

Annual Review 2008



st. Matthew's

Children's Fund Ethiopia

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Continuing to reach out to children

Chair's report

JeCCDO has continued to develop its work in the five project areas in Ethiopia and is continuing to reach out to new communities. SMCF responded to these new opportunities and challenges by increasing its own capacity.

Peter Jones has continued as Director and visited Ethiopia on two occasions, working closely with JeCCDO staff. In November we employed Glynys Sykes as a half-time fundraiser, and she is working on new ways of broadening our donor base. We arranged for two volunteers, Will Eckersley and Ruth Salmon, to spend a year working with JeCCDO in Addis Ababa. They developed strong relationships with JeCCDO staff and assisted in evaluation and reporting methods and also pioneered road safety training for children.

We also welcomed a new trustee Margaret Ingram who joins us with extensive experience of education.

The Director has continued to build positive relationships with other agencies and attended the World Urban Forum at Nanjing in China in November.

Among new funding initiatives has been participation in a Carbon Trading scheme and a successful involvement in the Run to the Beat half marathon in October.

In addition to supporting JeCCDO projects we are returning to our roots in seeking funds for a new library project in Addis Ababa, which is being set up by St Matthew's Chaplaincy. This is supported by JeCCDO.

The partnership with Comic Relief remains important to our fundraising, but there have also been valuable relationships with number of grant-making trusts and private donors. We are grateful to Hambleden Valley Africa Link, a local group which has given strong support over the last five years.

Rev Dr John Binns, Chair



“ Thanks to your support of St Matthew's Children's Fund Ethiopia, abandoned children Tesfaye and Daniel can have the chance of an education in a school especially for street children in Hawassa ”

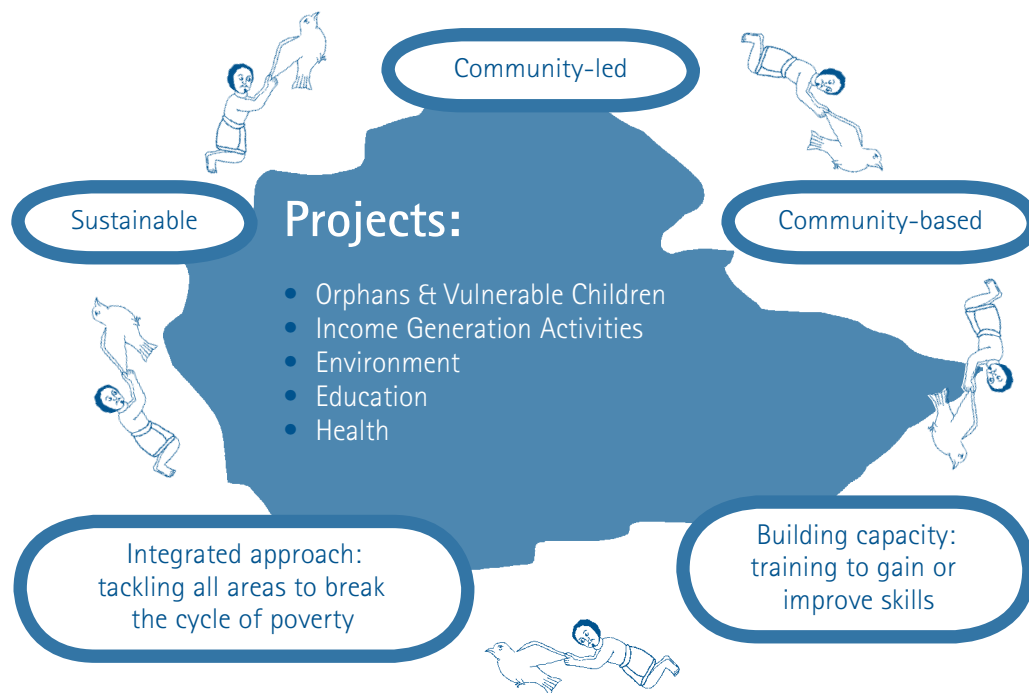


Names have been changed throughout this report to protect vulnerable children

About SMCF

SMCF was established in 1986 to support an Ethiopian-led NGO in its efforts to help care for orphans and children abandoned as a result of famine and civil war. Today, SMCF continues its longstanding partnership with the Jerusalem Children and Community Development Organisation (JeCCDO) in Ethiopia, through funding community-led, sustainable development projects to ensure children can be well looked after in their own communities.

These projects help to raise the capacity of Ethiopian urban communities so that they are more able to respond to the effects of poverty and to the needs of disadvantaged children – especially those orphaned by HIV/AIDS. Our funding currently supports projects for orphaned and vulnerable children, education, health, income generation, urban agriculture and the environment.



Go to work on an egg

To us, an egg is just something we have for breakfast, but for one Ethiopian mother, it is a livelihood for the family and for the rest of the community too.

Kidan Feleke had kept indigenous chickens for a while, but they did not produce many eggs. When she became pregnant with her son Shawel, her family needed to find extra income to ensure her son grew up healthy and well.

It was then that members of the community recommended her for training in poultry management, which is provided by JeCCDO thanks to funding from SMCF. After her training she was given a chicken and cockerel of an improved breed which lays more and bigger eggs, and help in building hen houses to keep her chickens safe from predators.

"Now I am trained I know better how to keep poultry and how to protect them."

By using a local chicken as a brood mother, she was able to hatch 18 chickens, which have then gone on to produce further chickens. "Every day I collect about 4 or 5 eggs, and when a hen stops laying; then we have a fowl for the pot."

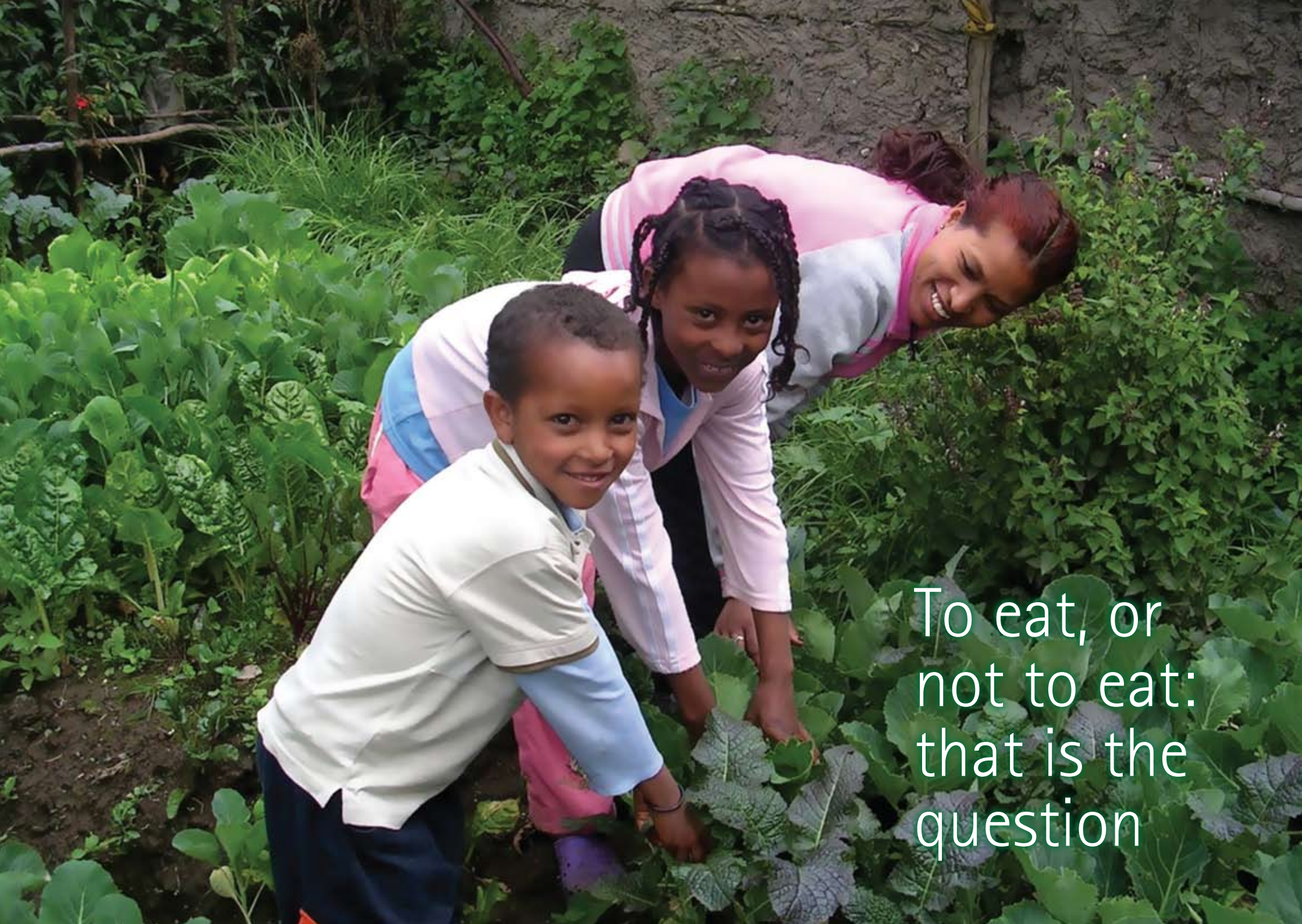
Thanks to the eggs, Shawel has grown into a delightful and healthy two-year old who loves chasing the chickens round the family's enclosed yard.

Kidan also uses the eggs to sell, or to pass on to other neighbours who also want to keep chickens. "Five people now breed the improved poultry because I have been able to pass on my eggs and my knowledge too. Now the community has plenty of eggs for food or for income."





“Now I am trained I know better how to keep poultry and how to protect them”



To eat, or
not to eat:
that is the
question

In Ethiopia the weather is changing. We know this because the communities we work with have been telling us for the past three years. In the east of the country it rains harder but less frequently making it more difficult to water crops; in the north, the frosts are harder, decimating plants. When harvests fail there is no food on the table, and for people living on the edge, this could mean the difference between life or death. But thanks to pioneering work organised by JeCCDO, whole communities are learning to make the most of whatever the weather brings to feed their families.

Most people in Ethiopia earn a living in the same way as their parents did and their grandparents before them. Smallholders and farmers plant crops in a manner suited to the weather patterns of old. But these days the weather does not have a discernable pattern making it more difficult to grow the family's food in the time-honoured way.

“Before this we did not like change. Our families lived the same way for generations”

If there is not enough food, then the most vulnerable members of the community, the children, are the hardest hit. When children go hungry they become too weak to go to school and there is little alternative for desperate parents other than sending them to beg on the streets. The spiral of poverty intensifies and it is difficult for children to recover from the many hardships they have to endure. Life becomes a question of existing rather than living.

In 2008 JeCCDO, with funding from Comic Relief and donations from the public, brought together different communities in the eastern city of Dire

Dawa to work together on the problem. JeCCDO organised a committee to examine the risks posed by changing weather conditions and to develop ways for people to adapt to them. This pilot project has been hugely successful with people finding new ways of conserving water, growing improved drought-resistant crops, managing community-owned dairy herds, planting indigenous trees and shrubs on the hillside to stop rain water run off (to reduce the risk of flood), and finding new sustainable forms of employment. As a consequence children can now eat plenty of nutritious food, they attend school and grow up in a community that has a future. As one mother of three children said: 'Before this we did not like change. Our families lived the same way for generations. It was the way we were taught to live by our parents. But we understand we have to change if we are going to give our children a life free from hunger and misery.'

Due to the success of this scheme JeCCDO have been asked by the local government of the Bench Maji in south west Ethiopia to work with poor forest communities who are struggling to exist. Many children there are malnourished and the dropout rate in schools is growing at an alarming rate. We welcome any support to help this community adapt to their new situation and create a bright future for their children.

To read a more detailed report about adaptation activities in Dire Dawa please go to www.smcfethiopia.org/carbon/carbon_compensation.htm or contact us and we will happily send you copy.



Children are
not rubbish

The Negede Woitto community compound is easy to spot. The shacks are in a poorer state of repair than even the worst slum areas in Bahir Dar. Walking around the community is difficult. The atmosphere is palpably different than in other urban slums I have visited. There is an air of distrust. The people do not like to have their photos taken. I later find out the community has been visited many times before and promised help by strangers. But once the strangers leave help never comes.

The children are dressed in rags and look unhealthy; their skin is duller and their faces thinner than other young people in Bahir Dar. I noticed children playing on rubbish heaps. I was told the children don't go to school. They spend their day going from house to house collecting rubbish for a few coins or some food and then return to their community and dump the collected refuse to add to the rubbish they play in.

“I noticed children playing on rubbish heaps.
I was told the children don't go to school”

They often drop out of school because they have so little food and no money for uniform, exercise books and pencils. The teenagers become day labourers. The adults, even the community leaders, either dropped out, or never went to school, but they do seem to value education and want their children to go school.

The theme of rubbish runs through the lives of the Negede Woitto. Not only is it one of the few ways for them to make money, they are also treated like rubbish by the majority of the people in Bahir Dar. I am told by some of the elders that many of the poorer members of the community suffer from low self esteem and see themselves as little better than the rubbish that fills their streets.

But despite all of this I saw signs of hope. Members of the community have volunteered to help teach English and mathematics to the women



in the community. Two classrooms have been built by Educans for this purpose. Women who had never previously been to school were learning English, how to write the Amharic alphabet and how to add and subtract. They did so with confidence and beaming smiles. Trenches were being dug for water pipes.

Thanks to Hambleden Valley AfricaLink and the people of Medmenham, water is coming to the Woitto. Whereas previously women and children had to walk a distance and buy water soon they will have their own communal water points

A Community Association has been formed. There is a sense of hope, a new sense of 'can do'. An alliance of supporters organised by JeCCDO and SMCF, including the people of Medmenham, Hambleden Valley Africa Link, the Mayor of Bahir Dar, Henley Rotary Club and the Rotary Club of Bahir Dar will help the Negede Woitto to clean up the rubbish and make a better future for themselves.

Thank you to all our supporters in 2008

Comic Relief, The JJ Charitable Trust, The Maurice and Hilda Laing Trust, Hambleden Valley Africa Link, Steer, Davies, Gleave, The Association for Cultural Exchange (ACE), North South Travel, The Allan and Nesta Ferguson Trust, The, Austin and Hope Pilkington Trust, The W.A. Shawdon Trust

We would like to thank our many individual sponsors and church groups for their continued and much valued support during 2008.

Board of trustees

Chair The Reverend Dr John Binns

Secretary The Reverend Jonathan Burke

Treasurer Mr Robert Stallard, Mrs Pippa Sandford, Dr Elizabeth Watson, Sir Robin Christopher, Mr David Denham, R Dom Colin Battell OSB, Ms Michelle Law, Mrs Margaret Ingram and Ato Yawahd Wossen Mangasha,

Staff Mr Peter Jones, Director
Mrs Glynys Sykes, Fundraiser

Financial summary 2008

Income	Total funds £
Gift aid donations	37,631
Individual donations	17,312
Churches	2,823
Trust funding	983,964
Bank interest & other income	31,585
Total	1,073,315

Expenditure	£
Direct payment to Ethiopia	764,153
Fundraising	62,299
Management & administration	9,926
Total expenditure	836,378



St Matthew's Children's Fund Ethiopia

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