



## The Official Newsletter of Projects-Abroad

**Ethiopia**  
ETHIOPIA

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### Selam! From Projects-Abroad Ethiopia

፩ - IS A GE'EZ NUMERICAL REPRESENTATION FOR NUMBER 1 AND 'HABESHA' IS THE NAME GIVEN TO ALL ETHIOPIANS DESPITE THEIR DIFFERENCE IN RELIGION, TRIBE, ECONOMY OR SOCIAL STATUS. SO ፩-HABESHA IS TO IMPLY THE UNITY OF ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE DESPITE THEIR DIFFERENCE.

**Welcome to January's newsletter. This month has been full of excitements, holidays and changes for all of us in Ethiopia including our volunteers and staffs of Projects Abroad.**

**This newsletter aims to update all our volunteers about the latest happenings in Projects Abroad Ethiopia in the month of January.**

**In this edition we will see a story about one of our outstanding volunteer who came and made a long term difference in one of our care projects.**

**Projects Abroad Ethiopia added two new staffs (a Country Director and Information Manager). They will also be introduced to you on this issue.**

**Ethiopian Christmas and 'Timket' (Epiphany), two of the most popular religious holidays in Ethiopia will also be discussed.**

**Bereket Tesema**  
**Information manager**

**I would like to thank all volunteers from the past and present for sacrificing your valuable time, money and knowledge to make a difference in our projects.**

**I hope that you will all find something that would grab your attention as you read through this edition. Big thanks to our volunteers who have shared their stories and photos with us. We encourage everyone to join us in making the newsletter interesting and exciting by sending in your own written articles and pictures of your experiences here with us. Your stories and pictures will help others to understand and learn about Ethiopia. If you have anything you'd like to contribute, suggest, or comment on, please contact:-**

**[berekettesema@projects-abroad.org](mailto:berekettesema@projects-abroad.org)**



## NEW STAFF MEMBERS

### A Few Words from the New Ethiopian Director

Greetings!

It's been three weeks since I formally took over as Projects - Abroad Director for Ethiopia but it seems like I've been here longer. Every minute has been an experience worth a thousand words. I've spent a lot of time talking to volunteers, international staff, and local partners who have made me feel at home at Projects Abroad.



Through my interactions, I have developed a profound admiration to the organizational network and the skills and commitment of the Projects Abroad staff all around the world. I have also been amazed at the level of experience and skills that many of our volunteers possess and their desire to contribute to making our world a better place. Moreover I have come to appreciate the beauty of the mix brought by different cultures and traditions to my country.

I believe that the unique mixture of professional contribution and cultural interaction makes our organization stand-out from others. I hope that in the years to come I can contribute to the legacy of Projects Abroad in Ethiopia and around the world.

Minassie Alemayehu  
Director for Ethiopia

### A Few Words from the New Information Manager



Greetings!

Working with Projects Abroad for the past three weeks has been quite interesting. As information manager I have been learning about each activity of volunteers and staffs. I really appreciate the commitment and co-ordination of the entire Projects-Abroad community all around the world. Watching the exceptional difference that volunteers are making in the lives of our community has been an inspiration for me and my colleagues.

Collaborating with other staffs and volunteers, I will dedicate myself to make sure all the efforts of volunteers are recorded and also keep you up-to-date with the latest happenings in Ethiopia and in Projects Abroad in particular. Though it has only been a few weeks since I joined Projects Abroad, I already feel at home and I am pretty sure I will enjoy the rest of my stay with you all.

Bereket Tesema  
Information manager



## Australian Lauren Cass changed her plan from traveling in Europe to volunteering in Ethiopia

**"Originally I was going to travel through Europe for two months, to experience a range of diverse cultures, to immerse myself into a different world. But then I had an overwhelming sense of selfishness because I was going to be spending all of that money just on myself. It's then that I decided to spend that money on volunteering instead!" said Lauren Cass (26); so she decided to sign up with Projects Abroad and volunteer at their Care Project in Ethiopia.**

**Her placement was at SOS Toukoul Children Village, where Lauren worked with orphans and abandoned babies. "In the beginning I felt like I was doing nothing other than watching older children play. After some weeks I started to feed and change the babies, interact and provide**



**games for the children and even be involved in working split shifts with other volunteers so that we could also work night hours, where we were involved in all of the duties to put the children to bed." She also had multiple meetings with the administration at the orphanage about ways to improve the children's wellbeing.**

**Besides helping the children, Lauren proactively donated 12 baby beds to the orphanages.**



**"Though there were many challenges I am so glad we finally donated the beds to the orphanage. It was overwhelming watching the children's faces when they saw the new beds. We also had a great time painting the beds;-, thanks to Projects Abroad for providing the paints."**

**Lauren advises future volunteers, who want to have a similar experience to spend their time, knowledge and money on volunteering in developing countries like Ethiopia. "It is like killing two birds with one stone. You will learn about and explore different culture, society and more, at the same time make a difference in the lives of others who can use your help."**

**Finally, she said she really loved her time in Ethiopia because she was able to make a long term difference and was able to meet other volunteers who came from different countries around the world. "I did have a wonderful time in Ethiopia and I would definitely do it again."**



# HOLIDAYS IN JANUARY

## Ethiopian Christmas

Christmas in Ethiopia was celebrated on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January since the country still use the old Julian calendar. Christmas celebration among Ethiopian Christians is also called 'Ganna' or 'Liddet'. Most Christians go to church on Christmas Eve or in the morning wearing a traditional outfits and spend some time singing spiritual songs and sharing scriptures about the birth of the savior.

It played with a curved stick and a round wooden ball. It has some similarities with hockey but yet it is a typical Ethiopian tradition game.



'Doro wet' is a popular traditional food. It is prepared

from chicken along with some eggs. The wet is eaten with 'injera' a kind of pancake. Pieces of the 'injera' are used as an edible spoon to scoop up the wet. Every foreigner who comes to Ethiopia enjoys eating Doro wet.

Around Christmas time, youngsters in the countryside play a game called 'Ganna'.



## TIMKET (Epiphany)

It feels like each and every individual is out on the streets. You can hear the beautiful voices singing almost from every angle. All roads are blocked for traffic and you can see red carpets on the highways.

It feels as if you are in a different Addis Ababa.

The festival is celebrated 12 days after Christmas. It starts from the eve of the festival which is on 18th January at 2 pm local time with traditional horns that herald the celebrations with colorful processions and ceremonies. Timket is a religious festival celebrated with much passion in Addis Ababa, Gondar, and Lalibela in Ethiopia. The festival is the Ethiopian Orthodox celebration of

Epiphany and venerates Christ's baptism in the River Jordan. It is the most colorful event of the year in the country. The celebrations start from the



eve of the festival which is on 18th January at 2 pm local time with traditional horns that herald the celebrations with colorful processions and ceremonies. The main ceremony commences with the priest solemnly carrying the 'Tabot', reverently wrapped in rich silk cloth to the nearby stream at around 2am on 19th January.



## IN THE PROJECTS



**We have about 14 volunteers in this month at Projects Abroad Ethiopia working in our Care, Journalism, Sports, Teaching and Medical projects and still expecting more. Most of our volunteers enjoys there stay in Ethiopia with Projects Abroad and all our placements are very happy with the efforts of our volunteers.**

**We recently had an existing dirty day organized at SOS Toukoul orphanage, one of our care projects. Our volunteers painted 12 beds which were donated by Lauren Cass, a volunteer from Australia. The paints were provided by Projects Abroad. Big thanks to all of you who participated in making a long term difference at SOS Toukoul orphanage.**



## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*ETHIOPIA*

*What would it be glorious if we would have this climate in Netherlands?  
Every day the light and feel the warmth of the Sun. Time and time again I  
am touched by the warmth and openness of the people  
I meet and feel here at all in the right place. It's a great experience to not  
here as a tourist walking around.  
But am just like all the others on the way to my work.  
That will give a real picture of life here what you will experience otherwise not as  
soon.*

Sonja Pijperna (From Netherlands | volunteering in our care project)



# JANUARY'S PHOTO ALBUM





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