

THE FORSAKEN CHILDREN

Christ's Agents of Hope to Ethiopia's Children at Risk

2009 Annual Report

Our Mission

The Forsaken Children (TFC) exists as an advocate for Ethiopia's children at risk by building sustainable financial support for Christ-centered Ethiopian projects working with children at risk and helping these projects to develop into strategic, long-lasting interventions.

TFC's Partner Projects

Children's Home Ethiopia

SAFE Project

Kota Ganate Ag Project

From the Field - a bird's eye view

by Joe Bridges, TFC Director

Has 2009 been a good year? Well, we moved away from our friends and family, we adjusted to a culture that is absolutely different from our own, Karyn had surgery, we attempted (and are currently attempting) to learn a new language, we loved some street children who never accepted our love and eventually ran from it, and I am sure there is more that I am forgetting.

YES! It has been a good year.

As I sit here in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia at The Forsaken Children's partner project, Children's Home Ethiopia, and consider all that has happened and is happening in our lives in



Joe Bridges with wife and TFC Co-founder, Karyn, and their children, Jack and McLaine, with Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in the background.

2009, most of which have been what I would call extreme challenges, I can honestly say it has been good. It is amazing to me how God works through things that we think should absolutely destroy us, and makes us able to say it has been and it is good. Neither Karyn nor I would change anything about the past 12 months if we could. Facing these challenges allowed us to see and experience amazing things that have truly enriched our lives. We have seen...

- Children put their faith in Jesus Christ
- Families restored and children able to go back to school
- A halfway home opened where children are learning what it means to be a family
- Our Ethiopian partner projects in action bringing hope into the broken lives of children
- Children's physical health dramatically improved because
- Poor mothers loving each other, their children, and their com-

Seeing such things have made us as a family begin to think about sustainability—how can these things that we have seen last with or without us? This concept of sustainability has also infiltrated TFC, which you will see throughout this Annual Report. As you read begin to focus with us on creating a sustainable framework that will produce partner projects, and therefore children, with long-term security. Sustainability is the key to our future success!

Kota Ganate - a firm foundation

by Jonathan Bridges, TFC Agriculture Coordinator

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock." - Matthew 7:24-25 (NIV)

The mission statement of TFC uses phrases like "strategic, long lasting interventions" and "building sustainable financial support". These goals are grounded in this practical wisdom from Jesus. The founders and board of directors of TFC have sought for several years to give their partners in Ethiopia a firm foundation on which to build. This year that goal became a reality with the start of the Kota Ganate Agricultural Development Project. Kota Ganate promises to be a cornerstone of TFC's work in Ethiopia.

As the idea for this project progressed TFC realized that it could be more than an investment



Jonathan Bridges with Kota Ganate's Project Manager, Terekegn, in front of KG's office in August.

in their partner projects, it could be an investment in an entire community. The project is located in a small, rural, poverty stricken town in Southern Ethiopia. Child trafficking continues to be a scourge in this part of Ethiopia. Many of the street children that Children's Home Ethiopia serves come from this area, having been brought to the city to provide forced labor for the textile industry. Several community development goals have now been incorporated into the project. These goals include improving food and economic security, as well as providing educational resources.

In August, I traveled to Ethiopia to take part in the ground-breaking of this important project. The start was small, but significant. We planted an acre of apple trees, a half acre of vegetables, and reserved a couple of acres of pasture for a small flock of chickens. We built fencing, a guard house, and a chicken coop. We also rented and furnished office space and hired an experienced and motivated staff.

As the Kota Ganate Project expands and the crops bear fruit it will provide a strong funding base for our partners in Ethiopia. This will give them more control of their financial resources thereby making them more sustainable. They will be much less vulnerable to economic fluctuations elsewhere in the world. It will also give farmers a means to better provide for their families. We believe that to keep families intact we must give parents the means to provide for and educate their children.

With an exciting and eventful year coming to a close we are looking forward to the coming year. Next year will be pivotal as the necessary expansion of this project takes place. We will be focusing on acquiring and planting additional acreage, building up the necessary infrastructure, starting English classes, and providing fees for needy children to attend school. Your support has helped to make this year a success. We need your ongoing support to ensure that next year will be just as successful, if not more so than this one.

2009 Financial Highlights

Revenues

Donations:	\$61,070
Fundraisers:	\$1,650
Total:	\$62,720

Expenses

CHE and SAFE Project:	\$46,829
Kota Ganate Ag Project:	\$7,956
Admin / Marketing:	\$4,522
Total:	\$59,307

CHE and SAFE Project - *lasting change*

by Randall Johnson, TFC Board Chairman



Randall Johnson with Metu, CHE beneficiary, at CHE's Drop-In Center in June, 2009.

Though I had been praying for and supporting Children's Home Ethiopia and the SAFE Project children for years, I got to see them firsthand in June of 2009. Wow, what a privilege! When I saw these children, who have next to nothing, now smiling and laughing and playing, it was such a wonderful blessing. The moment my wife, Mary Ann, our friend, Karen, and I entered the SAFE Project and CHE's Drop-In Center the children flocked around us, so excited to see and meet us.

Street children come to the Drop-In Center in the morning, have classes and eat lunch, something they had no prospect of before. These kids who were never going to go to school, escape poverty, and most likely never going to hear the good news about how much Jesus loves them, now have those opportunities through CHE. Children living in the neighboring impoverished communities also come to the Drop-In Center for tutoring, counsel, and simply a safe place to play apart from the streets that surround every other aspect of their lives. For these children, the lure of the streets is being combated by the lure of hope offered by the SAFE Project.

Can we keep this going? I believe so. I witnessed an amazing and dedicated Ethiopian staff who are committed to loving and teaching these children. I know we have a dedicated team of The Forsaken Children's board members for whom this project is of vital concern and dear to our hearts. We have contributors who

are moved by the needs of these children and desire to fund their schooling, physical sustenance, and training in the things of the Lord and to pray for them and the staff. These things are absolutely crucial to being able to continue ministering to these children and seeing them become future leaders and contributors to their own community and to other street kids just like themselves.

I am also heartened by two other contributing factors to sustaining this work. One is the investment TFC is making in Kota Ganate, the farming project in Chencha, Ethiopia. As it becomes self-sustaining and begins developing crops and livestock that can be processed and sold it will become a major funder of the children's ministry. A second contributing factor is what CHE and the SAFE Project are trying to do with these children, their end goal. They are seeking to strengthen existing families and restore broken families. The end result is living in a loving family, the very thing God intended for them to do from the beginning and a very sustainable approach.

These are the things that will make for a long-lasting change in the fabric of these children's lives and in the fabric of their community. These are the things that will result in their becoming functioning contributors to their own community as they mature and take on their responsibilities as adults. Thank you for helping us be a part of sustainable change for Ethiopia's children at risk.

