

# **Annual Report 2010-2011**

## **The Horn of Africa Relief and Development Agency of Australia Inc**

HARDA, a not-for-profit organisation, was incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act NSW in November 2003. Our mission is to unite refugees and humanitarian entrants from all Horn of Africa countries in Australia and work with their community leaders as a strong and effective advocate and lobbyist for their domestic and international issues and concerns.

HARDA has been classified as a public benevolent institution and has deductible gift recipient status from the Australian Tax Office. It is co-located with the Edmund Rice Centre at Homebush West NSW. ERC provides office accommodation, a computer network, phone, fax and consumables free of charge.

HARDA is administered and managed entirely by a volunteer workforce with pro bono services provided by our auditors McIntosh Bishop.

### **Our Vision**

- ⤴ That HARDA performs a positive and effective role in communicating with government as an advocate for Horn of Africa individuals, families and communities living in Australia.
- ⤴ That Horn of Africa refugees and humanitarian entrants have access on an equitable basis to the services and accommodation essential for their wellbeing, including affordable housing, education, vocational training, community services, employment and health care.
- ⤴ That HARDA provides support services to member organisations from the Horn of Africa countries, including advice about incorporation and compliance, policy development, accounting and finance, fundraising & sponsorship.
- ⤴ That HARDA uses its contacts with Horn of Africa communities and individuals in Australia and their contacts in the Horn of Africa ('the diaspora') to identify sustainable model projects in their countries of origin; works with non-government organisations in those countries to develop and cost their proposals; and seeks support for them from government and Australian based NGOs.

### **Membership**

Membership is open to all persons eighteen years of age and over who support HARDA's aims and objectives, irrespective of nationality, race, religious, political or other affiliation.

### **The Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee's responsibilities include setting HARDA's strategic direction, establishing goals for members and the volunteer workforce; monitoring the achievement of those goals, ensuring that the Agency meets its legal and ethical responsibilities and that the members of the Committee and volunteers meet the highest standards of conduct.

It is essential that individual members of the Committee communicate and consult with the communities from the Horn of Africa countries.

At 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011 members of the Executive Committee were:

John Cornwall, President  
Degeufe Hailu, Vice-President  
Nasser Nour, Secretary  
Paul Bisson Treasurer  
Abdiweli Osman  
Ms Deeqa Omar

### **The Horn of Africa Youth Agency of Australia (HAYAA)**

HAYAA is constituted as a standing committee enshrined in HARDA's constitution to reflect the high priority that HARDA accords to the youth sector. Its mission is to consult widely and engage with young people from the Horn of Africa countries and to develop projects and strategies that address their issues, in consultation with HARDA's Executive Committee. HAYAA's Chairman is Abdimalik Osman.

### **Sub-Committees**

The Executive Committee may appoint members of the Committee or ordinary members to sub-committees and delegate to them such powers or duties as the Committee may decide. Members of the Executive Committee may also maximize the effectiveness of the sub-committees by co-opting individuals with relevant expertise from within and outside the Horn of Africa countries.

### **Volunteers. The HARDA Secretariat**

John Cornwall joined HARDA in December 2007 and was appointed as the Executive Director on a pro bono basis. He was appointed as President at the AGM in November 2008.

Paul Bisson (Finance Officer) retired in 2008 as Finance Director/Chief Financial Officer of the Hawker Siddeley Aviation Group.

Fiona Carr (Policy & Projects) works four days a week as a senior staff member at AMP Capital and devotes her Wednesdays and other out of hours time to the Secretariat.

Carmel Clark (Community Relations) is a key volunteer with social welfare and community service experience.

Judi Flaherty (Administration & Management Support) was formerly a senior manager at Deloitte prior to her retirement.

## **Australian projects 2010-2011**

### **The Family Well Being Day Mental Health Month October 2010**

*Building resilience - good friends help us to bounce back*

Many families from the Horn of Africa countries came to Sydney's Auburn Park on the last Saturday in October 2010 to celebrate their cultural diversity and join with HARDA and the NSW Transcultural Mental Health Centre to promote mental health and well being in their communities.

Organisations and service providers in Western Sydney who joined with us on the day included the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS), the Auburn Cultural Diversity Network, the Auburn Youth Centre, the Hills Holroyd Parramatta MRC and Red Cross. Information about mental health services and how to access them was distributed in several languages from information booths around the picnic ground.

Our special guest was the NSW Minister for Health (Mental Health) Barbara Perry, who was thanked by HARDA's President John Cornwall for 'the support, commitment and wisdom which she always gives so generously to HARDA'.

There was a jumping castle for the kids, hip hop, face painting, and a drumming workshop. The big hit of the day was the soccer workshop and motivational session for the boys conducted by internationals David Zdrilic, currently coach of Sydney United, and Craig Foster, Chief Football Analyst at SBS.

The free barbecue was a huge success and up to a dozen volunteers were kept busy for more than two hours serving the marinated chicken kebabs, sausages, onions and sauce.

### **The African Men's Education and Training project**

Each Monday and Tuesday HARDA volunteers with teaching qualifications and experience tutored men at HARDA's office in Homebush West at three levels of English as well as basic computing. The initial pilot project for Sudanese men was funded by the Sisters of Charity Foundation. The current program is now open to Horn of African men and funded with a grant from Connect Australia Foundation. An outreach service to Blacktown was trialed in April 2011.

### **The DIAC funded HARDA Youth Employment and Careers Expo and Mentoring Program**

This joint venture with the Muslim Student Association was launched with the Expo on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2010. The Expo was an outstanding success, attended by more than 700 young people and supported by volunteers from professions, trades and numerous organisations and agencies, including TAFE, the ATO and the NSW Police service. More than fifty students and job seekers subsequently participated in an ongoing mentoring program. The project was completed with a presentation of certificates to mentees in November.

### **The HAYAA Youth Soccer Carnival**

*Funded by the Auburn RSL Club under the CDSE scheme*

HARDA/HAYAA joined forces with the Safari Sports Club to organise the African Cup of Nations, a weekly soccer tournament, held in October-December 2010.

Over 200 players and 3000 spectators from ten different African countries participated in the event, which was a great success, and provided opportunities for social interaction for people from varying cultural backgrounds.

### **The HAYAA African Youth Conference 27<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

The Conference brought together eighteen young African people from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Somalia, Zimbabwe and Uganda to discuss the key issues affecting them in their lives in Australia. The agenda was defined by holding a number of focus groups prior to the conference to identify the three main areas of concern: intergenerational and family conflict; law, justice and discrimination; and employment. Speakers from relevant agencies were then invited to present papers and lead discussion and debate around the topics.

The conference report (“Our Voices United, African Youth Speak”) outlines the key findings and recommendations, highlighting the voices of African young people and what they think needs to happen to make Australia a more inviting and engaging place for them. It is available on the HARDA website ([www.harda.org.au](http://www.harda.org.au))

### **HARDA’s Annual Cultural Night**

People from the Horn of Africa gathered at the Granville Town Hall on 25<sup>th</sup> June to showcase their arts and crafts and share their cultural heritage with the wider Australian community. This year primary responsibility for HARDA’s cultural night was delegated to HAYAA (HARDA’s standing committee on youth affairs).

They were joined by representatives of other African communities and from the wider Australian community. Guests included Barbara Perry MP (Member for Auburn and Shadow Minister for Family & Community Services) who is a great supporter of HARDA and officially opened proceedings.

HARDA’s President John Cornwall (who was recuperating from recent surgery) welcomed the guests by video link and gave a brief summary of the year’s activities and achievements.

Abdimalik Osman, Chairman of HAYAA, played a DVD produced by members and spoke about their aims, objectives and the year’s highlights, including the recent release of their report ‘Our Voices United, African Youth Speak’.

It was a fun night, with lots of traditional food produced by members from the Horn of Africa communities and an extensive program of entertainment. This was provided by African singers, cultural dance groups from South Sudan and Eritrea, a number of fun dance groups, a rap group and the Drumming Maestros. Members of the audience were all provided with drums and everyone participated with great enthusiasm.

Kudzi Maforimbo from HAYAA compered the evening, kept things under control with great humour and got everyone up and dancing.

Thanks to our sponsors - the Hills Holroyd Parramatta Multicultural Resource Centre, the NSW Transcultural Mental Health Centre, ACL Navitas, STARTTS and the NSW Community Relations Commission; to those ‘chefs’ from the communities for providing such a cornucopia of food from the Horn of Africa; and to all the entertainers.

## **African projects 2010-2011**

### **The Daghamadow Residential Primary School Project in Ethiopia.**

With the generous support of Human Appeal International HARDA again made a significant contribution to the budget of the Daghamadow School in Ethiopia through the Hassan Omar Trust. This school year 110 boys and girls aged between eight and ten years old are receiving their primary education at this residential school, conducted by the African Pastoralist Vision Association, a local NGO. These are children of the nomadic pastoralists (or orphans adopted by them) who follow the rain and the grass with their flocks and herds in this semi-arid region. Children accompanying their nomadic parents normally receive no education at all. The APVA is able to accommodate, clothe, feed and educate these children for less than \$400 per child per year.

### **Fast 2 Feed**

HARDA joined Muslim Aid Australia during the Ramadan month of August/September 2010 to facilitate the distribution of food aid to 475 families including orphans, elderly men and women and disabled people in the war ravaged villages of Darfur and the drought affected communities of nomadic pastoralists in Northern Kenya. The projects were identified by Dr Mohamud Sheikh, HARDA's Director of Overseas Aid, through African Australian contacts, and funded by Muslim Aid Australia with donations from Muslim communities in Australia under the Fast to Feed project. Villagers in Darfur said the project had 'brought a harmony which we hope will bring a sustainable peace to the people'. The villagers of the drought ridden region of Northern Kenya described 'a storm of food relief that came from a far land beyond our thoughts and brought our hopes high'

Local distribution in Darfur was organised by the Sudanese Islamic Medical Association in partnership with the Azaghrafa village elders. Thirty orphan children in Azaghrafa were also provided with new clothes as part of the project. The food and clothing were transported from Khartoum over 950 kilometres of dirt roads.

In Northern Kenya WARDA (the Waso Resource Development Agency) organised the food distribution, planning ahead with the village elders in Habaswein, Hoodan, Kulaaley and Eladow to identify food delivery points - the key water wells frequented by the nomadic families.

### **The Habeswein Cataract & Medical Camp. North East Kenya 30<sup>th</sup> December 2010 - 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2011**

Using portable surgical microscopes, volunteer ophthalmologists from Doctors for Hope restored the sight of more than 100 men and women, many of whom had travelled hundreds of kilometres to attend the clinic. The cataract surgery was carried out in a small hospital in the remote, drought stricken township of Habeswein of the North Eastern Province of Kenya, about fifteen hour drive north from Nairobi. This remarkable project was made possible through the combined efforts of Sydney based Dr Mohamud Sheikh, HARDA's special representative for overseas aid, who identified and helped to coordinate the project; Muslim Aid Australia which responded to HARDA's request for funding with a generous grant to cover travel and logistical expenses; and WARDA (the Waso Resource Development Agency)

Doctors for Hope is a Kenyan-based organisation of medical professionals who donate their time to conduct medical and surgical services in some of the most remote and arid areas in Kenya. There were twenty one doctors and nurses in the team for the Habswein project. In addition to the cataract surgery, other members of the team conducted more than 2,000 medical consultations during the four day period.

### **The Water Catchment and Storage Project in the Ooqaani Villages in Southern Somalia**

The project, funded by Muslim Aid Australia and coordinated by HARDA, was completed in August 2011, It will provide clean safe water for more than 20,000 villagers in Southern Somalia. It involved construction of underground water reservoirs. Water collected from surface ponds and bore holes is piped into the reservoirs, providing safe access to water within the village boundaries and preventing evaporation in the very hot climate.

In addition to controlling malaria-carrying anopheles mosquitoes, underground storage stops contamination by the domestic and native animals that pollute the surface water holes and controls water borne diseases due to bacteria and parasites. Physical safety is also an important issue. Attacks from Al-Shabaab and marauders from neighbouring villages compete with the Oorqaani for scarce water, often threatening the safety of the women and girls who carry water from the surface ponds.

The design (modified to improve technology used in other areas) involved 200,000 red bricks, cement, slates, metal bars, plastic sheets, pipes and timber. Project management was a joint responsibility, shared by WARDA (the Waso Resource Development Agency, an African NGO) and the village chiefs who monitored construction on a daily basis. WARDA hired an independent technical person to evaluate the completed work.

### ***Postscript - East African Famine Relief 2011-2012***

Our African Australian members (led by Dr Mohamud Sheikh, HARDA's Special Envoy for Overseas Aid) use their contacts in the Horn of Africa countries to identify and jointly develop model, sustainable projects with African NGOs (e.g. a school, a health service, water capture and conservation, peace building) rather than emergency aid. But the disastrous scale of the current famine is so overwhelming that emergency relief has temporarily displaced most other priorities. Since the beginning of the new financial year (2011-2012) HARDA has worked with Muslim Aid Australia, with generous financial support from the Sisters of Charity Foundation, a student group from the Macquarie University, the Western Sydney Muslim communities and numerous private donors to raise more than \$150,000 for emergency famine relief.

Most of the HARDA-MAA food rations have been distributed to Somalis resettled in Northern Kenya or in transit to the Daadab refugee camp by the Waso Resource Development Agency (WARDA). In addition the African Pastoralist Vision Agency has distributed our food aid in the Daghmadow region of Ethiopia and distribution in Darfur was organised by the Sudanese Islamic Medical Association in partnership with the Azaghrafa village elders.

Dr Sheikh participated as a volunteer in the distribution, Abdimalik Osman, HAYAA's Chairman, also flew to Nairobi and travelled with WARDA personnel during the latest distribution. Lives can be saved for a little as a dollar a day.

As this report was being written members of the Executive Committee, HAYAA and the Secretariat were preparing an information package for a state wide (New South Wales) appeal through public and private secondary schools and colleges

## Strategic alliances, partnerships and thanks

HARDA values its relationship with and the support it has received from many individuals, organisations and agencies in 2009-2010:

- The Christian Brothers' Edmund Rice Centre and the Director Phil Glendenning
- Colleagues and friends from the Horn of Africa countries
- Muslim Aid Australia
- Act for Peace
- Connect Australia Foundation
- The Sisters of Charity Foundation
- The AMP Foundation
- Hon Barbara Perry MP, Member for Auburn and New South Wales Shadow Minister for Family & Community Services
- The Auburn City Council, especially Adama Kamara
- The Auburn Diversity Services Inc
- The Australian Federal Police
- The Australian Red Cross
- Bunnings, Lidcombe
- The Hills-Holroyd-Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre, especially Melissa Monteiro (Manager) and Maeve Brown (CDO African Communities)
- STARTTS (The Service To Assist the Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors), especially Jasmina Bajraktarevic-Hayward
- The Centre for Volunteering NSW
- The Department for Immigration and Citizenship
- The Drug & Alcohol Multicultural Education Centre
- The Evans High School, especially Linda Cheeseman
- The Macquarie Legal Centre
- The volunteers who staff HARDA's Secretariat: Paul Bisson, Fiona Carr, Carmel Clark, Judi Flaherty and Joan Amudu
- The tutors and coordinator of the African Men's Education Project: Elizabeth Pooley, Brian Jeffers, Myron Byrne, and Rebecca Fowler
- The Bakhita Centre and Sr Maria Sullivan
- WorkVentures
- The Settlement Council of Australia
- The Refugee Council of Australia
- The Community Relations Commission (NSW)
- The Granville Multicultural Community Centre
- The Auburn Youth Centre
- Angie Simmonds and her graphic designers
- Human Appeal International
- Local Aid

John Cornwall  
President