

Bits of Hope

2012 — ISSUE ONE

Serving Through Short-Term Missions by Vivian H. Dersu

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Short-term mission trips have become an important part of Hand of Hope Ministries. HOH is committed to facilitating short-term mission trips to Ethiopia. These trips play an important role in strengthening the bond between the HOH family in Ethiopia and the U.S.A.

You may wonder what value there is in short-term mission trips. These trips are not cheap. Is the cost worth it? I believe the benefits far outweigh the downfalls of short-term mission trips.

I was exposed to short-term missions from a young age. My parents were Free Will Baptist missionaries in Japan for more than forty years. As a child, I remember hosting summer missionaries, welcoming them into our home as part of the family, and exposing them to life in a missionary family. I remember how encouraging it was to my parents to have a summer missionary to mentor and share their love for the Japanese people. While some of these summer missionaries ended up going into full-time mission work, many did not; however, I believe that each one returned to the United States with a greater understanding of what it means to obey Christ's command to preach the gospel to all na-

tions. I have no doubt that their short time in Japan had lasting effects that reached further than themselves.

Short-term missions provide opportunities to experience another culture and to gain understanding of what life is like in another country. Through this, participants gain a greater appreciation for what they have.

The majority of those who have gone on a mission trip return with a greater commitment to and better understanding of missions. It is easier to pray once you have a face and voice to match up with the photograph of someone you have been praying for. It becomes personal.

The person "going" on the mission trip is not the only one who benefits; many on the mission field gain so much through those who come to serve them.

One of the main reasons that HOH feels so strongly about facilitating short-term mission trips to Ethiopia is because of the feedback received from the HOH evangelists and children in Ethiopia. HOH evangelists look forward to visits from their American brothers and sisters. They long for the encouragement and fellowship that comes with a short-term mission team.

I have had the privilege of leading two mission teams to Ethiopia and have played a part in organizing several others. This process has taught me some lessons that I think are important in effective short-term missions.

1. Education: Participants should focus on learning as much as they can about the area where they will be serving. Read up on the country you will be visiting and learn as much as you can about the people and their culture.
2. Preparation: Preparing for a short-term missions trip involves more than just packing your suitcase. Try to learn a few phrases you can use with the locals. Show your respect for the people you are visiting by knowing something about their culture.
3. Open-Mindedness: I can't stress how important it is to be open-minded. Leave your American culture in the United States and embrace the customs and cultural practices of the people you are serving. Eat their food. Understand that they are giving you the best they have to offer, and although this

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Meeting a Real Hero

by Janean Bollinger

Some people hang up photos of sports stars. Others may admire movie stars or rock stars. But the face of the man looking out from the photo on my refrigerator shines instead with God's glory. Bati Wario, Hand of Hope evangelist to the town of Arsi Negelle, is God's star, embodying Philippians 2:15-16, following God's command to become "blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life."

I first "met" Bati when I picked up his photograph from a table in the summer of 2010. Something in his angular face resonated in my spirit as I tried to imagine this brother of mine ministering and serving in a town on another continent. His life was so different than mine! And yet, as I began to pray for him and his wife and children, the Lord cemented us all together as family, joint heirs in the Kingdom of God. That connection was reinforced when, some months later, Vivian Dersu handed me another copy of the same photo, asking me to pray for this evangelist. With laughter we realized that the Lord was already working here!

In the summer of 2011, I had the great privilege of journeying to Ethiopia with the PLCF Hand of Hope team. Returning to this country I love brought such joy as we reunited with friends and anticipated serving the Lord together with them. At some point, I knew, I would get to meet Bati. I had so many questions for him! I wanted to know about his wife, his children, his work in a primarily Muslim city. I wanted to ask him why he chose Nehemiah 4:4 as his favorite Bible verse.

Since most of the evangelists would be meeting our team in Mega, I was

startled when Vivian called me to the back of the bus during our trip from Hawassa to Yavello to meet one of the evangelists. Suddenly, I was standing face to face with Bati. And like any star-struck adolescent meeting her hero for the first time, I was speechless! "Quick!" I told myself, "Think of something coherent to say!" As I fumbled to get rid of my shyness, our interpreter Kebede introduced Bati's wife Barush to me.

What a beautiful young woman! Demeanor, with the grace of God shining from her face, she was holding a baby, one-year-old Galane. Aha! Babies! As the mother of five children myself, babies are familiar territory no matter what country we are in. Except ... when I reached out to rub Galane's small leg, she whimpered in fear at this strange white woman and nestled into her mother.

Feeling a tiny bit braver after admiring little Galane, I turned back to a patiently waiting Bati and asked if he had any questions for me. With a sigh of exasperation, he declared, "Yes! I have many questions! But you turned your face to my wife!" Our first meeting was not going at all like I imagined.

Thankfully, the work of the Holy Spirit, knitting us together as one body in Christ, was stronger than any awkwardness on my part. Bati gracefully excused my poor manners as we settled down to get to know one another. I learned about Habte, his son, and little Galane's sisters, Ruth and Buzu. In return, he and Barush studied a photo of my family, left home in Tennessee. We talked of our mutual love for the Lord, and I was able to ask him why he chose the verse in Nehemiah to guide him. Surrounded as he



Janean Bollinger with Evangelist Bati Wario, his wife, Barush, and their youngest child, Galane.

is by those who despise the Lord, he cries out on behalf of his city, "Hear, oh our God!"

Finally, Bati curiously asked how we worship God in my church. Worship. There is something about laying ourselves before an all-mighty Creator that binds the hearts of the creation. I learned this to be true the first time I visited Ethiopia. Now here it was again: The desire of God's people, no matter their color or location, to worship their King. In response to Bati's question, I called another teammate, Randy Wright, to lead us in some songs of praise. The words and rhythms of my culture might be different than that of my brother's, but the heart is the same. And adoration for our Savior poured out in English and Oromo.

My first meeting with a real-life hero did not go as I had planned. As Bati, Barush, and I spent more time together over the next week, however, we laid the foundation for friendship. I know those sweet children in the yellowing photo on my fridge pray for me alongside their hardworking parents, and I pray for them. We are, after all, family.

Serving Through Short-Term Missions (continued from page 1)

will more than that likely be drastically different from what you are accustomed to, do your best to eat what you can and be discreet with what you can't get down.

4. **Respect:** Imagine a role-reversal, where you are hosting someone from another culture. You would want that person to experience what you think is great about your culture, right? Respect your hosts, just as you would want to be respected. Just because we think hamburgers and french fries or fried chicken is some great food, other cultures around the globe don't exactly feel the same way. Plan to appreciate whatever is offered.
5. **Future:** Approach your short-term mission trip as the beginning of a relationship. Look for ways to continue your involvement after your short-term trip is over.
6. **Love:** Above all, show love. Love transcends cultural boundaries and language barriers. Be mindful of your actions.

The list could go on and on, but these are the first points that come to mind. The process leading up to the short-term mission outreach is critical to the success of the trip.

Consider the role God would have you play in short-term missions. Join the adventure — it will change not only your life, but the lives of countless others.

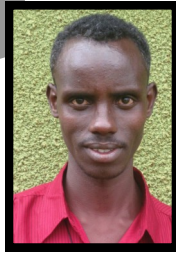


Hand of Hope Evangelists' Updates



Sisay Getachew
— Serving in Tuka & Aregane

**Moyale Area
Evangelists**



Kala Huka
— Serving in Elamu

Evangelists Sisay Getachew and Kala Huka continue to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Muslim dominated region of Moyale. God is using these young evangelists to expand His Kingdom in this area.

The churches in Tuka and Aregane are steadily growing. Over the past few months nearly 50 people have accepted Christ as their personal Savior. Pray that these new believers will be strong and grow in their new faith. Pray for Evangelist Sisay as he shepherds these new believers.

Evangelist Kala is working to establish a work in the village of Elamu. When asked how the work in Elamu is going, he said, "By the help of God and your prayers we are going forward to reach more souls for the Kingdom of God. We are sowing the seeds of the Gospel in the hearts of people and waiting for God to bring the harvest. Thank you very much for your prayers." Continue to pray for Evangelist Kala.



Galaba Tache
— Serving in Miyo & Hide

**Hidilola Area
Evangelists**



Dida Boru
— Serving in Miyo

Evangelists Galaba Tache and Dida Boru continue to serve under the church in Hidilola. Both of them are working to establish churches in the villages of Miyo and Hide. Evangelist Galaba shared the following: "We are praying for a great harvest in our area. As you know, last year we had a very terrible drought and many people suffered unimaginable loses as a result of the drought. Life in our area is very tough and difficult, but we trust God for more blessings and answers to prayer. Please pray for us. At present there are 28 believers in the church."

Evangelist Dida recently shared the following with us: "I thank God for the great opportunity he has given me to share the Good News with our people in the remote areas. There are about 32 believers in our church. We are praying for the people in our surrounding areas as we continue to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thank you very much for your prayers. May God bless you."

Hand of Hope Evangelists' Updates

God is using these four evangelists serving under the Mega Mekane Yesus Church. These evangelists minister in several villages throughout the countryside surrounding Mega.

Evangelist Nuno Aga continues to share the Gospel in the Melbana area. Nearly 80 believers are worshipping in the new church built in this area.

Evangelist Halake Salesa is building relationships in Deeda Jaarsa and is thankful for the way God is working in the lives of people in this area. He is encouraged by seven people who recently accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Evangelist Dokole Katelo recently shared the following: "I thank God for what He is doing in my life and ministry. Right now 45 people are regularly attending the church in Gayo. We are spreading the Good News and people are receptive. Thank you very much for your prayers."

Evangelist Jaldesa Kanchora is one of the younger evangelists serving under the church in Mega. He recently reported that there are nearly 190 believers attending the church in Wardele. This church was established by Evangelist Nuno a few years ago, and Evangelist Jaldesa took over the responsibility of ministering at this church about one year ago so that Evangelist Nuno could concentrate on the work in Melbana. Pray for Evangelist Jaldesa as he ministers in the Wardele area.



Nuno Aga
— Serving in Melbana



Dokole Katelo
— Serving in Gayo



Halake Salesa
— Serving in Deeda Jaarsa



Jaldesa Kanchora
— Serving in Wardele

Mega Area Evangelists



Dido Guyo
— Serving in Chare & Dadacha Daba



Ermias Shura
— Serving in Sadeko

Yavello Area Evangelists



Evangelist Nuno is pictured above holding one of the Bible Story flip charts made by the PLCF 2011 Mission Team. He regularly uses these to teach children in the Melbana area.

In recent months, more than 15 souls have come to Christ in Sadeko. Many of these are from Muslim backgrounds. Praise God! Pray for Evangelist Ermias Shura as he continues to share the love of Jesus Christ with the people living in Sadeko.

Evangelist Dido Guyo is excited about what God is doing in the Chare & Dadacha Daba area. He said, "God is doing great things in this area. We are experiencing a time of harvest. We currently have 91 believers in our congregation. Thank you

Hand of Hope Evangelists' Updates

Evangelists Dida Barako, Guyo Tade, and Godana Duba, regularly come together to pray for the gospel work that is going on in their region of Teltelle. Evangelist Dida is excited about how God is moving in the area.

Evangelist Guyo Tade recently shared the following: “God is good. I am very happy with the people of God in our small church. We are praying that more people in our area will come to know our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. For last three months we shared the Gospel of Jesus Christ with 37 people and are praying for them. We believe that one day the seed will grow in their hearts.’

Evangelist Godana Duba says, “God is doing great things in our area and people’s hearts are opened to hear the message of the gospel. We recently shared the gospel with more than 100 people, and five of them accepted Christ! We are praying for a great harvest of souls!

Continue to pray for the three evangelists serving in the Teltelle region. Pray that God would continue to soften the hearts of the people in the area.



Dida Barako
— Serving in Ghandille



Guyo Tade
— Serving in Kalo



Godana Duba
— Serving in Dalemale & Saarite

**Teltelle Area
Evangelists**



Tafesse Masebo
— Serving in Gubato Arjo



Bati Wario
— Serving in Kofole Arsi

**Arsi-Negelle Area
Evangelists**

Saarite Church Building Project

The believers in Saarite (Teltelle Region) have outgrown the small dirt house where they have been meeting. In addition, the house is falling apart. They desperately need a larger, more permanent place to meet for worship. We are trusting God to provide the \$2,500 needed to build a more permanent church building for the Saarite church!

Evangelists Tafesse Masebo and Bati Wario continue to share the good news of Jesus Christ in the difficult Arsi region. The work of the gospel is slow in this predominately Muslim region. Evangelist Bati recently shared the following: “We are praying that God will give us favor and power to reach more souls for the Kingdom of God. We are trusting God for a great revival in the Arsi region. Thank you very much for your prayers.”

Evangelist Tafesse has been encouraged by two Muslims who recently converted to Christianity in the village of Gubato Arjo. Continue to pray that God will soften the hearts of the Arsi Oromo people. Pray protection over the evangelists serving in this heavily populated Muslim region.

HOH Looking to Expand to Kenya!

Hand of Hope Ministries has been looking for opportunities to partner with churches in Kenya. After much prayer, HOH has agreed to a one-year trial partnership with the Isiolo Christ Community Church (CCC) in Isiolo, Kenya. In October 2012, a few men from Priest Lake Christian Fellowship in Antioch, Tennessee, will be traveling to Kenya to meet with the leaders of CCC. They hope to gain a better understanding of all that CCC is involved with and to determine whether or not HOH should move beyond a trial partnership into a long-term partnership with CCC. We are excited about being involved with evangelistic efforts among the Borana Oromo people in Kenya through our potential partnership with CCC.

Isiolo is located in central Kenya, approximately 200 miles north of the

capital city of Nairobi and 250 miles south of the Ethiopian/Kenyan border town of Moyale. The population of Isiolo and the surrounding areas is predominately Borana Oromo. The Borana Oromo population extends from Isiolo, all the way through northern Kenya and into southern Ethiopia. Nearly 175,000 Borana Oromo are living in Kenya.

The majority of people in northern Kenya are Muslim and are very hostile towards Christians. Christianity is viewed as a “white man's religion.

To win this region for Christ, one needs God's wisdom in how to effectively approach people and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In addition to the challenges of the Muslim community, prevalence of traditional beliefs



and witchcraft practice is another big obstacle to the Gospel.

Isiolo CCC is committed to sending evangelists out into the rural villages throughout northern Kenya. HOH is looking forward to seeing God move in this area, as we partner with CCC to reach the Borana Oromo of Kenya for Christ.

CCC Evangelists in Kenya

Godana Funan Halakhe was born in the village of Bulesa, located in Isiolo County, Kenya. He is 33 years old, married, and has three children — two girls and one boy.

Godana grew up in the Muslim faith, but in 2004, he accepted Christ as his personal Savior. Shortly thereafter, he began attending St. Steve Pastors Bible College in Timau, Kenya. Godana currently serves as an Evangelist under the Christ Community Church in Isiolo, Kenya.

HOH is looking forward to hearing how God uses Godana to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the Borana people in Kenya.



Evangelist Godana Funan Halakhe



Evangelist Halakhe Dabaso Duba

Halakhe Dabaso Duba was born in the village of Tuka, Ethiopia. Tuka is located in southern Ethiopia, not far from the Kenyan border. He attended school in Melbana, Ethiopia, through the eighth grade.

Halakhe is 22 years old and single. He accepted Christ as his personal Savior in 2002 in Ethiopia. Since then, he moved to Kenya and is now serving as an Evangelist under the leadership of Christ Community Church in Isiolo, Kenya.

HOH anticipates developing a relationship with Halakhe, getting to know him, and seeing how God uses him to reach the Borana Oromo people for Christ.

Hand of Hope Children’s Program

God continues to bless the Hand of Hope Children’s Program. Nearly 50 children are supported through this program. Volunteer coordinator, Bake Chenfo, continues to be the backbone of this ministry. He conducts regular follow-up meetings with the children and their caretakers and ensures that the children’s needs are being met. Bake makes sure that the children attend school and encourages them to work hard. In addition to the regular follow-up of children in the HOH program, Bake keeps an eye out for possible candidates to be added to the program.

Pictured to the right are the seven orphans in the Mega area who were recognized for their academic achievements. Each of them were presented with certificates along with a monetary incentive. We look forward to more children receiving awards in the coming months. (Back row l-r) Hama Mamo, Guyo Halake, Kaliti Galma, and Kabale Galme. (Front row l-r) Hamma Shanko, Garo Konso, and Ali Hussein.



SPECIAL NEED

For the past five years, HOH has been supporting the Abeduba children financially, which has enabled all of them to attend school regularly and to have food to eat and clothes to wear. Nesaanat, the eldest of the eight orphaned siblings, continues to be their primary caretaker.

The Abeduba children live in a house (pictured below) that was owned by their parents. It is a simple house, made of wood and mud. The house is beginning to fall apart and is in need of repairs. It will cost about \$2,000 to make the needed repairs. HOH hopes to raise the necessary funds so that the Abeduba children can have a suitable home to live in.



Interested in sponsoring a child? \$350 will sponsor a child for 1 year.

For information please email handofhopeministries@gmail.com.

Borana Regional Situation

Hand of Hope Ministries has been working primarily in the Borana region of southern Ethiopia. Mr. Gollo Huka, a long-time partner and supporter of HOH, has been a great source of information regarding the reality of the situation in the Borana zone. The better we understand the problems facing this area, the better we can pray for the evangelists and believers in this area.

Recently, Mr. Gollo Huka provided HOH with an update of the overall region. This update is based on his personal observations as well as discussions he has had with prominent elders within various communities throughout the region.

Rainfall: Rain is critical for the Borana people and for the survival of their livestock. Drought is a common problem; however, this year the rainfall has been better than in recent years.

Livestock: The livestock population in the area took a big hit in 2011 as a

result of the severe drought conditions at that time. This year's rainfall has provided favorable pasture and water supply for the remaining livestock. There is no great concern of any type of disease outbreak. There have been a few reported cases of farmers complaining of foot and mouth disease and TB.

Human Health: Apart from common diseases prevalent in the region, there is no report of epidemics.

Pasture: Reports throughout the region are that pastures are in good condition. The elders said that in the last five years, they haven't enjoyed this much pasture for their livestock. This is the effect of the last rainy season coupled with exceedingly reduced livestock population.

Water: Water is abundant everywhere. Ponds and traditional water wells are full to the brim. Unlike other periods when the number of livestock was beyond the capacity of the grazing land, this year there is plenty of water. The water is from the recent rainy season

Milk: Milk and meat used to be the mainstay for the pastoralists in this area. That is becoming the old history in Borana as consumption habits have been influenced more by the increase of grain available due to factors such as food relief supply and population growth. Moreover, there was no livestock pregnancy during the drought time, and those impregnated are expected to calf in the coming October. Thus, livestock by-products like milk and butter is almost nil.

Market: The grain and livestock markets have skyrocketed. Two factors have attributed to this. First, there was no harvest in the area despite the good rains the area received. Croppers never expected such plentiful rain in the period, and the central grain market is quite high. Second, the demand for meat animals soared in the slaughter factories and abroad.

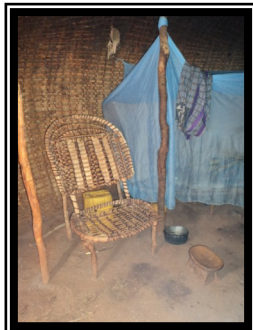
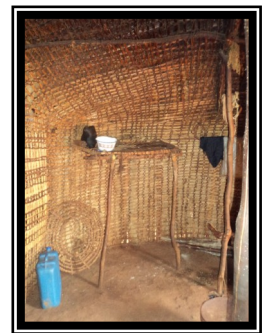


Mr. Gollo Huka



A Glimpse Into Borana Oromo Life

Pictured to the left is a Borana village; pictures below and to the right were taken inside a typical Borana home.



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We welcome input from our readers! Please email handofhopeministries@gmail.com with any comments or words of encouragement you may have.

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Prayer & Praise

Pray for....

- protection over the evangelists as they share God's Word throughout the countryside of southern Ethiopia.
- Tsega-ab Bekele and Gospel For Unreached Nations Ministry as they continue to train church leaders throughout Ethiopia.
- the team of men preparing to go to Ethiopia in October 2012 to encourage Hand of Hope evangelists and children in the Children's Program.
- additional prayer and financial supporters.
- volunteers to come forward both in the USA and in Ethiopia to help with the many organizational and administrative needs of this ministry.

Praise God for....

- doors that have opened up for ministry in Kenya.
- His continued provision for this ministry.
- churches in Mega, Hidilola, Yavello, Teltelle, Moyale and Hawassa who partner with Hand of Hope Ministries.
- the faithful prayer and financial support for this ministry.
- the souls that are coming into the Kingdom.