



The Friends of the Hudad newsletter

'Patience, persistence, perseverance and a small bit of panic'

It has been a long and interesting journey since our last newsletter. In September/ October last year, five of us from Friends of the Hudad went on a self-funded journey to consult with the Abuchagula community and also with the Ethiopian government. Although we were already registered as a Charity in Australia, we were advised that we needed to become an NGO in Ethiopia to be able to build the school with the local community. Otherwise we could donate the money to the Government and they would use it to build a school.

We had built such a beautiful connection with this community and we were committed to build them a place for their children and the adults to learn. We wanted it to be an experience of two communities, ours in Australia and theirs in the mountains of Ethiopia, working together to build the school and deepen our connections and understandings of the world.

So we persisted. We took up the very challenging and extremely bureaucratic process of becoming an NGO in Ethiopia. Some said it was impossible especially as such a small organisation, but we did it. We had the help of many very generous people including some very kind lawyers, who helped us on a pro bono basis. We went through the new Ethiopian Embassy in Canberra and they were very encouraging. 6 months later (April 30th) we finally had notification that we were accepted as an NGO in Ethiopia. Suddenly we needed an official design for our seal, within 24 hours Louella came up with a beautiful design – representing the mountain landscape and its people.



Yes, we thought we were through all the hoops and could finally start the exciting part of building the school but there was a stream of challenges and complexities ahead of us that we have found hard to understand. It took an other 3 months of door-knocking on all levels of government departments to finally get the land agreement in place. Our Ethiopian team (Derebe, Workeye, Mesfin, Eyayaw, Temmesgen, the community leaders and our school committee) have been facing every challenge with persistence, politeness but without ever a thought of giving in.



Derebe and the
Finance Officer



The education officer
in the zone office

FINALLY on Thursday 30th July, 2015 we signed a 3-year agreement with the Ethiopian officials to run our project in the Mountains above Lalibela!

We are now in the process of getting down to the nuts and bolts of getting things built as the community can't wait to start!

We have had a consultation and a design was prepared by an engineer in Ethiopia in regards to supplying potable water for the school and irrigation for the plantings.

We now have to get plans going with the community in Ethiopia to see when they can prepare all the mudbricks and cut trees for the building of the school. Then we will make plans to start the construction. We will have more information about these details in the next months but we wanted to let everyone know about the good news.

We have had great support from the staff and students at **Clifton Hill Primary school**, **Northcote High School** and **Melbourne Girls' College**. It is beautiful to see our local school communities working with us to help provide a school for the community in Ethiopia. And many thanks to those of you who continued to support/donate money over the last year. We really appreciate your continuous support!

The Friends of the Hudad
