

Ethiopia Calling

The newsletter of *Partners in the Horn of Africa*

Partners has been busy! We have now completed, or have in progress, eight projects in Ethiopia. Nine more are scheduled for the coming year.

With all *Partners'* projects our operating rules are the same.

- Donated funds are not used for administration. Our directors work voluntarily and cover all operating costs. 100% of our funding goes directly to our projects.
- All of our projects have an Ethiopian "Partner" - either a village group or local charitable organization - who buy into the project by contributing 15-20% of the cost - usually in labour or local materials.



An Ethiopian Orthodox monk...dressed in the National colours.

HIV Related Projects

Special points of interest:

- *Partners'* HIV - related projects
- *Partners'* new projects

Skills Training Project

AIDS is devastating sub-Saharan Africa. There are more than 2 million people living with HIV/AIDS. There were 1.2 million AIDS Orphans in 2001 and that number will grow to 2.5 million by 2014.

In response to the pandemic *Partners* is taking on more HIV - related projects. We now have five such projects in Ethiopia. One of the most successful is our *Skills Training Project* which trains the eldest AIDS orphan in a sibling group so that he/she can support the household and keep the family together. Anna - not her real name - is enrolled in the *Project*. This is her story.

Anna's Story

Anna is 18 years old and has two

younger brothers. Her father died of AIDS a year ago. The mother is presently very sick.

Anna cares for her mother and her two siblings in a one-room mud home in Addis Ababa. There is no plumbing or electricity and the family shares a communal latrine.

Until recently Anna relied on friends and neighbours for handouts to take care of her family. Recently her life took a turn for the better when she became one of 12 AIDS Orphans selected for *Partners' Skills Training Project*.

A trades college in Addis Ababa trains

(Continued on page2)

Anna's Story cont'd



Anna and her buddies in a western style kitchen.

(Continued from page1)

Anna and her classmates in certain skills that are in high demand - western style cooking and housekeeping. Anna will spend 10 months at the college learning how to cook western style meals and how to housekeep rooms with toilet facilities, windows and western style furniture. This training will be followed by a one-month internship in an international hotel.

Partners pays Anna's tuition, bus fare, and texts, (about \$500.00 per year) and provides a subsidy to the family for rent, medical expenses and tuition for the younger siblings. In Anna's case the family subsidy is \$800.00

85% of the students obtain decent paying jobs in hotels.

per year. *Partners* also hires a Training Officer who interviewed and selected Anna for the *Project* and who assists students with school related problems and job placement. The bottom line is that for about \$1,500.00 *Partners* can support a family like Anna's for one year and make her employable. 85% of the students obtain decent paying jobs in hotels.

We visited Anna's home this year in the morning when she was caring for her two brothers and her mother. It was a grim scene ... a woman/child caring for her sick mother and brothers in impoverished circumstances. That afternoon we saw Anna again in a modern, well-equipped college which had re-created a western style kitchen, hotel room and bathroom. She and her classmates were dressed in spiffy white aprons learning how to make french fries!! The transformation from a barely-coping teenager in the morning to a bright student full of hope and dreams in the afternoon was palpable.

Aids Orphans

Partners has other HIV related projects in Ethiopia. We place AIDS orphans with extended family members and then subsidize the family. This costs about \$250.00 per child per year and keeps kids in their own community. When there is no other option *Partners* places orphans in a group home/orphanage in Addis Ababa which is run by our Ethiopian partner, *Hope for Children*. Attached to the group home is another *Partners*/*Hope for Children* project that sends peer educators door-to-door in the community to discuss AIDS in a pri-

vate setting and to distribute information about the virus.

information on HIV/AIDS in a discreet and welcoming environment.

Female Adolescent Centre

Finally, *Partners* has just opened a Female Adolescent Centre where young rural women can get



Ethiopian women harvesting grain by hand.

Future Projects

Here is a snapshot of Partners' new and continuing projects for 2004 in Ethiopia:

- Two micro-financing projects - one in Addis Ababa - the other in rural Ethiopia. *Partners* provides unemployed women with small loans to start their own businesses. After the first loan is repaid the women are entitled to increasingly larger loans.
- Clean water supply and protection. In rural Ethiopia *Partners* is installing concrete structures to protect water sources (springs), digging shallow wells and segregating use of the water to reduce water borne disease.
- Installing public faucets and bringing clean water to a village in the Bale Mountains.
- Installing a flour mill in a remote village where women have to carry 20 kilos of grain for four hours each way to the nearest milling facility.
- Completing construction of a footbridge in the mountains of central Ethiopia.
- Renovating a high school library in rural Ethiopia.

Encouraging Notes

Ethiopia's problems are immense but there are some encouraging things to keep in mind.

- With the wars between Ethiopia and Eritrea and Somalia behind it, for the first time in 20 years there is peace in Ethiopia.
- In a country as poor as Ethiopia the Canadian dollar goes a long way. *Partners* can put HIV orphans into foster homes with extended family members for \$20.00 a month and we operate our group home/orphanage in Addis Ababa for about \$7,000.00 a year.
- Ethiopian volunteer organizations (our partners) are playing an increasingly active role in addressing Ethiopia's problems - an essential step to achieve lasting improvements.



Partners is having an impact in the Horn of Africa. The problems are immense but your donations do make a difference in the lives of many Ethiopians. **On their behalf we thank you.**



Partners in the Horn of Africa

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Partners is a recognized Canadian charity and issues 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 ~***