

Building Lives One By One

Partners in the Horn of Africa works with the Ethiopian charity Afro Ethiopian Integrated Development (AEID) to deliver the Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) fostering program in the area of Bahir Dar City. These children are placed in a private home (often of a relative) until age 16 with about \$25 a month in support and are mentored while they attend school.

AEID has grown to be an important partner - we also have worked with them on water containment projects and continue to support 28 high school kids in a Group Home and 72 children in a government-run Kindergarten in Adet town in Gojjam. We are also looking to partner with them on a university scholarship program next year. This time we share two stories of lives being built by AEID with your support...

Belaynesh Hune Altah was born in 1998 in rural Kebele near Kalshaye in the Mecha Woreda (district) of the West Gojjam Zone on a family farm. Unfortunately, two years later her mother died and a year after that her father also passed away, leaving Belaynesh and her two brothers and two sisters to fend for themselves.

At the age of 4, Belaynesh was sent to the city of Bahir Dar to live with her aunt and was enrolled in school a year later. Regrettably, her aunt was not supportive of her schooling, and she was overburdened with chores and given no time to study. Belaynesh, remembering her days there, said "sometimes I would do my homework at the market place before I reached home, as I knew once I got back home, I'd have a lot to do and no time for homework." Food was scarce and there was little money to buy school supplies or a uniform.

In 2008 when she was in Grade 4, the school administration realized that Belaynesh, an outstanding student, would greatly benefit from the Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) program that was luckily available in the community with the support of **Partners in the Horn of Africa**.

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Partners in the Horn of Africa is a non-denominational Canadian charity operating in Ethiopia, with two basic principles:

- 1) **100% of any donation goes directly toward project costs in Ethiopia.** All administrative and fundraising costs are covered by Friends of the Horn of Africa, a separately funded sister charity.
- 2) Our unique development model is based on community participation. **The Ethiopian community or partner proposes the project to us and then is required to contribute at least 15% of the total cost in cash, labour and/or materials.**

We work with both rural and urban communities. Our projects focus on education, basic infrastructure, water and sanitation, food security and sustainable livelihoods.

(Continued from Page 1) Even with the support of the program, Belaynesh's aunt continued to overburden her with too many tasks. Then, during a regular visit she told Shimeta Ezezew (Executive Director of AEID) about her situation. AEID assessed other options and it was able to locate her elder sister. Belaynesh was able to move to Merawi to live with her sister with the help of the funding from the OVC program. She was finally able to attend school without hardship and was able to focus on her studies. Now in Grade 12 with excellent marks, she is preparing to take the national examination which will enable her to attend university where she would like to study to become an Economist.



Belaynesh with her new school materials



Habtamu with his aunt Bahirdar

Young Man Aspires to Become a Manager and Educate Children in Need

Habtamu Yihune is another of the approximately 100 children supported by the Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) program sponsored by **Partners** through AEID.

Born in 1998 in Bahir Dar City, Habtamu's parents both passed away from HIV/AIDS when he was about three. He then went to live with his aunt and family, who lived in poverty and depended

highly on the husband's income, which was not enough to fulfill the basic necessities. His aunt also helped out by selling charcoal, baskets she made, and other small trade items.

When Habtamu reached school age, attending school regularly became a problem. Finding money for the required school materials (exercise books, a pen and a uniform) and other basic needs was very challenging to his caregiver family. Habtamu often ate only once a day.

When he was about ten, his teacher and the school administration determined that the potentially good student needed help. Habtamu and his aunt's family started to receive a small monthly subsidy (about \$25) and mentoring as part of the OVC program. This effectively improves the lives of the whole family.

Habtamu was then able to attend school regularly and lead a much better life. He says that "the support is helping me a lot. I attend my school without any stress. Now I am not thinking about school uniform, exercise book, and other necessities thanks to God, AEID and Partners in the Horn of Africa".

Today he is a Grade 11 student with good marks and is preparing for university. He hopes to be a manager of a "big organization" and says "I have a plan to help children that are living under a terrible condition and support them to attend school".



A Great BIG Run THANKS to our runners, donors and sponsors, and a special thanks to all of the volunteers who made this event happen.



A WISE Small Business Success Story

Tesfanesh Seyum from the Akaki Kality Women's Project, supported by Women in Self Employment (WISE), shares her story of success, empowerment and being a business owner. Partners supports micro-finance loans and business education to women through WISE.

I was born in my mother's home village of Amawete in 1963 and grew up in Addis in the Merkato area. My dad was a tailor in the Akaki Kality district of Addis where tailoring businesses concentrated.

I was fortunate to be able to go to grade school, but when I was in Grade 10 I started night school so I could work to help my family. I was employed at the Akaki textile factory and worked there for 25 years with a monthly salary of Birr 350 (\$22). I got married in 1988 and had two children, but my husband got sick and passed away in 1998. It was difficult to earn enough to care for my children without his support.

When the government-owned factory was sold in 2006, the new owner said in a speech that with hard work, anyone could someday own their own company. I was inspired. Two years later while attending a meeting with WISE, I saw that I could realize my dream with their lending and saving program. I registered, took their basic business skills training and started saving right away. The training changed me - I felt like I was born again. I participated in all the programs and training given by WISE, prepared my business plan and took the first loan of 700 Birr (\$44). I started selling women's clothes in my work place, paid my loan off and borrowed a second round loan. During holiday season, I started selling butter, coffee and other items that people use for the holiday. Within five months I had paid off the second loan.

It is five years since I started, and with a series of loans, the change I see in my life is unbelievable. I am now the owner of not one but two businesses - a sewing business and a retail shop! Many garment factories outsourced their business to us and we deliver on time as per the design and quality. Today I have 12 sewing machines that do the buttoning, over lock and standard sewing. I employ 15 regular shift workers and 5 temporary workers that are on call when I have urgent orders.

I am so pleased with my work and my life. I can take care of my children and send them to college. My daughter is attending a design school called Bole, and I hope she will join my company after that. People have high regards for my accomplishments and I am now a highly respected woman in my community.

I would like to thank WISE for their training since it has empowered me and helped me to know my strength and it has allowed me to create employment. I never knew this would be possible. It's true, hard work truly pays off.

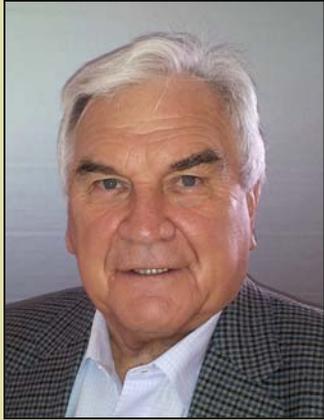


11th Annual Great BIG Run for Africa - A New Leaf

We are pleased with the success of a new format **Great BIG Run for Africa** held on Saturday Oct 24th in Kelowna. Rather than the 100 km relay run on the highway from West Kelowna to Enderby, we held a much safer car-free run along the lake on a 5 km course starting at the downtown City Park. Participants could run (or walk) the incredibly scenic course as many times as they liked. Then we finished off with some relay games and Loris' carrot cake. We look forward to growing this event in Kelowna and to holding other Great BIG Runs elsewhere next year as well.



Vince Ready, Partners' first Honorary Director



In September, our Board unanimously designated Vince Ready, Canada's most distinguished arbitrator and mediator of high level labour disputes, as Partners' first Honorary Director. Vince was a founding director of Partners and sat on the Board for more than 10 years playing a crucial role in guiding Partners through its formative years. During that same period, Vince's wife, Noella, was a key organizer for our AGM/Ethiopian dinner every year.

Vince has a well deserved reputation across the country for good judgement and resolving difficult issues, and we are delighted that Vince will continue to offer these skills to Partners in the years ahead.

Raffaele Teodonna (1965-2015)

We are saddened to let you know that Raffaele Teodonna (age 49) passed away suddenly on July 7th in Enderby. Raffaele had been the Executive Director for *Partners in the Horn of Africa* since May 2014. He leaves behind his wife Daniela and five children: Dalia, Marta, Lorenzo, Julie Ashley and Daniele. A funeral was held in Latina, Italy on July 25th with his family and Italian friends.



Raffaele had improved the lives of many people around the world with the UN, several small Italian NGOs, World Vision Canada and then *Partners*. He was a kind, thoughtful, humble and inspiring person. He was easy to like and had such diverse passions as music, politics and equality, and surprisingly, American Football and the Cincinnati Bengals (since his late teens in Italy). Raffaele had made many fast friends here in Enderby and in the wider Partners circle, and will be sorely missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with Daniela and the family with this tragic loss.

Meet Our New Executive Director Silantoi Kisoso



Sila moved from Mali in early September, where she managed administration, project development and staff for an agricultural social enterprise in West Africa. With a degree in Global Political Economics, Sila began her career with the Manitoba Ministry of Labour and Immigration where she implemented programs to ensure immigrants were supported through their transition to post-secondary. She continued with organizations such as Innovations for Poverty Action, where she designed and developed an innovative sanitation tool for children, the latrine training mat which peaked the interest of Bill and

Melinda Gates Foundation, USAID and a research partnerships with Harvard and Emory University. Sila has also worked on the deployment of FrontlineSMS in over 170 countries and has supported the development of a mechanism to introduce mobile money for the millions earning less than \$1 a day who don't have access to financial services.

With a compassionate nature and a deep commitment to sustainable development, Sila is very excited about the future of *Partners* in Africa. Originally from Kenya, she has lived in Canada for about 12 years, and now lives in Enderby, settling into life in the Okanagan with her four year old daughter Mariela.



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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 & individuals, and contribute to their well-being.

Donations of \$20 or more are issued a tax receipt for Canadian and American donors. We are a Canadian CRA registered charity and an American 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

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