

Journey to Ethiopia 2014

by Robyn McGregor / Tetra Tech EBA Ambassador

Tetra Tech EBA Inc. has been working with **Partners in the Horn of Africa** since 2006. Through either corporate or staff donations, we have funded 101 **Partners** projects including the Debre Markos Group Home, Grow Ethiopia Reforestation Project, Kasso Manso School, and access to improved water through 98 hand dug wells and spring protection facilities in rural villages. Each year, we select an employee as our ambassador, to travel to Ethiopia.

On March 31, 2014, when I arrived in the **Partners** office in Addis Ababa, I received a warm welcome, as Tetra Tech EBA's 10th Ambassador. My assignment was to work with **Partners** staff to outline a process to evaluate projects, and then visit as many of the Tetra Tech EBA funded projects as I could in the time that I had.

We visited 63 of the 70 villages that have **Partners** water projects constructed from 2009 to 2013. Our time in each village was spent reviewing the facility for overall operation and talking to the beneficiaries about what has changed now that access to improved water is available.



Water projects are delivered through a partnership between the village, **Partners** and the Woreda Administration as represented by their Water Office. The village provides the stone, sand and labour during construction, builds the fence and locking gate, and manages the facility after construction. The Water Office works with **Partners** to see the project to completion and then coordinates directly with the

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Partners in the Horn of Africa is a non-denominational Canadian charity operating in Ethiopia. We work with both rural and urban communities, focusing our efforts and investments in areas of unmet need. Our projects respond to community requests, addressing a range of needs such as education, basic infrastructure, water and sanitation, food security, and livelihoods. We follow two principles:

- We work with an Ethiopian partner on each project, usually a community or local organization. Our partner proposes the project and is required to contribute at least 15% of the total cost in cash, labour, or materials.
- 100% of any donation to **Partners** goes directly toward project costs in Ethiopia. All administrative costs are covered by **Friends of the Horn of Africa**, a separately funded sister charity.

News from Ethiopia...

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village Water Management Committee for training, repairs, and regular disinfecting with chlorine. All of the 63 facilities were operational and the level of maintenance varied from site to site.

When I asked, “How has your life changed now that the water is better?” the people spoke generally of the health and psychological benefits of having improved water.

Ethiopia is a beautiful country. You could almost imagine you are in British Columbia or Alberta with the clear skies and the hillsides dotted with farm buildings. That is until you see a small child in tattered clothes and bare feet, tending to a cow and you recall that the muddy waters of the river was once and still is a main source of water for the people in the area.

There isn't one big, awesome gesture that we can do to initiate change for the better. It takes patience, diligence, persistence, repetition and the initiation of



many small and customized actions directed towards one person or one village at a time.

Thank you Kelem, Gashe Abdi, Abiyot and Tesfaye for teaching me this and for helping me see that it is really the people that make Ethiopia beautiful.

WISE's Akaki Women Entrepreneurs Development Project

WISE, Organization for Women in Self-Employment, is one of our stronger partners in Ethiopia. They organize very successful programs to train and support women in Entrepreneurship/ Business, Leadership and Management, Health-Education and Self-Development. At WISE, courses are scheduled mostly on a half-day (3 hours/ day) basis to give trainees time to discharge other responsibilities, such as household chores and business. All courses,

except vocational skills, are delivered by in-house resource persons. These in-house resource persons are skilled in adult teaching methodologies and use participatory techniques of facilitation.

Participants are poor women and girls which are provided with basic business and entrepreneurial knowledge and skills to improve their livelihoods. The course motivates those who are not gainfully employed, or have no experience in micro business management to join the self-employment work force. For those with experience in micro business management, it offers them a chance to review their experience and gain new knowledge. In 2014, 160 new members are being trained and added to the program, which already supports over 1400 women from the region surrounding Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia.



... and from Canada

Discovering Global Citizenship in the Okanagan

Taking part in *Global Citizen Kelowna's Millennium Development Challenge* began as just another school assignment. As we looked deeper into the problems that our global community is currently facing, we realized how accessible a solution really was. Our discovery could not have been put into action without the guidance and the enthusiasm of *Partners in the Horn of Africa*.

The *Challenge* is a competition put on by *Global Citizen Kelowna* that seeks to empower students from around the Okanagan by helping them become aware of the challenges of global development, and to see the potential to make change and better the lives of our global neighbours. The objective is to devise a ten-minute presentation that demonstrates to a panel of judges how \$5000 will impact the lives of one community, and in turn address the Millennium Development Goals that were established by the United Nations back in 2000.



Caroline L., Melissa C., Chris M. and Mikayla J. with teacher Grant Richard (middle) from Immaculata High School in Kelowna celebrating their win

The task proved daunting at first, but motivated by our teacher Mr. Grant Richard, we set out to find an issue that we were passionate about. For each of our group members, the reality that there are still so many communities in the world that don't have access to bare minimum essentials such as clean drinking water had really caught our eye. This was when we encountered *Partners in the Horn of Africa*. Their dedication to their mission and their success in improving Ethiopia's water sources were really inspiring.

We learned that \$5000 would not only aid the construction of a well in the Wonberma District of Ethiopia, but it would also help launch a new sanitation and hygiene campaign called WASH in Schools at Seba Dar Elementary School. This way students and community members would have access to clean water, and learn how to manage their personal hygiene, establishing a more sustainable defence against various waterborne diseases.

Having been runners-up in the Challenge in previous years, it was really exciting to win and see our goals become a reality. The opportunity to immerse ourselves in the lives of a *Partners'* employee was a really wonderful experience, as was getting to connect with our global neighbours over in Ethiopia. It has been an incredible learning experience. We will be keeping in touch with *Partners* and keeping up with the progress of the well. A special thanks to everyone who has contributed to the success of this project thus far!

A letter to *Partners* from Jaylin, an 11 year old supporter from Kelowna

Last year I was inspired by my Social Justice teacher to try to make a difference in the world. I wanted to start a foundation that would support children in need in another country. My mom made me write 2 research reports to show that I was serious. My research just ignited my desire to something even more. I created "Positive Step for Kids" and chose to work with *Partners in the Horn of Africa*. They give all donations directly to communities in Africa. There are no administrative costs taken from donations like mine.

With the help of my friend Jetta, I got to work raising money. So far we have done a lemonade stand, Christina Lake and Big White Bottle drives, a pizza slice sale and we have made many crafts for our craft sale. By far the biggest contributor was the Rutland Elementary Spirit Day last January, students raised \$475 for the children in Ethiopia. In July I was happy to make a donation of \$1309.97 to *Partners in the Horn of Africa*. This has been the experience of a lifetime!

Jaylin's donation will be used to fund a hand-dug well like the one shown in the photo. Follow Jaylin on her website: positivestepsforkids.weebly.com





New Executive Director at Enderby Office

Raffaele Teodonno joined our Enderby team in May as the new Executive Director. Raffaele is an Italian national with 25 years experience in international development, including 5 years in New York at UN HQ and 10 years based in the field, in three different countries. He moved to Canada with his wife and 4 children in 2011 and was previously the Regional Program Manager with World Vision Canada in Mississauga.



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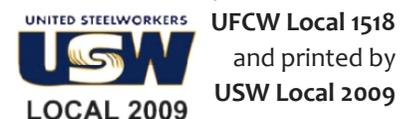
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Meet the Board - Q&A with Kirsten

Kirsten Behler has been a Director with **Partners in the Horn of Africa** for four years. She is an Urban Planner with a focus on community planning in Vancouver. While travelling through Ethiopia in 2003, Kirsten visited several of **Partners'** early projects and saw what difference they made in the lives of many Ethiopians. Kirsten lives in North Vancouver with her husband Andrew and their three children.



How long have you known Partners and what connected you to the organization?

I have known about **Partners** pretty much since it started back in 2001 and walked across the first foot bridge in 2003! I have since volunteered at the AGM, and finally had the chance to join the Board of Directors in 2010.

Why have you decided to dedicate time and efforts for this organization?

I think **Partners** is a very special organization. Effective aid in developing countries needs to empower people in those countries, and by partnering with Ethiopian organizations, that is exactly what **Partners** does. I know that the projects that **Partners** helps fund in Ethiopia make a huge difference in the lives of many Ethiopians, and that motivates me to be involved in the organization.

What would you like to happen in the future for Partners?

I really want **Partners** to keep doing what it is doing so well – work with our very capable Ethiopian partner organizations on a variety of projects that make such a big difference on the ground. Many of our projects are small, but they help step-by-step to create a better life for people in Ethiopia.

Partners is able to maintain its promise that 100% of your donation is used for project costs in Ethiopia because of the help of **Friends of the Horn of Africa**. **Friends** is a registered charity, managed from our Enderby office, established to uniquely support **Partners'** operations. **Friends** covers all administrative expenses of **Partners'** work, including office rent, equipment, salaries and travel, both in Ethiopia and Canada. **Friends** is supported by individuals, foundations and unions, as well as by our directors and staff.

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