



# Horn of Africa Neonatal Development Services

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2014

*Horn of Africa Neonatal Development Services (HANDS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to saving infants' lives in Ethiopia by facilitating the implementation of skilled medical care by the local medical professionals.*

## HANDS Team had a successful trip to Ethiopia

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Our HANDS founder, Dr. Mesfin Woldesenbet, recently came back from another successful trip to Jimma, Ethiopia. Dr. Mesfin was accompanied by volunteers Jayontra (JJ) Thompson, an experienced neonatal nurse from Georgia, and Elizabeth (Beth) Trexel, a respiratory therapist from Iowa.



*The team heading to Jimma in May 2014.*

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*“Ethiopia is showing significant signs of improvement in infant’s morbidity and mortality rates.”*

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During this trip, the HANDS team collaborated with Jimma University Hospital staff, was able to exchange valuable experiences and was encouraged to see previously donated equipment still being used effectively to save lives. These include the Masimo pulse oximeters, donated by Masimo, which senses patients’ oxygen levels and Bubble CPAP, donated by Teleflex, to help babies breathe comfortably.

Bedside rounds and teachings were conducted with the pediatrics and health officers’ residents and interns. The concept of Neonatal documentation was

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taught to those same individuals, which was received well. A copy of this documentation concept may be found on our website's education section. Dr. Mesfin gave grand rounds to the whole pediatrics department staff and residents. Beth and JJ also shared their knowledge and skill with the nursing staff, including how to manage a dying baby.

Neonatal resuscitation was taught using didactic session and hands on training using manikins. Based on our observations, this training needs to be repeated more frequently for the culture of neonatal resuscitation to be engraved in the institution. Although there were many encouraging improvements, there remain several outstanding issues that need more attention and process modifications. More frequent visits from HANDS and like-minded organizations are needed to insure continuity of the changes that were made during previous visits.

The number of infants in the neonatal ICU has significantly increased, however the available equipment is not sufficient to provide basic care. Our lowest point during this visit was losing four babies in one afternoon. Three of these deaths were undoubtedly preventable if the right equipment had been available at the time. As such, HANDS is more dedicated than ever to get these equipments in the future.

Dr. Mesfin met with senior staff members of the pediatrics department of Jimma Hospital and the Nursing director of the hospital, Mr. Gugsa N. Germossa. A lot of valuable suggestions were given to the senior staff including ICU staffing, intern and resident rotation and the use of modern internet technology in collecting data and sharing experiences from a distance. The senior staff also had very good suggestions on how to use these trips more efficiently.

In summary, the HANDS team feels that this most recent trip was again successful in changing neonatal care at Jimma Hospital. Having said that, we do believe there is much more work to be done.

We will be posting more pictures and videos of this trip on our website ([www.handsforbabies.org](http://www.handsforbabies.org)) and on our facebook page ([www.facebook.com/HANDSforBabies](http://www.facebook.com/HANDSforBabies)). We would like to thank our supporters, especially Teleflex inc., in sponsoring this trip.



*Bubble CPAP*



*Volunteer holding dying baby*



*Bubble CPAP and Pulse oximeter use in NICU*



*Resuscitation training*

## Volunteers are making a difference in HANDS' mission

Since the inception of HANDS, it has continuously depended on support of individuals and institutions. Our supporters have stepped up in helping hands both financially, donating neonatal equipment and volunteering their time to travel to Ethiopia. HANDS is very much encouraged by the number of neonatal nurses and respiratory therapists who are willing to travel to Ethiopia and share their experiences. HANDS specially wants to thank the neonatal ICU nurses of Women and Children Hospital at Roseville, California for their willingness to support our mission.

As mentioned in the above trip summary, a significant number of the babies who died could have been saved if the right kind of equipment were available. This includes breathing ventilators and intravenous fluid administration pumps. The neonatal ICU staff of St. Rose Siena, in Henderson, Nevada is in the process of collecting these equipments. HANDS would like to express its gratitude for these gestures.

## Next Steps

We believe strongly that the involvement of multiple organizations comprised of a variety of specialties or professions, both medical and non-medical, is needed to address these issues. This will require the involvement of local Ethiopian professionals and orchestration by the Ethiopian Ministry of Health.

We hope the above newsletter will trigger thought and discussion among individuals and organizations residing in the developed world. We are willing to work with local Ethiopian professionals towards the common goal of upgrading neonatal care in Ethiopia through the exchange of combined knowledge and experiences.

**-HANDS Team**



*Jimma University Hospital Neonatal ICU 2014.*

## How You Can Help

Would you like to get involved with Hands for Babies by volunteering your time and talents?

We have volunteer opportunities for skilled, talented and dedicated people in the following areas:

### Clinical Staff

- Neonatologist
- Neonatal Nurses
- Neonatal Respiratory Therapists
- Pharmacists

### Non-Clinical Staff

- Administrative Assistance
- Fundraising
- Marketing
- Shipment
- Travel Arrangements
- Website Maintenance

We welcome monetary donations in any amount. Your contributions will enable us to continue our work to improve neonatal health care facilities and the delivery of medical care to newborn babies in Ethiopia.

To volunteer or make a donation, please contact us at:

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