

## GEDAM SEFER COMMUNITY UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP RECEIVES 576 BOXES OF BOOKS

### SHORT REPORT OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS DONATED BY BOOKS FOR AFRICA

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The Gedam Sefer Community University Partnership has distributed about 40,000 books to nine primary and secondary Schools, four public and youth friendly libraries and two university libraries in July 2008. The books are multi-disciplinary reference and literature donated by Books For Africa based in St. Paul, Minnesota, USA. Volunteers in Cleveland, Ohio and Chicago, Illinois also contributed different books, their time and labor in collecting and transporting the books. The shipment and clearance of these books was covered by Books For Africa, Bahir Dar University, and the Love for Children Organization in Ethiopia.



**Volunteers help pack books in Chicago**

#### II. GENESIS OF THE PROJECT

In January 2008, Prof. Alice K. Butterfield of the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago started the book drive by asking volunteers to collect books for Ethiopia.

Approximately 282 boxes of books were collected by volunteers in the greater Chicago area and Cleveland, Ohio, were donated by the following individuals and organizations:

- College of Education, University of Illinois at Chicago (Ward Weldon)
- Crete Public Library, Harvey Public Library, Homewood Public Library, Sauk Village Public Library, and Glenwood-Lynwood Public Library (Kathy Parker)
- Faller International Training, LPC (Dorothy & Dolph Faller)
- Library books and encyclopedias (Scott Morgan)
- Global Alliance for Africa (Linda Stolz)
- Grafton Correctional Facility (Yolanda and Garey Burt)
- History Department, University of Illinois at Chicago (John J. Kulczycki)
- Jane Addams College of Social Work, University of Illinois at Chicago (Abebe Assefa & Meseret Kassahun)



**282 boxes of books**



**Bill loads the last boxes**

Bill Butterfield volunteered to drive a rented truck with the books to Books For Africa in St. Paul, Minnesota. The in-country transportation costs were paid by Bahir Dar University in Ethiopia, which was to receive a special collection of teacher education books for a new Masters Degree program for School Directors. [http://www.aboutsweep.org/bahir\\_dar/index.html](http://www.aboutsweep.org/bahir_dar/index.html)

Books For Africa donated the remaining 294 boxes of books from their warehouse in St. Paul, Minnesota. A total of 576 boxes filled the 40 ft. container for shipment to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

## The Books Arrived at Addis Ababa with the Excitement of All

In Ethiopia, Lemlem Tukuye, Executive Director of Love for Children Organization (LCO) agreed to collaborate in getting the necessary permits to import the books free of tax and other revenues in



**Unloading books-1 box at a time!**

Ethiopia. LCO took full responsibility for obtaining the permit, paying necessary costs at the port in Djibouti, hiring unemployed youth to unload the container, and arranging for temporary storage of the books at the LCO Youth Center. The 40 ft. container was unloaded by hand one box at a time. Youth from the community carried the boxes on their heads and backs down a long, winding cobblestone road to the LCO Youth Center. There, the boxes of books were sorted and temporarily stored for three days, during which time official representatives of organizations and universities came to the Center to receive the donated books for their organization.

The books targeted for distribution through the Gedam Sefer Community-University Partnership (GS-CUP) were temporarily stored at Bethlehem Primary and Secondary School. These books were distributed to 7 schools and 2 public libraries in the community. Mulu Yeneabat, Project Coordinator, community volunteers and representatives of the GS-CUP facilitated the book distribution. [http://www.aboutsweep.org/gedam\\_sefer/index.html](http://www.aboutsweep.org/gedam_sefer/index.html)



**Local youth carry books**



**Schools select books**

School principals, staff, and volunteers came to Bethlehem School to select books for their schools. Each book was officially registered. The handover of books to these libraries was held at Bethlehem Public School on June 22, 2008. Those attending the official handover of the Books For Africa books were Dr. Alice Butterfield and Dr. David Perry from University of Illinois at Chicago, doctoral students from Addis Ababa University School of Social

Work, representatives from Gedam Sefer kebele administration and schools, and children and members of the community. Beneficiary schools and public libraries were given a certificate about the donation with a message stating that the librarians and the responsible officials will facilitate friendly access to the books for readers.

The GS-CUP and its partners in Ethiopia would like to especially thank Books For Africa, including Mr. Asratie Teferra in Lovettsville, VA and Deb McDonald in St. Paul, Minnesota for their support and successful facilitation of this shipment of books to Ethiopia. We could not have done this without your untiring support and financial assistance. Additional appreciation also goes to the Oak Foundation of Geneva, Switzerland, and Fasil Marriam, Program Officer in Ethiopia for their part in assisting with the in-country costs.



**Community members at book handover ceremony**

### III. QUALITY OF THE BOOKS

The books are now on public and school library shelves as additional inputs and in the hands of students and teachers. They are being used to increase the knowledge of both the students and the teachers and allow them to explore the world in ways that only books make possible.

The school principals, teachers and students are grateful for the donation and appreciate the high quality of the books particularly those for general education, dictionaries and encyclopedias. To them, it would have been difficult—if not impossible—to acquire the encyclopedias and dictionaries.

### IV. BENEFICIARY SCHOOLS

Eight of the schools that received the books donated by Books For Africa are public schools in Addis Ababa, while one is a primary and secondary school is in rural Ethiopia. Two public libraries and two youth center libraries are in Addis Ababa, and one is out of Addis Ababa. Addis Ababa University and Bahir Dar University also received books.

Certificates and dictionaries were distributed to 20 youth who volunteer at the community library in Gedam Sefer. These youth took responsibility on their own part to staff the library and assist the librarian. Nearly 300 children and youth utilize the Gedam Sefer Community Library on a daily basis. Without their help, the library would not be open on a daily basis.

These youth also volunteered during the book distribution, and accountability process.



**Schoolboys explore their new world of books!**



**Youth volunteers receive certificates and dictionaries**

**BOOKS  
FOR  
AFRICA—  
Thank  
You!**

## Schools and Public Libraries That Benefited From the Book Donation

	SCHOOL	Number of Boxes	# OF BOOKS	SITUATION BEFORE RECEPTION OF BOOKS
1.	Aweliya Muslim Mission	146	269	Previously, there was no library, but now it has opened a new library
2.	Bethlehem Primary and Secondary Public School		686	It has a library. This is an additional major input
3.	New Era Primary and Secondary Public School		468	It has a library. This is an additional major input
4.	Ras Abebe Aragay Primary Government School		462	It has a library. This is an additional major input
5.	YeAlem Berhan Primary Government School		270	It had small books in a store, but now it has now opened a mini-library
6.	YeTemehert Belechta Primary Government School		288	It had small books in a store, but now has opened a mini-library
7.	Ethiopia Tekedem N <sup>o</sup> 2 Primary Government School		306	Its library was closed, but now it is open.
8.	The Gedam Sefer Partnership Office (Books and video cassettes for summer program and other activities)		450	This was very helpful for the summer program in improving the children's reading and educational activities
8.	Kebele 03/09 Public Library		1,238	Most of its books were elementary & high school used books. These books are major inputs.
9.	Kebele 04/05 Public Library	366		
10.	Alliance for Development	105	3,451	It has built a new library. This is a major input when it starts service
11.	Love for Children Organization	83		This is a major input to its library
12.	Fountain of Hope	33	1,158	This is a major input to its library
13.	Wag Oumera school (rural)	31		This is a major input to its library
14.	HORCO for Holeta Elementary school	31		There was no library and no books. The school is renovating room for a library.
15.	Bahir Dar University	105		This is an additional input
16.	Addis Ababa University Main Library	31		This is an additional input
17.	Addis Ababa University School of Social Work	11		This is an additional input
<b>Total Boxes</b>		<b>576</b>		