

## Postcards from Ethiopia

*"Do something everyday that scares you."  
- Eleanor Roosevelt*

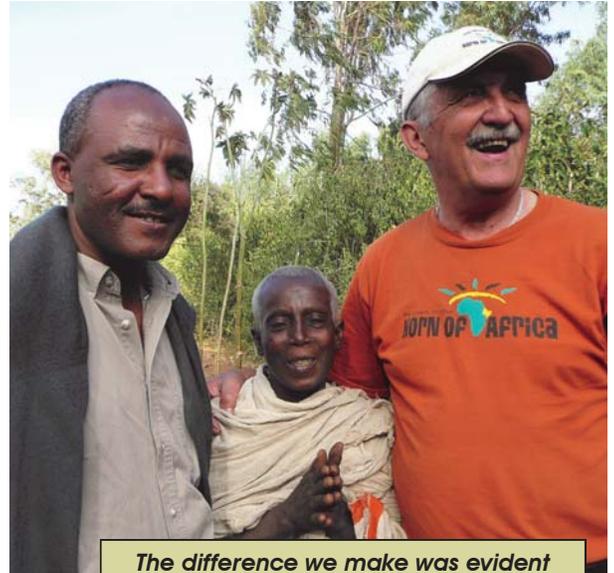
Climbing mountains, driving in a deluge, rock hopping across rivers, dodging camels - yes, my experience in Ethiopia was true to Eleanor Roosevelt's credo.

*Cindy Stewart, the Canadian Director of Partners, spent February visiting projects in Ethiopia.*

I had many amazing experiences during my month in Ethiopia, but, nothing is more powerful than an elderly man grasping your hand and (through a translator) with tears in his eyes, thanking you for the many lives that were saved because of the bridge that was built. Seeing the impact that *Partners* has on the lives of individuals and their communities will be the most profound memory I have of my visit.

The primary objective of my trip was to see the *Partners* model in action with my own eyes.

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*The difference we make was evident when we visited this mother in Adet, pictured here with Yehalem Meiku (left) and John Baigent. She is the sole caregiver for four children - all who are in school and doing well. Last year, Partners provided a new roof for her small mud constructed house. Although a modest cost, the repairs were priceless to this family and have made a profound difference in their lives.*



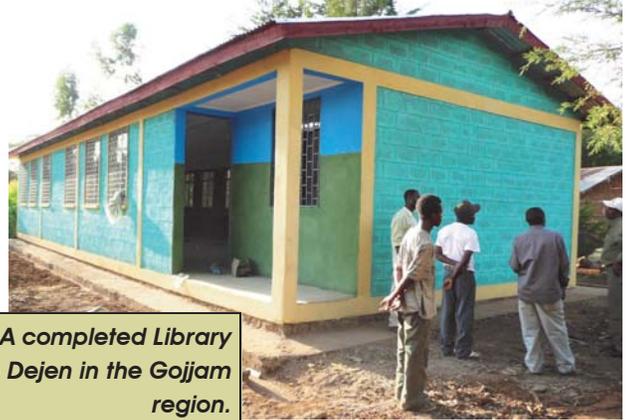
*No mountain is too high to climb in order to learn about the Reforestation Project and meet the 'mountain men' who were so proud of their trees. Cindy Stewart notes that she felt like she saw every one of the 65,000 trees planted on the hike up the hill.*

*Partners in the Horn of Africa is addressing the problems of Ethiopia and follows two unique principles:*

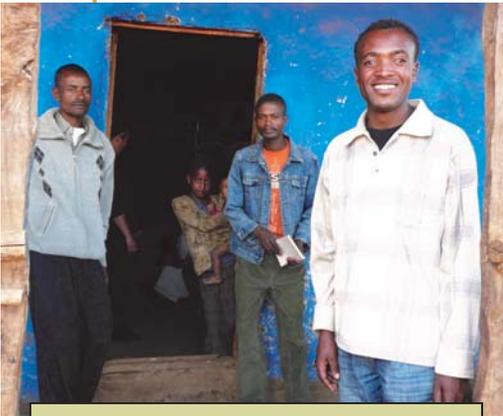
- *100% of all donations go directly into projects in Ethiopia. Our Board members work voluntarily and cover all operating costs.*
- *Each project has an Ethiopian "partner" who contributes 15-20% of the project cost, usually in the form of labour.*



Students in a classroom of the upgraded Dembecha Elementary School.



A completed Library in Dejen in the Gojjam region.



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Young teachers are given the opportunity to gain teaching experience at the Alternate Education Program in Wolliso.

From the first day of my stay and each day following that, our model was confirmed and reinforced with every project, every community and every partner that we visited. Everywhere we went we were welcomed with sincerity and warmth, which reflect the respect and appreciation felt for *Partners in the Horn of Africa*. I was touched by the gratitude that was expressed by the people that we work with - be it the widowed mother who supports her children with the proceeds from her family farm to the regional representative responsible for a population twice that of B.C., *Partners* is seen as a means of empowerment and positive change.

My other objectives were open ended. Like many westerners, my knowledge of the country had been shaped by disaster news and



Both women and men work together to fulfil the 15-20% community contribution to all our projects - here they are building the Ali School in the Bale Region.

Our construction projects are carefully monitored by our engineering consultant, Tessfaye.





*House of Hope used to be a hospice where people came to die... now it truly is a House of Hope. The provision of anti retrovirals, good nutrition, clean clothes and bedding, has allowed over 85% of residents to return to their community.*



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Hollywood tales. Even with three years on the *Partners* Board, six months on staff and a curiosity that has put a variety of books and articles in my hands, nothing could adequately prepare me for the experience of Ethiopia.

A first impression is that life can be harsh and seemingly unforgiving. But there is so much more to understand and appreciate. It was a privilege to be invited into the lives of individuals and communities and be granted a perspective I never would have seen as a traditional traveller or tourist. The hospitality and generosity were incredible - with our hosts we shared the simplest of meals, the most intimate of circumstances and also the joy and pride of accomplishment. I was moved to tears. I was inspired. I was humbled. I was overwhelmed and



*Microfinancing enables women to start small businesses, from purchasing sewing machines and supplies to make reusable sanitary pads, to making fuel efficient ovens, to buying a goat with the plan to someday buy a cow to milk, to being able to set up a business selling spices and dried goods.*

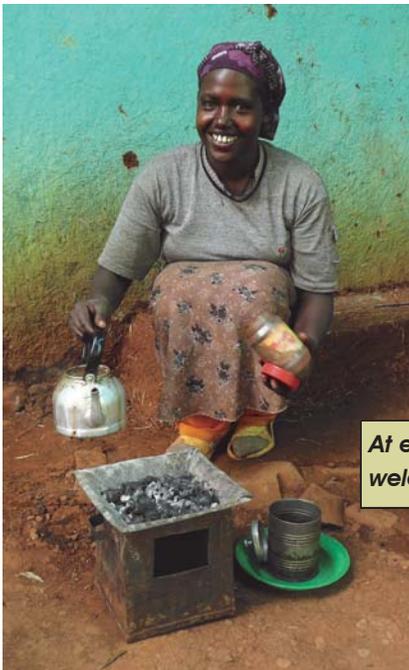


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touched by the incredible spirit of people who have the same hopes and dreams that we have for our family, our communities and ourselves. I was changed.

I am still assimilating my Ethiopian adventure and the sights, sounds, smells and intensity of the experience. Ethiopia is captivating and I was captivated. I arrived at the beginning of February 100 per cent Ferengi. (You can't help but absorb some of the language!). At the end of the month, I left a little bit Habesha.

Chow (as they would say in Ethiopia),  
Cindy



Cindy visiting students at Dembecha Elementary School



At every project we visited, we were welcomed with coffee and refreshments.



The Partners model is reflected in so many seemingly small, but significant stories. This is Zewuiditu (left), a graduate of the Kobo Group Home, with Yehalem Metiku, our Ethiopian Country Representative. She excelled at her government exams and now attends the medical college in Robe where she is studying to be a health officer. She is a long way from her village in another region, and it was nothing for us to take a three-hour detour to visit her. Partners is like a family to her.



[www.partnersinthehorn.org](http://www.partnersinthehorn.org)

**BC Office**  
PO Box 309  
Enderby, BC V0E 1V0  
Phone: 250-838-2111

**Alberta Office**  
9333 - 37 Ave NW  
Edmonton, AB T6E 5N4  
Phone: 780-993-2999

**Our mission is to improve the lives of Ethiopians. We listen to their needs and partner with them on projects that empower communities and individuals and contribute to their well being.**

- Our Board of Directors**
- John Baigent
  - Mekonen Bayssie
  - Patricia Blocksom
  - David Cosco
  - Marguerite Jackson
  - John McAlpine
  - Seaton McLean
  - Vince Ready
  - Brooke Sundin

**Moving?** Please let us know your new address so we can keep in touch.

**Email?** Let us know if you prefer to receive your

**"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."  
- Margaret Mead**

**Your donations are making a difference in the lives of many Ethiopians. On their behalf we thank you.**

We are a recognized Canadian charity and issue tax receipts for all donations.