



## CELEBRATING LITERACY MONTH

It's hard to believe that when we opened the BCI Academy, the literacy rate in Ethiopia was hovering at around 39%. Drastic progress has been made, and literacy has recently crossed over the 50% mark; however, this is still well below where it needs to be.

Literacy is crucial not only to advance in education but to navigate the world. Children who cannot read or those who read poorly grow into adults who cannot successfully advocate for themselves. They may be taken advantage of. They are at the mercy of others to provide them with reliable information. Imagine not being able to read the instructions on a medication you need to take, or ingredients in the food you are consuming.

September is literacy month, and we are marking it by surprising children with books for our Random Acts of Kindness project. This project is only possible with your support. If you would like to help young minds grow by surprising a child with a book, you can do so for \$15. We will be sure to send you a photo of the child receiving your gifted book. You can mail a check, call the office with a credit or debit card number, or donate via PayPal. Be sure to indicate "literacy" as the purpose for your funds.



Receiving a gifted book

## Post Newsletter

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WWW.BLESSINGTHECHILDREN.ORG

INFO@BLESSINGTHECHILDREN.ORG

## SECURING THE FUTURE

When we meet a child who has no food in their home and has never attended school, the priorities are clear. Immediate interventions ensure that the child's vital needs are met. Once the child is in a safe situation, it's imperative that we begin thinking beyond the immediate. It is our goal that each child graduates from our program equipped for a self-sustaining future.

Recently, we have taken an important step toward securing the financial future of our children by opening a bank account in each child's name and depositing 100 birr in starter funds. We are educating the children on financial matters and encouraging their guardians to begin investing for their future needs. In a culture of day-to-day living, this is a significant event. Importantly, no one can withdraw funds from the accounts except the child, and the children can only access the funds after they reach the age of 18. This safeguard will keep the funds protected until the children begin their adult lives.



Kalkidan Alemayehu

An added benefit of the bank accounts is that we are able to leverage the accounts to reward hard work and academic achievements. Already, top finishers for the 2020-21 school year were provided with deposits into their accounts in recognition of their efforts and success. We believe this incentive will result in improved academic performance as the students strive to earn rewards. The accounts can also be used to recognize important events such as birthdays and passing national exam scores.

If you would like to help your sponsored child or any child secure their future, you can make a gift at any time to help their seed money grow!



Amanuel Alemayehu



# HAPPY NEW YEAR, ETHIOPIA!

On Saturday, September 11th, Ethiopia celebrated “Enkutatash.” The word literally means jewel, and it is the day that marks the start of a new year. The day is typically celebrated by attending church and joining with family for a meal.

We were so excited to surprise our children with eggs and chickens to help them celebrate the new year with a nutritious meal. For our families, one protein is a treat; two in one meal made for a very special day. There were plenty of smiles all around.

**Did you know?** Ethiopia is 7 years behind the western world. They have just now marked the start of 2014.



Happy mothers and guardians receiving chickens and eggs



Daremyelesh and Mekdelawit Girma

## RISING COSTS SQUEEZE ETHIOPIANS



Natsanet Assefa

Funds in Ethiopia are being stretched thinner than ever before with the astronomical inflation that has taken place in recent years. The cost of everything from a pair of shoes to a bag of grain has more than doubled since 2016. The inflation rate was 15.81% in 2019, 20.35% in 2020, and is already 30.4% for 2021 as of August. Supply-side shortage is a key factor contributing to the recent acceleration in inflation. War in the Tigray region is also stressing the country. Inflation is truly out of control and the government is discussing plans to intervene.

We continue to do what we can to provide families with additional food support in these trying times. Please join us in praying for inflation to stabilize to ensure that we can continue meeting the needs of our families. The cost for extra food support is \$30 / month per family. We welcome financial partnerships in helping cover the additional grain support costs.



Nardos Melaku

# 2021/22 SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS

The 2021/22 school year kicked off on Monday, September 13th. As with last year, our operations will be influenced by government mandates regarding education. We are beginning the year with in-person learning, and pray that we can continue on with this format for the duration of the school year.

We invite you to join us in covering our children, staff and school in prayer as the new school year begins.



Sifen and Sebele receiving school materials

### Prayer Requests:

- Health and safety of students and staff
- Academic progress and success of students
- Minimal disruptions to the school year
- Funding to finish grade 11 & 12 classrooms
- Passing national exam scores for grades 8, 10 and 12
- Prosperity for the school and people



Staff distributing books and supplies

## IMMEDIATE NEEDS

### Sponsorship of Sifen

Provide monthly sponsorship for 6-year-old Sifen Abreham to meet her needs and help her thrive.

**Need: \$45/month**  
**Raised: \$0**  
**Remaining Need: \$45/month**



### October Food Support

Provide critical food support for families in crisis due to the effects of the pandemic.

**Need: \$30/family**  
**Raised: \$0**  
**Remaining Need: \$1,200**



### A Promise Fulfilled

Be part of BCI history by helping with the final steps in building grade 11 & 12 classrooms to complete the school.

**Need: \$13,910**  
**Raised: \$125**  
**Remaining Need: \$13,785**



You can **make a donation** by phone at (888) 269-2719, by web at [www.BlessingtheChildren.org](http://www.BlessingtheChildren.org) or by mail to: Blessing the Children, 2265 Fraser Road, Kawkawlin, MI 48631