



The Official Newsletter of Projects-Abroad

Inside this issue:

- ✦ Editor's Note.....2
- ✦ Volunteer story-1.....3
- ✦ In the projects4
- ✦ Volunteer story-II..... 5
- ✦ Visiting Merkato.....6
- ✦ Lucy (Dinknesh).....7
- ✦ Staffs contact list9

Ethiopia
Rising

Follow Us on:



EDITOR'S NOTE:

Selam! From Projects-Abroad Ethiopia

፩ - is a GE'EZ numerical representation for number 1 and 'Habesha' is the name given to all Ethiopians despite their difference in religion, tribe, economy or social status. So, ፩-HABESHA is to imply the unity of Ethiopian People despite their difference.

Welcome to February's newsletter. Unlike the west, we are enjoying winter ('Bega') here in Ethiopia which means that the weather is sunny, a bit dry with frost in morning.

Like all the other months, this month had also been full of excitements and good work of our volunteers. This newsletter aims to update all our volunteers about the latest happenings in Projects Abroad Ethiopia in the month of February.

In this edition we will see two volunteer stories; one from our care placement and the other from teaching. Each of them will share their experiences in the projects and give advice for future volunteers. We will also see about some projects and social activities.

I would like to thank all volunteers from the past and present for sacrificing your valuable time, money and knowledge to make a difference in our projects. I hope that you will all find something that would grab your attention as you read through this edition.

Big thanks to volunteers who have shared their stories and photos with us. We encourage everyone to join us in making the newsletter more interesting and exciting. You are welcome to send your own written articles and pictures. This will help others to understand and learn about Ethiopia more. If you have anything you'd like to contribute, suggest, or comment on, please contact:-

berekettesema@projects-abroad.org

Bereket Tesema
Information manager

VOLUNTEER STORY

St. Michael's Grammar School graduate used her break to volunteer in Ethiopia and teach children

"I always wanted to come to Ethiopia and volunteer after watching documentaries about the life style and poverty that some people live in. When my mother told me about Projects



Abroad, I decided to use my break between High school and university to teach children in Ethiopia," said Kate Siebert (18) from Australia. She decided to sign up with Projects Abroad and volunteer at one of their Teaching projects in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Her placement was at Hillside school where she taught students from grades one to three. "At first I thought I was going to be an assistant teacher but after a few days I became main teacher for speaking, listening and writing skills in English for students in grade one and two. I was given enough responsibilities which I enjoyed quite a lot." Kate was responsible for preparing the lessons and educational games as well as marking the children's exercise books.

"I believe by coming to Hillside I helped the children to improve their English. I always check the improvement of my students in the three basic skills of English and every week I saw improvements. I believe I have helped them to increase their vocabulary. They have definitely improved in my eyes." Kate had 18 classes per week to teach and play games with the children.

Though the culture here is extremely different from what Kate is used to, she explained it wasn't much of a shock for her. "I think having Projects Abroad staffs, Aster (host mom) and the whole family made my stay really nice and easy."



Apart from the project, Kate was very happy about the time she spent with other volunteers who already became her good friends. "I went on a trip with the other



volunteers to western and southern Ethiopia and the Timket (Epiphany) festival; these are two of my most special experiences; not mentioning the quality time I had with the children at the school."

Kate's advice to future volunteers, especially those whose placements are at schools or orphanages, is to bring toys, stationaries, little prizes and presents because the children love them and it is a good way to encourage them and show the affection volunteers have for them.

Kate was very happy about her nine week stay in Ethiopia with Projects Abroad and she looks very certain when she repeatedly says "I will come back!" Hopefully when she comes back, seeing the children all grown up and advanced in their knowledge will make her happy since they are the fruit of her, and other volunteers', efforts.

IN THE PROJECTS

There are about 13 Projects Abroad volunteers currently working on Care, Journalism, Sports, Teaching and Medical projects and we are still expecting more. Most of our volunteers enjoys there stay in Ethiopia. All the placements are also very happy with the efforts of the volunteers.

In this edition we will have a bird's eye view through one of our best placement for care projects.

Selam Children's Village is a non-governmental organization which strives to help orphans and destitute community children to improve their lives and develop holistically as self-sufficient citizens. It provides foods, shelter, clothing, education, medical, care services, and other basic necessities.

Volunteers, mainly placed here as a care giver has a wide area of preference to work on. They can work on little children below the age of 13, on teenagers or youngsters who joined High school and university. Most common tasks are playing with the children, coordinating sports activities, teaching them drawing and songs, life and experience sharing with teenagers and youth, and more.

Using first semester break,



volunteers from teaching projects joined care volunteers for a week to spend time with the children living in the village. "The time I spent at Selam was one of the best experiences I had in Ethiopia." said Hannah Hans Matthews from the teaching placement.

Volunteers placed there, usually go back home with an overwhelming love and empathy. "The staff and all



members of the placement are very welcoming; the children are also very loving" said Clea Arrieta, care volunteer.

For these children having a company means a lot. They were once abandoned, rejected, suffered from disease, hunger and homelessness. Things which we think doesn't matter much, like taking time to talk and play with them plays a great role in their psychological and social wellbeing.

The number of volunteers coming to Ethiopia to make a positive influence and play a role in the improvement of this community is increasing from year to year. **It is your turn to come and play your part in reaching those who are in need of your help.**



VOLUNTEER STORY-II

Professional physiotherapist and nurse came to volunteer in Ethiopia all the way from the Netherlands

Sonja Pijper is a professional physiotherapist and nurse who had many opportunities to spend her time and resources in places where she can make more money and live in her comfort zone. With all her long lived experience and knowledge, she took time to go and volunteer in a developing country sacrificing her time, money and other resources.

"I have always wanted to go and help where help is most needed. When I found out that Ethiopia is a country where it is difficult to find professional volunteers, I decided to volunteer there," said Sonja (56); so she signed up with Projects Abroad to volunteer at the Care Project in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Her placement was at SOS Toukoul Infants Ethiopia where Sonja worked with abandoned babies and children with disabilities. She shared responsibilities of feeding and taking the babies to bed, playing and singing with the nurses, caregivers and other volunteers.

Despite the shared responsibilities, Sonja gave the



babies and children with physical disabilities special treatment using her 36 years of experience in nursing and 17 years of experience in physiotherapy. "I saw improvements with the children in my short stay; I have seen those who couldn't move their fingers starting to do so; this inspired me to add more effort to improve their overall health."

Sonja tried to give training to a few nurses regarding physiotherapeutic treatment. "The nurses were very interested and motivated but the time I had was very short to teach enough." For the sake of a better future for the children, Sonja promised to be back as soon as possible to train more nurses and caregivers about the basics of physiotherapy and child treatment. "I can't always be around. The best way to insure the children's physical and emotional wellbeing is to have well-trained local nurses and caregivers who will always be around to treat the children.

Apart from the support she gave using the knowledge and skills she possesses; Sonja also

raised money for the orphanage. Until her last week in Ethiopia, Sonja donated 30,000 ETB to the orphanage. "I raised the first 20,000 ETB before I come to Ethiopia thinking it might be useful for something additional to the children, but after I come here I found out the orphanage is having financial problems so I

decided to raise more money while I was here." She also plans to raise more money for the orphanage when she gets back to Netherlands.



Sonja's advice to those who want to volunteer in developing countries like Ethiopia is to go for it and enjoy this life changing experience. "My presence here is to contribute to a safer environment for children; not just for now, but hopefully in the future. All children are entitled to a safe place where they feel loved. A home, even if it is temporary, which provides warmth and love which they can grow in. I believe everyone should play their own role to insure a better future for these children."



VISITING MERKATO

Mercato, from the Italian word for "market" is the name for the large open-air marketplace in the Addis Ketema district of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and for the neighborhood in which it is located. Mercato is the largest open air market in Africa, covering several square miles and employing an estimated 13,000 people in 7,100 business entities. (Wiki).



there are multiple shops in the same spot dedicated to selling these items solely. The same thing applies to all other products.

Price in Mercato is negotiable. The seller will tell you a certain amount to pay. No need to be angry if they take the price to high. All you need to do

is tell them the amount you are willing to pay. After a few conversation you will come to a mutual agreement.



The primary merchandise passing through the Mercato include goods of all kinds including clothing, electronics, souvenirs, furniture, vegetables, and cereals of different standard so that people in different economic level can access the market.

Saturday, 1st of February, twelve volunteers of Projects-Aboard with the assistance of two staff members (Minassie and Bereket) gathered around Piassa, center of Addis (alike Mercato name derived from Italy), took a shared taxi to take a tour through the biggest open market in Africa. In about 10 minutes, we started to approach a big crowd, few malls surrounded by multiple small shops filled with colorful items. It wasn't that difficult to guess that we reached in Mercato already.

There are different spots for different goods. Shops in one street usually sells the same kind of goods. For example if what you want to purchase is souvenir,



Fighting with the warm sun, we tried to visit the most common spots in the market. Volunteers bought souvenirs and Ethiopian National football team (Waliya) outfits.



LUCY (DINKNESH)

“Lucy”, in her Amharic name “Dinknesh” was the first *Australopithecus afarensis* skeleton ever found. She is believed to age 3.2 million year. Dinknesh was discovered in 1974 by paleontologist Donald C. Johansson in Hadar, ETHIOPIA, Lucy was for about 20 years the earliest known human ancestor species.

Though her remains are not fully found, the partial skeleton is available for display at the National Museum. The National Museum is the primary museum in Ethiopia. It



is located in the nation's capital, Addis Ababa, near the graduate school of Addis Ababa

University. It is filled with ancient history of Ethiopia and multiple archeological findings.



The National Museum at present has four main exhibition sections. The basement is dedicated to archaeological and pale anthropological sections. The first floor contains objects from ancient and medieval periods, as well as regalia and memorabilia from former rulers, who include Emperor Haile Selassie. The second floor show art work in a chronological order, from traditional to contemporary works. These include murals, Afewerk Tekle and other Ethiopian artists. Finally, the third floor has an ethnographic

display. Here, the museum tries to give an overview of the cultural richness and variety of the peoples of Ethiopia.

Simon Fournier (volunteer) cooperating with Ms. Gina Ruef (volunteer) and the school he was placed at, took the students to the national museum so that they learn about their ancestors and the ancient history of their country. The students were very excited watching and listening about the ancient history of



Ethiopia, especially about Lucy (Dinknesh). They were asking many questions and listening to the explanations with much attention.



δ-HABESHA ProjectsAbroad Ethiopia

Projects Abroad is the leading global organizer of overseas voluntary work placements. Our wide range of projects, including Teaching, Care, Conservation & Environment, Medicine & Healthcare, Sports, Culture & Community projects Journalism and physiotherapy are designed specifically for the needs of the communities in which we work, whilst giving our volunteers the very best experience of volunteering abroad.

In Ethiopia you can join one of our care, medical, teaching, physiotherapy, Sport, journalism projects or a combination of them. If any of you have been a volunteer or are interested in volunteering in Ethiopia with Projects Abroad then please join our group to find out more about Projects Abroad Ethiopia.

stay Updated!!

FOLLOW US ON:



STAFF CONTACT LIST

NAME	TEL	E-MAIL ADDRESS
MINASSIE ALEMAYEHU (DIRECTOR)	+251 9 12 64 72 71 (Mobile) +251 1 16 63 61 51 (office)	minassiealemayehu@projects-abroad.org
BEREKET TESEMA (INFORMATION/SOCIAL MANGER)	+251910620398 +251 1 16 63 61 51 (office)	berekettesema@projects-abroad.org
FREWEINI MELKAMU (VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR)	+251 9 11 91 54 88 (Mobile) +251 1 16 63 61 51 (office)	freweinimelkamu@projects-abroad.org

**Bole sub-city
Wereda 06
s/r Gete memorial building
3rd floor**