



The stunning Blue Nile Gorge

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

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

Through a Compassionate Eye

Each year, more and more of our donors visit **Partners'** projects in Ethiopia. This year our visitors included some members of the **Compassionate Eye Foundation**, a group founded by commercial photographers who donate the royalties from photos shot for Compassionate Eye to support developing communities around the world.

The following are some excerpts from a narrative of their July 2012 trip to Ethiopia:

July 2nd: Arrival early morning in Addis. We are struck by the dramatic contrast between the images we have in our minds of the Ethiopian landscape from the "famine" pictures and the lush hills we see around us.

Our first visit was to **Partners' House of Hope** – a safe home set up for people with AIDS/HIV to recover and build weight and strength.

With the proper food, a safe place to stay and recently available antiretroviral drugs, recovery rates are approaching 90%. We experienced many mixed emotions generated by the strength and frailty of the residents. It was hard to fathom what these peoples' lives would look and feel like without this refuge.

Next was a visit to **Laura's Place** – a safe home for young women from rural villages who have been orphaned, primarily by AIDS, and who have been assessed to be both at risk and good candidates for schooling. Most of them were studying nursing. We all left impressed by the home and the opportunity these girls are being given.



Recovering at "House of Hope"

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Helping children to walk

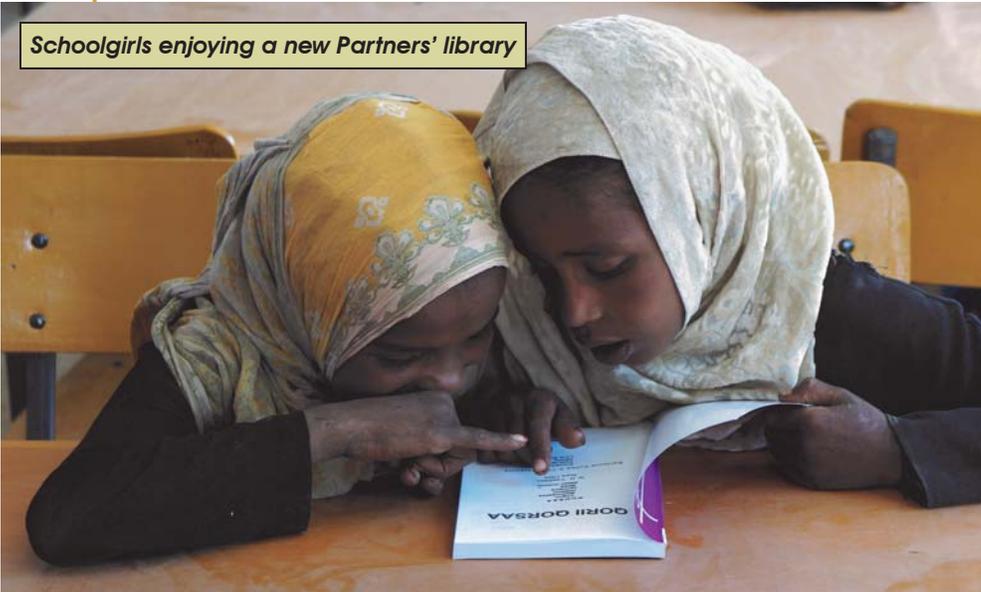


July 3rd: Visit to the Prosthetics-Orthotics Centre, where a Partners' project provides prostheses for hundreds of children and adults. The facility does not receive any public funding, another example of how **Partners** is led by a real need in the community and goes about meeting it very effectively.

In the afternoon we went to visit **Women in Self Employment, WISE**, which provides training and employment opportunities for women coupled with micro-finance loans.

Partners and **WISE** manufacture re-useable sanitary pads for girls in numerous rural communities. This provides employment and financial independence for 10 women, while allowing hundreds of girls to attend school for many more days in the school year.

Schoolgirls enjoying a new Partners' library



July 4th: We left Addis early in the morning for our long journey to the rural communities in the north. The Blue Nile was stunning. We saw lots of people walking, herding animals, working etc... all carrying something. We remembered that John told us Ethiopia is the size of BC, yet has 85 million people!!

Our first stop was a visit to an elementary school library that **Partners** had recently constructed. The library was a fine facility and the collection of books was growing, including many in Amharic, the official language of Ethiopia. The commitment of the students

and their parents to their education is simply staggering.

It was a long drive to our next stop – the town of Debre Markos where we visited **Partners' Group Home**, a safe residence for a group of at risk girls, still in secondary school. We broke the ice by showing pictures of home and children. It was heartening to know that these girls had a safe home to grow up in and that they were being given – and taking – the opportunity of education.

July 5th: We drove south and then inland where **Partners' Wongie Footbridge** was nearing completion. It spanned a narrow and treacherous gorge and 20,000 people lived on the "other side of the river." This bridge is essential for them to access market, schools, medical care, the highway and more. In celebration of the impending completion of the bridge, the contractor appeared with a bottle of clear liquid...our first taste of the local moonshine - Araki!



"We were struck by a hand-painted sign in the middle of the school yard which seems to sum up what Partners (and CEF) is all about."

In the afternoon we travelled inland to see a recently completed water project where several fresh water springs provided abundant clean drinking water and an area to wash clothes etc. We saw hundreds of women collecting water in clay and plastic urns. It was a very enjoyable visit and we really felt like we had been able to connect to local people.

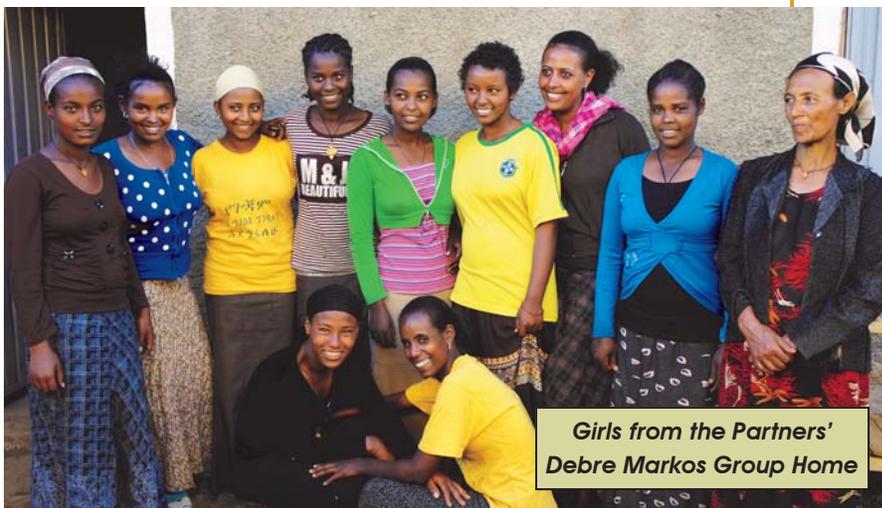
July 6th: We travelled to Dinsir Metakir, a reforestation project on the sides and top of a hillside at over 10000 feet!

Partners worked with the local farmers and the government forest officers to formulate a plan to reverse the erosion. The government provided the seedlings, the farmers planted and tended the trees and **Partners** provided payment to the farmers based on number of surviving trees. It was clear how proud the farmers were of their efforts - and it was working. The trees were coming back and so was the wildlife. We had a wonderful time with all the local people. We were struck by their humility and how they readily admitted their responsibility in the current difficult situation...very moving...we were greatly inspired.

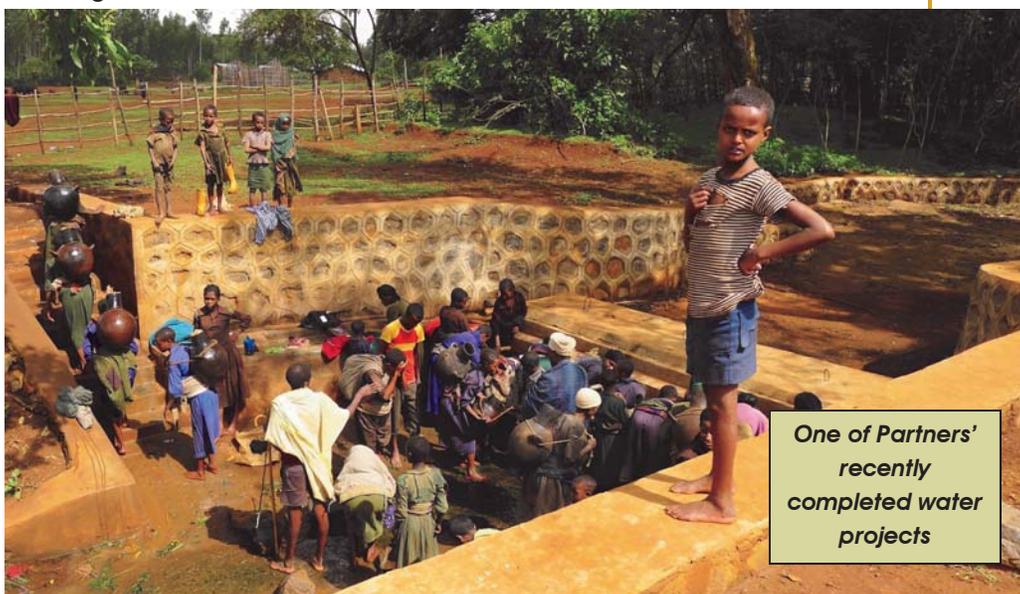
July 7th: We travelled in the morning to see **Partners'** **Andasa River Bridge**. Once again we were surprised to learn what an important part this bridge played in saving lives.

In the afternoon we went to visit "foster homes" for children who have been orphaned, usually by AIDS. **Partners** provides a subsidy to the families which enables the child to go to school.

We can't thank **Partners** enough for the experience. We all felt honoured to be able to support an organisation like **Partners** that is clearly doing such life-altering work. The strength of **Partners'** model of having communities contribute was evident over and over again.



Girls from the Partners' Debre Markos Group Home



One of Partners' recently completed water projects



Impromptu celebratory dance at the opening of the Andasa River Bridge

“Educate a girl, educate a family”: New Girls Group Home in Jimma

Orphaned or vulnerable school girls in rural Ethiopia have virtually no opportunity of attending high school. Schools are too far away and attending them too costly. Without family support, early marriage or dead end jobs are inevitable. Last year **Partners** identified 10 bright, hardworking girls from rural schools and set up a Group Home for them in Jimma. There the girls live safely with a housemother while attending school. With electricity allowing them to study into the night, three good meals and relief from rural chores, the girls are thriving and facing a life that was previously unthinkable. The results of their first year in high school have just come in. Eight finished in the top ten of their class. All look to qualify for university admission. Their futures are bright and their lives transformed.



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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

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Donna Lifton, Partners' original Administrative Assistant, was honoured at a dinner earlier this year to thank her for her years of service with our charity. She is now semi-retired, but will be coming into the office from time to time to help out with special projects.



*We sincerely thank Donna for her dedication to **Partners** and for everything she's done to help us improve the lives of so many Ethiopians. Donna, we wish you all the best in your retirement and we hope to see you often.*

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

Email? Let us know if you prefer to receive your Newsletter by email.

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.

"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

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