

HORCO's SPRING NEWSLETTER 2016



Dagim and Bob traveled to sunny and warm Ethiopia in February, to get updates on HORCO's completed work from 2015 and to check-out the approved project for 2016-2017. We also had opportunity to meet and spend time with Bereket Gebretsion, our new contact person at the Ethiopian Kale Heywet Church Development Commission (EKHCDC). Bereket is very experienced in water and sanitation development in rural Ethiopia, and we look forward to working closely with him. Below is a summary of the trip.

It was amazing to see the ongoing modernization of Addis Ababa, which now has crowded 4-lane roads (with the occasional sheep herd crossing the road), traffic lights, an elevated, east-west/north-south, light rail transit system, and access to a major toll road to the south. New business buildings and apartments are everywhere.



However, as you see from the photos below, not much has changed in the Gimbichu District, 80-100 km to the east, where HORCO works with rural villages to develop clean water systems and effective sanitary practices. We attended the inaugural celebration of the clean water system completed with the Jejiga Village in 2015: capped spring, reservoir, three water points, animal troughs and clothes washing tables. It was a joyful event with speeches and some light refreshments including, of course, Ethiopian coffee!



Original source of water used by generations of residents of Jejiga Village



One of three water points delivering spring water, located throughout the Jejiga Village

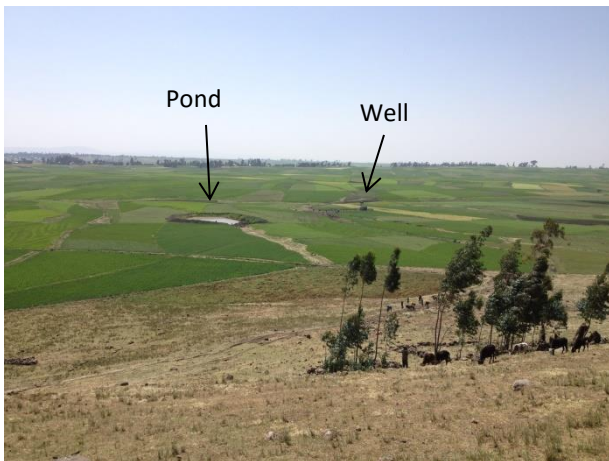


Three Elders from the Jejiga Village thank the Government, EKHDC and HORCO



Some of the men, women and children enjoy the inaugural celebration

The next day we took the same bone-crushing road back to Gimbichu to visit the site of our 2016-2017 work with the Menjigso Gora Village. This is a series of villages (1,500 people) on a high plain overlooking a broad valley below. There is an old water point by a well that services these people, but some of the women and children have to walk up to 7 km one-way, and there are long line-ups. Nearby the well there is a stagnant pond where some people get contaminated water to avoid long wait times.



With HORCO resources and EKHDCDC oversight, villagers will lay a pipeline from the well to the top of the plain to connect the well with a 27,000 L reservoir, now under construction. The Government purchased a new pump which will keep the reservoir filled with clean water. Six water points connected to the reservoir will distribute clean water among the villages so that walking for water requires only 10-15 minutes. Water points will also supply a nearby school and a healthcare centre. This is a two-year project which requires a lot of pipeline being laid over rough terrain and elevations. As clean water without sanitary practices is of little use, sanitation and personal hygiene will also be taught throughout the duration of the project.

Before we left Menjigso, one of the farmers invited us into his home for a sheep dinner! This was an amazing act of generosity and friendship - quite a humbling experience. These are very poor people who normally eat beans and lentils, but he actually butchered one of his precious sheep even before he asked us to stay. It was an offer we could not refuse! He was very excited to receive a HORCO cap, and looked forward to the start of the project in just a few weeks.



The rest of that day we visited a number of villages where work had been completed in 2012-2014. We were happy to see all systems were functioning and delivering clean spring water to the villages. The photo at right was taken in the Kersa Villages, where a joint project involving 5 water points was completed in 2013.



As always, we are grateful to our faithful donors who make this amazing work possible. Our pledge to you: **100% of your donation to the Gimbichu Fund will be used for project-related expenses in Ethiopia.**

Mark your calendar now for HORCO's 9th annual **Ethiopian Dinner Fund-raiser**, to be held in London on **Saturday, November 5th at Oakridge Presbyterian Church**. Last year we maxed out at 225 guests, so don't delay making a reservation when the announcement arrives in the fall. The *London Amabile Boys Training Choir* will again be singing a number of African songs for our enjoyment.



Looking for a novel way to support HORCO on an ongoing basis? Check out this website: www.changeit.com. With an RBC or BMO credit card (others banks may follow) you can enlist in a program that "rounds-up" every credit card purchase to the nearest dollar, with the round-up amount designated as a charitable donation to HORCO (e.g. a purchase of \$15.68 will become a \$16.00 charge, with \$0.32 going to HORCO.) The round-ups accumulate and monthly statements are sent to HORCO indicating the total amount of the donation minus a service charge. HORCO will give you a tax receipt for the full amount at the end of the year. Little bits here and there add up!

If you want to use a more standard way to donate to HORCO on a regular basis, try **CanadaHelps** on our web site.

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*If you would like to share an email address with us, it will save us time and admin costs, and we promise not to overwhelm you with emails and requests for additional donations. Just send us an email at **info@horco.ca**.*

Here is how we use email throughout the year:

Jan/Feb – official tax receipt and year-end update

Spring/Summer – newsletter

Sep – annual dinner announcement and once-a-year request for support

Oct – last minute reminder about the dinner