

Editorial



We've done it: Die Ofenmacher has been authorized as a "foreign charity" in Ethiopia. We now have a branch "Ofenmacher Äthiopien" located in Addis Abeba. In spring 2019 Katharina und I travelled to Ethiopia again to clarify some formalities with the authorities in the region of Amhara. The visits to families with stoves and the stove makers was the focus of our trip. The contract couldn't be bigger between the high-rise buildings in the regional Bahir Dar and the "Tukuls" in which the farmers in the country live.

People execute projects. We learned first-hand, in our meetings with stovemakers and housewives, how our stove project affects people. We were confronted with diverse sensibilities and opinions. We learned that one could never know enough about the culture and traditions of the area one works. Together with our co-ordinator Abewaw we created a long action list to improve the communication with village communities and to create yet more motivation for stove building.

Projects give people possibilities. Our employee Genet is a perfect example. With the help of our project, she was able to work her way out of a nearly hopeless situation. Now she looks forward to her future with her daughter. It is not just the stoves, which motivate us!

Let us take a quick look at the organizations revenues: given the number of stoves, which we want to build, it is very helpful that we can report about two agreements concerning CO₂-certificate purchase. M-Tours live and Grenslösar Resor both want to compensate their emissions via our certificates. The approaches are quite different. We wish both success and thank as the help the environment and households in Nepal, Ethiopia and Kenya.

Die Ofenmacher wish you pleasure reading this newsletter.

Dr. Frank Dengler, Chairman

Stove Counter May 2019

79695 smoke-free stoves in Nepal
747 in Kenya
3054 in Ethiopia

From High-Rise Offices to the Tukuls Ethiopia Trip

The Ofenmacher are officially registered and working as a “foreign charity”. Now the projects, which have started, have a legal status and can be driven forward with full power.



On route to Bahir Dar

The authorities in the capital Addis Abeba already knew about our projects in the Simien Mountains and in Alem Ketema and Merhabete. The local-offices in Bahir Dar, the capital of the region Amhara, in which these projects run, were however not informed. Together with Abebaw, now our project leader at Ofenmacher Äthiopien, Katharina and I started a journey of several days through the wild north of Ethiopia.

Bahir Dar is on the shore of the Lake Tana and has the flair of an Italian coastal town with parks and alleys as a reward for the long strenuous tour through the high-rise offices of the regional administration. The energy, health and environmental authorities gave us a friendly reception and all committed to supporting our projects. After two days of meetings would could conclude our mission successfully and return to Alem Ketema.

Alem Ketema has changed a lot since our last visit 4 years ago. There is a tar road bringing many more cars and trucks. Hotels are under construction or have opened recently. Many houses now have electricity; though the supply is unreliable and there are several interruptions each day. On the other hand, nothing has changed outside the small city.



Meeting with stove makers

Our target areas for stove building are houses within the small town as well as in the surrounding villages throughout the Merhabete district. To this end, we have already trained about 100 stove makers living in various communities. In the second part of this year’s mission, we wanted to learn as much as possible from their day-to-day experience to develop ideas for improve-

ments.

During our first visit, we noticed the consistent high quality of the stove making and maintenance. This is because our field-workers Genet and Ketema check each stove upon completion. The fact that the stoves are well maintained is proof that they are valued by their owners.



A kitchen with Chigir Fechi can look as pretty as this



Stove with dough and salt containers

On many stoves, we found small extensions for containers for injera-dough or salt, which stays dry due to the heat of the stoves.

Most of our stove-makers are women; often single women with children. Thanks to stove-making they have income, raising their social status. This is not always without problems. Many stove-makers reported being shunned by their neighbors. This seems to be a consequence of jealousy in the villages. This can even lead to a stop in orders forcing the stove-makers to look for work in neighboring villages.

We saw traditional stoves for the first time. These are simple stone or clay rings around the fireplace. They hold the injera-plate in place and let smoke released from a gap in the back of the ring escape through hole in the wall. Traditional stove-makers often receive payment-in-kind rather than monetary compensation. The stoves are not common as they are not really of much use. The smoke extraction does not work well as without a chimney there is no exhaust stream. Nonetheless, we heard reports that the traditional stove makers were talking down the value of our Chigir Fechi stove design. There was only

one village where we had no problems. Without knowing we had trained the traditional stove maker to build Chigir Fechi-stoves.

Some families mostly the poorer ones had not registered for a Chigir Fechi stove, as their Tukul was too small for a clay stove. Possible solutions would be to offer a smaller stove only suited for injera. Even that would cover about 70% of the wood required for cooking (see Newsletter 17). An alternative would be assistance to build an extension for cooking.

We did not only talk to the stove makers but also visited many households. The people knew about the Ofenbauer and knew Abebaw, but often they were not informed about our motivation and working methods. Rumors growing out of this lack of knowledge prevented many people from applying for a stove. It became clear how important it is to reach out to people with influence in the communities, which we want to help.



A traditional stove

Our site-visit resulted in a lot of ideas for improvements only some of which are listed in this report. We are in the process of implementing the ideas one-by-one. Last-but-not-least we agreed with Abebaw to carry out a campaign in Alem Ketema, during which several stove makers would come together to provide stoves for all households in a concentrated action. Even if that is far from perfect, it helped us build 50% more stoves than in the previous month. We plan further similar actions.

Frank Dengler

New Partnerships for Environmental Protection

M-Tours live



M-tours live is a regional tour operator located in Regensburg. They offer bus tours in Europe in addition to international travel including trips to Nepal. M-Tours has offered carbon-neutral travel for the last six months. Interested parties can find more information on the service section of their homepage. There is also the possibility to make a donation to the Ofenmacher to compensate the CO₂ generated by the trip thereby actively contributing to environmental protection.

Gränslösa Resor



Gränslösa Resor is Swedish and means borderless travel. It is also the name of a small tour-operator, from Vingåker in the middle of Sweden, specialized in adventure travel. The Swedes were actively looking for an environmental protection project from Nepal and were directed to the Ofenmacher by the WWF. Gränslösa Resor wants to offset not only the CO₂ created by their customers travel but also the CO₂ created by internal operations using VER-certificates from the Ofenmacher. Jenny Adhikari, the representative of the tour operator in Nepal already collected extensive information about our environmental protection project and stove building from Anita Badal in Kathmandu. It is planned that later groups travelling with Gränslösa Resor can gain insight into the humanitarian work of the Ofenmacher. The Ofenmacher look forward to developing the co-operation with Gränslösa Resor.

Reinhard Hallermayer

Genet

Stove-maker and Supervisor in Ethiopia

This evening we are visiting Genet at her home. She lives in a small village not far from Alem Katema. We travel as far as we can by car on the rough roads; before continuing on footpaths to Genet's small cottage. All the neighbors are there and Genet has prepared a delicious meal on the Ofenmacher injera-stove, which she built herself.

Genet is 33 years old. She was one of the first stove-makers in Ethiopia about 4 years ago. At that time Genet was in a hopeless situation. Abebaw always says: "The Ofenmacher saved Genet". Genet told me her story in person.



Genet grew up in this village. Her parents tended a small plot of land, which provided just enough to feed the family. Genet could even visit school and can therefore read and write. However, her father passed away and shortly thereafter her mother too. Genet was on her own and chose an early marriage far from home. Unfortunately, her husband was not a good man. He mistreated and bullied her, was lazy and did not take care of their child. After a few years, Genet made a hard choice and decided to leave her husband. She got a divorce and returned to her home village with her small daughter. Without a family and without state support, it was very hard for her. Her house was nearly completely fallen down. She tried growing vegetables and wheat but could not make enough to keep animals and her daughter was still a baby. According to Abebaw Genet was also suffering from hunger. She was not able to earn enough to feed herself and her baby.



Genet with trainee stove-makers in Debark

It was at this time that Genet learned about the Ofenmacher. She contacted Abebaw and stayed in touch with him until she had a job. That was her chance to escape from a life in poverty. Genet quickly showed herself to be hard-working and reliable. She quickly became the best stove-maker. When we started our second project in the Simien Mountains, Frank and I needed an experienced stove-maker to accompany us for several weeks in that distant region. Genet was immediately open for the challenge and offered to go with us. It is by no means com-

mon for a single Ethiopian woman to be open for such an adventure. Also on this trip, Genet showed special skill.

In the meantime, Genet has a permanent position as supervisor. She does not build stoves herself anymore, but checks the quality of the other stove-makers and corrects faults. In spring this year, we could see the excellent quality of the stoves built under Genet's stewardship.



Genet has a regular income from the Ofenmacher. She could rebuild her parents' house and fix the roof. Her home is comfortable and it is clear that her neighbors respect her. Her daughter is dressed beautifully and attends school. Genet is confident and is developing well.

I recount Genet's story to show you what your donations make possible. It is not just the stoves that get built, your donations help give people a new start in life. Genet is only one of those who could take advantage of that opportunity.

You can see Genet on our [youtube Video](#) from the Simien Mountains. The video created a lot of interest in Ethiopia not least because of the quiet competent way in which Genet explains stove-making for her colleagues.

Katharina Dworschak

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