



**Health And
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Abroad —
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Inside this issue . . .

Page

- 1. We still need a certificate!**
- 2. Harvesting precious rainwater**
- 3. Reflections of a novice project officer**
- 4. Current HADA projects**
Rural schools in China
Tax deductability

NEWSLETTER

Issue 17. November 2003

We Still Need a Certificate from the Department of Epidemiology!

"Department of what . . . ?"

WE received a 40 ton container of humanitarian aid from Crossroads International in Hong Kong on the 7th of January, the Russian Orthodox Christmas. Unfortunately the laws for importing aid had changed and we had been trying to comply with the new requirement. Just when we thought we had all the documents ready the epidemiologic check was outstanding. Things weren't looking good. One representative of the department was shocked we would import something from "China" - and that was before SARS. Finally we got the information that the Ministry of Health needed to decide on the matter. Would we ever see the aid distributed?

One evening we got a phone call. How long had this container been sitting in Astana for? About two weeks? Well, it had been very cold, -20° C. The department of epidemiology was convinced that all the germs they were worried about must have died! Our relief was enormous. Finally we could distribute the goods. Lots of clothing for different age groups. Pillows for prisoners. Filing cabinets for our HADA office. Furniture for our Crisis Pregnancy Centre. A workbench for a new project. Computers and sport equipment for a local NGO working with single mothers and their children.

But what touched us most was the giving away of the wheel-chairs that Crossroads had provided as an extra gift to pass on. Two young boys whose lives were totally restricted were the overjoyed recipients. According to a local doctor, children wait up to eight years to get a wheelchair — if they get one. It is in situations like these we wish we could do much more . . . and are grateful for the difference we have already made in people's lives.

*Edith Hanke
Astana/Kazakhstan*



Harvesting Precious Rainwater to Supply Family Needs

"You fix wells?! I'll show you a well that really needs your attention."

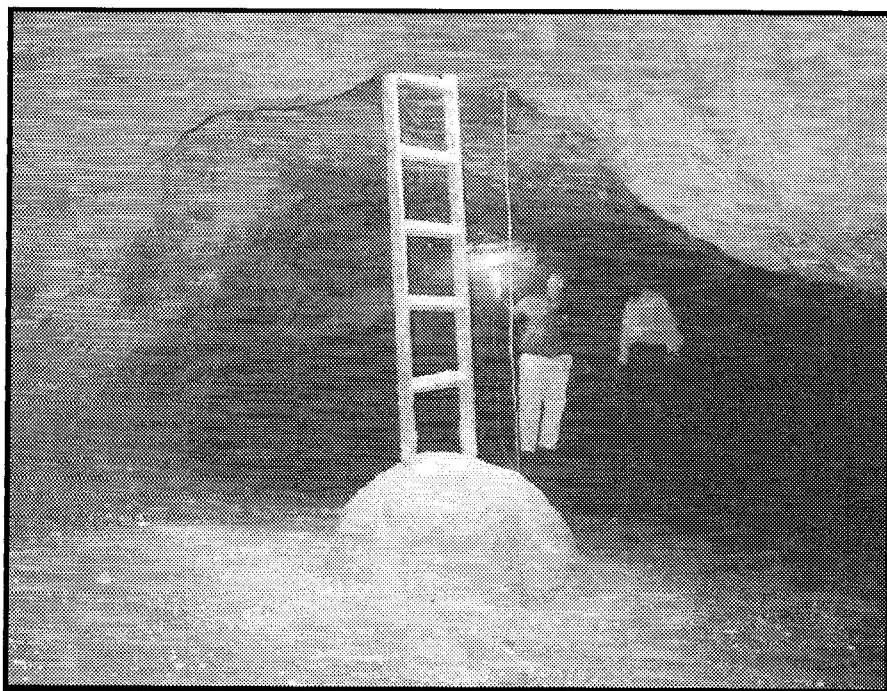
BARJAS had become a friend through an agricultural project that we helped him with. He heard of our other development work and immediately wanted to show us a community that was in great need for the repair of a well. He

rubble and soil. This is what they had in mind for us to work on.

With the customary tea served, Midallah tells us the story around this cave. During harvest times, his grandfathers used to move from the desert areas to the

agricultural fields to offer their labour. As a needy pastoral Bedouin he helped out in the harvesting to earn some wheat for his herds. When the sun was at its hottest the harvesters would seek shelter in the cave and rest in its coolness. Once done harvesting, they would move on only to return the next harvest season. With each return this cave became more and more comfortable to these tent dwellers. The cave started as a cool resting place, then became a convenient storage place and soon stone partitionings were raised to divide rooms. It became a home.

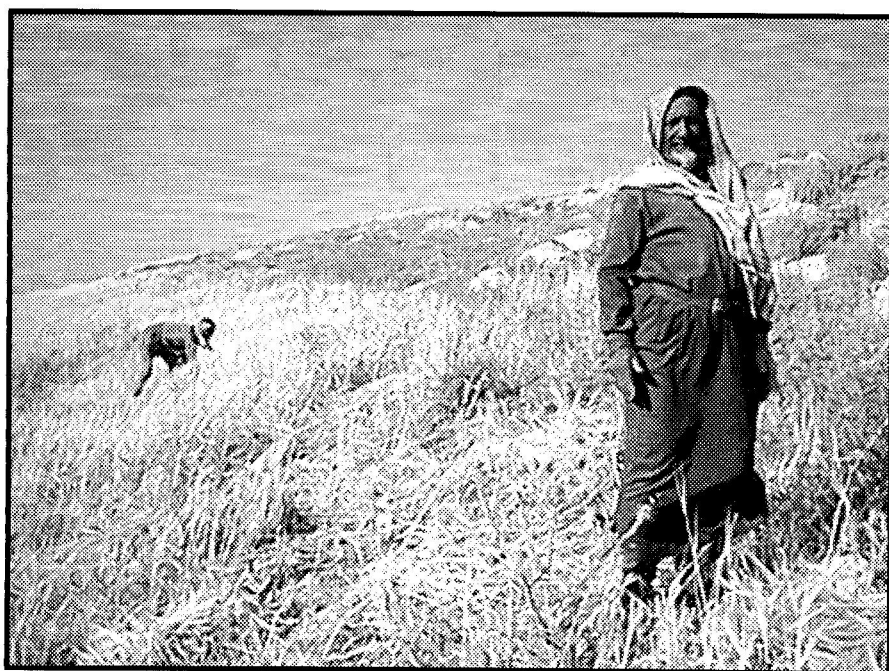
As with most of the Bedouin in the region, also the grandfather of Midallah chose for the security of concrete houses. The tent was abandoned and a house was built next to the cave. The view became the size of a window and the breeze had to be manufactured by a fan, but sleep during the cold, rainy and windy winter was more secure and comfortable. The now useless cave soon filled with rubble and mud. The stone partitionings collapsed. The cave became history and at the most a hazard for children falling in it. (Cont'd p 3)



Former cave turned into a well

had married off his daughter to this community. On the way there he explained the economical situation of his daughter. Her husband works in the army earning a minimum wage of 150 Jordanian Dinar a month (200 USD). He is now paying 50 JD a month to pay off the loan for his wedding and another 50 JD to pay off the loan for building his house. What can the remaining 50 JD do?

Upon arrival, we are introduced to Midallah, father of Ibrahiim. Ibrahiim is the husband of Barjas' daughter. The society is all about relationships. Midallah is pleased to see us and shows us an abandoned cave full of stones,



Midallah, owner of the cave, harvesting wheat like his grandfathers used to do

(From p 2)

When we came there were 5 houses around this cave. One of Midallah and 4 of his married sons with their families. He still has 3 more to marry, who will most likely also build among their brothers. This is a considerable community, and a growing one. Yet they were deprived of one of life's essentials. They had no water. The government water pipes do not reach this community since they are too far from the village. They had to buy their water from tanks at

expensive rates. 40 JD were spent monthly (50 USD). That is extreme for their wages. But that was also the extremity of their need.

The once abandoned cave has again become a treasure, a treasure they were sitting on. The cave has been transformed into a water cistern. It was cleaned of all the dirt, rubble and stones. The large entrance was closed and a small opening was made in the centre. Finally, it was plastered. Rain water is collected during the rainy

season and used in the 6 to 8 months of the dry season when not a drop of rain falls. Now, a few rainfalls on the extensive slope above the opening of the water cistern will fill it to the brim. It holds 250 m3 of rainwater. This will supply the community with 6 to 9 months of water during the dry season until the rains come again and refill the supply.

In this way we serve the communities with reliable sources of precious water that last for generations to come.

Reflections of a Novice HADA Project Officer — Yunnan, China

I HAD expected to suffer more, but it turned out to be as much of a holiday as it was a successful business trip. The scenery was breath taking, venturing northwest from Kunming into the Himalayan Mountains, I only experienced one day without a hot shower. I discovered by far the greatest beauty was to be found in the unassuming, hospitable Chinese people. I felt humbled by their kindness and generosity.

But the people that impressed me, and that I most remember, were two American women. One young lady,

Renee, has left the luxury of home and family to devote herself to several hundred children in a remote mountain village. She lives in a very basic 3 x 4 m room above the village school, without indoor plumbing. But it is her heart to help children learn English, who would otherwise spend their days labouring with their families in the rice fields. HADA is financially enabling these children to receive what our children take for granted, an education.

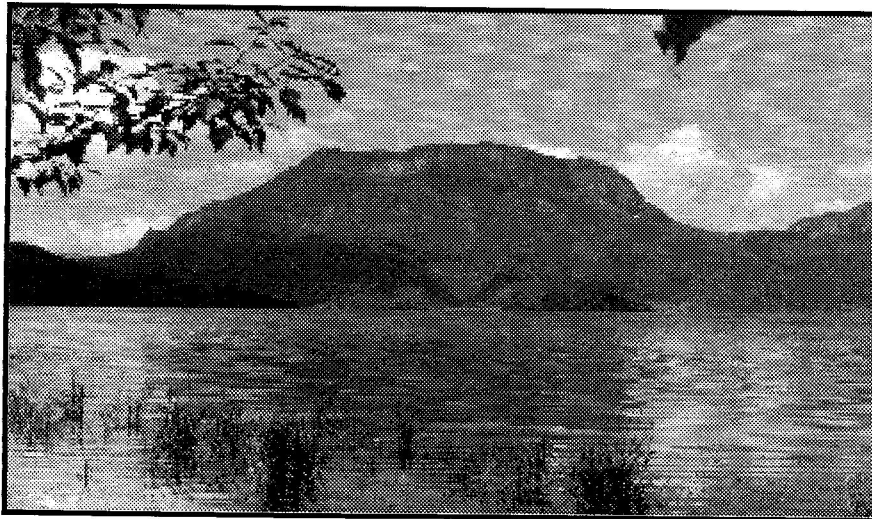
Another lady, Ruth, in her sixties, is spending not

only her time, but her own money to help the desperately poor people in her village. She suffers constant pain in one knee and went back to the USA to receive a knee replacement. Ruth declined the operation when she realised that after the operation she wouldn't be able to sit on the floor with the

Chinese people she seeks to help.

Time and space won't permit telling the stories of the many other faithful HADA workers. I was very impressed by their commitment, devotion and love in the work of HADA.

One final observation: I left China amazed at the warm welcome given to HADA personnel everywhere by the Chinese government officials. There are numerous "green lights" — multiple opportunities available to HADA. This makes the only negative point all the more tragic: the lack of funds available to take advantage of the opportunities being offered to HADA.



Chaney Carter
Project Officer, HADA Australia

HADA's Vision: *To see medical, education, agricultural and sanitation programs established in countries as needed.*

Current HADA Projects

Yunnan, China

- Pig farming
- Chicken farming
- Sponsoring children for schooling
- Training English teachers

Astana, Kazakhstan

- Pregnancy Crisis Centre
- Community health

HADA has provided funding to the following associate organisations for some of their projects.

SAI, China

- Sponsoring mature rural students to language and medical school
- Sponsoring children for schooling
- Assisting a hospital for the poor
- Supporting a school for the children of nomadic families
- School renovations
- Hydatids treatment and eradication project
- Yak micro-loan project
- Community health training

IAM, Afghanistan

- The Herat Ophthalmic Centre
- Herat Community Development Program
- Herat Mental health Clinic
- Ophthalmic Technicians Training Program
- Maternal Child Health — training women health workers
- Primary Mental Health Program
- Disaster Management Program

Harvest International Services, Cambodia

- Vocational training
- Village education
- Street kids

HADA wishes to thank **Anthony Smith and Company** for the printing of this newsletter. Anthony Smith and Company (07) 5531 6333 can assist you with all your accounting and body corporate services.

Rural Schools in China

EDUCATION is not free in China and a small, in our estimation, charge is made by the Education Department. The amount varies according to the location, level of the school, accommodation provided etc.

Many village schools provide accommodation for 5 days per week and supply some rice. The students are required to bring additional food from home and do their own cooking.

One of the projects that our English teacher friends are involved in is training the



children to grow good quality vegetables in an 'igloo' or hot house. This will give the children access to good healthy vegetables while living at the school.

HADA is assisting in these projects in a number of rural areas in China.



Hot house at the school for growing vegetables

Tax Deductibility

The process is a long and winding path. The documentation has passed through AusAID and they have recommended that tax deductible status be given to HADA. All the information is now in the Ministry of the Treasury where it needs to be checked through again for them to be able to make a recommendation to the Minister for his signature and approval. When this is obtained it can be "Gazetted" — the final step. This will give HADA tax deductible status for certain projects and you, the supporters of these projects, will be able to record these tax deductible gifts on your taxation returns. Be assured we will advise you when this is available.