



# The Friends of the Hudad newsletter

Well, there has been action at the station - as promised! Visits to Ethiopia, new staff, the first farmers' workshops, incredible fundraising and future plans.

## Action in Ethiopia

Conrad and Madge had a joyous reunion with the Hudad community in December. They were greeted with flowers, singing and some very special shoulder dancing from the local kids. There is some great footage on our Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/friendsofthedad/videos/938596966219275>

Amongst all the excitement and celebration there was also loads of consultation. There were meetings with the community, the elected school council and the local government officials. Madge, Conrad and our Country Representative Derebe, also interviewed prospective staff in Ethiopia to manage the project and the finances. We have appointed a very wonderful and



**Welcomed-back by the community**



**flowers and singing - what a reunion!**

skillful man, Mr Sisay Maregu, who has had great experience not only in building schools and water systems but also in reforestation. He has already undertaken some workshops with the local community in preparation for ordering and planting seedlings for reforestation and fruit orchard planting.



**Community consultation at the school site with Sisay, our Project Director & Derebe**

## Next Steps

Madge and Conrad plan to be at the Hudad again in March to commence the water project. With the local community they will dig trenches for the water pipes, and with some expert assistance, install solar water pumps (they found there was not enough water pressure to drive the planned hydraulic ram pumps). Hopefully all this will be completed by the beginning of the rainy season, so that the water storage can fill when the rain begins to fall.

Once the water system is in place we will be moving immediately into mud brick making and the building of the school will proceed from there. The seedlings will also be planted at the beginning of rainy season, in June.



**Madge and Conrad, joined by Mesfin, buying tools and materials in Addis Ababa**

### **In other news...**

As a result of our intention to build the school, the local education department officials climbed that 3-hour track and saw that indeed there are many families and children who are without education facilities. In response to this they have erected a temporary school, with a tarpaulin for walls and a temporary thatched roof, and provided a teacher. So the kids are already learning!



**The temporary school**

As you may have read, Ethiopia is once again in famine due to drought, estimated to be as severe as the devastating famines of the 1980's. We are acutely aware of this climate phenomenon and the project is contributing to long-term prevention by the setting up of water storage, reforestation to help land preservation, improved farming practices to increase crop yields and planting of fruit trees for increased food supply.

## Fundraising

We were so amazed to raise almost \$30,000 with our Christmas Gift cards and donations on the chuffed site. The wonderful donations really went global with donations from many of our friends and families in countries far and wide - from Holland, Ireland, Germany, and Belgium and also from many visitors to the Hudad that heard about the project. There was so much support from America, Hong Kong, Canada... we hope we haven't forgotten anyone. And we are collecting wonderful array of interested and skilled people from many countries to come and help on the ground with the project.

We have had some preliminary discussions with Rotary about funding some aspects of the project and many of our local schools have been such great supporters of the project. One of our local schools is interested in a school tour to Ethiopia and the Hudad.

**Thanks again for your ongoing interest and belief in us!**

Warmest regards

## Friends of the Hudad

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