

# PHASE ONE CONSTRUCTION BCI ACADEMY - REPORT

AUG 2008 – SEPT 2009



This report is a month-by-month progression of the construction during Phase One of the BCI Academy. The academy is a school of excellence in one of Africa's two poorest countries; Ethiopia:

**Average income of \$220/year — Only 1 in 3 adults can read — Only 1 of 2 children attend school<sup>1</sup>**

***This is a land where education makes all the difference; more than changing lives, it transforms them!***

In an open field where cattle graze, the work began to build a school that would change the lives of orphaned and impoverished children in this country of Ethiopia. Phase one was to build offices, restrooms and classrooms for an elementary school with grades one through four. Upon completion of Phase One the school will open, while three additional phases of construction will continue expanding the number of classes annually. At completion, the BCI Academy will educate 350 students in grades 1 through 12, and will also serve thousands in the local area as a *community center*, the Adana Children Center.



AUGUST 2008

## August 2008 – Just Open Fields

The Ethiopian Government granted *Blessing the Children International* land for the school in August after just three months.

This, in and of itself, is the provision of the Lord. There were dozens of other applications on the mayor's desk requesting land, most of which have been waiting more than a year. Understanding government red tape and bureaucracy, the locals were amazed at how quickly God provided the land.

Our architect in Ethiopia has begun working on blueprints from the design provided by BCI's Corporate Office in America.



SEPTEMBER 2008

## September 2008 – Fencing It Off

Upon completion of the land survey, our first order of business was to fence off the property according to the official property lines provided by the surveyor.

Blueprints have been finalized and submitted to the Ethiopian government for approval. A team is scheduled for November to break ground and begin pouring the footings.

The entire area has been platted by the government and a few neighboring property owners have begun construction of their houses.



OCTOBER 2008

## October 2008 – Storage Building

We built a secure storehouse for construction materials, tools and supplies.

It is a temporary building with no floor or foundation that will serve us for all four phases of construction over the course of the next four years.

Upon completion of all four phases of construction, the building will be removed and the land reclaimed for an amphitheater.

Blueprints have been approved by the Ethiopian government for construction to begin in November.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/ethiopia\\_12162.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/ethiopia_12162.html)

**“No one has yet realized the wealth of sympathy,  
the kindness and generosity hidden in the soul of a child.  
The effort of every true education should be to unlock that treasure.”**

- Emma Goldman



### **November 2008 – Pouring Foundations**

With the arrival of the November Team, laying out and pouring of the footings was underway. Working with local laborers, team members with construction backgrounds proved invaluable to ensuring the footings were sound, true and well laid.

As with any construction, laying the proper foundation is critical. We appreciate those team members who were in Ethiopia to be sure the foundation for Phase one was done right.



### **December 2008 – Steel Framing Goes Up**

After weighing costs and benefits of different building materials, we decided on a steel-framed building, with Compressed Earth Brick (CEB) walls. This brick is formed using high-pressure hydraulics with a reduced cement content, saving money, yet as durable as conventional cement block.

Though a newer technology in Ethiopia, we found a local company producing the CEB brick and steel. Not only is it more attractive being brick rather than the standard painted block, the overall cost of this newer construction method is 17% less expensive overall.



### **January 2009 – Brickwork Begins**

We began the brickwork in January with some of the first walls started.

Winter teams are generally smaller in size, but working with the locals, we were able to complete about 10% of the brick work, mostly consisting of the two starter courses on each wall.

The septic tank system was also complete in January, along with the plumbing for the ‘boys’ and ‘girls’ restrooms.

We hired a great principle, Mr. Mulugeta Gizaw. He has over twenty years academic experience in various positions.



### **February 2009 – More Brickwork**

Once the starter courses were laid in January, we began laying up the internal walls. With no teams in February, short-term missionaries joined in with local laborers to continue the work.

Our initial order of brick was used and we were waiting on more brick from our supplier. Meanwhile, crushed lava rock was spread between footings in preparation for the cement floors.

**“But if you ask what is the good of education in general, the answer is easy: that education makes good men, and that good men act nobly.”**

**- Plato, Greek Philosopher**



### **March 2009 – Completion of Interior Walls**

In March, we completed the interior walls dividing the classrooms and began raising the outer walls. We also received delivery the remainder of the brick needed to complete the rest of this first phase.

We continued on to raise exterior walls and began the placement of the steel window frames, which have to be primed and sealed after they are welded.

Postings have been placed for teachers.



### **April 2009 – All Brick-work Completed**

After three months of laying brick, we completed all of the walls this month. The next step will be to weld in place the roof trusses.

The steel roof trusses are being prepared by our supplier. They will cantilever over the walkway creating a 6-foot overhanging roof to keep students dry when passing between classes.

In the meanwhile, we continued preparing for pouring floors by laying the bed of crushed lava rock in the rest of the rooms.



### **May 2009 – Trusses Are Up**

We took delivery of the steel roof trusses this month and are welding them in-place. The trusses are joined together by steel purlins, on which the roof sheeting will rest and be fastened to.

All of the steel must be primed and painted after it's welded in-place. Our Ethiopian Director, Tadesse Gebreyes, is seen in the foreground of the photo as he inspects the work daily.

The sheet metal roofing is scheduled for delivery at the end of the month.



### **June 2009 – Roof Goes On**

Most local buildings use the common and inexpensive roof sheeting. These poor quality sheets are 3 feet by 6 feet and are so thin they can be rolled up for easy transport. In time, they will leak because of overlapping sheets expand and contract daily from the heat.

The best solution is using a heavy gauge steel that is continuous (no seams) from peak to eave. No overlapping means no leaks. Although 50% more expensive, it will provided decades of maintenance free performance.

This month, we completed the installation of this high-grade roof!

# Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see.

- John W. Whitehead, *The Stealing of America*, 1983



JULY 2009

## July 2009 – Concrete Floor Poured

With the roof in place, the rainy season causes no delaying in pouring the floors. Summer is a busy time with teams, so we had no shortage of workers to mix cement and hand carry it into the rooms.

All of the concrete work was finished by summer teams, except the sidewalk.

Though the brick is all laid, we still need to tuck-point the mortar joints and seal coat the brick with a clear sealant., making them easily washable. We have finished this process on half the walls so far.



AUGUST 2009

## August 2009 – Installing Doors & Windows

We took delivery this month and began installing the doors and windows.

Unlike windows in America, windows are custom made to size in Ethiopia, and come without the glass. After all frames are welded in place, they have to be primed and painted. Then glass is ordered, cut-to-size and glazed in place by workers specializing in glass work.

Teachers were hired and student registration has begun for the school start date in September.



SEPTEMBER 2009

## Sept. 2009 – School Opens

September 21st, 2009, school opens for grades one through four in the new BCI Academy.

The BCI Academy's first year will be a year of transition for students to learn English well enough that next year the entire curriculum will be taught in English. The principle benefit will be the

immense amount of curriculum and resources available in English. There is a very limited amount of teaching materials in Amharic, as this language is spoken in only one country, Ethiopia. Students will always have an Amharic class, to continue learning their mother tongue.

Pictured above at the school's front gate is Pastor Tadesse, BCI National Director (L) and Mr. Mulugeta, School Principal (R). It is customary in Ethiopia to formally address people with their title and first name, rather than title and last name as in America.

Thanks to the support of many donors and to the hard work of teams and the local Ethiopian staff, there now operates a school where once was open fields. The hard part of getting started is behind us; Now the journey toward excellence begins!

