



International Medical Relief

PROVIDING COMMUNITY HEALTH
TO POPULATIONS MOST IN NEED

ETHIOPIA



PRE-FIELD BRIEFING PACKET

ETHIOPIA

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ABOUT THIS PACKET

This packet has been created to serve as a resource for the 2016 ETHIOPIA Medical Team.

This packet is information about the country and can be read at your leisure or on the airplane. The final section of this booklet is specific to the areas we will be working near (however, not the actual clinic locations) and contains information you may want to know before the trip.

The contents herein are not for distributional purposes and are intended for the use of the team and their families. Sources of the information all come from public record and documentation. You may access any of the information and more updates directly from the World Wide Web and other public sources.



BACKGROUND

Unique among African countries, the ancient Ethiopian monarchy maintained its freedom from colonial rule with the exception of a short-lived Italian occupation from 1936-41. In 1974, a military junta, the Derg, deposed Emperor Haile SELASSIE (who had ruled since 1930) and established a socialist state. Torn by bloody coups, uprisings, wide-scale drought, and massive refugee problems, the regime was finally toppled in 1991 by a coalition of rebel forces, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front. A constitution was adopted in 1994, and Ethiopia's first multiparty elections were held in 1995. A border war with Eritrea in the late 1990s ended with a peace treaty in December 2000. In November 2007, the Eritrea-Ethiopia Border Commission (EEBC) issued specific coordinates as virtually demarcating the border and pronounced its work finished. Alleging that the EEBC acted beyond its mandate in issuing the coordinates, Ethiopia has not accepted them and has not withdrawn troops from previously contested areas pronounced by the EEBC as belonging to Eritrea. In August 2012, longtime leader Prime Minister MELES Zenawi died in office and was replaced by his Deputy Prime Minister HAILEMARIAM Desalegn, marking the first peaceful transition of power in decades. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/za.html>



EXTENDING YOUR STAY

What to see in Ethiopia

The things to do in Ethiopia will absolutely astound you! The country is just emerging from a very rough communist state and is just starting to flourish. Because the country was so closed off to the rest of the world the people of the country are very open and curious about the outside world. Ethiopians are literally ingesting everything they can get their hands on from music, dress, and even culture. One of the most fascinating things about the country is that it is a very ancient culture. Their language, Amharic, is one of the oldest written languages in the world. Add on the fact that Ethiopia has tourist attractions like feeding hyenas, the city known as the 2nd Jerusalem, African Safaris, and even a real world Camelot, you have quite a country & culture to experience. It is also one of the cheapest places to travel in Africa.

#1: Attend the Lake Chamo 'crocodile market'
The name is a local in-joke; the crocodiles of Lake Chamo aren't for sale and are very much alive and well, sunning themselves on the banks of the lake and gliding through the water. Afternoon boat trips on the lake, where you can see these massive creatures up close and personal (and maybe hippos too) are a must.



#2: Head back to biblical times in Aksum



According to folklore Aksum was once home to the Queen of Sheba and, today, the Ark of the Covenant's final resting place. The Aksumite Obelisks of the Northern Stelae Field are the main attraction but you can also peek across the wall within the St Mary of Zion Church Complex to see the chapel where the Ark is supposedly kept.

#3: Go trekking in the Simien Mountains
Trekking along the escarpment, surrounded by jagged pinnacles, with the slash of the Great Rift Valley tumbling down before you is one of the finest panoramas on the continent. This is also the home of Gelada 'bleeding heart' baboons. Coming face-to-face with a troop of them while ambling along is almost guaranteed..



#4: Wonder at the Royal Enclosure of Gondar

Africa's own fairy tale castles are testament to the wealth and whimsy of Emperor Fasiladas who made Gondar his capital in the 17th century. Now a museum complex, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is an enthralling peek into the pageantry of the past and the last days of Ethiopia's still revered emperors, which only ended in 1974.



#5: Meet Ethiopia's tribes in the Lower Omo Valley

The Lower Omo Valley is home to 16 culturally distinct tribes including the Hamar (famed for their ornate hairstyles) and the Mursi (known for the lip plates female tribe members wear). Market days - when people from all tribes flock to the region's towns - are a colorful and fascinating experience.



PUBLIC HEALTH OVERVIEW

Ethiopia's health care system is among the least developed in Sub-Saharan Africa and is not, at present, able to effectively cope with the significant health problems facing the country. General lack of physical access to even basic health care facilities in rural areas. Widespread poverty, poor nutritional status, low education levels and poor access to health services have contributed to the high burden of ill health in the country

Life Expectancy: 60 years (country comparison to the world: 193) male: 57.7 years, female: 62.4 years

Infant Mortality rate: 58.28 deaths/1,000 live births (country comparison to the world: 29)

Under-five mortality rate: 77 per 1000 live births (global average: 51)

Maternal mortality ratio: 350 per 100,000 live births (global average: 210)

Prevalence of TB: 237 per 100,000 population (global average: 170)

Prevalence of HIV: NA per 100,000 population

Incidence of malaria: 63533 per 100,000 population (global average: 4082)

Major infectious diseases:

Degree of risk: very high

Food or waterborne diseases: bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever

Vector borne diseases: malaria and dengue fever

Respiratory disease: meningococcal meningitis

Animal contact disease: rabies

Water contact disease: schistosomiasis

Health system: Public health sector only

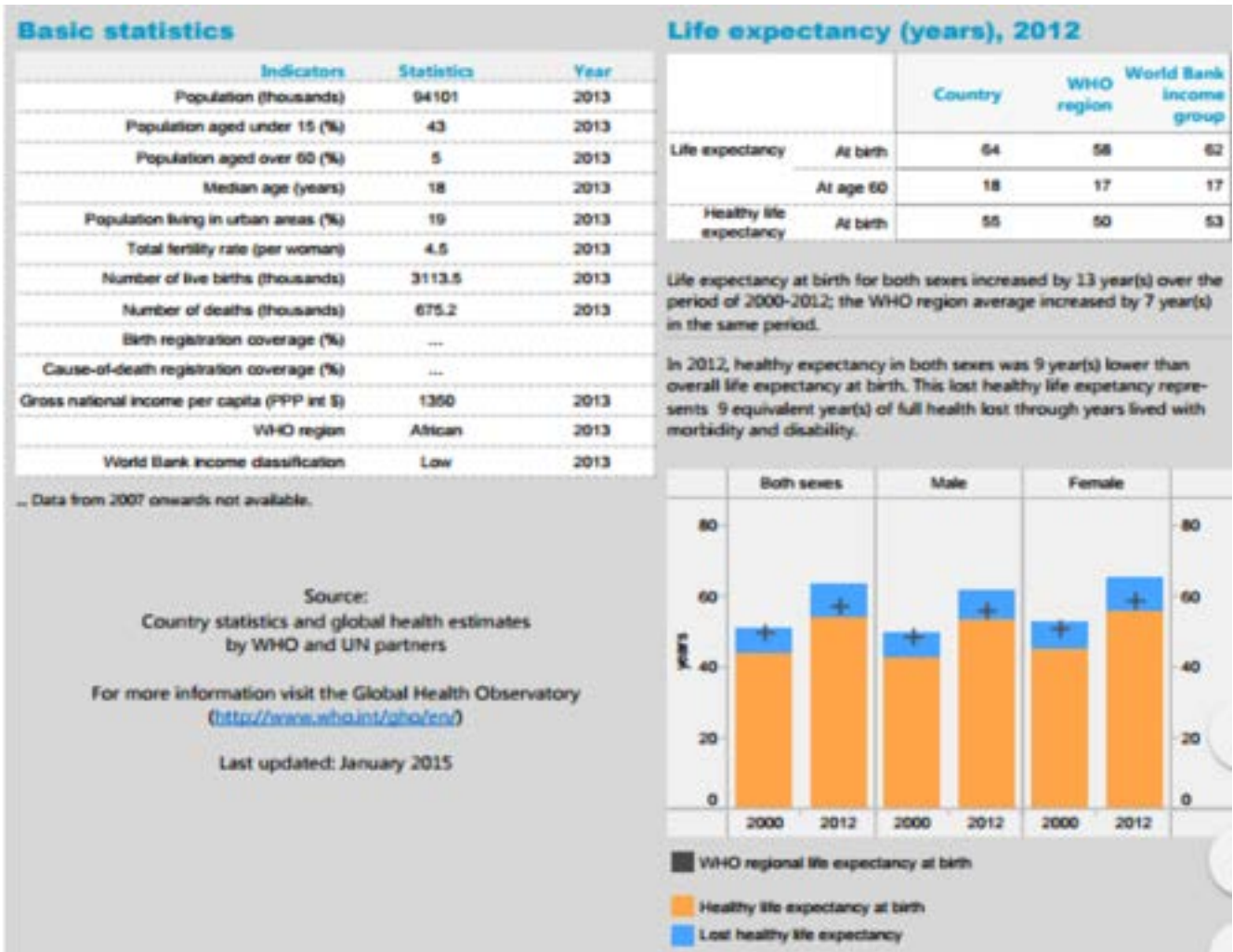
HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

Ethiopia is characterized by a predominantly rural and impoverished population with limited access to safe water, housing, sanitation, food and health care. Estimated life expectancy at birth is 57 years for males and 60 years for females. The burden of disease measured in terms of premature death is estimated at 350 disability adjusted life years lost per 1000 population, which is the highest in sub-Saharan Africa.

The disease burden, responsible for 74% of deaths and 81% of disability adjusted life years lost per year, is dominated by malaria, prenatal and maternal death, acute respiratory infection, nutrition deficiency, diarrhea and HIV/AIDS.

Ethiopia has a decentralized three-tier system of primary, secondary and tertiary care (see figure). The devolution of power to regional governments has largely resulted in shifting decision-making for public service delivery from the central to regional and district levels.

The Health Extension Program is a flagship program of the Ministry of Health. It serves as the primary vehicle for implementation of community-centered essential health care packages and as an effective referral system from the grass-roots level to broaden access to care at secondary and tertiary levels. A large Health Development Army was also initiated to expand the success of the Health Extension Program deeper into the community to improve community ownership and scale-up best practices.

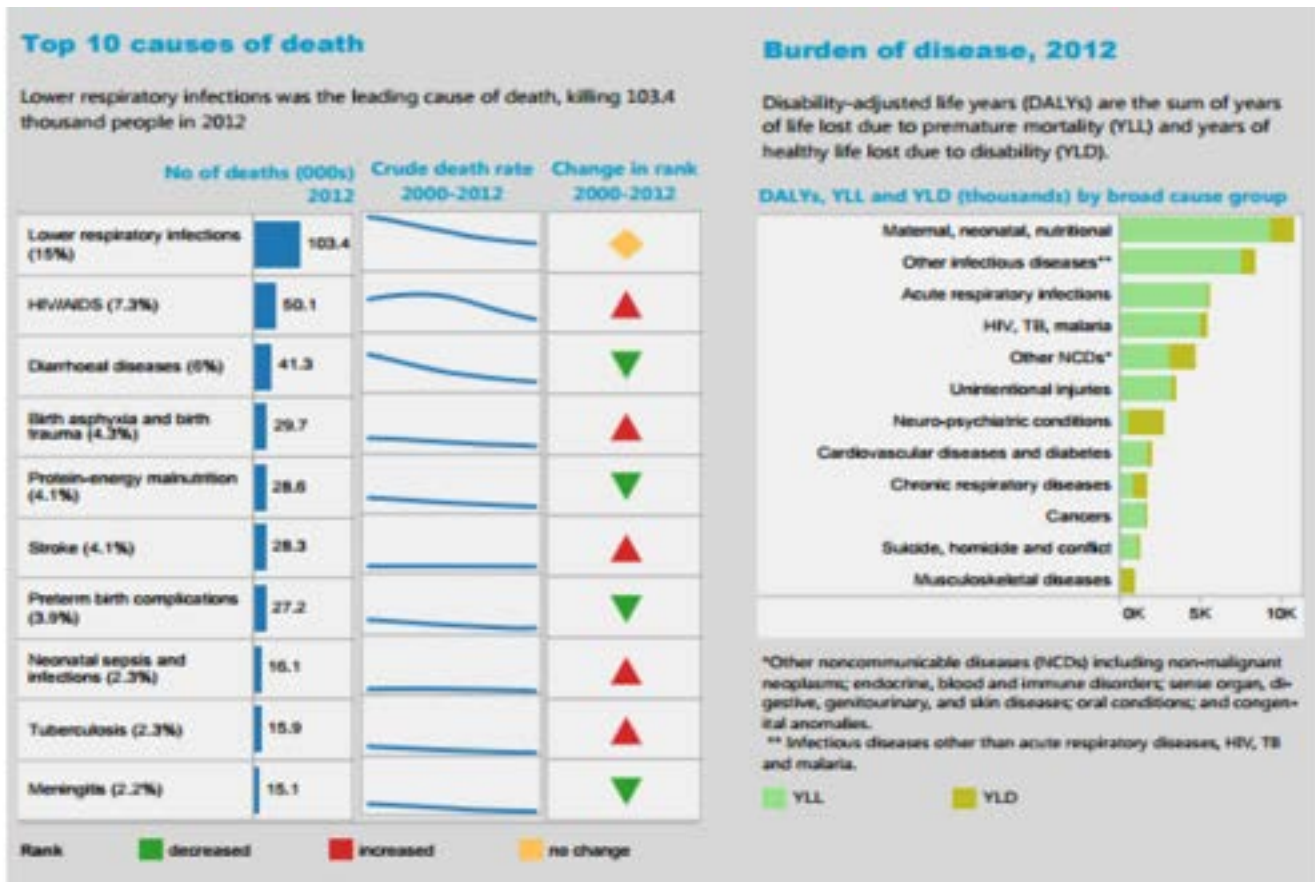


The prospect of better conditions and higher pay in other countries has lured much of Ethiopia’s very scarce resource of medical professionals to leave. According to recent data, there is only 1 medical doctor available for every group of 100,000 Ethiopians and there is only 1 nurse available for every group of 12,000. Meanwhile, there is only 1 hospital bed for every group of 4,900 people in the country, and only 1 major medical health facility for every group of 27,000 people.

Throughout the country, there are a total of 119 medical hospitals and 412 medical health centers. 12 of these medical hospitals are located in the capital city of Addis Ababa. In rural areas, there is almost no access to any health care facility.

HIV/AIDS is prevalent in Ethiopia and so are malnutrition and other communicable diseases. These are usually caused by the very poor sanitation in the country and are made worse by the very poor state of the nation’s health care system. This has led to the very low average life expectancy rate of 45 years for people in Ethiopia. In contrast, the mortality rate for infants in the country is very high, with the national average reaching almost 8 percent. Despite these 2 factors though, population growth is still an overwhelming problem for the country. The government has tried to shift the country’s health care focus to prevention but it has not worked out so well. In the Somali regions of the country, the full immunization rate is as low as 3%, while it is only 20% in

other regions such as in Amhara and Gambela. The capital Addis Ababa has the highest percentage of fully immunized children, but it is still relatively low at 70%.



WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

Access to water supply and sanitation in Ethiopia is amongst the lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa and the entire world. While access has increased substantially with funding from foreign aid, much still remains to be done to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of halving the share of people without access to water and sanitation by 2015, to improve sustainability and to improve service quality.

Some factors inhibiting the achievement of these goals are the limited capacity of water bureaus in the country's nine regions and water desks in the 550 woredas; insufficient cost recovery for proper operation and maintenance; and different policies and procedures used by various donors, notwithstanding the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.



In 2001 the government adopted a water and sanitation strategy that called for more decentralized decision-making; promoting the involvement of all stakeholders, including the private sector; increasing levels of cost recovery; as well as integrating water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion activities. Implementation of the policy apparently is uneven.

In 2005 the government announced highly ambitious targets to increase coverage in its Plan for Accelerated Sustained Development and to End Poverty (PASDEP) for 2010. The investment needed to achieve the goal is about US\$300 million per year, compared to actual investments of US\$39 million in 2001-2002. In 2010 the government presented the equally ambitious Growth and Transformation Plan(GTP) 2011-2015, which aims at increasing drinking water coverage, based on the government's definition, from 68.5% to 98.5%. While donors have committed substantial funds to the sector, effectively spending the money and to ensure the proper operation and maintenance of infrastructure built with these funds remain a challenge.

HEALTH STATUS

HIV/AIDS

Based on a single point estimate, there are nearly 1.2 million people living with HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia. The adult prevalence rate is estimated at 2.4% and the incidence rate is 0.29%. The prevalence and incidence rates significantly vary between geographical areas and gender. The urban prevalence rate is estimated at 7.7%, while the rural prevalence rate is 0.9%. The prevalence rate is 1.7% for males and 2.6% for females.

With 90 000 HIV-positive pregnant women, there are an estimated 14 000 HIV-positive births and a total of 28 000 AIDS death and an estimated 800 000 AIDS orphans annually

Tuberculosis

Ethiopia ranks third in Africa and eighth among the 22 highest tuberculosis (TB) burdened countries in the world. The prevalence of all forms of TB is estimated at 261 per 100 000 population, leading to an annual mortality rate of 64 per 100 000 population. The incidence rate of all forms of TB is estimated at 359 per 100 000 population, while the incidence rate of smear-positive TB is 108 per 100 000 population. The TB case detection rate, treatment success rate and TB cure rate are 74%, 82.5% and 67%, respectively.

Malaria

Malaria is endemic in Ethiopia, with differing intensities of transmission. The disease is prevalent in areas below 2000 m altitude and is seasonal, with irregular transmission patterns. Areas below 2000 m altitude cover three quarters of the country's land mass, with an estimated population of 52 million. An epidemic occurs every 5-8 years in these areas, with frequent outbreaks within short periods. The last epidemic occurred in 2003 and recent outbreaks have been reported in consecutive years from 2006 until early 2010. With an average of more than 3 million clinical cases per year, malaria remains the biggest health problem in Ethiopia.

Maternal and Newborn Health

The maternal mortality ratio in Ethiopia is 676 per 100 000 live births, which is one of the highest in the world and is mainly a result of lack of access to health care, and socioeconomic and demographic factors. This maternal mortality rate remains a major public health challenge facing the country. Every year, 22 000 women and girls die during childbirth or as a result of complications of childbirth.

The lifetime risk of a woman dying during pregnancy or childbirth is 1 in 27. In addition, more than half a



million women suffer from pregnancy-related disabilities. Obstetric fistula, a pregnancy-related disability, affects nearly 9000 women each year. For sociocultural reasons, the magnitude of the disability is significantly higher in rural areas where there is a strong tradition for young women to be married at a very early age

Child Health

Improving child health is one of the priorities of the Health Sector Development Programme IV[8] covering the period 2010-2015. The infant mortality rate is 59 deaths per 1000 live births. The estimate of child mortality is 31 deaths per 1000 children surviving to 12 months of age, while the

overall under-five mortality rate is 88 deaths per 1000 live births. In addition, 67% of all deaths in children aged under 5 years in Ethiopia take place before the child's first birthday. Malaria, pneumonia, diarrhoea and nutrition deficiencies are among the major causes of child mortality. A high mortality and disease burden from nutrition-related factors is also prominent among children aged under 5 years.

Malnutrition is widespread across the country. Overall, 29% of all children are underweight and 9% of children are severely underweight. Also, 31% of male children are underweight compared with 27% of female children. The percentage of children who are underweight is eight times higher in children with mothers with no education compared with children whose mothers have more than secondary education.

Gender and Women's Health

Despite recent improvements, child mortality in Ethiopia is still high. The neonatal and under-five mortality rate, responsible for 30% of annual deaths, is caused mainly by diarrhoea, malaria and pneumonia. In addition, the mortality and disease burden from nutrition-related factors in children aged under 5 years is high. A total of 34.6% of children are born underweight while 50.7% are stunted. Stunting (low height-for-age) reflects the cumulative effects of undernutrition and infections since birth and even prior to birth.

As in other countries, the child mortality rate for females is lower than for males. The average probability of dying by 1 year of age is 60 per 1000 live births for females and 78 per 1000 live births for males. In addition, the under-five mortality rate is 100 per 1000 live births for females, compared with 117 per 1000 live births for males

Epidemic and Pandemic - Prone Diseases

Epidemic-prone disease and nutritional emergencies due to recurrent drought and pandemics are major health sector priorities. However, Ethiopia is not yet adequately prepared to respond efficiently to such threats. Public health emergency management preparedness and response is one of the core processes introduced under business process re-engineering within the Ethiopian Health and Nutrition Research Institute and implementation has started. In order to establish public health emergency management teams at the Ministry of Health and rural health boards, 13 epidemic intelligence service officers have been trained. Twenty diseases have been selected for surveillance and detection and new forecasting, early warning, response and record systems have been designed

FLAG



The current flag of Ethiopia (Amharic: የኢትዮጵያ ሰገደቅ ዓለማ?, ye-Ityoppya Sendeq Alama) was adopted on 31 October 1996. It conforms to the specifications set forth in Article 3 of the 1995 Constitution of Ethiopia. However, the diameter of the central disc is increased from that of the flag used from 6 February to 31 October 1996. The three traditional colors of green, yellow and red date back to Empress Zewditu (r. 1889-1913) and were first used in a flag in 1897. The current national flag and emblem were adopted after the defeat of Ethiopia's Marxist Derg regime (in power from 1974 to 1991). The emblem is intended to represent both the diversity and unity of the country. Blue represents peace, the star represents diversity and unity, and the sun's rays symbolize prosperity. The green recalls the land, yellow stands for peace and hope, and red is symbolic of strength.

The flag used today is the same as that established in 1948, although since then five other designs have been used. Almost all made use of the image of the temple of Angkor Wat in one form or another. This famous temple site, which dates from the 12th century, was built by the Mahidharapura monarchs. It has five towers, but these were not always all depicted in the stylized version used on flags. The monarchy was restored in September 1993, the 1948 flag having been readopted in June of that year.

The star is yellow on a blue disc which overlaps the green and red stripes. The star testifies to Ethiopia's bright future and possibly echoes the connection with the House of King Solomon, while the yellow rays which it emits are equidistant and are said to represent the equality of all Ethiopians regardless of race, creed, or sex. In recent years, the government of Ethiopia has taken a conscious effort to increase the usage of the flag with the emblem, which had been seen far less than the plain tricolour. As the plain tricolour was used and seen far more often than either the flag of the Derg or the Lion of Judah flag, this was considered unusual.

COUNTRY OVERVIEW

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Ethiopia, officially the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, is a country situated in the Horn of Africa. It has one of the most extensive known histories as an independent nation on the continent, or indeed in the world, and is also one of the founders of the United Nations. Unique among African countries, Ethiopia maintained independence during the European scramble for African colonies, and continued to do so except for a five-year period (1936-1941) when it was under Italian occupation.

The long reign of monarchs came to an end in 1974, when a pro-Soviet Marxist-Leninist military junta, the "Derg," deposed Emperor Haile Selassie and established a one-party communist state. After nearly two decades of terror and famine, in 1991 Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam was defeated by a coalition of rebel forces and fled to exile in Zimbabwe. The government that replaced the Derg has taken steps to liberalize the economy and the political environment, though there is still plenty of room for improvement.

Electricity: 220V/50Hz (European plugs)

Currency: Ethiopian birr (ETB), US\$1=19 Birr.

Time Zone: GMT +3 hours

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Due to the country's proximity to the equator and its largely diverse topography, Ethiopia experiences varied conditions of climate that range from almost freezing temperatures of near 0°C to very hot, very arid temperatures that could reach up to 50°C. This climatic range is further subdivided into three climate zones based on altitude.

The first zone is the coolest one among the three. It affects locations in Ethiopia that are more than 2500 meters above sea level. These areas can be found in the eastern and western regions of the northwest plateau. There are also areas around the Harer that are inside this climate zone. For Ethiopians, this cool climate zone is known as the "Dega".

Climate data for Mek'ele													[hide]
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Average high °C (°F)	23 (73)	24 (75)	25 (77)	26 (79)	27 (81)	27 (81)	23 (73)	23 (73)	25 (77)	24 (75)	23 (73)	22 (72)	24.3 (75.8)
Average low °C (°F)	16 (61)	17 (63)	18 (64)	19 (66)	20 (68)	20 (68)	18 (64)	17 (63)	18 (64)	17 (63)	16 (61)	15 (59)	17.6 (63.7)
Average precipitation mm (inches)	36 (1.4)	10 (0.4)	30 (1)	46 (1.8)	36 (1.4)	30 (1.2)	201 (7.9)	216 (8.5)	36 (1.4)	10 (0.4)	30 (1)	41 (1.6)	722 (28)

Source: Weatherbase^[12]

The second climate zone is locally referred to as the "Weina Dega". It is characterized by a temperate climate and a temperature range that has a low of 16°C and a high that could reach up to 30°C. This zone affects all locations in the country that are between 1500 to 2500 meters above sea level. Most of Ethiopia's cities and general population are located in this particular climate zone.

The third climate zone is the hot and arid “Kola” zone. This zone includes all areas in the country that are no more than 1500 meters above sea level. The temperature here ranges from 30°C up to 50°C and the humidity is usually high.

The capital city of Addis Ababa, just like most of the other major cities, is exposed to a very pleasant climate for most of the year. Its average temperature is around 16°C with minimum lows reaching 5°C and highs hovering around 25°C. The rainy season usually lasts from March to September with an average rainfall of about 1200mm. The light rains come in the earlier months of March to May while the heavier rains come in the months of June to September. The dry season on the other hand lasts from October to February.

GEOGRAPHY

Eastern Africa, west of Somalia, high plateau with central mountain range divided by Great Rift Valley

Area: 1,104,300 sq km, slightly less than twice the size of Texas

Urban Population: 17% of total population

Rate of urbanization: 3.57% annual rate of change

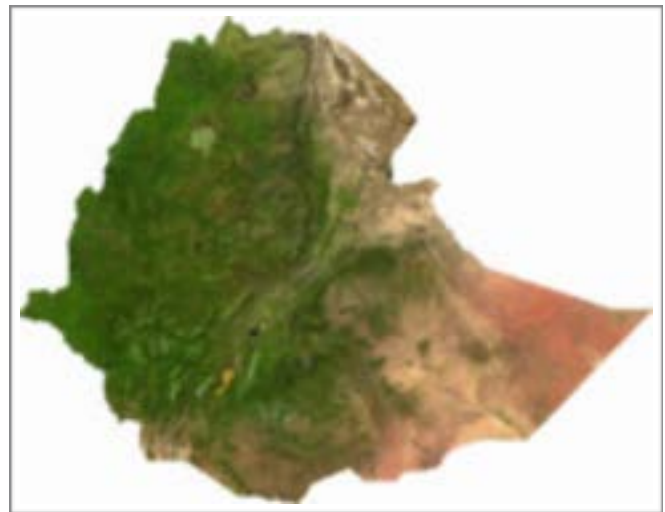
Climate: The predominant climate type is tropical monsoon, with wide topographic-induced variation. As a highland country, Ethiopia has a climate, which is generally considerably cooler than other regions at similar proximity to the Equator.

Natural Resources: small reserves of gold, platinum, copper, potash, natural gas, hydropower

Natural Hazards: geologically active Great Rift Valley susceptible to earthquakes, volcanic eruptions; frequent droughts

Ethiopia, at 435,071 square miles (1,127,127 sq. km) in size, makes up the major portion of the Horn of Africa, which is the easternmost part of the African land mass. Bordering Ethiopia are Sudan to the west, Djibouti and Eritrea to the north, Somalia to the east, and Kenya to the south. Addis Ababa, the capital, has an estimated population of three million. Its altitude of 8,000 feet ensures a temperate climate. It hosts several international agencies, such as the World Health Organization.

SATELLITE IMAGE OF ETHIOPIA, GENERATED FROM RASTER GRAPHICS DATA



Two massive highland regions are a complex of mountains and plateaus separated by the Great Rift Valley, which runs generally southwest to northeast. Elevations in the western region, known as the Amhara Plateau, range from 7,800 to 12,000 feet (2,377-3,658 m). The Somali Plateau, to the east of the Great Rift Valley, has peaks that reach 13,000 feet (3,962 m). The valley itself ranges from 25 to 40 miles wide. In the north it contains the Denakil Depression, a desert area 380 feet (116 m) below sea level. The lowlands are located chiefly in the north-central and eastern parts of the country. Most of the population lives in the highlands



because of the cooler temperature and more abundant water, swept in by warm, moist winds from the Indian Ocean. In the southwest, a combination of low elevation and high rainfall produces rainforests and a climate conducive to experimenting with crops.

The Great Rift Valley contains a chain of lakes, including Lake Tana, the largest in Ethiopia. A spring just north of Lake Tana is considered the source of the Blue Nile, which cascades through deep gorges into Sudan and then joins with the White Nile to form the Nile River.

The great diversity of terrain, the most rugged in Africa, results in wide variations in climate, soils, natural vegetation, and settlement patterns.



HISTORY

Pre-history

Some of the earliest known fossils of hominids have been found in Ethiopia, including the skeleton known as "Lucy" and others dated back five million years. The area is therefore often credited with being the origin of mankind. Bones discovered in eastern Ethiopia date back 3.2 million years. Ethiopia is described in the writings of the Greek historian, Herodotus, of the fifth century B.C.E.

Other archaeological evidence, including stone tools and artifacts such as decorated ceramics, have also been discovered, attesting to the long period of human habitation in the region. Agriculture developed during the Neolithic period. The nation is also the oldest independent country in Africa and one of the oldest in the world.

Monarchy

The English name "Ethiopia" is thought to be derived from the Greek word *Aithiopia*, from *Aithiops* 'an Ethiopian', derived from Greek terms meaning "of burnt visage." This etymology is disputed, however. The *Book of Aksum*, a chronicle composed in the fifteenth century, states that the name is derived from "*Ityopp'is*," a son (unmentioned in the Bible) of Cush, son of Ham, who according to legend founded the city of Axum.

According to legend, the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon are the ancestors of a line of monarchs that continued, with two brief interruptions, until modern times. Their son, Menelik, was declared king by his father, and those claiming to be his descendants continued the dynasty until it was overthrown in 1974.

The rise of sizable populations with a writing system dates back to at least 800 B.C.E. Proto-Ethiopian script inlaid on stone tablets has been found in the highlands, notably in the town of Yeha. The origin of this civilization is a point of contention. The traditional theory states that immigrants from the Arabian peninsula settled in northern Ethiopia, bringing with them their language, proto-Ethiopian (or Sabeian), which has also been discovered on the eastern side of the Red Sea.



This theory of the origin of Ethiopian civilization is being challenged. A new theory states that both sides of the Red Sea were a single cultural unit and that the rise of civilization in the Ethiopian highlands was not a product of diffusion and colonization from southern Arabia but a cultural exchange in which the people of Ethiopia played a vital and active role. During this time period, waterways such as the Red Sea were virtual highways, resulting in cultural and economic exchange. The Red Sea connected people on both coasts and produced a single cultural unit that included Ethiopia and Yemen, which over time diverged into different cultures. It is only in Ethiopia that proto-Ethiopian script developed and survives today in Ge'ez, Tigrean, and Amharic. In the first century C.E., the ancient city of Axum became a political, economic, and cultural center in the region. The Axumites dominated the Red Sea trade by the third century. By the fourth century they were one of only four nations in the world, along with Rome, Persia, and the Kushan Kingdom in northern India, to issue gold coinage.

The Kingdom of Axum was a cultural and trading center. At various times, including a period in the sixth century, Axum controlled most of modern-day Yemen, some of southern Saudi Arabia just across the Red Sea, as well as northern Sudan, northern Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, and northern Somalia.

However, the Axumite Empire eventually declined as a result of the spread of Islam, resulting in a loss of control over the Red Sea as well as a depletion of natural resources in the region that left the environment unable to support the population. The political center shifted southward to the mountains of Lasta (now Lalibela).



CHURCH OF OUR LADY MARY OF ZION IN AXUM, WHERE IT IS BELIEVED BY THE ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH THAT THE ARK OF THE COVENANT LIES.

It was in the early fourth century C.E. that a Syro-Greek castaway, Frumentius, was taken to the court and eventually converted King Ezana to Christianity, thereby making it the official religion. As Islam made its appearance on the coast, Christians retreated into the highlands and consolidated their authority there, establishing Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity as the state religion.

Most historians regard Yekunno Amlak as the founder of the Solomonic dynasty. In the process of legitimizing his rule, the emperor reproduced and possibly created the *Kebra Nagast* (Glory of the Kings), which is regarded as the national epic. The "*Glory of the Kings*" is a blend of local and oral traditions, Old and New Testament themes, apocryphal text, and Jewish and Muslim commentaries. The epic was compiled by six Tigrean scribes, who claimed to have translated the text from Arabic into Ge'ez. Contained within its central narrative is the account of Solomon and Sheba, an elaborate version of the story found in I Kings of the Bible. In the Ethiopian version, King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba have a child named Menelik (whose name is derived from the Hebrew *ben-melech* meaning "son of the king"), who establishes a duplicate Jewish empire in Ethiopia. In establishing this empire, Menelik I brings the Ark of the Covenant with him, along with the eldest sons of the Israeli nobles. He is crowned the first emperor of Ethiopia, the founder of the Solomonic dynasty.

From this epic, a national identity emerged as God's new chosen people, heir to the Jews. The Solomonic emperors are descended from Solomon, and the Ethiopian people are the descendants of the sons of the Israeli nobles. The descent from Solomon was so essential to the nationalistic tradition and monarchical domination that Haile Selassie incorporated it into the country's first constitution in 1931, exempting the emperor from state law by virtue of his "divine" genealogy.

Both the Orthodox Church and the monarchy fostered nationalism. In the epilogue of the *Glory of the Kings*, Christianity is brought to Ethiopia and adopted as the "rightful" religion. Thus, the empire was genealogically descended from the great Hebrew kings but "righteous" in its acceptance of the word of Jesus Christ.

The Solomonic monarchy had a variable degree of political control over Ethiopia from the time of Yekunno Amlak in 1270 until Haile Selassie's dethroning in 1974.

Other than contacts with Portugal that enabled Ethiopia to turn back Muslim invaders in 1527, few Europeans arrived in Ethiopia until the nineteenth century.



FASILIDES' CASTLE IN GONDAR, AMHARA REGION.

All this contributed to Ethiopia's isolation from 1755 to 1855, called the "Age of Princes." The emperors became figureheads controlled by regional warlords. Ethiopian isolationism ended following a British mission that concluded an alliance between the two nations; however, it was not until the reign of Emperor Tewodros II, who began modernizing Ethiopia and re-centralizing power in the emperor, that Ethiopia began to take part in world affairs again.



In the 1880s, the Italians began to vie with the British for influence in bordering regions. Assab, a port near the southern entrance of the Red Sea, was bought from the local Afar sultan, vassal to the Ethiopian emperor, in 1870 by an Italian company, which by 1890 led to establishment of the Italian colony of Eritrea. Conflicts between the two countries resulted in the Battle of Adowa in 1896, when the Ethiopians surprised the world by defeating the colonial power and remaining independent, under the rule of Menelik II. The early twentieth century was marked by the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I, who undertook the rapid modernization of Ethiopia. Haile Selassie's application to join the League of Nations in 1919 was rejected, because the institution of slavery was still strong in Ethiopia, and was not eliminated until 1923. Ethiopian sovereignty was interrupted only by the brief Italian occupation (1936-1941). British and patriot Ethiopian troops liberated the Ethiopian homeland in 1941, which was followed by sovereignty on January 31, 1941, and British recognition of full sovereignty (i.e., without any special British privileges) with the signing of the Anglo-

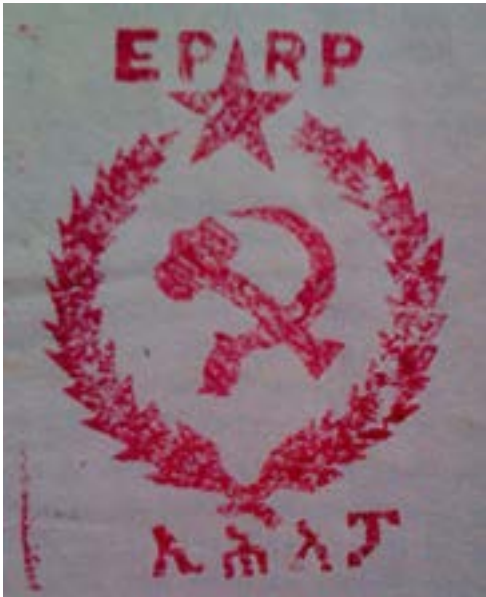
Ethiopian Agreement in December 1944.

The Derg

Haile Selassie's reign came to an end in 1974, when a pro-Soviet Marxist-Leninist military junta, the "Derg," deposed him and established a one-party communist state. Derg is the short name of the *Coordinating Committee of the Armed Forces, Police, and Territorial Army*, a committee of military officers that ruled the country from 1974 until 1987. Between 1975 and 1977, the Derg executed and imprisoned tens of thousands of its opponents without trial.

Mengistu Haile Mariam gained undisputed leadership of the Derg, which in 1987 was formally dissolved and the country became the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia under a new constitution. Many of the Derg

members remained in key government posts and as members of the Central Committee and the Politburo of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE), which became Ethiopia's civilian version of the Eastern bloc communist



parties. Mengistu became secretary general of the WPE and president of the country, as well as remaining commander in chief of the armed forces.

Mismanagement, corruption, and general hostility to the Derg's violent rule was coupled with the draining effects of constant warfare with the separatist guerrilla movements in Eritrea and Tigray, resulting in a drastic fall in general productivity of food and cash crops. Although Ethiopia is prone to chronic droughts, no one was prepared for the scale of drought and famine that struck the country in the mid-1980s. Hundreds of thousands fled economic misery, conscription, and political repression and went to live in neighboring countries and all over the Western world, creating an Ethiopian diaspora.

Close to eight million people became famine victims during the drought of 1984, and over one million died. The Ethiopian government's inability or unwillingness to deal with the 1984-1985 famine provoked universal condemnation by the international

community. The primary government response was uprooting large numbers of peasants who lived in the affected areas in the north and resettling them in the south. Several human rights organizations claimed that tens of thousands of peasants died as a result of forced resettlement.

Beginning in 1985, peasants were forced to move their homesteads into planned villages, which were clustered around water, schools, medical services, and utility supply points to facilitate distribution of those services. Many peasants fled rather than acquiesce in relocation, which in general proved highly unpopular. Additionally, the government in most cases failed to provide the promised services. Far from benefiting agricultural productivity, the program caused a decline in food production.

In 1977 Somalians attacked Ethiopia in the Ogaden War, but Ethiopia quickly defeated them with a massive influx of Soviet military hardware, direct Cuban military presence, coupled with East German and South Yemeni military assistance. Despite accruing one of the largest armies in Africa due to benevolent military assistance from East Bloc countries, an unending insurgency in the then provinces of Eritrea and Tigray, a major drought in 1985 and regime changes in the former Socialist Bloc culminated in the Derg regime being defeated in 1991 by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) in the far north, and elsewhere by the



Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a loose coalition of rebel forces mainly dominated by the Tigrean People's Liberation Front.

Return to democracy

In 1993, the province of Eritrea became independent from Ethiopia, following a referendum, ending more than thirty years of armed conflict, one of the longest in Africa.

In 1994, a constitution was adopted that led to Ethiopia's first multiparty elections the following year. In May 1998, a dispute over the un-demarcated border with Eritrea led to the Eritrean-Ethiopian War that lasted until June 2000.

On May 15, 2005, Ethiopia held another multiparty election, which resulted in the EPRDF's return to power, although a much larger group of opposition parliamentarians was elected.

The irredentist claims of the extremist-controlled Council of Islamic Courts (CIC) in Somalia in 2006 posed a legitimate security threat to Ethiopia and to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia. In December 2006, the TFG requested the assistance of the Ethiopian military to respond to the CIC's aggression.

Within a few weeks, joint Ethiopian-TFG forces routed the CIC from Somalia, and the deployment of the African Union's Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in March 2007 began to provide security in Mogadishu to allow for the quick withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Somalia.



The Somali-speaking Muslims who live in the Ogaden region continue to press the government for independence. The Ogaden National Liberation Front engages in periodic fighting with the Ethiopian military and in April 2007 killed 65 soldiers and nine Chinese workers at a Chinese-run oilfield near the Somali border.

Human rights abuses reported by the U.S. State Department during 2006 included: limitation on citizens' right to change their government during the elections; unlawful killings, and beating, abuse, and mistreatment of detainees and opposition supporters by security forces; poor prison conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention, particularly those suspected of sympathizing with or being members of the opposition; detention of thousands without charge and lengthy pretrial detention; infringement on citizens' privacy rights and frequent refusal to follow the law regarding search warrants; restrictions on freedom of the press; arrest, detention, and harassment of journalists for publishing articles

critical of the government; restrictions on freedom of assembly; limitations on freedom of association; violence and societal discrimination against women and abuse of children; female genital mutilation (FGM); exploitation of children for economic and sexual purposes; trafficking in persons; societal discrimination against persons with disabilities and religious and ethnic minorities; and government interference in union activities.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population: 93,877,025 (country comparison to the world: 14)

Population Growth Rate: 2.9% (country comparison to the world: 12)

Ethnic groups: Oromo 34.5%, Amhara (Amara) 26.9%, Somali (Somalie) 6.2%, Tigray (Tigrigna) 6.1%, Sidama 4%, Gurage 2.5%, Welaita 2.3%, Hadiya 1.7%, Afar (Affar) 1.7%, Gamo 1.5%, Gedeo 1.3%, other 11.3%

Languages: Oromo (official regional) 33.8%, Amharic (official) 29.3%, Somali 6.2%, Tigrayan (official regional) 5.9%, Sidama 4%, Wolaytta 2.2%, Guragiegna 2%, Afar 1.7%, Hadiyya 1.7%, Gamo 1.5%, other 11.7%, English (official) (major foreign language taught in schools), Arabic (official)

Religions: Ethiopian Orthodox 43.5%, Muslim 33.9%, Protestant 18.6%, traditional 2.6%, Catholic 0.7%, other 0.7%

Ethiopia's population is highly diverse. Most of its people speak a Semitic or Cushitic language. The Oromo, Amhara, and Tigrayans make up more than three-fourths of the population, but there are more than 80 different ethnic groups within Ethiopia. Some of these have as few as ten thousand members. Semitic-speaking Ethiopians and Eritreans collectively refer to themselves as *Habesha* or *Abesha*, though others reject these names on the basis that they refer only to certain ethnicities. The Arabic form of this term is the etymological basis of "Abyssinia," the former name of Ethiopia in English and other European languages. Traditionally, the Amhara have been the dominant ethnic group, with the Tigreans as secondary partners. The other ethnic groups have responded differently to that situation. Resistance to Amhara dominance resulted in various separatist movements, particularly in Eritrea and among the Oromo. Eritrea was culturally and politically part of highland Ethiopia since before Axum's achievement of political dominance; Eritreans claim Axumite descendency as much as Ethiopians do.

The "Oromo problem" continues to trouble Ethiopia. Although the Oromo are the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia, never in their history have they held political power. Ethiopian highlanders subjected many ethnic groups in the present state of Ethiopia, such as the Oromo, to colonial status. Conquered ethnic groups were expected to adopt the identity of the dominant Amhara-Tigrean ethnic groups (the national culture). It was illegal to publish, teach, or broadcast in any Oromo dialect until the early 1970s, which marked the end of Haile Selassie's reign. Even today, after an ethnic federalist government has been established, the Oromo lack appropriate political representation.

Only 42.7 percent of the total adult population is literate, with male literacy at 50.3 percent and female literacy at 35.1 percent (2003 est.). GDP per capita is \$1,000 (2006 est.). Population below poverty line is 38.7 percent. Life expectancy at birth is 49.23 years (males 48.06 years and females 50.44 years). Children in urban areas begin attending school at age five if their families can afford the fees. In rural areas, schools are few and children do farm work. This means a very low percentage of rural youth attend school. The government is trying to alleviate this problem by building accessible schools in rural areas. Children who do well in elementary school go on to secondary school. University education is free, but admission is extremely competitive. Every secondary student takes a standardized examination. The acceptance rate is approximately 20 percent of all those who take the tests.

Traditionally, labor has been divided by gender, with authority given to the senior male in a household. Men are responsible for plowing, harvesting, the trading of goods, the slaughtering of animals, herding, the building of houses, and the cutting of wood. Women are responsible for the domestic sphere and help the men with some activities on the farm. Women are in charge of cooking, brewing beer, cutting hops, buying and selling spices,

making butter, collecting and carrying wood, and carrying water.

The gender division in urban areas is less pronounced than it is in the countryside. Many women work outside the home, and there tends to be a greater awareness of gender inequality. Women in urban areas are still responsible, with or without a career, for the domestic space. Employment at a baseline level is fairly equivalent, but men tend to be promoted much faster and more often.

Arranged marriages are the norm, although this practice is becoming much less common, especially in urban areas. The presentation of a dowry from the male's family to the female's family is common. The amount is not fixed and varies with the wealth of the families. The dowry may include livestock, money, or other socially valued items.



ECONOMY



WOMAN COFFEE FARMER WITH BASKET OF COFFEE BEANS IN ETHIOPIA

After the 1974 revolution, the economy of Ethiopia was run as a socialist economy: strong state controls were implemented, and a large part of the economy was transferred to the public sector, including most modern industry and large-scale commercial agriculture, all agricultural land and urban rental property, and all financial institutions. Since mid-1991, the economy has evolved toward a decentralized, market-oriented economy, emphasizing individual initiative, designed to reverse a decade of economic decline. Gradual privatization of

business, industry, banking, agriculture, trade, and commerce is underway.

While the process of economic reform is ongoing, so far the reforms have attracted only meager foreign investment, and the government remains heavily involved in the economy. The ruling EPRDF controls more than 50 large business enterprises, following the Chinese model. Many government-owned properties during the previous regime have just been transferred to EPRDF-owned enterprises in the name of privatization. Furthermore, the Ethiopian constitution defines the right to own land as belonging only to "the state and the people," but citizens may only lease land (up to 99 years) and are unable to mortgage, sell, or own it.

EDUCATION

The education system in Ethiopia is divided into three divisions consisting of primary school, lower secondary school, and higher secondary school. The primary schooling lasts for 6 years, the lower secondary 4 years, and the higher secondary 2 years. Elementary education is usually taught in the local languages especially in the rural areas. A very important underlying principle used in education in Ethiopia is the belief of their society



that corporal punishment is the right way of teaching their children. They believe that their children can best learn new and better habits by having them punished when they do bad ones.

Most of the schools in Ethiopia lack the basic school supplies and necessities often seen as standard fare in other countries. They lack books for the students and even pens and paper. Some schools even lack necessary utilities such as clean water and working toilets for the students. Making the educational situation even worse is the fact that on average, a teacher has to attend to a class comprising of 65 students. Although most Ethiopian children who go to school begin to do so at the age of 5, literacy in Ethiopia is

still very low. This is in part due to the low quality, non standard actual education available to them and also due to the general belief of the people of Ethiopia that education is not an important part of their productivity. Most Ethiopians believe that work is far more important than education and that education is not really needed for work. They are of the inclination that all they need to know to work can easily be learned by doing the work itself thus it is not necessary to spend several years in school before starting out to work.

Religion



THIS LEATHER PAINTING DEPICTS ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX PRIESTS PLAYING *SISTRA* AND A DRUM.

According to the 1994 census, Christians made up 61.6 percent of the country's population, Muslims 32.8 percent, and adherents of traditional faiths 5.6 percent. In 2006, the breakdown was 45-50 percent Muslim, 35-40 percent Ethiopian Orthodox, 12 percent animist, and 3-8 percent other, including Jews. Muslims and Christians generally get along peacefully.

The Axumite Kingdom was one of the first nations to officially adopt Christianity, when King Ezana of Axum converted during the fourth century C.E. Today, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is by far the largest denomination, though a number of Protestant churches have recently gained ground. Because of the spread of Islam, Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity was severed from the Christian world. This led to many unique characteristics. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church lays claim to the original Ark of the Covenant, and replicas (called *tabotat*) are housed in a central sanctuary in all churches; it is the *tabot* that consecrates a church. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church is the only established church that rejects the doctrine of Pauline Christianity, which states that the Old Testament lost its binding force after the coming of Jesus. The Old Testament focus of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church includes dietary laws similar to the kosher tradition, circumcision after the eighth day of birth, and a Saturday sabbath.

Islam in Ethiopia dates back almost to the founding of the religion; in 616, a band of Muslims was counseled by the Prophet Muhammad to escape persecution in Mecca and travel to Abyssinia, which was ruled by, in the Prophet's estimation, a pious Christian king. Moreover, Islamic tradition states that Bilal, one of the foremost companions of the Prophet Muhammad, was from the region of present-day Ethiopia. There are numerous indigenous African religions in Ethiopia. In general, most of the Christians live in the highlands, while Muslims and adherents of traditional African religions tend to inhabit lowland regions. A small group of Jews, the Beta Israel, lived in Ethiopia for centuries, though most emigrated to Israel in the last decades of the twentieth century as part of the rescue missions undertaken by the Israeli government.

Ethiopia is also the spiritual homeland of the Rastafari movement, whose adherents believe Ethiopia is Zion. Rastafari view Emperor Haile Selassie as Jesus, the human incarnation of God.

CULTURE

The classical language of Ge'ez, which has evolved into Amharic and Tigrean, is one of the four extinct languages but is the only indigenous writing system in Africa still in use. Ge'ez is spoken in Orthodox Church services. The development of Ge'ez literature began with translations of the Old and New Testaments from Greek and Hebrew. Ge'ez was also the first Semitic language to employ a vowel system. Many apocryphal texts—such as the Book of Enoch, the Book of Jubilees, and the Ascension of Isaiah—have been preserved in their entirety only in Ge'ez. Even though these texts were not included in the Bible, among biblical scholars (and Ethiopian Christians) they are regarded as significant to an understanding of the origin and development of Christianity.



Religious art, especially Orthodox Christian, has been a significant part of the national culture for hundreds of years. Illuminated Bibles and manuscripts have been dated to the twelfth century, and the eight-hundred-year-old churches in Lalibela contain Christian paintings, manuscripts, and stone relief.



Christian music is believed to have been established by Saint Yared in the sixth century and is sung in Ge'ez, the liturgical language. Both Orthodox and Protestant music is popular and is sung in Amharic, Tigrean, and Oromo. The traditional dance, *eskesta*, consists of rhythmic shoulder movements and usually is accompanied by the *kabaro*, a drum made from wood and animal skin, and the *masinjo*, a single-stringed violin with an A-shaped bridge that is played with a small bow. Foreign influences exist in the form of Afro-pop, reggae, and hip-hop.

Wood carving and sculpture are very common in the southern lowlands, especially among the Konso. A fine arts school has been established in Addis Ababa that teaches painting, sculpture, etching, and lettering.

Ethiopian cuisine consists of various vegetable or meat side dishes and entrées, usually a *wat* or thick stew, served atop *injera*, a large sourdough flatbread. One does not eat with utensils but instead uses *injera* to scoop up the entrées and side dishes. Traditional Ethiopian cuisine employs no pork of any kind, as both Muslims and Ethiopian Orthodox Christians are prohibited from eating pork.

The coffee *kafa* ceremony is a common ritual. The server starts a fire and roasts green coffee beans while burning frankincense. Once



roasted, the coffee beans are ground with a mortar and pestle, and the powder is placed in a traditional black pot called a *jebena*. Water is then added. The *jebena* is removed from the fire, and coffee is served after brewing for the proper length of time. Often, *kolo* (cooked whole-grain barley) is served with the coffee.

Traditional houses are round dwellings with cylindrical walls made of wattle and daub. The roofs are conical and made of thatch, and the center pole has sacred significance in most ethnic groups. Variations on this design occur. In the town of Lalibella the walls of many houses are made of stone and are two-storied, while in parts of Tigre, houses are traditionally rectangular. In more urban areas, a mixture of tradition and modernity is reflected in the architecture. The thatched roofs often are replaced with tin or steel roofing. The wealthier suburbs of Addis Ababa have multistory residences made of concrete and tile that are very western in form.



The music is extremely diverse, with each of the country's eighty tribes being associated with unique sounds. Ethiopian music uses a unique modal system that is pentatonic, with characteristically long intervals between some notes. Influences include ancient Christian elements and Muslim and folk music from elsewhere in the Horn of Africa, especially Somalia. Popular musicians included Mahmoud Ahmed, Tilahun Gessesse, Asnaketch Worku, and Mulatu Astatke.

Ethiopia offers a greater richness in archaeological findings and historical buildings than any other country in Sub-Saharan Africa. In April 2005, the Axum obelisk, one of Ethiopia's

religious and historical treasures, was returned to Ethiopia by Italy. Italian troops seized the obelisk in 1937 and took it to Rome. Italy agreed to return the obelisk in 1947 in a UN agreement.

Many churches and monasteries in the northern region are carved out of solid rock, including the 12 rock-hewn monolithic churches of Lalibela. The town is named after the thirteenth-century king who supervised its construction.

POVERTY

Despite the government recently showing signs of efforts to tackle poverty in Ethiopia, the country is still faced with such an extent of widespread poverty that there is still so much to build.

With over 80 million inhabitants, Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Sub-Saharan Africa, and one of the poorest in the world.

The Ethiopian economy is based on agriculture, which accounts for half of GDP and about 60 percent of export earnings (coffee being the major product).

The country is therefore highly sensitive to variations of world prices on basic food, just like the global slump in coffee prices since the mid-1990s. Another consequence of its reliance on agriculture and climate is that it is extremely vulnerable to climatic changes, in particular droughts.

Not to help with that, the war with Eritrea from 1998 to 2000 also had a devastating impact on the economy. After that the IMF (International Monetary Fund) supported the creation of a program to reduce poverty in Ethiopia, which was aimed at restoring its macroeconomic stability. What does this mean concretely? Mostly keeping inflation low and under control, stability of the exchange rate in currency markets, and last but not least sustainable GDP growth. A stable economy helped aid donations rise significantly since then.



By the end of 2003, the country's economy was finally growing rapidly, and was benefiting from favorable weather conditions.



Like every time an economy grows too rapidly though (i.e. demand higher than the capacity of the economy), high inflation threatened all these efforts but it was eventually brought back to normal. Relatively stable growth has been achieved since then (annual GDP growth around 11% for the past 5 years), and you will see what have been its effects on the struggle to alleviate poverty in Ethiopia. What does this mean concretely? Mostly keeping inflation low and under control, stability of the exchange rate in currency markets, and last but not least sustainable GDP growth. A stable economy helped aid donations rise significantly since then.

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Ethiopia has started a difficult process of market development, trade liberalization, institution- and infrastructure building. That kind of development takes a while and no matter what the country undoubtedly

remains in the group of the "marginalized" economies of the world.

Moreover the impact of market liberalization - started in the early 1990s - on welfare shows that while one group of the poor has been able to take advantage of the improved economic environment, another group has become increasingly marginalized because of reduced access to social safety nets.

This illustrates that liberalization alone will not by any means solve all the problems of poverty in Ethiopia, as opposed to what many experts in international organizations seem to think. As economists, including at the WTO (World Trade Organization), argue international trade liberalization needs to be complemented with redistribution mechanisms (social security, indemnities, skill training,...) because it's detrimental to low workers' living conditions in both developed and poor countries.

End of 2002 - early 2003 saw a decline in donations combined with a drought which resulted in massive food shortage affecting up to 12.5 million people, who became dependent on international food aid only. Along with plummeting donations, possibly because everyone's attention was focused on the war in Iraq in 2003, the UN described the situation in Ethiopia as a "huge crisis" and warned it was quickly bound to get worse.



The Ethiopian government reacted with an ambitious program that moved two million people from the dry and infertile highlands to

the unused land in the West and South of the country. But the result was pretty much a fiasco: resettlement camps that were to be set up with schools, water and facilities were not ready. Malnutrition and diseases killed so many that some even left the camps to return to the desolate highlands.

More recently, world commodity prices have not only fallen sharply but the ongoing global economic crisis is likely to damage the country's economic growth with declining demand for its exports. This calls for an urgent macroeconomic stabilization, otherwise the fight against poverty in Ethiopia won't be won before several more decades.

Despite roads being the dominant mode of transportation, Ethiopia's road infrastructure is dangerously underdeveloped, unfit and inappropriate to its needs. Ethiopia has actually the lowest road density per capita in the world. Poorness in road infrastructure is an obstacle to economic integration, development of the domestic market, diffusion of primary goods and export growth among other things.

Therefore it's not surprising that the government made the extension of the road network a crucial part of its development strategy (with the help of the World Bank, the European Union, and the African Development Bank among others).

With a ratio of 0.53 lines per 100 population, Ethiopia ranks amongst the worst African countries in term of telephone lines per person. This means that more people are being left out, not only socially but also economically considering the tremendous impact of ICTs (information and communications technologies) in a country's economy.

This situation represents an unbelievable waste of human resources and time that could otherwise help to substantially reduce poverty in Ethiopia by increasing efficiency and opportunities (market-wise) for the people. On the bright side, as in many other sub-Saharan countries, the cellphone now provides an

incomparably cheaper alternative. This is an opportunity for the population to "leapfrog" the landline technology and directly adopt the wireless one.

A lot of research has shown time and again that except times of drought, the country should be able to enjoy decent food security conditions at the national level. However, droughts do occur far too often (more and more experts link this to global warming), and the problem of the insufficient road network prevents proper food distribution.

Besides, the government needs to push for more systematic use of irrigation which is essential to reach long-lasting food security. But as you can see, this problem can't be solved in a day and during this transition the country will have no other choice but to rely on continuous food aid ("continuous" being a key characteristic of development programs for landlocked countries such as Ethiopia).

Another essential aspect for Ethiopia's economic development is the investment in infrastructure. It will provide the country with useful resources to overcome some of its inherent poverty due to limited assets. Improving infrastructure is known to provide significant growth effects for countries that lack natural or strategic resources (e.g. access to the sea). But the risk is that investments keep on being focused in specific geographic areas (big cities), so that the marginal ones eventually end up even more marginalized by the time the country becomes more integrated into the global system.

Liberalization and marketization will also bring new dangers. Recent events in the international economy, such as the international food price rises, high fuel prices, and the worldwide recession offer good examples of how Ethiopia will become increasingly sensitive to global crises. Food and fuel price increases alone led to a surge in food prices by more than 50% between 2007 and 2008. In 2011 food prices soared by 200 to 300% in the region. -

Major challenges to the government include weak infrastructure, low agricultural productivity, structural food insecurity (i.e. due to the structure of the food organization/system including lack of roads), environmental degradation, and weak human and bureaucratic capacity.

Nonetheless, modest improvements in institutional efficiency (reform of the legal system, contracts, property rights), maintaining peace and stability, and improving the functioning of public services, have helped reduce poverty in Ethiopia. Still the country is not likely to achieve the United Nation's Millenium Development Goals

SURVIVAL GUIDE

ETIQUETTE

MEETING ETIQUETTE

- Ethiopian greetings are courteous and somewhat formal.
- The most common form of greeting is a handshake with direct eye contact.
- The handshake is generally much lighter than in Western cultures.
- After a close personal relationship has been established people of the same sex may kiss three times on the cheeks.
- Across genders, men should wait to see if a woman extends her hand.
- Greetings should never be rushed. Take time to inquire about the person's family, health, job, etc.
- People are addressed with their honorific title and their first name.
- "Ato", "Woizero", and "Woizrity" are used to address a man, married woman, and unmarried woman respectively.
- Elders should be greeted first.
- It is customary to bow when introduced to someone who is obviously older or has a more senior position. Children will often be seen doing so.

GIFT GIVING ETIQUETTE

- Gifts may be given to celebrate events of significance or religious occasions.
- Since Ethiopia is an extremely poor country, expensive gifts are not the norm.
- In fact, giving a gift that is too expensive may be viewed negatively. It may be seen as an attempt to garner influence or it may embarrass the recipient as they will not be able to match it in kind.
- If you are invited to an Ethiopian's home, bring pastries, fruit, or flowers to the host.
- A small gift for the children is always appreciated.
- Do not bring alcohol unless you know that your host drinks. Most Muslims and Amharic people do not.
- Gifts are not opened when received.
- Gifts are given with two hands or the right hand only; never the left hand.

DINING ETIQUETTE

- Ethiopians are hospitable and like to entertain friends in their homes.
- An invitation to a private home should be considered an honour.
- Punctuality is not strictly adhered to although considerable lateness is also unacceptable.
- You may have to remove your shoes at the door.
- Dress well.
- Shake hands with each guest individually.
- A woman should offer to help the hostess with the preparation or clearing up after a meal is served.
- You will always be offered a cup of coffee. It is considered impolite to refuse.
- Ethiopians are relatively formal and believe table manners are a sign of respect.
- Do not presume that because food is eaten with the hands, there is a lack of decorum.
- Expect a small earthenware or metal jug to be brought to the table before the meal is served. Extend your hands over the basin while water is poured over them.
- Only use the right hand for eating.
- Hierarchy dictates that the eldest person is the first to take food from the communal plate.

- Guests are often served tasty morsels by another guest in a process called “gursa”. Using his hands, the person places the morsel in the other person’s mouth. Since this is done out of respect, it is a good idea to smile and accept the offering.
- Expect to be urged to take more food. Providing an abundance of food is a sign of hospitality.
- The meal ends with ritual hand-washing and coffee.

COFFEE DRINKING

- The Kaffa province in Ethiopia is renowned for its coffee.
- Coffee is a national drink and its drinking is a ritualized process that generally takes at least an hour.
- If invited for a formal coffee you may be seated on pillows or grass and flower-strewn floor with frankincense burning in the background.
- A woman or young boy enters the room to wash and roast the beans over charcoal.
- The roasted beans are then hand-ground and added to boiling water.
- Sugar is put into small cups without handles and the water/coffee mixture is added.
- Inhale the aroma of the coffee before sipping.
- The first round (called “awol”) is served, starting with the eldest.
- When the first cup is finished, the “jebena” (coffee pot) is refilled with water.
- The second round (called “tona”) is then served. It is weaker than the first since the same ground beans are used.
- The third round (called “baraka”) is served after boiling water is again added to the jebena.
- Always sip the coffee slowly.

LANGUAGE

Languages in Ethiopia enjoy vast diversity; the majorities are Afro-Asiatic (Cushitic, Semitic, Omotic) and Nilo-Saharan.

To this day, English still ranks as the most popular and widely spoken language for most secondary schools and universities. In many areas, Oromifa and Tigrinya have replaced Amharic as the primary language of instruction in school instruction. In 1991, the Republic of Ethiopia gave all ethnic groups an avenue to better develop their own languages and establish a mother tongue primary education system, which actually marked the change to the language policies of previous Ethiopian governments.

There are a number of Ethiopian languages which are as of the moment in danger of being extinct, while some Ethiopian languages to this day are already extinct, caused by a phenomenon known as language death. A possible factor which is said to cause language death is the number of speakers of the said language. However, the same could not be easily said of Ethiopian languages considering that throughout their history, Ethiopian languages never have had that big numbers in terms of population, but still most of their languages continue to exist. This, including the new language policies of Ethiopia, has effectively strengthened the use of a number of Ethiopian languages.

Presently, the language in Ethiopia is Amharic, a semitic tongue. Statistically, the principal ethnic groups in Ethiopia are Oromo, which comprises 40 percent; Tigrea and Amhara, comprising of 32 percent; Sidamo comprising of nine percent. Of these ethnic groups, Orominga and Tigrinya are widely spoken which are similar to Ge’ez, the ancient Axum language, and is still utilized by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church’s liturgy.

USEFUL PHRASES

English	አማርኛ (Amharic)
Welcome	እንኳን ደህና መጣህ። (ənkwan dāhna mäṯṯah) m እንኳን ደህና መጣሽ። (ənkwan dāhna mäṯṯaš) f
Hello (General greeting)	ሰላም። (sälam) [peace] - inf ታዲያስ። (tadyass) - inf [how is it?] - inf ጤና ይስጥልኝ። (ṭenaistəlləñ) >frm [may he (God) give you health on my behalf]
How are you?	እንደምን ከለህ። (əndämən alläh?) >m እንደምን ከለሽ። (əndämən alläš?) >f እንደምን ከላቸሁ። (əndämən allačču?) - pl
Reply to 'How are you?'	ደህና ነኝ። (dāhna näñ)
Long time no see	ረጅም ጊዜ ከተለያየን። (räğgim gize kätäläyayän)
What's your name?	ስምህ ማን ነው። (səməh man näw?) >m ስምሽ ማን ነው። (səməš man näw?) >f የአርስዎ ስም ማን ነው። (yärswə səm man näw?) >frm
My name is ...	የኔ ስም... ነው (yäne səm ... näw) ስሜ ... ነው። (səme ___ näw)
Where are you from?	ከየት ነህ። (käyät näh?) >m ከየት ነሽ። (käyät näš?) >f ከየት ኖት። (käyät not?) >frm አንተ ከየት ነህ። (antä käyät näh?) >m አንቺ ከየት ነሽ። (anchi käyät näš?) >f አርስዎ ከየት ኖት። (ərswo käyät not?) >frm
I'm from ...	እኔ ከ ... ነኝ። (əne kä ... näñ) ከ ... ነኝ። (kä ... näñ)
Pleased to meet you	ስለተዋወቅን ደስ ብሎኛል (sələtäwawäqən däs beloññall)
Good morning (Morning greeting)	እንደምን አደርክ? (əndämən addärk?) >m እንደምን አደርሽ? (əndämən addärš?) >f እንደምን አደረ? (əndämən addäru?) >frm [how did you pass the night?]
Good afternoon (Afternoon greeting)	እንደምን ዋልክ? (i'ndemin walik?) - m እንደምን ዋልሽ? (i'ndemin walish?) - f እንደምን ዋሉ? (i'ndemin walu) - frm [how did you spend the day?]

English	አማርኛ (Amharic)
Good evening (Evening greeting)	አንዲምን አመሸህ? (əndämən amäššäh?) >m ምሽቱን እንዴት አሳለፍከው? (məššəṭun əndet asalläfkäw?) >m አንዲምን አመሸሽ? (əndämən amäššäs?) >f ምሽቱን እንዴት አሳለፍሽው? (məššəṭun əndet asalläfsəw?) >f አንዲምን አመሹ? (əndämən amäššu?) >frm [how did you spend the evening?]
Good night	ዲህና እዲር (dähna dār) >m ዲህና እዲሪ (dähna dāri) >f ዲህና እዲረ (dähna dāru) >frm/pl
Goodbye (Parting phrases)	ቻው (chaw) - inf ዲህና ሁን (dähna hun) - m ዲህና ሁኒ (dähna hunyi) - f ዲህና ሁኑ (dähna hunu) - pl
Good luck	መልካም እድል (mälkam əddəl) - inf
Cheers! Good Health! (Toasts used when drinking)	ለጤናችን (läṭenaččən) ለፍቅራችን (läfəqraččən) ለጓደኛነታችን (lägwadänñannätaččən)
Have a nice day	መልካም ቀን:: (mälkam qän) መልካም ቀን ይሁንልህ:: (mälkam qän yəhunəlləh) >m መልካም ቀን ይሁንልሽ:: (mälkam qän yəhunəlləš) >f መልካም ቀን ይሁንላችሁ:: (mälkam qän yəhunəllaččhu) - pl
Bon appetit / Have a nice meal	ብላ (bəla) - eat! >m ብዩ (biy) - eat! >f ብሉ (bəlu) - eat! - pl መልካም ምግብ (mälkam mägəb) - good feasting
Bon voyage / Have a good journey	መልካም ጉዞ:: (mälkam guzo) መልካም ጉዞ ይሁንልህ:: (mälkam guzo yəhunəlləh) >m መልካም ጉዞ ይሁንልሽ:: (mälkam guzo yəhunəlləš) >f መልካም ጉዞ ይሁንላችሁ:: (mälkam guzo yəhunəllaččhu) - pl
I understand	ገባኝ (gäbbañ) - it entered me
I don't understand	አልገባኝም (algäbbañem) - it didn't enter me
I don't know	አላውቅም (alawqəm)
Please speak more slowly	እባክህ ቀስ ብለህ ተናገር:: (əbakəh qässə belläh tänagär) >m እባክሽ ቀስ ብለሽ ተናገረ:: (əbakəš qässə belläš tänagäri) >f እባካችሁ ቀስ ብላችሁ ተናገሩ:: (əbakaččhu qässə belläččhu tänagäru) pl
Please say that again	እባክህ ያልከውን ድገምልኝ:: (əbakəh yalkäwn dəgäməlləñ) >m እባክሽ ያልከሽውን ድገሚልኝ:: (əbakəš yalššəwn dəgämilleñ) >f እባክሽ ያላችሁትን ድገሚልኝ:: (əbakaččhu yalaččhutən dəgäməlləñ) pl

English	አማርኛ (Amharic)
Please write it down	
Do you speak Amharic?	አማርኛ ትችላለህ? (amariñña təcəlalläh) >m አማርኛ ትችያለሽ? (amariñña təciyalläš) >f አማርኛ ትችያላችሁ? (amariñña təcəlallačču) pl
Yes, a little (reply to 'Do you speak ...?')	አዎ: ትንሽ (aw tənəš)
How do you say ... in Amharic?	
Excuse me	ደቅርታ (yəqərta) - <i>forgiveness</i>
How much is this?	ስንት ነው ዋጋው? (sənttə näw wagaw?)
Sorry	አዝናለሁ (azəñallähw) - <i>I am sorrowful</i>
Please	እባክህ (əbakəh) - m እባክሽ (əbakəš) - f እባክዎን (əbakown) - frm - <i>I beg of you</i>
Thank you	አመሰግናለሁ (amäsəggänallähw) - <i>I praise you</i> በጣም አመሰግናለሁን (bätam amäsəggänallähun)
Reply to thank you	ምንም አይደለም (mənəm aydälläm) - <i>it is nothing</i> ችግር የለም (čəggər yälläm) - <i>there is no problem</i>
Where's the toilet?	ሽንት ቤት የት ነው? (šəntə bet yätə näw) - inf መጻጻጽ ክፍል የት ነው? (məš'ädağğa kəfl yätə näw) - frm
This gentleman will pay for everything	ለሁሉም ደህ ሰው ያደክፋል:: (lähulum yəh säwye yəkäflall)
This lady will pay for everything	ለሁሉም ደህች ሴት የትኩፋለች:: (lähulum yəč setyo təkäflalläč)
Would you like to dance with me?	ከኔ ጋር መደካከስ ትፈልጋለህ:: (käne gar mädänäs tefällegalläh?) >m ከኔ ጋር መደካከስ ትፈልጋለሽ:: (käne gar mädänäs tefällegiyalläš?) >f
I like you (as a friend)	እወድህለሁ:: (əwäddəhallähw) >m እወድሻለሁ:: (əwäddəšallähw) >f
I love you	አፈቅርሻለሁ:: (əfäqrəšallähw) >m አፈቅርህለሁ:: (əfäqrəhallähw) >f
Get well soon	ምህረቱን ያምጣልህ:: (məherätun yamṭalləh) >m ምህረቱን ያምጣልሽ:: (məherätun yamṭalləš) >f (<i>may his (God's) mercy come for you</i>)
Go away!	ሂድ! (hid) >m ሂጁ! (hiğgi) >f ሂዱ! (hidu) - pl
Leave me alone!	ለቀቅ አርገኝ:: (läqäq arregäñ) >m ለቀቅ አርገኝ:: (läqäq arregiñ) >f

SAFETY

Traveling to a foreign country such as Ethiopia can offer the experience of a lifetime. However, in the midst of all this excitement you must also be cognizant of your surroundings and take certain precautions to ensure your safety. Like many of the countries in Africa and around the world, Ethiopia has certain neighborhoods you might be wise to avoid, and the country is currently experiencing a higher than average crime rate due to an increase in gang activity in certain regions of the country.

To help you safely enjoy all that Ethiopia has to offer, below we have outlined a few travel safety tips you may want to keep in mind while visiting the country.

TRAVEL IN GROUPS

As the old saying goes, “there is safety in numbers.” Truer words have never been spoken. As you make your way through beautiful Ethiopia, en route to the various sites and attractions you’ve mapped out on your itinerary, always try to travel with at least one other person (even more if you can). Research shows that criminals are less likely to approach you when they feel outnumbered.

MAKE COPIES OF ALL YOUR IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Documents can easily be misplaced or even stolen in the hustle and bustle of foreign travel, creating a nightmarish situation you just don’t need. This is why you should make copies of all your important papers. This includes copies of your passport, visa, driver’s license, social security card and medical insurance card. Travel experts suggest you keep one copy of these documents on your person at all times, and at least one other copy locked in the hotel safe.

BEWARE OF THE NIGHT

Sightseeing is an activity that should be limited to the daylight hours, as unsavory types tend to be hard at work during the nighttime, often preying on unsuspecting tourists. Enjoy your hotel during the nighttime hours, and if you must go out, try to stay in the immediate area.

WATCH THE STRAYS

Ethiopia has many stray dogs and cats roaming the streets, many of which are feral and quite dangerous. Even if the animal looks friendly, resist the temptation to pet him/her, as many of these strays are infected with diseases, including rabies.

GET VACCINATED

Check with your doctor regarding the vaccinations that would be appropriate when traveling to Ethiopia and don’t let a serious illness of some type ruin your long-awaited getaway.

FOOD

When buying street food and snacks in more rural areas of Ethiopia, take the usual precautions: don’t buy meat unless you can see it being cooked right in front of you. If you find yourself buying snacks out of a bus window, avoid anything with meat in it and try to go for fruit that you can peel.

TRAVELING BY TAXI

There are two types of taxis: Blue/White or Yellow/Green

Blue and white minibuses/taxis travel quite efficiently around the town. Since they are full of people most of the time, it is very cheap too, usually between 1-3 Birr depending on how far you are going. To catch a minibus, stand on the side of the road and hail it. This can be done anywhere it is possible for the bus to stop. The conductor inside will call out the destination, and if that’s where you want to go: get on. You pay the

conductor when he signals to you that he wants money (which might take a few minutes) to get change. To get out say "woraj alle", or just "woraj". It is worth having an experienced guide with you if it is your first time using these taxis, since it can be quite chaotic to find out which minibuses go where, and from what places. It is acceptable to ask if the taxi (minibus) will go by your destination on its way.

Yellow and green taxis usually hang around hotels like the Sheraton. They are more expensive, but reliable, and if you're willing to pay for peace of mind, slightly better drivers and a car that wasn't featured in the Flintstones (comfortable ride and vehicle usually in good working order). Use these cars. Walking in Addis Ababa is a pleasant and sensible way of getting around. Locals will happily greet you, ask you how you are doing and so on.

CURRENCY



The first currency of Ethiopia was introduced in 1894 and was known as the "Menelik talers." In 1934, the occupying Italian forces made the Italian lire the legal currency in Ethiopia until their expulsion in 1942. The Ethiopian Birr was finally introduced in 1945, first called the Ethiopian dollar and was only renamed the Birr in 1979.

Coins in circulation are 1, 5, 10, 25 and 50 cents. Banknotes in circulation are 1, 5, 10, 50 and 100 Birr. 1 birr can be divided into 100 cents.

The monetary system of Ethiopia is decimal based, with the primary unit of Ethiopian money being called the Ethiopian Birr. The fractional unit, Santim, is alternately listed in various sources as Centime and Cent. The names and relative values of the coins depicted above are, from left to right:

One Santim - 1/100 of a Birr
Five Santim - 5/100 of a Birr
Ten Santim - 10/100 of a Birr
Twenty-five Santim - 25/100 of a Birr
Fifty Santim - 50/100 of a Birr

BANKING HOURS

Usual banking hours are 8:00am to 3:00pm, Monday - Thursday, Fri 8:00am to 11:00pm and 1:30pm to 3:00pm on Fridays and 8:30am to 11:00am on Saturdays.

CREDIT CARDS

Credit cards can be used in some places like hotels, airline offices or travel agencies in the capital Addis Ababa, but, with some exceptions, not outside of the city. Some banks will give you cash advance on a credit card. Most accepted cards are Visa and MasterCard and typically merchants add additional 3-5% to the bill when using them.

FOREIGN CURRENCY EXCHANGE

Foreign currency can be exchanged at any commercial bank, including branches located at larger hotels and at the airports. Exchange rates are the same everywhere in Ethiopia.

Foreign currencies that will give you the best exchange rates are US dollar, euro and pound sterling. US dollars are the best as some banks will not accept other currencies.

It is illegal to change money on the black market.

Exchange of Birr back to foreign currency is only allowed for visitors holding onward tickets from Ethiopia. You will find it very very hard to exchange any Birr outside of Ethiopia.

TRAVELER'S CHECKS

Traveler's checks can be cashed in banks, but are difficult to exchange outside of Addis Ababa. Best rates are offered for checks in US dollars or pounds sterling

CURRENT CONVERSION RATE OF 24 MAY, 2016

<http://themoneyconverter.com/USD/PAB.aspx>






NOTE: Ethiopian Birr are not traded in the United States. You will need to trade money at the airport in Addis or at a local bank. Your team leader will make arrangements for this to happen. You must trade back Birr to USD prior to leaving (except for “souvenir” bills).

IMR RECOMMENDATIONS ON PERSONAL FUNDS

- Please bring the amount that you are comfortable spending on gifts or small personal articles, including snacks.
- To determine if the currency of the country you are visiting is traded in the United States, please visit www.travelex.com. Travelex has offices in all major airports and cities and you may change money before the trip for a small fee.
 - Trading in the United States is the easiest way for you to trade money.
- If the currency is not traded in the United States, you will usually be able to trade in the airport upon arrival or the team leader will arrange to change money for the team once during the trip. We do not guarantee that you will be able to change money in small towns or during clinic.
- You must bring currency newer than 2006 and in perfect condition - no tears, folds, old bills.
- New bills are preferred by the international banks, as are denominations larger than \$20. The best rate is obtained trading \$100 bills.
- If you are joining us from another country, please check the trading rules of your home currency.
- Credit cards may not be accepted outside of major cities, hotels, and large restaurants.
- IMR does not pay for alcohol. If you intend to purchase alcohol, you are required to obtain and pay with a separate bill. Please have local currency for these transactions.

TIME IN ETHIOPIA

 <p>Time zone</p> <p>EAT (Eastern Africa Time) UTC/GMT +3 hours</p>	 <p>No DST</p> <p>No Daylight Saving Time in 2016</p>	 <p>Difference</p> <p>7 hours ahead of New York</p>
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EMBASSY INFORMATION

Assistance for U.S. Citizens

U.S. Embassy Addis Ababa
Entoto Street
PO Box 1014
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



Telephone

+(251) 11 130-6000



Emergency After-Hours
Telephone

011 130-6000



Fax

+(251) 11 124-2435 and
+(251) 11 124-2419



Email

consacs@state.gov



U.S. Embassy Addis
Ababa

WEBSITES

The following websites provide information on the country you are visiting. IMR highly recommends and encourages you to view these sites prior to departure. They are frequently updated and are a tremendous resource:

- ❖ Embassy of the United States for Ethiopia: <http://ethiopia.usembassy.gov/>
- ❖ State Department Travel Warnings: <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/ethiopia.html>
- ❖ CIA publication: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/et.html>
- ❖ Travel Health online: <http://www.tripprep.com/>
- ❖ World Health Organization: <http://www.who.int/>
- ❖ Center for Disease Control: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>
- ❖ CDC Travel Medicine for Ethiopia: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/ethiopia>
- ❖ CNN Weather Report: <http://www.cnn.com/WEATHER>
- ❖ Official Ethiopia Tourism Site: <http://www.moct.gov.et/index.php/en/>
- ❖ UNICEF Statistics: http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/ethiopia_statistics.html
- ❖ Lonely Planet: <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/ethiopia>
- ❖ Wikipedia Ethiopia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ethiopia>