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Geertje Roelofsen, ('Dr. Margaret') who founded School Project Ethiopia, has decided to retire from the Board this year, but we've made sure she will continue as an **honorary member** so that she will be part of what many see as 'her' trust for the foreseeable future. Kees van Straaten joins the Board. In this newsletter she'll say farewell and Kees will introduce himself. You can also read about the progress of our projects in and around the schools. Four members of the board intend to pay another visit to Ethiopia in November 2015.

### Farewell

"It all began in a modest way when in 2003 the head of the school in Addo, Abba Tesfaye, asked me to set up a school project for the poorest pupils. We started with four children during one school year, because we had to find out the best way of organizing it. How did these very four children end up? One graduated as an architect, one girl left school after grade 10 and subsequently became a nun. Number three dropped out after a few years because he lacked motivation and number four seemed to be doing well at first, but failed in the end to finish his training as a mechanic. At this moment he is an employee at the mission in Dhanka. What has changed since 2003? Today, parents seem to be much more willing to send their children to school, while at the start we needed to persuade them to do so. Most children stay at secondary school till their final exams and many want to go on to university or to do vocational training. The number of children we support



has increased considerably. We don't just concentrate on supporting pupils but we now also look at the school water supplies and the toilet facilities. So, School Project Ethiopia now plays an important part in the West-and East Wollega region and I sincerely hope that it will stay that way. Abba Tefaye, as you can see in the photo, is still at work!

Goodbye to you all! I am convinced that my work as a member of the board will be continued in a very good way. We love Ethiopia, its children and their parents. Thank you so much for supporting us during the last thirteen years."

*Geertje Roelofsen ('Dr. Margaret')*

### Introducing Kees van Straaten

"For many years I have followed with interest the activities of School Project Ethiopia related to me by my wife Agnes (board member since 2010), and my former colleague GP, Geertje Roelofsen. Now that I have recently retired, I will enjoy finding the time to contribute to this fantastic project. It will be quite a change from being a GP, and it's fortunate that I have some management experience already. I hope that we will be able to continue our small-scale school projects, whilst ensuring that we waste as little money as possible on the overheads."

*Kees van Straaten*

**Please rest assured that 100% of your donation will be spent well!**

### Laboratories in Dhanka

In our last newsletter we showed you a photo of the labs under construction. They have now been completed and the pupils of the more advanced grades are able to follow their courses in biology, physics and chemistry. Progressio, who organize the Lent Action and the Advent Campaigns in the Netherlands, has also partly financed the building. We have been able to purchase the furniture and the inventory with the help of sponsorship from a Dutch company.



*The new labs in Dhanka*

## Water and sanitation project in Addo

Twelve years ago our Trust started activities at the St



Michael's School in Addo. When we visited them in 2014 we found out that the sanitary facilities were not working. Also, the

bottoms of the lavatory doors were rusting away, so it was no longer safe for the girls to use them. Now repairs have been made with the money we've raised. Children are able to drink fresh clean water again when at school. The lavatory doors won't get rusty any longer because they have been constructed from sustainable tropical wood. After the repairs had been made, Abba (Father) Berhanu send us photos with a big thank you to all who made this happen. The Wild Geese Trust gave a contribution as well.



*Abba Berhanu near the water taps*

## Orphans would like to go to school as well

Our Trust tries to support more and more orphans. We do this by giving a 'micro-credit', in the form of a sheep, to their carers. Around the mountain village Komto the number of orphans that benefit from this arrangement has increased 300% from seven to twenty two. Sister Desta keeps an eye on these children and she visits the carers on a regular basis. Recently she told us that in the first group of fifteen children four of their sheep had died, which placed their carers' source of income at risk. We are pleased to say that our Trust has quickly replaced these sheep.

## As pupils get older

Although the number of children that benefit from our school program is fairly static, the expenses continue to grow! Our success means that school pupils become university students, so as they get older, the cost for schooling increases. Our yearly budget is about €40,000. We do have some reserve, but gradually we have to eat into our capital. At this moment we are able to guarantee continuity, but regrettably we have to decline new

requests. You'll understand that your support is still needed very much. You can be convinced that every euro is spent well and that there are hardly any overhead costs.



## New Website Content

Please have a look at our website:

[www.schoolprojectethiopia.nl](http://www.schoolprojectethiopia.nl)

Since the beginning of this year four short films can be viewed which will give you an impression of our work in Ethiopia. These films each have their own specific theme: <http://www.schoolprojectethiopia.nl/missie-en-visie.php> is about our main object: schooling for underprivileged children.

<http://www.schoolprojectethiopia.nl/projecten.php> has three short films about projects that aim to enhance the quality of teaching which we support or have supported with external sponsorship: 'Micro-credits', 'the Dhanka project' and 'Other projects' (like sanitation).

## Sponsoring by Dutch schools

If you know a school which is looking for a charity to sponsor, please think of us!

We are very happy to show what a school class in Ethiopia looks like, what Ethiopian children have for food, how they live and how much they enjoy being able to go to school.

Don't hesitate to contact us!

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## Board

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Kees van Straaten, member

Geertje Roelofsen, honorary member and advisor