



Children crossing  
a rope bridge

## Building Bridges

In some rural communities around the world, people cannot get to school, a market, or visit the doctor because of a river they cannot cross. Footbridges are a common solution in many places. These basic bridges are often made with rope and pieces of wood. They're not very strong and sometimes fall down.

About 20 years ago, a man in the US saw a photo in a magazine of a person in Ethiopia being hauled over the Blue Nile River on a rope. This was how people crossed the river ever since the old bridge **collapsed**. The image made Ken Frantz, a construction company owner, decide to fix that bridge.

Frantz created a group called Bridges to Prosperity to build the bridge. The group worked with

the local people who would use the bridge, and the **tribal elders** gave permission for the project. Donkeys carried supplies to the area, and Frantz, his team, and local volunteers built a lightweight steel bridge in 10 days. Since then, Bridges to Prosperity has built more than 250 bridges in countries around the world.

A safe and reliable footbridge improves the lives of people in rural areas. It means they can bring goods or food to a market to sell. They can possibly earn an income from this. It also means children can go to school and families can visit their relatives on the other side of the river.

**collapse** fall down

**tribal elders** older people who make decisions for a tribe

**A** Read the article. Circle **T** for *true* or **F** for *false*.

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. There are places where not having a bridge is a problem. | T | F |
| 2. Footbridges are for people to drive across.              | T | F |
| 3. Most footbridges are made of lightweight steel.          | T | F |
| 4. Footbridges can be dangerous.                            | T | F |
| 5. A tourist in Ethiopia decided to fix a bridge.           | T | F |
| 6. Ken Frantz saw the problem in a photo in a magazine.     | T | F |
| 7. Frantz had a solution to the problem.                    | T | F |

**B** Number the events in the article in order.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Village elders approved the bridge project.
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. The Bridges to Prosperity group was created.
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. The group and local volunteers built a new bridge.
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. Frantz saw a photo of a dangerous river crossing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ e. Bridges to Prosperity built more than 250 bridges.
- \_\_\_\_\_ f. Frantz decided to fix the bridge.

**C** Complete the sentences with *as a result of*, *because*, or *because of*.

- 1. People cannot go to the market \_\_\_\_\_ the river.
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ the bridge fell down, people crossed the river by rope.
- 3. Ken Frantz knew about the problem \_\_\_\_\_ a photo in a magazine.
- 4. Bridges to Prosperity was created \_\_\_\_\_ Ken's decision to build a bridge.