

Partners in the Horn of Africa

Annual Report

2006

The Organization

Partners in the Horn of Africa is a registered Canadian charity operating exclusively in Ethiopia. 2006 was our fifth year of operation.

Partners follows two operating principles that distinguish it from other charities: First, 100% of donations go directly into projects in Ethiopia. Our directors work voluntarily, pay all of our operating expenses in Canada and Ethiopia and run the organization. Second, with all of our projects we have an Ethiopian ‘partner,’ most often an indigenous Ethiopian charity or community group. Our ‘partner’ contributes 15-20% of the cost of the project, usually by supplying labour or local materials. This ensures that *Partners*’ projects reflect local needs and that local communities have a stake in what we are doing. We look at the people who work with us as partners – not as beneficiaries.

Our directors are from British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, and Ethiopia. They are: John Baigent, Mekonen Bayssie, Dave Cosco, Marguerite Jackson, John McAlpine, Seaton McLean, Vince Ready and Brooke Sundin. Directors meet regularly and visit our projects in Ethiopia at least twice each year.

Projects in 2006

2006 was a watershed year for *Partners in the Horn of Africa*. Midway through the year our directors had to decide whether to cap *Partners*’ growth or expand its infrastructure. A decision was necessary when it became obvious that the organization was growing faster than we had anticipated and faster than we could manage without some structural changes. At a “think tank” session in August the directors decided to proceed with expansion and to reconfigure *Partners* to accommodate the new growth. *Partners* decided to increase the Canadian support staff and to hire a Country Representative in Ethiopia. At the same time it was agreed that *Partners* would continue to finance its administration without using donations. This decision was made possible by the directors contributing more toward the administrative costs and by a five year grant from the Columbia Foundation. The decision to expand was based on a simple proposition: *Partners* has a great model and is accomplishing much in Ethiopia; as long as we can maintain the model and do good, why not continue?

The end result was a year of banner growth. *Partners* took on 28 new projects in Ethiopia, up from 21 in 2005. Donors increased from 374 to 550, and our donations for the year went from \$393,075 in 2005 to \$582,290.

Projects in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia *Partners* has an office in Addis Ababa and a Country Representative, Yehalem Abebe. Yehalem is a former director of *Partners* and a recent graduate from the University of Victoria's Masters of Public Administration program. Yehalem has operational responsibility for the selection and development of all projects in the country.

In Ethiopia our projects address the problems of sub-Saharan Africa: AIDS, malaria, lack of educational facilities and social infrastructure, marginalized women, soil degradation and clean water shortages. *Partners* continues to favour small-scale projects where a significant community contribution can be made and where true 'partnerships' are possible. On the education front we build a lot of classroom blocks, libraries and latrines using local materials and donated labour. Elsewhere we build footbridges, as well as spring protection systems and shallow wells which provide clean drinking water to rural communities and where villagers can do the digging. *Partners* is also involved in income generating projects, such as micro-financing and assisting women to produce silk or to manufacture and sell fuel-saving ovens, all projects where participants have a real stake in the outcome. *Partners'* model of shared contribution works well since the community benefits from the project and has a vested interest in its outcome – an important consideration from the perspective of empowering a community to eventually take over its own development. In addition, *Partners* distributed mosquito nets to new and expectant mothers in an area of high malaria morbidity.

Partners operates in four regions in Ethiopia and, mainly, in partnership with three Ethiopian charities. Our largest 'partner' is the Aba Woldentensae Gizaw Mothers and Children Welfare Association (AWWA). As its name suggests, AWWA is concerned with women and vulnerable children, believing, as many do, that the development of Africa depends on keeping girls in school and empowering women. AWWA's operations are located in North Wollo, a drought-prone region of Ethiopia where the 1974 and 1985 famines occurred, in the capital, Addis Ababa, and in the Bale Mountain region of central Ethiopia. In 2006, AWWA and *Partners* ran three micro-financing projects and two income generating programs for women. We also protected many clean water sources and dug shallow wells. In a country where only 22.5% of the population has safe water, the clean, accessible water provided by these wells not only eliminates many water-borne diseases but frees up young girls to attend school by eliminating the need to fetch water each day from great distances. *Partners* also built school classrooms, libraries and latrines with AWWA.

Hope For Children (HFC) is another of our major 'partners' in Ethiopia. HFC's projects are in Addis Ababa and in the Hareghie region of eastern central Ethiopia. HFC focuses its efforts on the HIV pandemic and with assistance from *Partners* has placed approximately 850 HIV orphans in fostering situations or in group homes. *Partners* also runs community

education programs with HFC and provides home-based care for the sick, a hospice for the dying, and an HIV Information Centre.

Our third 'partner' in Ethiopia is the Anti Malaria Association (AMA), with whom we run two orphan-based programs – a group home for young orphaned high school girls in the city of Debre Markos and a fostering program in the Gojam Region where 150 orphans have been placed with extended family members. Last year we also built three bridges with AMA and shipped used hospital beds from Canada to Ethiopia.

In addition to these three major 'partners,' *Partners* also entered into project agreements with two smaller community-based organizations.

The Coming Year

In 2007 *Partners* is undertaking some exciting new projects.

In Addis Ababa we are opening an AIDS Dialogue Centre where the community can openly discuss HIV and its related problems. Getting HIV out of the shadows and into mainstream discussion is essential if it is to be dealt with effectively. The Centre will also offer grief counselling and play therapy for children struggling with the loss of their parents.

In the Bale region we are undertaking an ambitious program to upgrade eleven elementary schools in the Agarfa school district. *Partners* will build new classrooms, provide latrines and desks, upgrade the English fluency of 480 teachers and offer Alternative Basic Education to 1500 kids who cannot be accommodated in the existing system. This project will also distribute panties especially modified to hold washable sanitary pads to 4000 girls who miss two days of class each month. This component of the project will add 72,000 girl-days to the system each year.

Partners is increasing its commitment to HIV orphans with new group homes. And we are starting a program of "Community Conversations" in an area of high HIV infection where the community will formulate strategies for dealing with the pandemic.

Partners will also continue with its major commitment to micro-financing and related income generating programs for marginalized women. We will build more footbridges and continue to provide new sources of clean water.

In Canada

We have two offices in Canada. One is in Enderby, British Columbia, where John Baigent and Barbara DuTot work; the other is in Edmonton, staffed by director Dave Cosco and his assistant Shalene McPherson.

Our donor base now stretches from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland, with our major areas of support being the Okanagan Valley and Lower Mainland of British Columbia, Calgary and Edmonton. We also receive significant support from the Toronto area.

In several cities we are assisted by volunteer groups who organize annual fundraising events. Supporters in Kelowna stage a 100 kilometre “Great Big Run for Africa” every fall, and each year a group of mothers in North Vancouver (“Mom and Me”) host a Mother’s Day Dinner-Dance. These events result in significant donations and raise *Partners’* profile with the general public.

In Alberta we received generous grants from a geo-technical firm, EBA Engineering Consultants Ltd., and from the Lefebvre Foundation. In British Columbia the Blue Sky Foundation and Rotary Clubs have been generous and partnered with us in several projects. The Columbia Foundation, also in British Columbia, has provided us with a major grant which will continue over the next five years. Two trade unions, the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 1516, and the British Columbia Government and Service Employees Union, have provided donations and invaluable technical assistance in the form of computers, phones, stamps, etc. In Enderby, British Columbia, all of our considerable accounting work is done free of charge by Murray Rossworn Inc.

Our Donors

Our donors are mostly individuals and were very generous in 2006. The chart below offers year-to-year comparisons of projects, donors and donations.

Year-to-Year Comparisons

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Number of Projects	1	4	13	21	28
Number of Donors	18	154	181	374	550
Donations for the Year	\$21,450.00	\$103,261.00	\$191,000.00	\$393,075.00	\$582,290.00

The number of repeat donors grows each year and allows us to plan for the future with some confidence. *Partners* selects and commissions projects in advance, trusting that we will be able to raise money but never entirely sure of just how much. With a growing core of repeat donors we can select projects with more confidence. Our direct debit system is also working

well, with more and more donors choosing to donate this way. Direct debit involves low administrative costs and offers us a measure of predictability.

Financial Statements

Our financial statements, and those of the The Friends of the Horn of Africa, were audited by Murray Rossworn Inc., a Chartered Accounting firm in Enderby. Copies of those financial statements are available to members upon request.

Vancouver, BC
May 2007