



Ethiopia: They Yearn to Learn!



Ethiopia is home to five excellent ICCM schools. Children may be living in material poverty, but their educational environment is rich. One of those schools is at a crossroads, where desperate need meets tremendous opportunity.

The town of Alem Tena, an hour or so from Addis Ababa, suffers from four serious problems. A very hot climate and deep poverty are two of the four — but these are common to many towns in Ethiopia. The third is almost



unique to Alem Tena: The water is contaminated with fluoride, with perhaps 400 times as much as our city water systems use for cavity preven-

tion. The visible result is that most of the children have dark brown stains on their teeth. Even worse, their bones and teeth are being destroyed. And yet, this is home. Families live here. Children are growing up here.

Our school in Alem Tena boasts high academic achieve-

ment. On regional and national exams, these students distinguish themselves. In 2016, all 8th graders passed the regional exam to 9th grade, averaging more than 80% on their results. But now comes the fourth major problem: **no high school**. Once students pass 8th grade, where will they go? Our school only goes through 8th grade. Because of sponsorship, the children have had the benefits of a private school and a Christian education. Once they graduate from 8th grade, they must travel a long way to a public school, move to a place with a public high school, or find a Catholic or Muslim school — but these private schools charge more than most parents can pay. Sounds like we are in dire straits!

But there is amazing news. About a year ago, the local government granted a good piece of property to our school for construction of a high school. This gift of land was received with great joy! In fact, in 2014 our Africa Learning Conference attendees had stood on this very land and prayed that God would give it to us. He has!

After a whole year of working through bureaucratic red tape and planning with architects and leaders, we are ready to build! All documents are in hand. High school can be a reality.





The local government is pressing us to begin construction immediately or risk losing the land. So far, we have managed to build a security fence and a guard house on the property. We have just sent \$25,000 to begin construction.

To build the classroom block, bathrooms and required laboratories, the estimated cost is \$167,000. We are now raising funds for this first phase. Phase two will add an administration block and a library. This is projected to cost another \$67,000, for an approximate grand total of \$234,000.

Is this impossible? Absolutely not! God has helped us complete big projects like this before, through compassionate and generous donors.

Is this a good investment? If only you could see our wonderful high school at Arbegona, another rural Ethiopian community! To help you envision it, look at the



photo below. Students are lined up for tea break in front of a classroom block on which is painted the Periodic Table of Elements. No educational space is wasted! The photo above that is a university-educated science teacher in a lab furnished by parents' contributions. Students in this excellent school earn top marks in their whole state! We know this is possible in Alem Tena, too.

Will you pray with us for this dream to become a reality?

Donated land, visionary leaders, partnership from ICCM, and construction support from abroad will change the Alem Tena community for the better in a wonderful way!

