Blein Center and more generally in Tabor subcity.

A Blein Center's public awareness campaign normally includes:

- community involvement;
- local authorities participation
- mobilization and sensitization on the theme;
- debates and discussions;
- promotion and advertising.

## Sport activities

Blein Center land offers one of the best facilities for safe, fun, and frequent community interaction in Hawassa.

Organization of sports teams, activities, and games contributes to the sense of social strength and support of community members.

The compound soccer field, volleyball and basketball courts offer the proper space for activities, while Blein Center staff facilitate and organize training, practice, and events.





## Water and Sanitation Projects

Blein Center is part of a project that will provide water and sanitation facilities to the Wondogenet Woreda, a part of SNNPR located in a one of the Sidama districts.

Wondgenet is a Woreda with a high population density (588 persons per sq. ft.), with the presence of many different cultural groups.

However there is a huge variation in population density and groups within the different Kebele.



The variability of population density depends on fertility of the land, the availability of water resources and then on the level of lands productivity. Thanks to a targeted government action, new rural villages have been created around the main urban areas, and a house with 0.1 hectares of land to cultivate has been given to each family.

Farmland can be easily distinguished in land for large scale farming and home gardens. The large estates are mostly used in the production of cash crops such as sugar cane, coffee and chata edulis, alternating with vegetables such as potatoes, carrots and cabbage all at high levels of productivity compared to the national levels, thanks to the support of appropriate irrigation system. The situation concerning home gardens is totally different.

Only 29.34% of houses can steadily reach water resources and with the surrounding gardens they are completely devoid of any equipment that allows secure and steadily access to the big water resources of the area. Home gardens are designed with a low level of cultivation performance of slow growing plant like paya, avocado, coffee and cereal.

The difficult of access to water that sometimes turned into no access, is not just a private homes issue, but also a government facilities issue, that provide basic services like education and health care. Access to water is a critical point of the Woreda Wondogenet development strategies.

### **Our actions**

Blein Center's action focuses in "Water, Environment, Land and Natural Resourc-

es Management", identified as priority goal of intervention program in the region. The action will especially help to achieve the following priorities identified the area:

1. ensure better water coverage using "appropriate and technologically reproducible systems", especially aimed to guarantee better access to safe and protected water for local people;
2. ensure capacity building of institutions and communities about the management and maintenance of water schemes;
3. building the response capacity of beneficiary communities to the current and future water emergency response;
4. promoting the improvement of community sanitation knowledge and practices.







# The Youth Club

Blein Center's Youth Club aims to inspire the value of community and social well-being, in-turn the desire to serve and contribute to others. The response of young people has been enthusiastic and offers them the possibility to train themselves.

Many young people are willing to carry out activities in various areas in favour of other young people. For example, in previous years, the Youth Club have addressed the issue of AIDS and harmful traditional practices and organized awareness raising and exchange of experiences with other young people in the neighbourhood.



## Community Arts

Youth Club is strongly involved in the Blein Center's Community Arts program that includes theater, drama and cinema. It not only offers participating youth the opportunity for peer support, community, self-esteem and creative expression, but also provide an essential tool for educating the public on important issues such as HIV/AIDS awareness, hygiene and sanitation, social, and cultural conflicts.

Blein Center plans to develop a strong theater group for the purpose and vision of reaching the larger rural community with effective educational entertainment.

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## English and computer courses

With regards to enter the labour market, young people who have a basic knowledge of english and are able to use computers and common programs, have an advantage over those who in these two areas have no familiarity.

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## Life-skills training

These courses are designed for helping young girls and boys to acquire decision-making and problem-solving techniques.

## Information Desk

Blein Center's Youth Information Desk is a friendly and open space where young girls and boy can find up to date information on training, educational and job opportunities in Hawassa.





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Blein Center is a project founded, supported and financed by **Progetto Continenti**, an Italian non-governmental, non-profit organization for international solidarity and co-operation. Founded in 1989, Progetto Continenti works with local partners on development projects in developing countries. Progetto Continenti is an organization recognized by the European Union and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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### **Progetto Continenti's values**

In our day-by-day activities we try to practice and promote solidarity, both social and economic; people's involvement, to understand and improve the realities that we encounter; peace, justice and respect for diversity of people and cultures.

### **Projects**

Since its beginning in 1989, Progetto Continenti has undertaken more than 120 development projects in Central America (Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador), Africa (Ethiopia, Sudan) and Asia (Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar).

### **Fields of intervention**

Education: formal and informal education, school constructions, teachers training.

Health: health facilities, health education, medical assistance, equipment provision, training of health staff.

Work: vocational training, local trade, micro-credit, income generating activities.

Our sources of funding are: members self-taxation, private donations, fund-raising campaigns, contributions from private and public institutions, bequest.

[www.progettocontinenti.org](http://www.progettocontinenti.org)

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