

**Danny Glover Interview with Ethiopian Television
Adigrat, Tigray Region, 27 November 2004**

DG

What I learned from UNICEF is they put you in the fire. We've had a very extraordinary trip here in the region of Tigray. We were at a school here as a community devastated by the war with Eritrea.

We visited landmine recovery programmes. We also visited a school which interestingly enough has a comprehensive programme about Mine Risk Education. It was wonderful to watch this classroom as a stage for talking about the experience – also they use the victims. And outside they have a place to demonstrate to the students how they had to be careful as they went along in life.

It was also interesting that they focused on children rights as part of lessons and the idea that all of this was played out on various stages. Play acting, drama, music, classroom orientation. All these things were very interesting, very informative for me. Once you begin to do that for any children, for any school – for the boys and girls from first, second grade – these are things that will have residual effects throughout their lives – as they move into adolescence and adulthood. It is great to the role and how the community has embraced the whole idea in an area infested with landmines and unexploded ordnances – to cope with that situation and with programmes and to protect themselves and children who are most vulnerable. One of these main points of understanding about UNICEF's focus on landmines is that no weapon should outlast the war. And landmines outlast wars. They affect people's lives, they affect the psychological nature with which people live their lives and how they go on with their lives, rebuilding their lives after the conflict. And so I saw people and whatever they say about people in under-developed countries about being lazy – that is not what you see here.

You see people working hard, working countless hours to change their lives, to improve the lives of their children.

ETV

Why are you focusing on landmines for you first trip as goodwill ambassador – why not other children's issues?

DG

On this short visit we focused on HIV/AIDS and its transmission among children and young people and the prevalence and their impact it had on children and young people. So we didn't just focus on landmines because of the upcoming conference in Nairobi, Kenya, around landmines and reemphasizing the importance that we have to have concrete programmes, specific programmes to eradicate landmines – to get rid of landmines. It costs three dollars to plant a landmine but a thousand dollars to destroy it. So these are the kinds of things that are just as important. UNICEF leaves

no stone unturned. It deals with children from all aspects – from having a safe community and ensuring children’s safety is the first act that needs to be done in order for people to recover their lives.

ETV

What can we expect from your trip?

DG

I am a goodwill ambassador for good reason – I have visibility and hopefully that visibility translates into people putting more pressure on their respective communities and governments to change policy, to initiate policy. But also I think our presence here, not only my presence but the whole idea that UNICEF and other people have come because there are people who care. And in some sense that resonates to people. We are here because we care, and I believe that lifts the spirits of these people in some sense.