

# Dekamhare Women's Training Centre in Eritrea, Africa

Women are the most oppressed population in the world. For many Canadian women, it is difficult to imagine living your whole life with a deep-rooted feeling of distress due to harsh, unfair treatment. Unfortunately, in many impoverished nations, women will live their whole lives in fear because they do not have the tools needed to change their situation.

Eritrea is geographically one of the smallest countries in Northern Africa. It is situated in North-Eastern Africa, bordering the Red Sea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Sudan. Eritrea is a small, desperately poor country, which gained its independence from Ethiopia on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1993. After thirty years of war with neighbouring countries, Eritrea has been left totally devastated. Most of the population lives in poverty, meeting their needs in large part through aid imports.

Eritrea is a male dominated society. Men are given increased access to education; therefore, the literacy rate for Eritrean women is 47.6%. The average child in Eritrea receives only five years of formal schooling, and for girls, the average amount of schooling is 4.2 years. The low literacy rate in Eritrea is a key contributor to the cycle of poverty in this country.

Education, not only increases knowledge, but also empowers communities to break their cycle of



poverty. Education builds healthier communities because the educated individuals bring attention to the health issues, which affect their community and offer solutions to bring about change; therefore, the greatest gift a woman can receive is an education.

The world's HIV/AIDS epidemic has brought death and devastation to many African countries - 40% of the world's AIDS cases are from the African continent. Eritrea's AIDS/HIV epidemic is considered to be in its early stages - compared to other African countries it has a relatively low HIV prevalence rate of less than 3 percent among adults.

Unlike many countries in Africa, Eritrea has the opportunity to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS in communities. Prevention of this deadly virus rather than intervention, in the long run, will save the lives of thousands of parents and children in this country. Educating communities about this deadly virus the first step in building a healthier community

Change for Children Association along with their local partner, the National Union of Eritrean Women, will be establishing a training

centre for the women of Dekemhare, in the province of Akele Guzay, Eritrea. The purpose of this project is to reduce the rate of unemployment and improve economic conditions in this poverty-stricken area.



CHANGE FOR CHILDREN ASSOCIATION (CFA) is an Edmonton-based non-profit, non-governmental organization with a 29-year history of working for sustainable, grassroots community development in Latin America and the Philippines. Our development projects, their cost and priority, are determined by our Southern partners according to the needs of their communities. In Canada, our education program engages the public in a process of awareness raising, analysis and action on issues of global justice.



The National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) believes that increased participation of educated women in society, will lead to a more stable and ultimately healthier community. The NUEW also believes that educated women will stabilize and strengthen their families because they will be able to provide financially for their children; therefore, raising their families standard of living.

The training centre will provide educational training in computers with qualified instructors. These programs will teach women the different skills needed in their chosen careers, which will include everything from secretarial skills to general job skills. Students will be provided with a practicum placement and, upon completion of their program, job search support. The increased earning-power of each woman involved in this program will be contributing to the economic growth of her community.



In addition to job training, the training centre will also provide a safe haven for the women living in this community. Here, women will be able to practice the traditional coffee ceremonies, discuss their problems, talk about politics and discuss the serious economic conditions in their country.

Moreover, Dekamhare Women's Training Centre will provide space for workshops and classes on topics such as: human rights, gender issues, and HIV/AIDS prevention in the community. The aim of these workshops and classes is to empower the women of this community, increase awareness of important issues affecting each of them, increase self esteem/self-worth, and strengthen the community.

Education is the tool needed by women in impoverished nations because education gives women the power to change their situation; therefore, improving the standard of living for future generations. Education is also the key to a healthy community because it increases awareness of health issues impacting the community and boosts the community's economy, which means more money to fight diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

Change for Children Association and the National Union of Eritrean Women are asking you to help empower the women of Eritrea. This is not only an investment in a Women's Training Centre, this will be an investment in a whole community.



## PLEASE SUPPORT THIS IMPORTANT PROJECT

Complete the form below and mail it with your donation to:

Change for Children Association:

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