



May 2022

Dear friends and supporters of Rainbows4children,

We are delighted to share a video recorded recently at the Nicolas Robinson School (NRS) in Mekelle, thanks to the great work of our school staff and some local friends of the school. The video link is provided at the end of this newsletter.

The school purchasing team has been able to buy essential food for the schoolchildren thanks to the kind donations of our supporters during this time of war and blockade on the Tigray region. This gives the children a much-improved diet to help prevent malnutrition which is now widespread in Tigray.

Unfortunately, there is very little fresh fruit available, as most fruits are not grown in Tigray due to the very dry climate. However, as you will see in the video, the school staff have been able to prepare a range of different meals for the various age groups of our schoolchildren.

All the children from kindergarten to grade 6, (approx. 1,000 in total) now receive one meal every day when they are at school. They are busy catching up with school lessons which they have missed, meaning that they are at school most days, except for Sundays and public holidays, and will continue to have lessons throughout the summer months.

Some of the meals seen being prepared in the video are cooked lentils, flavoured rice, hard-boiled eggs, "minestrone" soup and bread. The delight on the children's faces is their way of saying thank you. For most of the children this will be the only food that they eat each day, as they have very little at home.

This programme is supported through your kind donations and sponsorship from 3 organisations which have given us money for humanitarian aid during these difficult times. Food shortages have caused huge price inflation and basic foods such as wheat and teff (the preferred, local grain) are now at least 10 times the price of a year ago. Although the diet is monotonous, the most important thing is that the children are getting some food; they are delighted, and their families are extremely thankful for your support.

The school staff help enormously in many ways including growing vegetables on spare land at the school and nearby. They are also working very closely with the local Bureau of Agriculture and other experts to create a demonstration centre for growing crops in an urban environment. We will share photos of this activity with you as soon as they are available.

Finally, with the help of paediatricians from 2 local hospitals, all the children now receive regular health checks. If the health advisors inform our school staff that a child would benefit from a visit to an expert, the parents are given referral letters so that the child can be treated at a hospital or clinic.

The Nicolas Robinson school continues to be seen as the top-quality school in the region and is expected to play a very important role when reconstruction eventually happens. The school leadership and staff will then actively lead the community in helping to provide education and training at all levels.

The most important way you can help is to sponsor a child at the school. At a cost of just over \$1 per day (\$500 per year) you can make a huge impact on a child's life and their family. Please contact us at info@rainbows4children.org if you or your friends would like to help.

[Link to the video on Youtube](#)

Thank you again on behalf of the children and staff of the Nicolas Robinson School.