



It's all about people!



The African Connection

A quarterly publication of East African Village Outreach

Fall
2025

Special Edition – Trip report



From the Director's Desk:

Dear friends,

I was in Ethiopia and Kenya in September 2025 visiting our project sites and meeting with our partners.

I also met some of the very people you, our donors, are helping. One of them is this bright young lady, **Rediet Mesfin**, who dropped out of a four-year college due to financial constraints. Through our conversation, I could tell she is very talented. Her command of English is impressive. I asked her to write about her story, and we departed. What I read in her story moved me so much that I decided to assist her in any way I can send her back to school. You will love her story below.

Rediet Mesfin - In her own words



I was born in Adama, Ethiopia, on a quiet day that marked the beginning of a stormy journey. My name is Rediet Mesfin, and I am 21 years old.

My childhood was far from easy. I did not grow up with my family, and that absence carved a hollow space in my heart. At school, I was just an average student, but behind the grades,

I carried a storm—anger, frustration, and a loneliness I couldn't explain.

But the deepest wound of my childhood was losing my mother. She had left Ethiopia when I was only two years old. I grew up imagining her face, her voice, her touch. And then, one day when I was eight, she came back. I still remember the excitement running through me like fire. I ran to my friends shouting, "My mom is here! My mom came back!" When I saw her, my heart leaped. She looked tired, but I didn't notice—I was just happy to have her back. What I didn't know was that she was carrying an invisible enemy inside her: cancer.

Soon, she was admitted to the hospital. I remember the smell of disinfectant in the halls, the way people whispered, the way adults avoided my eyes. She had surgery, but the doctors already knew the truth: the cancer had spread everywhere. Her time was running out.

A few months later, she was gone.

I still don't have the words for the agony and sorrow that wrapped around me. It felt like the world had been ripped apart. I had waited years to see her, only to lose her again forever.

After her death, my father and my aunt came for me. They took me away from the people I had been living with, and I began a new life with them. Every night, I whispered the same prayer: "God, please give me a mother who will love me. Please give my father a wife who will care for him". Yet, amid the darkness, there



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were sparks of light. Lughter with friends in the dorms, joy from volunteer activities, and pure freedom in ther artt class at the university I was studying, where my pencil and colors told stories my lips couldn't.

Eventually, I knew I couldn't stay. The pain outweighed the hope. I made the hardest choice—I dropped out of that university. Now, I stand on a different road. In Ethiopia, a degree doesn't guarantee a job. Many graduates leave school with empty hands and broken dreams. So, I asked myself: Why wait? Why not start now—work, learn, and face the real world head-on?

Not long ago, my step mother's uncle, Seifu Ibssa, gave me advice. We met for the first time this year when my step mom invited him for lunch. He was impressed by my English language skills. He didn't really know me, but as we talked, I shared my plans to study economics and work during the day to cover my education costs. He listened carefully and then said, "You know, accounting has a lot of opportunities anywhere you live. It might be a great choice for you." He even offered to cover my tuition, which was a huge relief. So, I decided to give myself a chance to explore this path, to study hard, and to see what other options are out there. I don't know exactly where this path will lead me, but I walk by faith. My life has been shaped by loss, sorrow, survival, and unexpected love. And through it all, I believe this: in God's timing, I will find my way. For now, I have joined a four year college again, this time thanks to a kind man who saw something in me. My future could be bright, I am hopeful.

Rediet is now attending Addis Ababa University, School of Commerce. Tuition fee per year: \$621. Please consider supprting Rediet. Mark your gift "Rediet".

Head teacher at Lana Reese resigns

We were disappointed to hear that our Head Teacher at Lana Reese Preschool, Worknesh Seyoum, had to resign from her teaching job she loved so much due to health reasons. We met her soon after she finished 8th grade and sent her to high school. We also paid for her to get a training in teaching Kindergartners.

Wornkesh was born deformed. A volunteer



team from So. Korea recently operated on her, and told her that she cannot work for at least 2-3 years. I visited Worknesh during my last trip. She plans to open a small shop to sustain her life. EAVO has provided her with some financial support to achieve that. Please pray for a quick recovery.

A replacement teacher has been hired to continue teaching at Lana Reese School.



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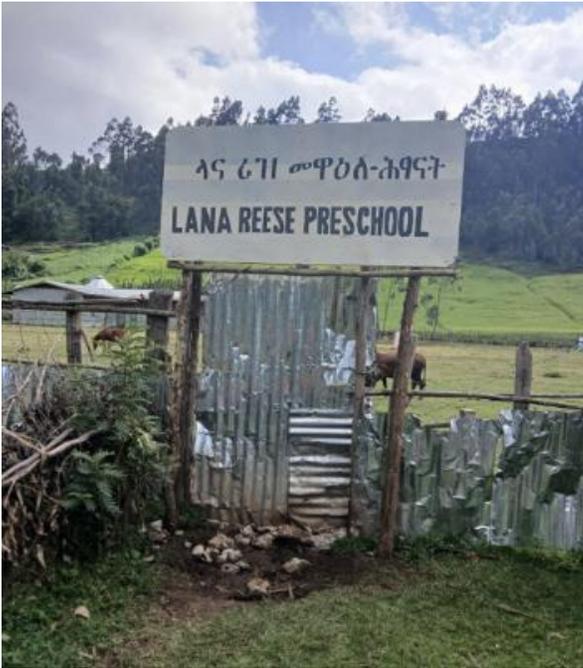
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Lana Reese Preschool

We built Lana Reese Preschool with sticks and mud due to shortage of funds about 15 years ago, and now needs some repairs. The building needs to be retrofitted at the foundation and repair the external walls.



Edoy Elementary School Latrine Project

I met community representatives of Edoy Elementary school and delivered your donation to build the latrine for the school. Our Partner, Begashaw Tsegaye, will oversee the project which will be constructed by some of our own students who completed their 4-year college in Engineering with our support and have established their own construction business. The construction will also be supervised by the District School Superintendent.





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Acheber High School



Acheber high school has been lagging behind in sending students to college since its opening



some 5 years ago. Last year, our board decided to help by supporting a new Principal

with good track record. We sent \$185 per month to be distributed among the teachers and also hired a college graduate to tutor students. These efforts resulted with 5 students becoming eligible to attend a 4-year college. Thank you Board members and donors for your positive response in this program.



All boys? We need to change that.

Our Guest Speaker – March 28, 2026

We are excited to inform you that Rev. Jack McNary will be our guest speaker at our upcoming activity & financial reports event scheduled for March 28, 2026 at Fremont Presbyterian Church, 5770 Carlson Dr. Sacramento, CA 95819. He will share his Ethiopia experiences. We look forward to seeing you there at 6 PM.



2 New Ways to Donate to EAVO:

There are two tax smart strategies for donating to EAVO for your consideration:

- 1) Donate appreciated stock from your portfolio
- 2) Donate Qualified Charitable Contribution (QCD) that would come from a portion of your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your IRA. For details and to see if this might make sense for you, contact our Treasurer, Rob Colvin, at rcolvin789@gmail.com