



**Building sustainable livelihoods**

Over 40,000 children in Ethiopia and Eritrea had health and lives improved through new fuel efficient stoves, supported by Vita.



# Content 2012

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*from* **Message** **2012**  
*our Chairman*  
**Seamus Crosse**

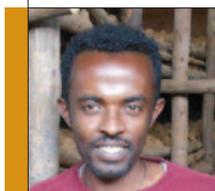


Vita's work with African farmers and rural families has delivered very tangible results in 2012 which has been acknowledged by communities, local government and donors. Delivering impact is the bottom line in development and Vita has been able to overcome serious organisational and financial challenges in 2011 to emerge as an innovative and strategically relevant development agency in Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Potato Centre of Excellence initiated in Ethiopia is an example of a very successful new initiative.

Vita's finances have been tenuous for several years and thanks to a sustained effort from all concerned, Vita was much more financially sustainable in 2012. It should be noted that Vita's fundraising is still dependent on a small number of large donors and benefactors and the Vita Board will encourage and support management in broadening our donor base. Vita's Board has been strengthened and invigorated through six new members in the past two years, and Vita will continue to recruit appropriate expertise to enhance oversight, subject matter expertise and core competence in agriculture and programmes. Vita's Board also remains committed to collaboration which can enable Vita to feed into the big picture of international development, build synergies and economies of scale, and reduce organisational risk. As Board Chairperson I would like to express the sincere appreciation of the Board for the great role played by Vita's staff in Eritrea and Ethiopia, to head office staff and also to the staff and volunteers running Vita's shops in Kilkenny and Dundalk.

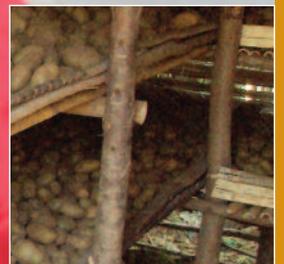
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Seamus Crosse".

**Seamus Crosse**  
Chairman





**Women's groups provide invaluable insight, reflection and leadership in project design and implementation**



Vita's aspiration is to see rural households in Africa living in dignity and with secure and sustainable access to food, water and the essentials of life



# Message 2012

*from*

*our Chief Executive*

**John Weakliam**



2012 was a mixed year in Eritrea and Ethiopia with some economic growth but great deprivation for millions of people affected by poverty, hunger, globalisation, climate change and governance issues. Vita was very glad to be able to bring lasting change and greater resilience to tens of thousands of such affected people. With 10,000 women building fuel saving stoves and over 10,000 farmers getting more production from improved seed and farm practice, impact in homes and on farms was evident. These bald facts gloss over a multitude of heart warming stories of change, of hope, of courage, inspiration, and the absolute privilege for Vita of being invited and able to be part of such change.

In Ethiopia and Eritrea during 2012, the European Union has acknowledged Vita's contribution with awards, testimonials and new funding, while Irish Aid provided Vita with two-year transitional funding pending clarity on Vita's strategic intentions and financial targets. By the end of 2012, such targets were achieved opening the way for develop ambitious new programmes. Groundbreaking partnerships with Teagasc, Wageningen University, Irish Potato Federation, Agriculture Science Association, Macra na Feirme and others opened new horizons for transferring technology and building farmer enterprise and self-reliance. Bank of Ireland Group Employees, Electric Aid, Sisters of Mercy and the Ballyousskill Vita Friends of Father Kevin Doheny continued their exceptionally generous funding to bring benefit to more communities. Vita is also looking at creating a federation with like-minded NGOs in UK and Australia. All in all, 2013 is full of promise and potential for positive change.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Weakliam'.

**John Weakliam**  
Chief Executive

*about* **Vita**



Established in 1989 under the patronage of Mother Teresa, Vita is an Irish charity that works with local partners and communities in Eritrea and Ethiopia.

**VISION**

Rural African families empowered to sustain their livelihoods.

**MISSION**

To tackle household food insecurity through community led sustainable agriculture projects that are scalable and replicable, with a special focus on women as the key enablers of sustainable development.

**OUR PROGRAMME GOAL**

To create a material improvement in nutrition through food availability, access and affordability for 250,000 households by 2015 and to leverage additional impact through replication.

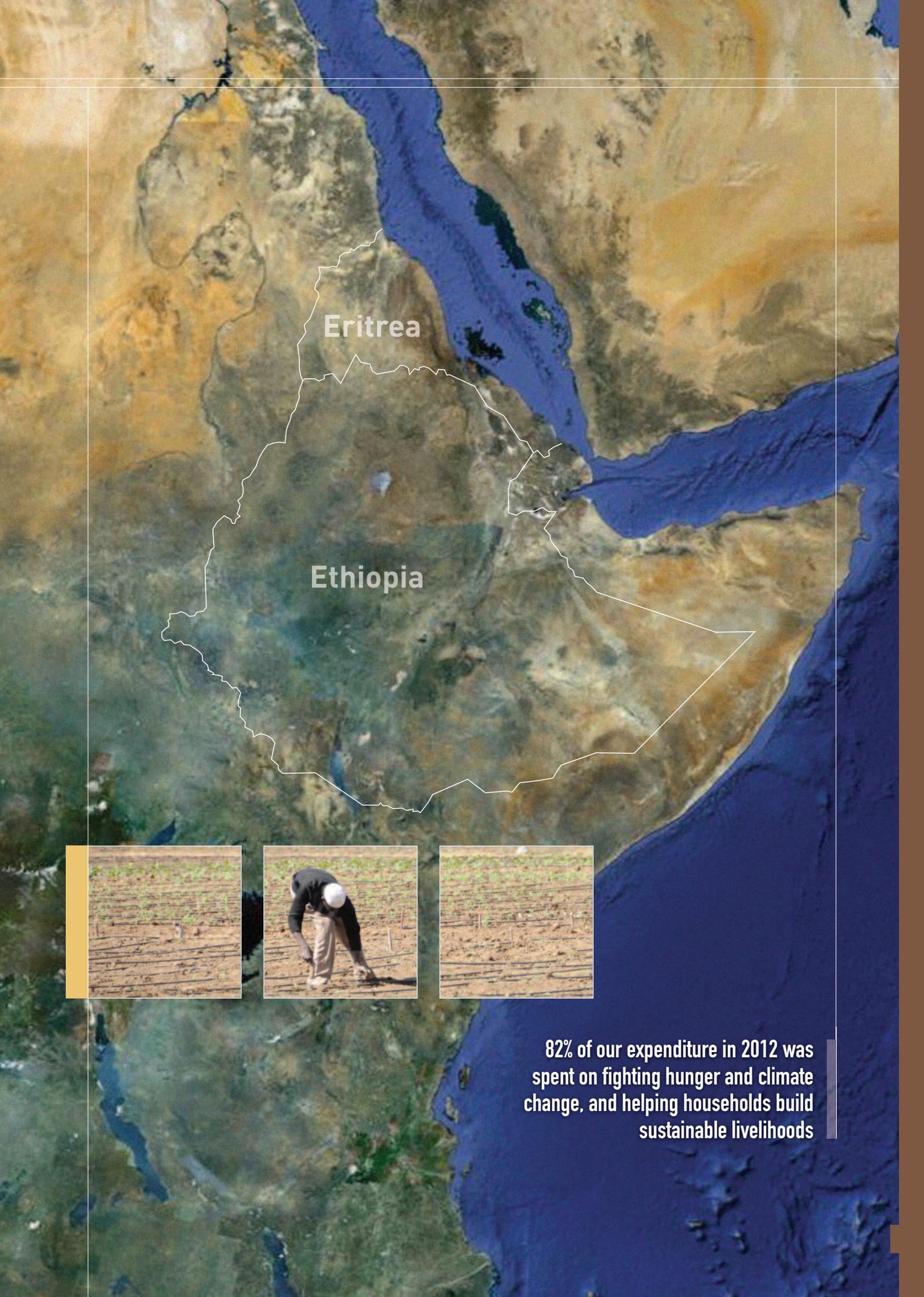
**APPROACH**

To maximize impact of interventions by;

- Working with local implementing partners and facilitating their ability to deliver food security
- Building on evidence-based research, innovation and quality programming
- Incorporating Vita values into all aspects of our work

**THEMATIC FOCUS**

- Empowering women to sustain their families and their natural environments
- Providing innovative support for farmers to produce more food and become self reliant
- Enabling local communities and countries to access resources to lead to their own development



Eritrea

Ethiopia



**82% of our expenditure in 2012 was spent on fighting hunger and climate change, and helping households build sustainable livelihoods**

# *how we* Work



Vita enables African families to build sustainable livelihoods through food and energy security. To achieve this Vita applies a community-led approach in both Eritrea and Ethiopia. Vita follows a number of principles in implementing our work towards building sustainable livelihoods:

## **RESEARCH-LED**

Vita works to continue its strong research ethos with our international and local research partners. This approach allows us to deepen understanding of issues facing our partner communities. A good example of this is the triple PhD undertaken by Vita, Wageningen University and Teagasc on potato production in Ethiopia.

## **INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER**

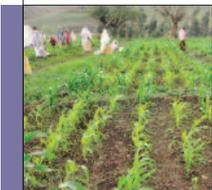
Vita aims to bring the best of international best practice and research into our development projects. By supporting initiatives for research into use, Vita aims to maximise potential benefits to our beneficiaries. An example of this is the introduction of drip irrigation across Eritrea.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

Vita will work in partnership where possible. This includes local and international partners, government agencies, research institutions, universities, the agri-business sector, international donor agencies and most importantly, with local communities. This ensures our work is needs based and enables us to work more effectively in delivering impact across our partner countries.

## **SCALABILITY**

To leverage value beyond the scope of our projects Vita aims to design projects that can be scaled up. Successful projects that are proven to create significant, long-lasting change at local level, can be adopted by local government agencies and replicated across a larger target group. Examples of this are adoption of CLTS in Ethiopia and drip irrigation in Eritrea by local government.



*operational*

# Partners



Operational partnerships are central to Vita's strategy. We recognise that it is the trust and respect created within these partnerships which is the fundamental reason that Vita can deliver so effectively on the ground. In 2012, Vita maintained a number of operational partnerships:

## **LOCAL COOPERATIVES**

Vita works with farmer cooperatives in the delivery of agricultural and community development projects. Cooperatives play an important role in providing micro-finance and other services for member families. Working with cooperatives creates access into communities and added legitimacy for Vita's work.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXTENSION SERVICES**

Vita always works with these agencies because we believe that it is essential in building long term sustainability and capacity of these agencies to provide an effective service to rural communities. Vita signs an operational MoU with the local extension service for all of its projects which creates commonality of purpose and shared responsibilities.

## **STEERING COMMITTEES**

These committees create the formal linkage with the community for every project. Steering committees encourage community participation and ensure that projects are needs based.

## **WOMEN'S GROUPS**

Women's groups are identified by Vita as agents of change. Reflecting their important status in society, Vita aims to partner with women's groups in the formation of Steering Committees, where they provide invaluable insight, reflection and leadership in project design and implementation.

# Vita's Actions



## **FUEL-EFFICIENT STOVES**

Rural households are heavily reliant on firewood for their energy needs. Vita works to provide fuel-efficient stoves which require less fuel and produce fewer emissions. A community based approach is used to train women in the construction, maintenance and repair of stoves, ensuring that future generations will carry the benefits of improved stoves. These stoves require 50% less timber, reducing time spent gathering firewood. This is a task traditionally carried out by children and women, which takes up to 20 hours per week. The new stoves also emit less smoke and have resulted in a major reduction in eye and respiratory diseases. Finally, on a global level the stoves reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions thereby mitigating against climate change.



## **SANITATION**

Vita continues its work on Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) which focuses on community education around issues of health and sanitation and the importance of latrine usage. Communities work with Vita and CLTS experts to become 'Open Defecation Free' and provide the labour and materials required to construct private and communal latrines. Vita's initial leadership work within CLTS has resulted in it being adopted by neighboring communities, with no direct Vita inputs, which is a great endorsement of the success of this initiative.

## **POTATO PRODUCTION**

Potatoes are a highly nutritious crop and an ideal crop to boost household food security. Vita's intervention focuses on introducing improved seed varieties allowing farmers to treble their yields compared to traditional seed. Allied to this is creating storage capacity at the farm and cooperative level for both ware and seed potato.



Out of our work with potatoes Vita established the Potato Centre of Excellence which is a unique collaboration between research, the private sector, local government and non-governmental agencies that aims to improve service delivery across all aspects of the value chain.

#### **HOUSEHOLD LIVELIHOODS**

This forms a central part of Vita's work and is particularly relevant as it works predominantly through woman. Vita helps rural households by supplying them with livestock such as sheep and goats. Similarly, we work with families to provide improved vegetable seeds and in training in vegetable production. Projects such as these give families a chance to boost their income, improve food security and diversify their nutrition.





## **WATER**

Crucial to any agricultural based development is access to water. In Eritrea, Vita's work on water focused on providing households and communities with drip irrigation. This model has become extremely successful, and was adopted by the Eritrean Ministry of Agriculture as the preferred method for any new irrigation works across the country. Vita also assisted communities in rehabilitating communal pastures through the construction of dozens of micro-dams for livestock use.

In Ethiopia, Vita continued its work in constructing and rehabilitating irrigation canals and flumes, thereby allowing farmers extended access to water, even during the dry season. Vita also assisted communities in the construction of rope and washer pumps which are simple pumps used to access water for the purpose of micro-irrigation around the house and for use in kitchen gardens. This increases household nutrition as well as supplying the household with an opportunity to generate some additional household income.



### **WATERSHED MANAGEMENT**

Vita works with local communities to manage the watershed through different initiatives. Firstly we contain downstream erosion through gabion wire box construction to break the flow of water, particularly near irrigation canals and streams to prevent large-scale erosion. Secondly, extensive tree planting upstream helps prevent soil from being washed away in times of heavy rain or flash floods.

### **COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Vita enables farmer cooperatives to enhance their capacities and skills to provide an essential service to farmers. Vita works with cooperatives in providing capital for revolving credit, building stores and offices, supporting marketing initiatives and training in technical and management issues.



### **ADVOCACY**

Vita advocates for a community centred approach with its partners in country and with its peers internationally, while seeking to promote scalable best practice within the countries it works in. In Ireland, Vita specifically focuses on informing the agricultural sector on issues such as food and energy security, climate change and sustainable livelihoods. Vita regards this as a core constituency to leverage Ireland's rich agricultural heritage to engage with overseas development by advocating the needs and challenges faced by some of the world's poorest communities.

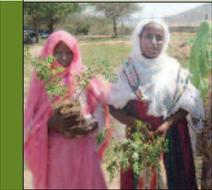
# Eritrea *in* 2012



## ERITREA AT A GLANCE

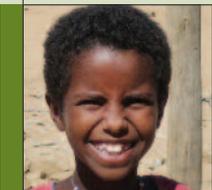
Area:	117,600 sq km
Capital:	Asmara
Population:	6.1 million
Languages:	Tigrinya, Arabic, English
Religions:	Muslim, Coptic Christian, Roman Catholic
Life Expectancy:	61
GNI per capita:	€337
Access to Safe Water:	57%

## COUNTRY UPDATE



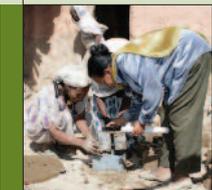
Eritrea, one of the Africa's newest countries, has a similar population and history to Ireland. Vita's work comprised actions completed under following programmes

- EU Energy Facility project, 2011-2014 (€1,542,850, 75% EU funded)
- EU Geleb Nursery Project, 2012-2014 (€837,500, 78% EU funded)
- Irish Aid Sustainable Livelihoods programme, 2012-2013 (€336,000)



Direct country expenditure in 2012 was €810,616.

## IMPACT & HIGHLIGHTS



- Direct impact on over 50,000 people
- 20,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emission savings from improved cook-stoves
- Improved livelihoods for 10,000 women led households using cook-stoves
- Improved soil stability through the planting of 2 million trees
- MoU signed between National Agricultural Research Institute, Teagasc and Vita
- Irish potato varieties shipped for adaptation trials

# Ethiopia

## 2012

*in*



### ETHIOPIA AT A GLANCE

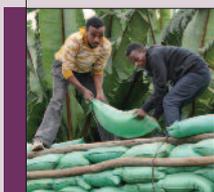
Area:	1,104,300 sq km
Capital:	Addis Ababa
Population:	91.7 million
Languages:	Oromigna, Amarigna, Tigrigna, English, Arabic
Religions:	Orthodox, Muslim, Protestant
Life Expectancy:	59
GNI per capita:	€307
Access to Safe Water:	39%

### COUNTRY UPDATE



Ethiopia's 91.7 million people are predominantly rural and dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods. Vita operates in the Southern Region of Ethiopia and its current programmes include:

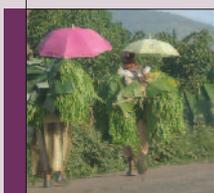
- Irish Aid Sustainable Livelihoods programme, 2012-2013, (€364,000)
- CIP Potato Project, 2011-2012, (€74,000)
- EU Instrument for Stability project No.1, 2011-2013, (1,471,565)
- EU Instrument for Stability project No.2, 2012-2014, (€350,000)



Direct country expenditure in 2012 was €632,589.

### IMPACT & HIGHLIGHTS

- Direct impact on over 18,000 people
- Food security improved through doubling of potato productivity for 500 farmers
- Greater potato price stability due to household and cooperative seed storage
- Improved health and sanitation for 8,000 households by introduction of CLTS
- Increased capacity of farmer cooperatives for sustainable seed storage
- Vita won the 2012 EU award for project visibility
- Creation of the Potato Centre of Excellence
- Start of triple PhD study on Vita's potato work



# Looking Ahead



During the year Vita started to develop a number of initiatives that build on our strategy of innovation, partnerships and scalability.

The most ambitious of these was the Potato Centre of Excellence. Having seen the role and potential of potatoes as a basic food crop, Vita recognised the value of creating a focal point that would promote best practice across the value chain and that would actively engage science partners, private sector partners and development organisations. The Centre aims to drive and coordinate actions in Ethiopia, and to develop regional initiatives across East Africa.

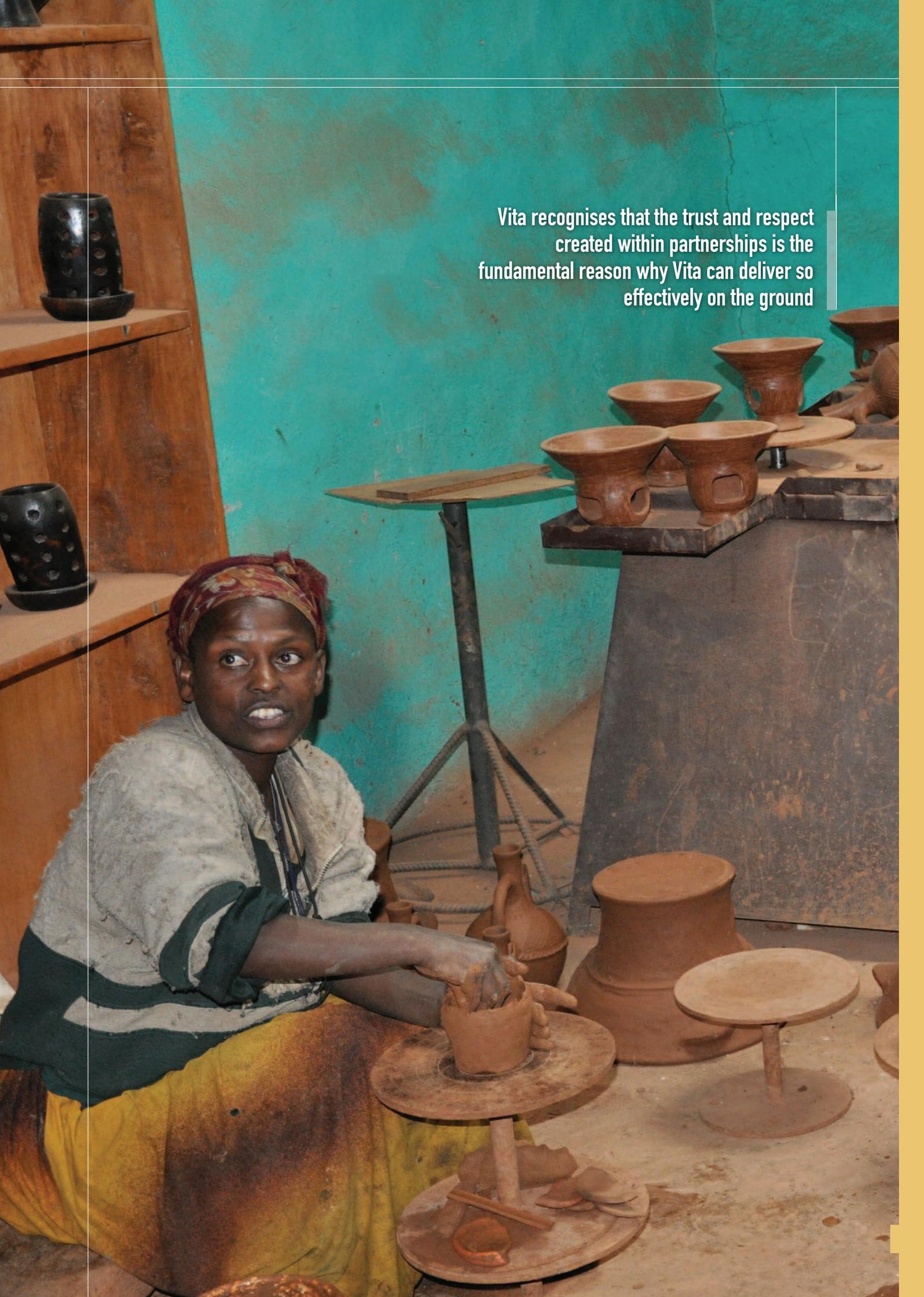
Vita firmly believes that collaboration with like minded NGOs is a key part of its future and the way forward for the sector. Following on a mandate by our Board, we actively pursued this matter in 2012 and has had promising discussions with organisations in Ireland and other countries with a view to meaningful collaboration.

Vita also sees great benefit in developing an Irish based constituency through partnerships that can be both informed and engaged with overseas development. To this end Vita is specifically developing partnerships with agencies and companies operating in the agricultural sector in Ireland. It is through these partnerships that Vita will develop an advocacy role, highlighting the impact of Ireland's development aid agenda.

*Macra Queen of the Land, Teresa Brennan and Macra member, Joe Wall with farmers in southern Ethiopia*



Vita recognises that the trust and respect created within partnerships is the fundamental reason why Vita can deliver so effectively on the ground



# Supporters

*Our and Partners*

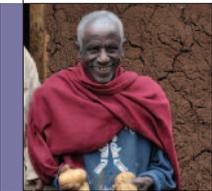


**ESB ELECTRIC AID**  
IRELAND



## **AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION**

ASA Ireland with almost 2,000 members has adopted Vita as a partner and is supporting research led agriculture in Ethiopia. Several Council members will be visiting Ethiopia in 2013 to see work with communities.



## **BANK OF IRELAND GROUP STAFF THIRD WORLD FUND**

The Bank of Ireland Group Staff Third World Fund is one of Vita's most important funding partners. In 2012, the Fund supported a number of projects, ranging from improved stoves to cooperative development and food production. The Bank of Ireland Group Staff Third World Fund provided over €73,274 in support of Vita's projects in 2012.



## **BALLYOUSKILL VITA FRIENDS OF FR. KEVIN DOHENY**

The Ballyouskill community in county Kilkenny provides year on year support to a community development project in Ethiopia.

## **ESB'S ELECTRIC AID PROGRAMME**

Electric Aid, drawn from support from the staff of the Electricity Supply Board, is another of Vita's strongest supporters. With support of over €70,956 in 2012, Electric Aid has helped to fund projects in both Ethiopia and Eritrea, from issues of potato production, Community Led Total Sanitation and irrigation.



### **EUROPE AID (DEVCO)**

The European Union has been Vita's biggest funding partner in both Eritrea and Ethiopia including in 2012/13, providing funds through different instruments such as the Energy Facility, Instrument for Stability and Agriculture Innovation Funds. Vita spent €804,701 of EU funds on programmes in 2012.

### **IRISH AID**

Irish Aid has been funding Vita for more than 15 years, and continue to provide core programme funding in both Eritrea and Ethiopia. Irish Aid funding supports Vita's work in communities and with government and non-government partners in such areas as potato farming, dissemination of latrines and fuel saving stoves, forestry and

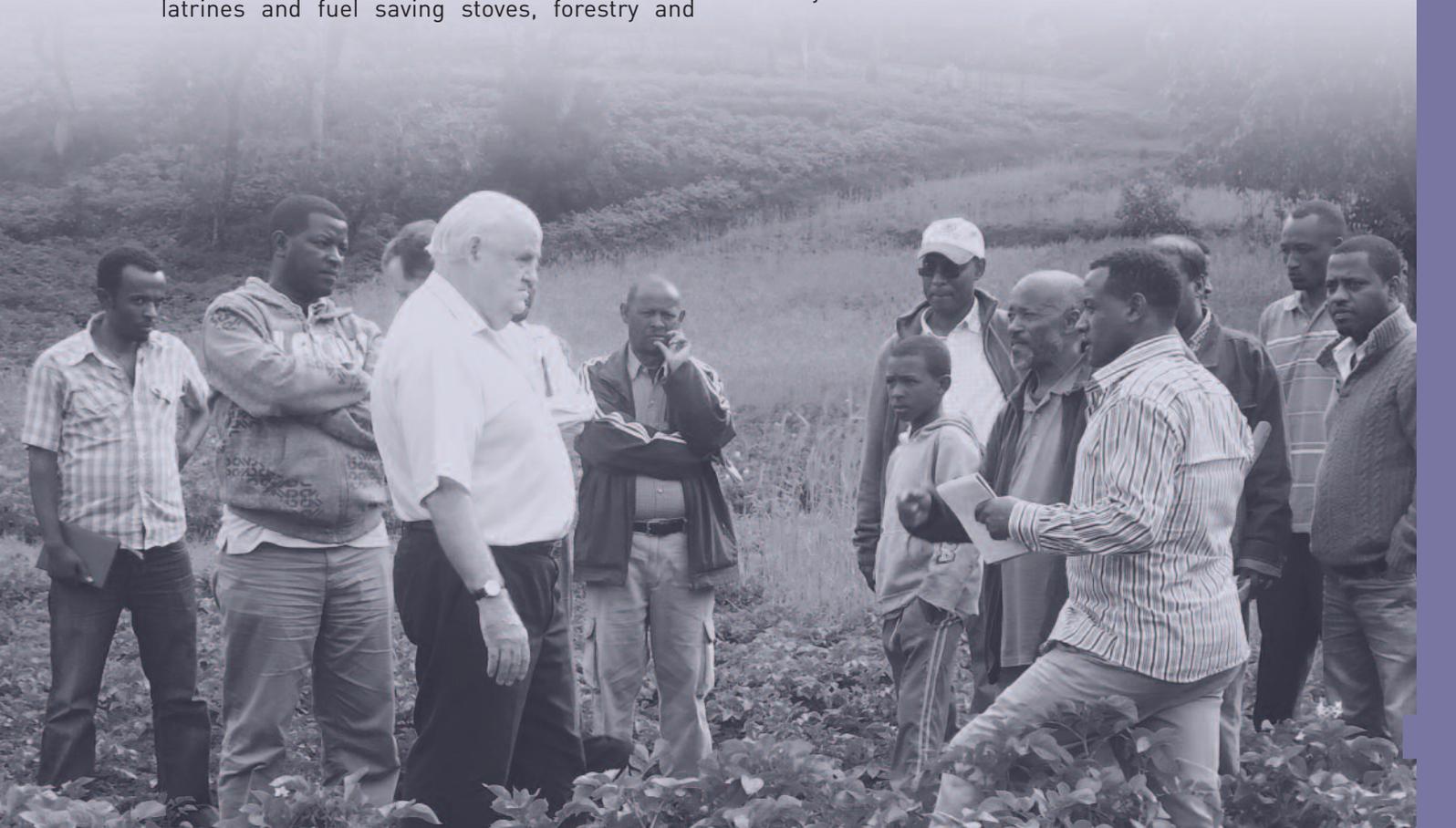
research led agriculture. In 2012 Irish Aid granted €350,000 to Vita programmes.

### **IRISH DAIRY BOARD STAFF ASSOCIATION**

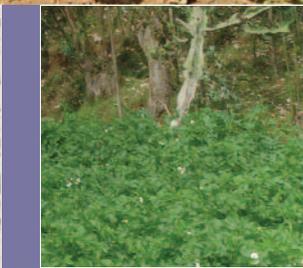
The Irish Dairy Board Staff Association provided €10,000 in support of Vita's projects in Ethiopia and Eritrea in 2012. They assisted in funding projects focusing on improved sustainable livelihoods for farmers.

### **IRISH POTATO FEDERATION**

The Irish Potato Federation is one of Vita's key partners in the Potato Centre of Excellence. Their support and business expertise in the marketing of potato are invaluable to Vita's effort to promote the potato in efforts to improve household food security.



**With local partners we create Steering Committees for every project which ensures community participation in design and implementation of work**





### **IRISH POTATO MARKETING**

Irish Potato Marketing, a private potato seed innovation, marketing and distribution company, engaged with Vita's work in Eritrea. By providing seven potato varieties for trial by the Eritrean National Agricultural Research Institute, IPM greatly helped Vita's efforts to improve household food security in Eritrea.



### **SISTERS OF MERCY**

The Sisters of Mercy Western Province have been a wonderful and knowledgeable partner with Vita in the Chencha area of Southern Ethiopia for the past four years and provided Vita with €60,000 in 2012. The collaboration has reached over 600 families with a particular focus on women. Apart from helping families to construct latrines and stoves, the project has also assisted with provision of water, irrigation, potato and other crop seeds, and with mobilisation of carbon finance to provide more families with assistance.



### **TEAGASC**

Teagasc, the Irish Food and Agriculture Development Authority, is another key supporter of Vita. Their support to Vita's programmes, in both Ethiopia and Eritrea, provides technical expertise and support to Vita projects. Furthermore, the partnership with Teagasc is central to the research aspect of the Potato Centre of Excellence, and in supporting the PhD-level research in Ethiopia. In Eritrea, Teagasc is supporting the national research centre with capacity building on research led agriculture, potato development and dairy development.

### **THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

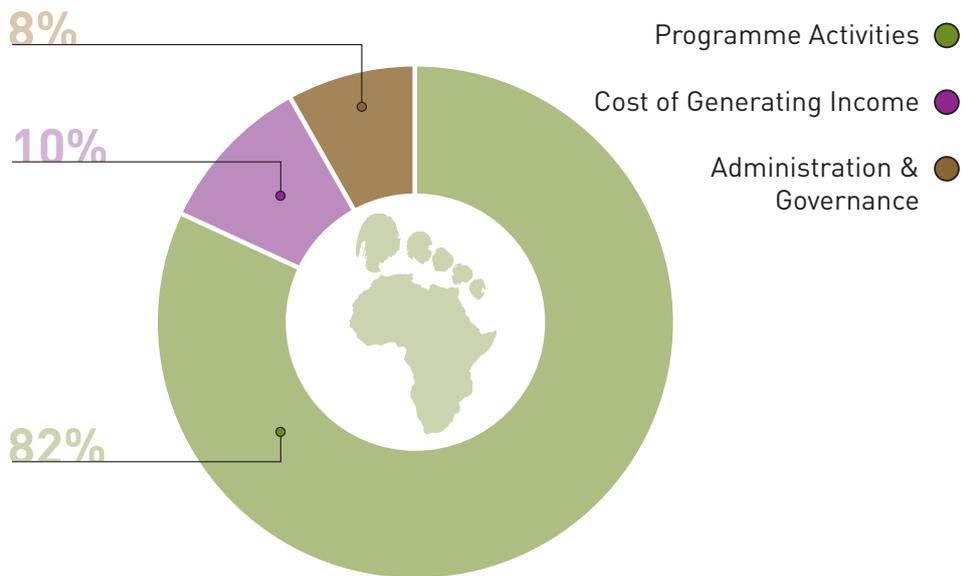
The Community Foundation supported Vita's projects with €50,000 in 2012. Their support has enabled Vita to run a project supporting Eritrean women to sustain their families and environment through improved cook stoves and tree planting.

# Financial

## *Accountability*

In 2012, Vita spent €1.57 million of our income on our programmes activities. Our total income for the year was €2.15 million, a slight decrease of 6% from 2011, reflecting the continuing impact of the economic downturn. Vita aims to be as transparent and accountable as possible in all its financial transactions and our accounts and financial statement are readily available on our website at [www.vita.ie](http://www.vita.ie).

### WHERE OUR MONEY IS SPENT



Vita subscribes to and aims to be compliant with Dóchas Irish Development NGO Code of Corporate Governance, the Dóchas Guidelines for Annual Reports and Financial Statements for Non-Governmental Organisations and Dóchas Code of Conduct on Imagery and Messaging.

To ensure accuracy and transparency Vita's accounts are externally audited by Anne Brady McQuillans DFK on a yearly basis. Vita's financial transactions are supervised by our Board of Directors and we are fully compliant with the Irish Development NGOs Code of Corporate Governance.

# Company Information

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CHAIRMAN Dr Seamus Crosse

PRESIDENT Fr. Norman Fitzgerald CSSp

DIRECTORS  
Brian Buggy  
Larry O'Loughlin  
Tom Barry  
Brian Weber  
Rebecca Bristow (Appointed 9th September 2012)  
Dermot Nolan (Appointed 18th June 2012)  
Maureen O'Dea (Appointed 23rd February 2012)  
Geraldine Etchingham (Resigned 18th June 2012)  
Patricia Hallahan (Resigned 18th June 2012)  
Fr. Brian Starcken (Resigned 1st September 2012)  
Chantall McCabe (Resigned 31st October 2012)

SECRETARY John Wallace

CHIEF EXECUTIVE John Weakliam

Company Number 152968

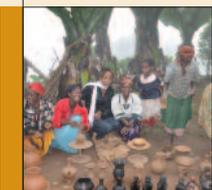
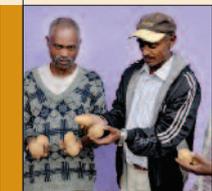
Charity Number CHY 9670

Registered Office 1st Floor, Equity House  
Upper Ormond Quay  
Dublin 7

Auditors Anne Brady McQuillans DFK  
Iveagh Court  
Harcourt Road  
Dublin 2

Principal Bankers Bank of Ireland plc

Solicitors Matheson Ormsby Prentice



# Financial 2012

## Information

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2012

	Restricted Fund 2012 €	Unrestricted Fund 2012 €	Total 2012 €	Total 2011 €
INCOME FROM RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES				
Govt. grants & Institutional co funds	1,317,926	-	1,317,926	1,391,778
INCOME FROM GENERATED FUNDS				
Voluntary income		738,895	738,895	782,538
Income from trading activities		95,160	95,160	108,724
Other incoming resources		658	658	867
	1,317,926	834,713	2,152,639	2,283,907
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Charitable activities and governance costs	1,317,926	411,228	1,729,154	1,923,158
COSTS OF GENERATING FUNDS				
Cost of generating voluntary income		121,478	121,478	297,897
Cost of generating trading income		62,214	62,214	62,787
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	1,317,926	594,920	1,912,846	2,283,842
Net Incoming Resources for the year		239,793	239,793	65
Fund balances at beginning of year		117,207	117,207	117,142
Fund balances at end of year		357,000	357,000	117,207
FUND BALANCES AT END OF YEAR				

**BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED  
31ST DECEMBER 2012**

	<b>2012</b>		<b>2011</b>	
	€	€	€	€
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>				
Tangible assets		4,426		8,319
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Debtors	151,699		94,220	
Cash at bank and in hand	1,365,260		761,578	
		1,516,967		855,798
<b>CREDITORS</b>				
-Amounts due within one year	(1,164,393)		(746,910)	
<b>Net Current Assets /Liabilities</b>		352,574		108,888
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		357,000		117,207
Unrestricted funds		357,000		117,207
Restricted funds		-		-
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>		357,000		117,207



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1st Floor, Equity House  
Upper Ormond Quay  
Dublin 7

Ph: +353 (01) 8734303 Fax: +353 (01) 8734325 Email: [info@vita.ie](mailto:info@vita.ie) Web: [www.vita.ie](http://www.vita.ie)