

December  
2012

# Eritrean Women's Center Newsletter

## Report of Activities

*This newsletter is a report on the activities of the women's center. From this date forward, newsletters will be released monthly.*

### Opening Event

The Eritrean Women's Center was opened at the end of July 2012. Following a month of renovations carried out by Eritrean and Israeli volunteers together, the Center's steering group organized an opening event. The objective of the event was to raise awareness among the Eritrean women's community about the center so they could begin using its services. Also, the Center wanted to welcome the Israeli refugee organizations so that future cooperation could be successfully set up. Around 150 people attended the event, highlighting the amount of support for such an initiative. The event was also attended by Selam Kidane, a visiting representative from our partner organization Release Eritrea. The Eritrean women's Steering Group was delighted to see Selam and very grateful for the support from Release Eritrea. Below are some photos and the invitation from the event.



אירוע הפתיחה של המרכז לנשות אריתריאה!  
הצטרפו אלינו ביום ראשון, 26 באוגוסט, בשעה 19:00, ברחוב  
הקונגרס 13 (שכונת שפירא, תל אביב). נתראה שם!

We are very excited to invite you to the opening of the Eritrean Women's Centre! Come join us on **Sunday, August 26th at 19:00** for our opening event. The address is: **HaKongress 13, Shapira Neighbourhood, Tel-Aviv.**

በክብር ለመገናኛት በዓል መለሰ. ግለሰብ  
ናይ ኢ.ር.ት. ድ.ት. ኣገለገሉ  
ገደብ 26 ንሕለ ለዓት 7:00 ድ.ት. ኣብ  
ዮ-ኮንግረስ (Ha-Kongress) 13 ከባ. ሕገራ  
ተላተፍቲ በዓልና ከትዮት  
ብኸብሪ ገደድዮ።

In Partnership with Release Eritrea





## Weekly Activities

### Dr. Habte- Health Q&A

Every week, Dr. Habte, a respected Eritrean physician living in Tel Aviv, comes to the women's center to run a health Q&A session with a number of women. At these sessions, women are able to come with questions and health issues on all topics including nutrition, pregnancy, and childcare. Women look forward to these weekly sessions and many plan questions in advance. These sessions have also enabled us to learn about what issues are most important to Eritrean women so that the Center can develop future programming accordingly. We thank Release Eritrea for supporting this important initiative.

---

“The center has become so important for us and for the community. I now have a place to go where I can ask questions and get advice. Also, it's nice to have a place where I can just hang out with other women. Thank you!”  
--Merhawit

### Orientation to Israel and Human Rights Course

From October to December, a group of 15 women underwent an intensive training with Amnesty International Israel. The objective of this course is to create multipliers in the community who know about basic issues and can assist others with solving problems and advocating for change.

The group included sessions on human rights principles, orientation to Israel, work rights, health rights, domestic abuse, education, freedom of movement, and tools for advocacy.

This group graduated from the course on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December. The women are now a part of the larger steering group that meets every Monday. The group will focus on the development of activities at the women's center.

### Releasing Stress

The Women's Center held an 8-week course on relieving stress run by an Israeli volunteer, specializing in the practice of relieving stress. Thinking together about calming down and having a safe space environment was new to all of the women and they said they were very excited about this opportunity. We may hold something similar again, depending on interest. Below is a picture from these sessions.



*Movie Nights:*

Every Sunday evening Zebib runs a movie night at the women's center. These evenings are an opportunity for women to come together to drink coffee and relax.



*Pastoral Care:*

Zebib holds regular sessions with women about various religious topics. Using movies on religious themes as well as religious literature, Zebib leads important discussions with the women from a religious perspective. Zebib remains in touch with both the Orthodox and Pentecostal Church to ensure that women of all denominations feel welcome and at home at the Women's Center.



*English and Hebrew Classes:*

Weekly Hebrew and English classes take place at the women's center. The language classes are run by Israeli and international volunteers and aim to empower Eritrean women through language skills. Many of the women have commented that language skills are incredibly important in allowing them to settle and feel more comfortable in Israel. Currently, over 40 women take either English or Hebrew at the Center.



*Developing Additional Programs:*

Zebib has spent a lot of time developing relationships with both Eritrean women and the various Israeli organizations working to assist Eritrean women. Zebib has developed infrastructure to implement programs on domestic abuse, prostitution, and family planning in 2013. The details of these programs are outlined in the proposal. The success of these programs is currently dependent on finding additional funding.



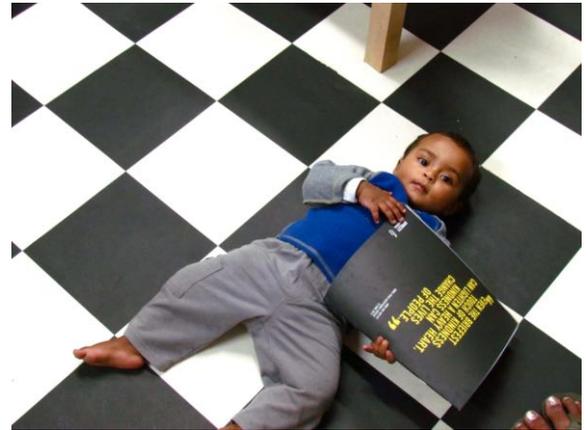
*Nursery:*

The children's nursery continues to play a central part in the functioning of the women's center. Around 18 children are enrolled in the nursery that continues to develop in providing quality care for the children of Eritrean refugees. The nursery acts as a flagship project by being a model for other nurseries working with refugee children. Parents continue to pay subsidized prices for the nursery and we do keep a few spots open for women in urgent need.



*Zebib Sultan:*

Zebib runs the women's center and acts as one of the nursery staff. Unfortunately, lack of funding to pay Zebib without utilizing the money she gets from the subsidized payments of the mothers in the nursery means that Zebib is unable to focus a lot of her energies on the women's center as she is tired from working in the nursery all day. We do have funding for a few hours of work each week, and the activities presented here are a result of these efforts.



Eritrean Women's Center  
13 HaCongress, Tel Aviv

Zebib Sultan  
+972-542317006  
eritreanwomenscenter@gmail.com

