

Annual Report 2009-2010

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. It 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.

HARDA works with governments, NGOs and the philanthropic sector to raise funds and to ensure that they are targeted directly to support settlement programs, cultural diversity, community capacity building and integration programs in Australia.

In addition it has used the African diaspora to develop relationships with local and regional non-government organisations and communities in the Horn of Africa countries, working with them to identify model sustainable projects in education, health and peace building and to actively seek grants from non-government aid agencies in Australia to fund them.

Mission

HARDA'S 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.

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, submission writing and event planning.
- That HARDA forms a strong and effective alliance with government and works with non-government overseas aid organizations in Australia, including Human Appeal International and Muslim Aid.
- 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; 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 their own constituencies i.e. the communities from each of the Horn of Africa countries that they represent.

At 30th June 2010 members of the Executive Committee were:

John Cornwall BVSc, President

Dr Mahmoud Sheikh MIPH MHSc PhD, Vice-President & Director of African Projects

Degeufe Hailu BDS, Secretary

Ms Prossie Kyobe BSc BACC (Banking & Finance) MApp Finance, Treasurer

Mohammed Omar BA MEd

Leonard Abeiro LLM

Associate Committee members

Carmel Clark

Abdiweli Osman

Andrew Kabega

The Horn of Africa Youth Agency of Australia (HAYAA)

HAYAA is constituted as a special interest group 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.

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.

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

Judi Flaherty (Administration & Management Support) was formerly a senior manager at Deloitte

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

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

Faduma Geddi and Samira Ibrahim (Publicity, promotion and website maintenance)

Speaking with one voice. HARDA as a regional umbrella body

In 2008 members of the Executive Committee looked at ways in which the Agency could best meet its mission 'to support Horn of Africa refugees in Australia and form partnerships to promote and fund sustainable aid projects in Africa'. We began a series of consultations with the Migrant Resource Centres, Youth Centres, STARTTS and the many other agencies that delivered services to our African constituents in Western Sydney. We sought their views as to how HARDA could best fulfil its mission. At the same time we consulted the office bearers of numerous associations which represent the Horn of Africa communities in Sydney and began extensive group consultations with the general members of those communities, developing ideas for HARDA's role and functions from the ground up.

As a result of these consultations the constitution was amended at our AGM in November 2009 to provide for affiliation by 'any agency or organisation purporting to represent the interests, cultural and ethnic origins of a country or region in the Horn of Africa which has satisfied the Executive Committee of its bona fides and agreed to abide by the agency's purpose and objectives'. Affiliation does not derogate from nor diminish the autonomy of an affiliated organisation but ensures that from 2011 HARDA will be able to speak with one voice on issues or policies endorsed by the Policy Council.

And at a special general meeting in April this year the Horn of Africa Youth Agency of Australia (HAYAA) was formally incorporated into HARDA's constitution as a permanent special interest group.

HARDA now has representatives from every Horn of Africa country on its Executive and/or HAYAA Committees.

Programs and projects conducted in Sydney through 2009-2010

- **The Schools Cultural Exchange Program**, sponsored by the Scanlon and James Kirby Foundations. Sixteen refugee students from the Intensive English Centre at Evans High School travelled to Narooma on the South Coast and were hosted by students at the Narooma High School. It was the first trip outside Western Sydney for the African students since they arrived in Australia. Some wonderful friendships were formed between the

students and members of the Narooma community generally. The Narooma students will make a reciprocal visit to Sydney in December.

- **The Sudanese Men's Education and Training project.** Each Monday and Tuesday HARDA volunteers, all with teaching qualifications and experience, are tutoring Sudanese men at three levels of English and computing. The pilot project was funded by the Sisters of Charity Foundation.
- **The HARDA-DIAC Harmony Day Program** was held at the Auburn Park in March. Adults, young people and children from the Horn of Africa countries were joined by members of the wider community in Western Sydney and by Barbara Perry, NSW Minister for Local government, Juvenile Justice and Mental Health, in celebrating their successful settlement, living in harmony with each other and increasingly joining the mainstream of Australian society. The project was part of the DIAC Diverse Australia Program.
- **The Horn of Africa Cultural Night.** More than 300 people attended the fifth annual HARDA Cultural Night which was held at the Granville Town Hall on 26th June. The evening showcased the food, customs and culture of the member countries and organisations. African music and entertainers kept the crowd in high spirits and everyone participated in the drumming and dancing inspired by the African drummers. The event was sponsored by the NSW Community Relations Commission, STARTTS, the Hills-Holroyd-Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre and ACL
- **The Bunnings Barbecues.** Five fundraising barbecues were conducted at Bunnings Lidcombe store during the year. In addition to raising in excess of \$2,500 for project support they were important in raising HARDA's profile in the wider community in Western Sydney.
- **The HARDA Website.** During the year the HARDA website was redesigned and upgraded to make it significantly more informative and user friendly. Special thanks to Samira Ibrahim, Hartono Setiowijoso and Fiona Carr.
- **The Daghamadow Residential Primary School Project in Ethiopia.** With the generous support of Human Appeal International HARDA made an important contribution to the budget of the Daghamadow School in Ethiopia through the Hassan Omar Trust. More than 100 boys and girls aged between eight and ten years old are now 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 \$500 per child per year.

2010-2011. A Preview

- **Muslim Aid Australia. Fast for Food.** 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 the Wajir South Development Agency, a local NGO, 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 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 24th July. 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, as diverse as TAFE, the ATO and the NSW Police service. At the time of writing this interim report more than fifty students and job seekers are participating in an ongoing mentoring program.
- **A Family Well Being Day** is scheduled for October 2010, Mental Health Month, as a joint venture with the NSW Transcultural Mental Health Centre (TMHC) and in association with the Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS).

The HARDA Youth Soccer Carnival (sponsored by the Lidcombe RSL Club) and the inaugural **HAYAA Conference** are scheduled for November 2010 and the first **HARDA Policy Council** meeting will be held in March/ April 2011.

Members of the Secretariat and Executive Committee will again be diligent in identifying submission based funding opportunities for projects which are consistent with HARDA's role as an umbrella body for our constituency in the Sydney basin and beyond. And guided by the findings and recommendations of the recent report by the Human Rights Commission 'The African Australians Project: Human Rights and Social Inclusion Issues' HARDA will continue to expand its role as advocate and lobbyist for its Horn of Africa constituents.

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 Edmund Rice Centre, especially Phil Glendenning, Daphne McKeough, John Sweeney and Aranza Munoz
- STARTTS (The Service To Assist the Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors)
- Hon Laurie Ferguson MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services (2007-2010)
- Hon Barbara Perry, NSW Minister for Local Government and Juvenile Justice and the Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Mental Health)
- Colleagues and friends from the Horn of Africa countries
- The Hills-Holroyd-Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre
- The AMP Foundation
- Auburn Council, especially Jennie Dunlop and Glenn Harding

- The Centre for Volunteering NSW
- The Macquarie Legal Centre
- The Foundation for Humanity
- The volunteers who staff HARDA's Secretariat: Carmel Clark, Judi Flaherty, Fiona Carr, Paul Bisson and Faduma Geddi
- The Settlement Council of Australia
- The Refugee Council of Australia
- The National Council of Churches
- Human Appeal International
- Muslim Aid Australia
- The Community Relations Commission (NSW)
- The Granville Multicultural Community Centre
- The Auburn Youth Centre
- Evans Intensive English Centre
- The Saint Bakhita Centre
- Narooma High School

John Cornwall
President and Executive Officer

27th October 2010