



An Irish business initiative for trade & partnership

The Connect Ethiopia Times

Connecting - Focusing - Building

Issue 1

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CONNECTING THE EFFORTS OF THE IRISH BUSINESS COMMUNITY

FOCUSING THE COMBINED EFFORTS ON ONE COUNTRY – ETHIOPIA

BUILDING CAPACITY TO HELP STIMULATE THE ECONOMY

TO REGISTER FOR ONE OF THESE EVENTS PLEASE CONTACT:

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"Greetings to you from all of us at Connect Ethiopia. Although we are undoubtedly facing into tougher times, we believe that it is a true test of our nation's spirit that support for Connect Ethiopia continues to grow. We are very encouraged by the commitment of the members of the Irish business community, who are uniting in a combined effort to help fight extreme poverty in the developing world. Our 7th trade mission to Ethiopia took place in November 2008, led by Philip Lynch, CEO, One51 plc and Chairman of our Advisory Board. We were accompanied by more than 35 leading members of the Irish business community as well as Minister for Food & Horticulture, Trevor Sargent. If you are interested in becoming part of this initiative, we would be delighted to welcome you on board!" *Connect Ethiopia Committee*

DIARY DATES:

A regular series of "**BREAKFAST BRIEFINGS**" take place throughout the year, to inform the business community about our work and to provide a forum to explore how attendees may become involved in Connect Ethiopia. Please note the following dates:

DUBLIN: May 5th commencing at 8:00 a.m. Venue: 7/8 Wilton Terrace, Dublin 2
CORK: May 12th – Venue to be advised
DUBLIN: May 26th commencing at 8:00 a.m. Venue: 7/8 Wilton Terrace, Dublin 2

UPCOMING TRADE MISSIONS TO ETHIOPIA:

14th – 17th June, 2009
18th – 23rd October, 2009

MAIN PROJECTS UPDATE:

Tourism: Following a successful presentation made to the Ethiopian State Minister of Tourism HE Minister W/zo Tadelech Dalecho during Connect Ethiopia's April 2008 trade mission, a recommendation for the establishment of a joint Ethiopian – Irish tourism task force was agreed. The purpose of the task force, which will exist for one year, is to formulate a strategic plan for the tourism industry in Ethiopia and to present a costed business plan to the Ministry. A two year plan implementation period will follow and will focus on a pilot area to cover the towns of Bahir Dar, Lalibella, Axum, Gondar (the main elements of the Ethiopian "Historic Route" which will be rebranded along the lines of the "Inca Trail" and "El Camino de Santiago").

Connector's Cathy Winston, Brody Sweeney, Joe Mulhall, Tamara Jaradat, Mary Kavanagh, John O'Sullivan, Dr. Elene Negussie and Declan O'Connell headed up the Irish side of the taskforce during the November 2008 trade mission. A "Study Visit" will take place in March when members of the Ethiopian tourism task force visit Ireland to meet professionals from the Irish tourism industry and visit many of our country's well known tourist sites.

Coffee: Many of the significant coffee retailers in Ireland are now importing beans from Ethiopia (O'Brien's Sandwich Bars, Insomnia, La Croissanterie, Java Republic), either to produce a blended coffee or 100% Ethiopian coffee for the Irish consumer. Direct trading routes, which cut out the middle man, have been established with Ethiopian coffee farmers, leading to a fairer price being paid for the coffee beans.

BB's Coffee and Muffins are very interested in becoming part of this initiative and remain committed to the project. They will visit Ethiopia and make direct contact with exporters before placing orders. A trip to Ethiopia's coffee growing regions will take place during 2009.



Presentation made to the Ethiopian Minister of Tourism during Connect Ethiopia's April 2008 trade mission



Coffee was first consumed in the 9th century, when it was discovered in the "Kaffa" region in the highlands of Western Ethiopia.



Hand looming textiles



Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Dublin Chamber of Commerce and the Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce – May 2008



Reception hosted by Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce



Philip Lynch, CEO of One51 plc, head of the One51 Charitable Foundation and Chairman of Connect Ethiopia's Advisory Board with members of the Savings and Credit Co-Operative in Hurutu

Textiles: Ethiopia promises a low cost production location with natural resources such as cotton to enable the set up of vertically integrated textile and garment operations. Connector's David Fitzsimons, Retail Times and Theresa Daly, Microsoft, held meetings with Ethiopian women textile producers and plan to build trade linkages with Irish retailers. If you are interested in finding out more about the Ethiopian textile industry and its low cost production base or are interested in stocking Ethiopian hand woven garments, please email Sandra@connectethiopia.ie or call 087 417 1809.

Village Telephone: A feasibility study has been carried out by Connector, Gina Kilkelly, to assess the possibility of implementing a pilot "Village Telephone" project, in an effort to bring telecommunication services to the rural poor in Ethiopia. Village Phone is based on a business model that is sustainable for all of the participants and enables the poorest of the poor to have access to valuable communications services. Additionally, through this telecommunications services, rural individuals can gain access to information that increases their productivity, earns better prices for the goods they produce and saves on the direct and opportunity cost of travelling away from home. Meetings are on going with the relevant Ethiopian Ministers and high ranking officials at department, regulatory and institution level.

SUBSIDIARY PROJECTS UPDATE:

Chambers of Commerce: A successful visit by the Addis Chamber of Commerce to Dublin in April 2008, was hosted by CEO, Gina Quin and the team at the Dublin Chamber of Commerce. Following on from this visit, the Chamber in Addis hosted a series of seminars for Connect Ethiopia, as well as a dinner hosted by the President of the Addis Ababa Chamber, Ato Eyessus Zafu. Relations between the two Chambers are now established and we look forward to building on this work in the years ahead. We are hopeful that the Cork Chamber of Commerce will consider twinning with either Adama or Mekelle in Ethiopia, to continue building on this great foundation.

Hamara – Education for Africa: The official opening of "Hamara" - the first digital hub in Ethiopia took place in Adama (Nazreth) during the November 2008 trade mission. Minister Trevor Sargent and Philip Lynch, CEO, One51 plc, officially launched "Hamara" in the company of Camara founder Cormac Lynch and his local partner, Feyissa Arassa. The hub has the capacity to refurbish 6,000 PC's per year, which are then distributed to schools and educational establishments throughout the country. Connect Ethiopia committee member, Philip O'Dwyer, has joined the Board of Hamara Ethiopia as a non executive Director.

Banking: The first Ethiopian Banking delegation to Ireland, jointly hosted by IBF and the Institute of Bankers, took place in November 2008. This successful visit and the exceptional quality of the meetings were due in no small measure to the support of Pat Walshe and Anthony Farrell and their colleagues, to whom we extend grateful thanks.

Banking progress on the November trade mission was disappointing for Connector Tony Brennan of Viewpoint Consulting as an extraordinary number of meetings scheduled for Tony, were either cancelled or there were "no shows". However, some progress was made during a meeting with the head of AMFI (Association of Ethiopian Micro Finance Institutions).

Huruta Self Help Programme: The One51 Charitable Foundation is working in partnership with Self Help Africa to implement an Integrated Rural Development Programme in Huruta, in Oromiya zone, Ethiopia. Through the development programme at Huruta, the Foundation addresses vulnerability and supports the agricultural component of rural livelihoods. This programme, supported by Irish farmers through the Co-operatives, seeks to improve the lives and build the capacity of over 110,000 people in the Huruta region. CEO of One51 plc and head of the One51Charitable Foundation, Mr Philip Lynch visited Huruta with fellow charitable supporter Ms Elizabeth Signolet to monitor the progress of the programme during 2008. Implementation of the programme commenced in spring 2006 and remarkable progress has been made over three years in the provision of training, the introduction of improved seeds, the establishment of microcredit organisations, and rainwater harvesting schemes. Huruta has successfully improved social services in the community through the implementation of secondary schooling, health centre facilities and potable water pipelines. The impact of the programme demonstrates increased agricultural production and productivity as well as increased levels of farm household income. The One51 Charitable Foundation hopes to continue their efforts to alleviate poverty and achieve food security in rural Ethiopia



Awarded by the US Department of State – January 12th, 2009

“Your expertise, guidance, advice and professional support has been very instrumental and has contributed its level best to my success and to this award that I received. Thanks again, Nigest



Ethiopian schoolchildren outside a new primary school which was built with the help of funds raised by the community of Skerries. Self Help Africa are the NGO implementing the programme



Mr. Teshome pictured in front of solar oven.



Connector Janice O'Connell with some of the members of the EPPA

Women in Business / Growing your Business: Connector and committee member, Cathy Winston, ran a seminar in April 2008 along with Connector, Lulu O'Sullivan (4giftsdirect.com), aimed at Ethiopian women in business in April 2008. A follow up seminar was held and attended by approximately 20 business women, during the November 2008 trade mission. The members of CAWEE (Centre for African Women Economic Empowerment) were the most responsive and motivated seminar participants. Follow up meetings were held later in the week between members of CAWEE and Connector's Theresa Daly and David Fitzsimons, with a view to building trade linkages.

Law: 10 Irish lawyers, led by former Attorney General, Harold Whelehan, conducted a series of lectures targeted at 70 participants made up of judges, prosecutors and lawyers, during the November 2008 trade mission. The objective of the Rule of Law Project is to combine both the highest levels of comparative legal education in the core areas of administration of justice and human rights, with the practical experience that can be provided by experienced practitioners and not just academics.

Music and Visual Arts: We are investigating the possibility of facilitating the setting up of a show that would showcase Ethiopian music and dance at arts & music festivals, such as the Festival of World Cultures in Dun Laoghaire, Womad and Glastonbury in the UK etc. The troupe will be made up of approximately 12 musicians and dancers. Steve Wall, lead singer with "The Walls" is steering this project.

Nursing / Teacher Training: Connector Robert Power led a group of nursing and teaching professionals from Ireland on a visit to Ethiopia and Uganda in October 2008. The group visited Sodo, (see Skerries & Sodo project to follow). Options under consideration include a pilot nursing training initiative and a twinning of schools.

Skerries / Sodo initiative: The community of Skerries are now in their third year of support for a major five year development programme taking place in the Sodo region of Ethiopia which is being implemented by Self Help Africa. To date, the community of Skerries has contributed over €65,000 to this programme. Programme highlights include the construction of a new primary school, a new secondary school, marked increase in crop production, increased access to clean water and the introduction of women's savings schemes to encourage private enterprise. Seven Connectors participated in the trip to the region which took place during the November 2008 trade mission

Insurance: The first ever Insurance seminar in Ethiopia was conducted by an Irish team during the November 2008 trade mission. Led by Mike Kemp of the Irish Insurance Federation, the group which included Seamus Fitzgibbon of Allianz and Sean Maher gave a seminar in Addis Ababa for Chief Executives of insurance companies, with representatives of the Insurance Regulator (the National Bank of Ethiopia) also in attendance and also a seminar aimed at technical and middle managers.

Solar Ovens: Connector Joe Mulhall visited the Garabet Rehabilitation project in Butajira during the November 2008 trade mission. His task was to examine a solar oven that was installed three years ago by the Rotary Club of Addis Ababa West. Unfortunately, the oven, capable of baking bread and other foodstuffs, had been left idle, as the baking and cooking results were unacceptable. Joe assessed the oven and bread making process and identified the weaknesses in the set up. Demonstrations of more suitable processes were given by Joe, resulting in the production of more suitable bread. Joe gave written recommendations to the director Mr. Teshome who has since confirmed that the progress made during Joe's visit has proved significant and very promising. The Rotary Club of Addis Ababa West have expressed satisfaction that after 3 years of disuse the oven is now in a position to produce bread and other foods.

Photography: The EPPA (Ethiopian Professional Photographers Association) which was set up with the direction and assistance of Cork based Photographer and Connector, Janice O'Connell during her participation in the October 2007 trade mission, has now been officially registered with the appropriate Ethiopian Ministry.

Design / Printing: Following on from a successful meeting, arranged by Antonio Fiorante of the EPPA, between Ethiopian graphic designers and Connector's Ger Winston and Chris Kunnert, discussions are underway relating to the formation of a representative body for Ethiopian designers.

Ethiopian "Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the year" programme: We are investigating the possibility of setting up an "Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year" programme in Ethiopia to encourage and recognize entrepreneurship. Initial meetings have taken place with Ernst & Young representatives in Ireland and Ethiopia.



OTHER NEWS:

Connect Ethiopia Fundraising Ball

Our first dedicated fundraising event took place in Barberstown Castle on November 20th, 2008. A great night was had by all and over €70,000 was raised for the organization! These funds will help to support the running of the offices in Dublin and Addis Ababa and will help to facilitate the hiring of a new General Manager, which marks another step in the continued growth of Connect Ethiopia. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all who supported this event!

"Connector" is the term we use for those who are now part of our growing community of people, who have a real desire to help make the world a better place and are doing something pragmatic, by giving freely of their time, knowledge and expertise.

If you would like to join our efforts and use your talents and expertise to help overcome extreme poverty in Ethiopia, or to find out more about our organization please call Sandra O'Sullivan at 087 417 1809 or email: Sandra@connectethiopia.ie



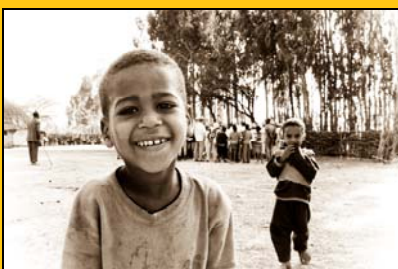
Ethiopia is a mountainous country



A lot of construction is taking place in the capital, Addis Ababa



Young Ethiopian girl



Young Ethiopian boys

ABOUT ETHIOPIA:

Ethiopia, officially the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, is a landlocked country situated in the Horn of Africa. Ethiopia is bordered by Eritrea to the north, Sudan to the west, Kenya to the south, Somalia to the east and Djibouti to the north-east. Its size is 1,100,000 km² with an estimated population of over 78,000,000. Its capital is Addis Ababa.

Ethiopia is one of the oldest countries in the world and Africa's second-most populous nation. Ethiopia has yielded some of humanity's oldest traces, making the area a primary factor in the origin and developmental history of humanity, with recent studies claiming the vicinity of present-day Addis Ababa as the point from which human beings migrated around the world.

Historically a relatively isolated mountain country, Ethiopia by the mid 20th century became a crossroads of global international cooperation under the leadership of Emperor Haile Selassie I. It became a member of the League of Nations in 1923, signed the Declaration by United Nations in 1942, and was one of the fifty-one original members of the United Nations (UN). The headquarters of United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) is in Addis Ababa, as is the headquarters of the African Union (formerly the Organisation of African Unity), of which Ethiopia was the principal founder. There are about forty-five Ethiopian embassies and consulates around the world. (Source: Wikipedia)

WHY CONNECT WITH ETHIOPIA:

- ❖ 78% of the population of 78 million, live on less than \$2 per day
- ❖ UNDP Human Development Index - 169th out of 177 (2007/8)
- ❖ Human Poverty Index – 105th out of 108 countries (2007/8)
- ❖ Strong government leadership and ownership of development agenda
- ❖ Relatively sound development policies/strategies
- ❖ Real partnership/dialogue with donors emerging
- ❖ Donors have high opinion of Ethiopian fiscal management/low levels of corruption
- ❖ Ambitious reform programme underway
- ❖ Strong public support/association with Ethiopia in Ireland

“Be the change you want to see in the world”, Ghandi