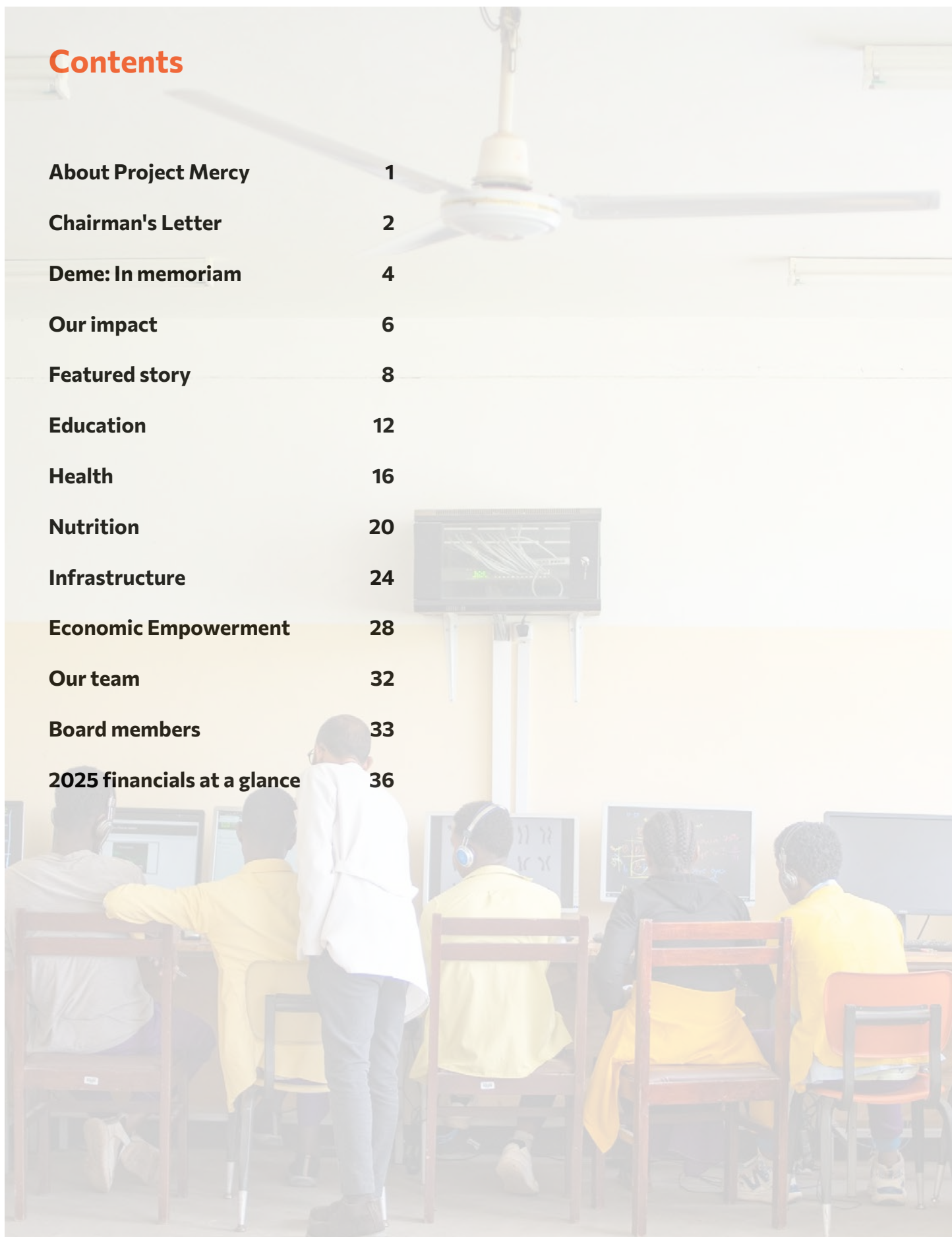




2025 Annual Report

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About Project Mercy

Project Mercy empowers rural communities by addressing the holistic needs of every human being. Through a set of complementary programs, we focus on five areas of impact that catalyze thriving communities - education, health, nutrition, infrastructure and economic empowerment.

Our approach is informed by the individuals we serve and is centered around community ownership and local government engagement.

While each of our programs stand independently, they all benefit from the mutual impact they have on society.

Our mission

To serve as a living example of Jesus Christ by transforming lives and empowering rural communities.

Our approach

The challenges our communities face are complex and require us to be collaborative and to respond and adapt to changing contexts, environments, and needs. That's why we consider the root causes of an issue in order to solve it.

Instead of focusing on one challenge at a time, we identify what it takes for a whole person to thrive. When a child receives an education, there must be economic opportunities awaiting them. If we treat symptoms of malnutrition in the clinic, then we must also prevent them by improving nutrition and agricultural production. And when we teach good hygiene practices, the water that people bathe in and drink from should be clean and accessible.

At Project Mercy, we base our programmatic work on this ideology and, in doing so, we address the realities that shape people's lives and create deep and long-standing impact.

Our programs

Education

Enabling individuals to break the cycle of poverty through quality education, inclusive learning environments and comprehensive academic and vocational programs.

Health

Improving healthcare access, Maternal and Child care and training health workers to promote well-being and empower communities with essential medical services.

Nutrition

Enhancing sustainable agriculture, increasing crop productivity and raising awareness about nutrition to ensure communities have access to nutritious food and eradicate hunger and malnutrition.

Infrastructure

Building resilient communities by improving access to clean water, sanitation facilities and renewable energy sources for better living conditions and sustainable development.

Economic empowerment

Equipping individuals with vocational training, entrepreneurship support and microfinance services to foster economic self-reliance, create job opportunities, and stimulate local economies.

Chairman's letter

It is with a heart filled with gratitude that I can share the many ways 2025 was a significant year for Project Mercy. Living into the inspired vision of Marta and Deme and thoughtfully using the resources provided through faithful support we experienced growth and strengthening of the five pillars of our integrated and holistic rural community efforts – education, health, nutrition, infrastructure, and economic empowerment.

Working in concert, these five pillars of Project Mercy's ministry advance our priorities of wellness, knowledge, personal, and community opportunities. We were pleased to see continued progress, as evidenced by measurable gains in each of these dimensions, while also recognizing that there is more growth needed as we press on.

Within this report, you will see examples of impact for each of the five pillars and I hope you will be especially encouraged by the story of empowerment taking hold in Yetebon through the rise of women's self-help groups. In addition, we will illustrate how our friends, donors, and partners have afforded us the opportunity to ensure the three generations we now serve in rural Ethiopian communities will continue to see healthier and brighter tomorrows.

In education, regional and national examination results confirm the scale of the academic challenge facing Ethiopia. While students in sixth, eighth, and 12th grade at Medhane-Alem School performed below our internal targets, they outperformed their counterparts across the region and country. We have implemented strategic interventions with the goal of improving the quality of our students' education and performance. In addition, the scope and offerings of the Health Science College have been expanded.

The school has been renamed Project Mercy Science College, demonstrating our evolution by adding additional science-related subjects, the first of which is IT training for unemployed

or underemployed STEM graduates which launched in 2025. Such training will allow them to be competitive in the global economy and serves as an excellent example of Project Mercy's integrated holistic approach - responding to current economic realities by augmenting our educational approach in order to foster economic opportunities for a population in need.

In nutrition, the school meal program continues to serve as a foundation for our primary school, with breakfast and lunch served to over 1,600 students for the entirety of the school year. With the addition of 2,000 laying hens to our poultry program, the school meal program is expanding to feed the students of three additional schools in the area near Yetebon in collaboration with the communities served and working with local governmental agencies.

The dairy cattle breeding program in ChaCha has expanded from 20 kebeles (townships) to 25 kebeles with a geographic coverage that spans 1,000 square kilometers. This program of bringing improved-breed animals to smallholder farmers now exists in three modalities: the distribution of pregnant heifers from the breeding farm to community members directly, through the services provided by trained artificial insemination specialists across all kebeles, and the recently launched Jersey bull breeding stations established in five locations. Together, these layers contribute to increased access to high protein nutrition as well as economic empowerment as excess milk can be sold in the local market or be processed into other products such as cheeses.

In health, patient visits at the Glenn C. Olsen Memorial Primary Hospital increased 8.5% from 2024 to 2025, while Community-Based Health Insurance utilization rose by 25%, which serves as a valuable resource for people who face severe economic barriers to receiving healthcare. Deliveries increased 6.2% from 2024, and prenatal monitoring



expanded significantly. We expect continued growth as we have hired an OB/GYN physician - a first for Project Mercy and the Yetebon community. Work also commenced on a renovation to the hospital to create a Neonatal ICU which will be followed by the construction of a tuberculosis isolation wing. Our vision is for these additions to allow current spaces to be repurposed for mothers to stay on-site and provide “Kangaroo Care” (skin-to-skin contact) for their babies who are in the NICU.

In infrastructure, we expanded and upgraded our water distribution system and added four new access points. These access points provide clean water to new neighborhoods and significantly shortens the distance people need to travel to get water. In addition, we took steps to strengthen the preexisting system to ensure its reliability.

In economic empowerment, our adult skills programs have also expanded. A total of 62 students joined educators to provide literacy and numeracy education in the summer to 566 adults, while nearly 500 women have joined self-help groups, the results of which will be included in our featured impact story. Project Mercy also continues to spearhead the local coffee growing co-op, which we envision bringing new economic opportunities and economic uplift to the community.

Now more than ever, we want to express our appreciation for your care and partnership with us on this journey. We look forward to sharing how this walk continues to bear fruit for those we serve.

Blessings,
Michael Van Noord
Board Chairman, Project Mercy

In memoriam





With deep gratitude and respect, we honor the life of Demeke Tekle-Wold, who went to be with the Lord on Thursday, July 31, 2025. Deme lived a life of service, shaped by faith and a steady commitment to others. Alongside his wife, Marta Gabre-Tsadick, and their friends Chuck and Fran Dickinson, he co-founded Project Mercy and devoted himself to empowering people living in vulnerable circumstances.

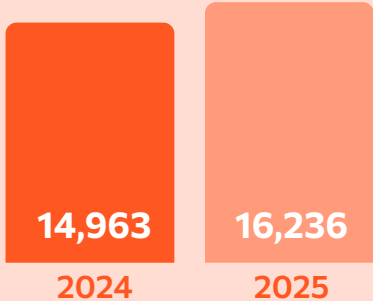
Deme had a gift for bringing people together, and today Project Mercy is a global community united by his example. Thousands have traveled to Ethiopia to work alongside him and Marta, helping to design, build, and operate a remarkable range of programs that have strengthened education, healthcare, nutrition,

infrastructure, and economic opportunity across rural Ethiopia. Together they also created a loving home for children in need. To know Deme was to witness the love of Jesus Christ in action. His legacy lives on in every part of Project Mercy's work, and we are proud to carry his vision forward.

After Marta went to be with the Lord in 2023, the Marta and Deme Foundation was established to sustain Project Mercy's mission and to carry their shared vision further still, supporting faith, education, and wellness in ways that reach beyond what any single program can. If you would like to extend Deme and Marta's legacy through a gift, please contact our office, as we would be honored to speak with you.

Our impact

Patient encounters at Glenn C. Olsen Memorial Primary Hospital



1,884
Students attending Medhane-Alem School

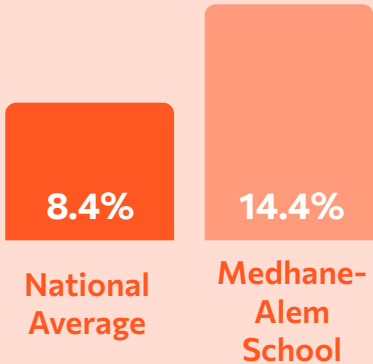


230
Crossbred animals added to farmers' holdings



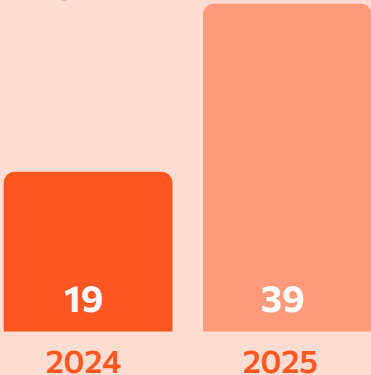
23,109
Coffee seedlings distributed to farmers

Passing rate on 12th grade national exam



325
Births at Glenn C. Olsen Memorial Primary Hospital in 2025

AI Techs employed by Dairy Cattle Breeding Program



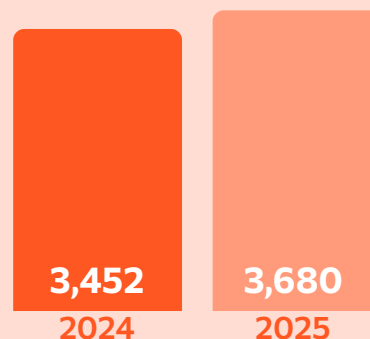
1,528
Ultrasounds performed at hospital

710

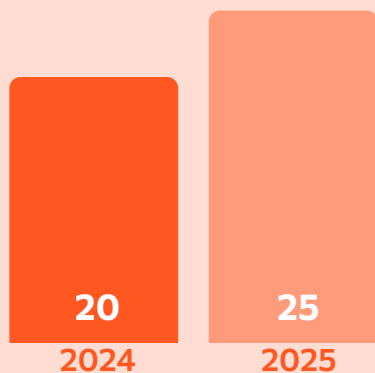
Girls
enrolled
in school
(grades
K-12)



Families receiving
mother and child
services



Number of kebeles
serviced by AI Techs



34,786

Laboratory tests
performed at hospital



1,628

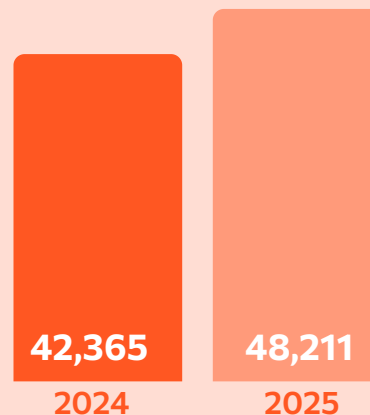
Students participating
in school meal program



9,000

Eggs served weekly to students in school meal
program

Families receiving
health education





A HELPING HAND

Sadia Hassen understands the importance of education. She excelled in her studies through Grade 8 in Miskan Koto and sought to continue her education into secondary school in Butajira.

But with her father unable to pay the rent on a place for her to live, she was forced to end her time in school. She later married and is now the mother of four children.

The three oldest currently attend Project Mercy's Medhane Alem School, with the youngest set to enroll in kindergarten in the fall.

While she enjoys motherhood, she admits that her lack of knowledge on how to contribute to the family's financial situation created a constant hardship.

"I depended entirely on my husband for money to meet our daily needs, and this often created tension between us," Sadia said. "I wanted to contribute to my family's well-being, but I lacked both the opportunity and the knowledge to do so."

When Melaku Afere joined Project Mercy, he brought more than two decades of experience serving rural communities through Christian ministries. His passion was never limited to treating illness. He believed then, and still today, that lasting change begins by preventing disease and addressing the conditions that keep families trapped in poverty.

That vision became reality after Project Mercy hosted volunteer medical professionals who conducted intensive health screenings in Yetebon and neighboring communities. Their findings revealed that many illnesses affecting families were preventable. In discussing these issues with community leaders, one question emerged:

"How can we overcome these problems?"

The answer? What now stands as the Community Health Education program. As Melaku worked with women's development groups, he noticed something encouraging.

Women had already developed a habit of saving small amounts of money. However, nearly all of their savings were spent during the Meskel holiday (a major annual holiday celebrated more than any other holidays of the year by the local people), leaving nothing for future investments or emergencies. Instead of replacing this culture, Melaku built upon it.

He introduced the concept of regular savings, internal lending, and small income-generating activities. At first, many women were hesitant. Previous community groups organized by others had failed, leaving them with little trust in new initiatives.

Patiently, Melaku listened to their concerns, respected their traditions, and explained that this program belonged to the women themselves. Gradually, trust grew, and one group after another decided to join.

The program later expanded to include coffee production, sheep rearing, poultry farming, financial literacy, and preventive healthcare education. Today, 17 Women's Self-Help Groups are actively working together. The transformation extends far beyond income.

“Everything began to change after I joined the Women's Self-Help Group,” Sadia said. “Through Project Mercy's training, I learned the importance of saving, financial management, and developing sustainable sources of income.”



“We began by saving small amounts of money together as a group,” Sadia continued. “Those regular savings gradually grew into a source of security, allowing members to support one another through internal loans during times of need and to invest in income-generating activities.”

Sadia started her experience with the Women's Self-Help Group through raising chickens, which provided eggs, a tremendous source of nutrition for her family. She was also able to sell the surplus to earn additional income.

“For the first time, I had money that I had earned myself,” Sadia said. “I no longer had to rely entirely on my husband for household expenses, and this brought greater dignity, confidence, and harmony to our family.”





Women who once considered themselves dependent now contribute directly to their household economy. They confidently save money, borrow responsibly from one another during emergencies, and invest in productive activities that improve their families' futures.

Melaku also has seen how preventive health education has changed everyday life. Mothers practice better hygiene, maintain more sanitary homes, prepare more nutritious meals, and closely monitor their children's health and education. Communities have become cleaner, healthier, and more supportive of one another.

“Perhaps the most significant change is one that cannot be measured in numbers,” Melaku said. “Women now believe in their own potential. Many have become chairpersons of their groups and serve as respected leaders within their communities. They organize activities, support vulnerable neighbors, visit the sick, assist new mothers, and encourage other women to improve their lives.”

Project Mercy has expanded upon the offerings presented by Women's Self-Help Groups through the distribution of coffee seedlings and sheep rearing. Ytebon's location within the Rift Valley produces some of the world's highest quality coffee, and group members have planted approximately 100 coffee trees on each of their properties.

This creates the possibility of significant household income within the next few years. What once seemed impossible is becoming a realistic pathway out of poverty.

Sadia's family also participates in sheep raising and the growing of coffee. Raising sheep has given her family another reliable income source and strengthened their financial resilience. Instead of depending on a single livelihood, the family now has several ways to support the household and prepare for future needs.

Coffee production also now stands as an important part of the journey, not just for Sadia, but for hundreds of families in and near Ytebon.

Supplemental Video

Scan the QR code to watch a video where Sadia speaks more about the Women's Self-Help Groups:





“Through Project Mercy’s training, we learned how to prepare nurseries, raise coffee seedlings, and manage coffee trees,” Sadia said. “After planting my own coffee trees, I now harvest coffee from my farm. What has impressed me most is that Project Mercy did not simply provide us with temporary assistance. They equipped us with knowledge, practical skills, and ongoing guidance that enable us to improve our lives through our own efforts. The combination of savings, poultry production, sheep rearing, and coffee farming has created a strong foundation for my family’s future.”

Looking ahead, Melaku dreams of seeing Yitebon become a thriving coffee-producing area where buyers travel from across Ethiopia to purchase locally grown coffee. More importantly, he hopes future generations will inherit communities that are both healthier and more economically resilient.



For Melaku, the greatest achievement is not simply healthier families or higher incomes. It is seeing women confidently say, **“Yes, I can”**.

Supplemental Video

Scan the QR code to watch a video where Melaku speaks about the goals of the Women's Self-Help Groups:



Women's Self-Help Groups At a glance

Since its inception, the program has established 17 Women's Self-Help Groups, each consisting of approximately 30 members, integrating preventive healthcare education with savings and internal lending practices. Members have increased their savings contributions every 15 days from 10 birr to 50 birr, significantly strengthening group savings.

Women have been introduced to internal lending systems that allow them to support one another during emergencies. In addition, women have been provided continuous training on preventive healthcare, personal hygiene and sanitation, nutrition, financial literacy, savings, and small business development.

Project Mercy has also provided rams for breeding and fattening, chickens for egg production, coffee seedlings and nursery materials, plastic seedling pots, and technical support for coffee production. Each member has received around 100 coffee seedlings and planted them at their homes, creating a strong foundation for future household income.

Education

We enable individuals to break the cycle of poverty through quality education, inclusive learning environments, and comprehensive academic and vocational programs. Education is core to our holistic approach and plays a defining role in each area of impact, in addition to our specific focus on early childhood development, girl education, child nutrition, and adult skills training.

The Medhane-Alem School was founded in 1996 in partnership with the Yetebon elders, who invested their land and labor to build the school. Today, it educates over 2,000 children from Pre-K through 12th grade. The school benefits from local leadership and community ownership, as well as a high majority of teachers who graduated from Medhane-Alem to become educators at the school for the next generation.

Under an intervention we call “Teaching for Learning”, sustained capacity-building initiatives have been instituted at the Medhane-Alem School, including evidence-based pedagogical training and the integration of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). While pedagogical training is making teachers more effective in the classroom, SEL is proving particularly important in this rural context where many students face socioeconomic pressures that directly affect concentration, confidence, and desire to learn. By equipping teachers to better understand and respond to students’ emotional and motivational needs, classroom engagement and instructional effectiveness can gradually improve. The foundation for sustained academic turnaround is being established, and continued implementation and refinement will be essential to translating these reforms into consistently stronger student outcomes.

In 2025, we took a major step to create a new science-related department at the Health Science College. With it, we transitioned to a Science College. The objective is to offer university graduates in STEM that are under-employed or unemployed the opportunity to upgrade their skills; get internationally recognized certifications from globally known companies like Google, Microsoft, Oracle, IBM, and others in AI, data sciences, cybersecurity, etc.; and secure good jobs.

126

Science College graduates to date

441

students in Pre-K and kindergarten

359

students seen at school health clinic

Supplemental Video

Scan the QR code to learn more about how students prepare for the Ethiopian national examination:





IMPACT STORY Education

Abayneh Kinde

When the Medhane-Alem School announced a vacancy in 2015, I applied immediately and was accepted as the Vice Principal of the secondary school. Before starting with Medhane-Alem, I worked as a government school teacher. But since joining, my professional journey has transformed in ways I never expected.

Through Project Mercy, I have received specialized training in education and learning outcomes, introducing me to new approaches that I had never encountered before in my career. I often say that I'm learning more than I'm working. The Medhane-Alem School is a place where educators are continuously discovering ways to make teaching more effective and meaningful.

As a Vice Principal, I am learning how to support teachers and what is required of a principal through mentoring. I've gained the knowledge and confidence to guide others and suggest better ways to teach each subject. I am seeing our students become more productive as a result. My intention is to continue to help our nation and serve our community with love.



Supplemental Video

Scan the QR code to learn more about education reform at the Medhane-Alem School:





Health

We improve healthcare access and maternal care, and train health workers to promote well-being and empower communities with essential medical services. Women with access to maternal care have a higher chance of giving birth to healthy babies. Well-nourished children can focus in class and grow into productive members of society who can take advantage of economic opportunities and reduce the huge burden on the public sector.

The Community Health Development (CHD) program is formed by several components to address last-mile health in rural Ethiopia. Key components include Community Health Education and the management of four health posts and one community health center which is overseen in partnership with the Health Bureau. Through a combination of preventative and curative services, we take an end-to-end approach to delivering healthcare services for a community of 25,000 people in Ytebon and the adjacent three kebeles.

As we continue to expand our services and offerings based on the needs of the Ytebon community and beyond, we noticed a need to upgrade certain facilities and systems to ensure the continued offering of the best possible care. To that end, we sought to upgrade not just our laboratory, ICU, and radiology facilities and systems, but also launch a Neonatal ICU to improve service to birthing mothers and significantly reduce the number of mothers that must be referred out to other hospitals at a critical point in time of their greatest need for care. In 2025, we started and completed the required renovation to establish a NICU on-site at the hospital, and we are in the process of purchasing, installing, and commissioning the equipment as well as upskilling the nurses that will deliver the service and care.

While malnutrition remains a persistent challenge in Ethiopia, the results of our community health education evaluations varied even across the communities and population groups within our catchment. Our community health education initiative is designed to address these gaps through the implementation of educational interventions to strengthen knowledge and influence behavior at the household level.

299

surgeries performed at hospital

11

mothers served at lie-in-wait home

1,577

patients receiving TB and HIV testing and counseling

Supplemental Video

Scan the QR code to learn more about how the Maternity Village at our hospital improves outcomes for expectant mothers:





Genet

Before I experienced the Maternity Village myself, I did not fully understand why healthcare providers encouraged pregnant women to stay there before delivery. Like many mothers in our community, I was reluctant to leave my family and remain at the hospital. I worried about my children at home more than my own health.

Everything changed when I experienced the care myself. Because I stayed at the Maternity Village, my condition was monitored every day. When it was time to deliver, the doctors were ready to perform a Caesarean section immediately. Today, both my baby and I are healthy. I truly believe that if I had stayed at home, my baby could have died before birth.

The Maternity Village gave me much more than medical treatment. It gave me peace of mind. I knew that skilled healthcare workers were always nearby, checking on me, encouraging me, and making sure both my baby and I were safe. The free meals, accommodation, and continuous care allowed me to focus on my health instead of worrying about how I would pay for the services.





Nutrition

We enhance sustainable agriculture, increase crop productivity, and raise awareness about nutrition to ensure communities have access to nutritious food and eradicate hunger and malnutrition. Our innovative and novel approaches to nutrition equip smallholder farmers with the knowledge and resources to thrive and adapt to increasing food insecurity.

At the demonstration gardens, local farmers are taught how to grow cash crops, which will provide a higher profit than some of the more traditionally grown crops in the region. This initiative integrates with the economic empowerment pillar, as well as our focus on nutrition, due to the commercial viability and the nourishment that many of the cash crops provide families.

Our poultry farm initiative was launched in 2018 as a way to introduce new and sustainable farming techniques to the region. The Ytebon community has adopted poultry farming and is passing on the techniques to the next generation who are using this form of farming to generate income to support themselves.

In 2025, we established a foundation for better nutrition outcomes in the communities we serve while crafting a delivery platform for ongoing nutrition education. We expect that continued investment in this approach will yield strengthened community knowledge, supporting behavior change and contributing to improved nutrition outcomes for children, mothers, and families over time.

We expanded the coverage of our Dairy Cattle Breeding Program in 2025 from 20 to 25 kebeles, along with completing the training and then deploying 19 new artificial insemination specialists. As a pilot, one of the 19 specialists we trained was from Ytebon and spent time in ChaCha to gain hands-on experience. Having a trained specialist in another community will prove valuable when we launch a trial program to expand the dairy development program.

We delivered 244 animals through a combination of crossbred animals distributed from the ChaCha breeding farm and those born in the community through the services delivered by the artificial insemination specialists. In all, the breeding center now employs 39 artificial insemination specialists, who performed a total of 1,050 inseminations in 2025.

499

apple seedlings distributed through fruit tree program

2,000

laying hens at Ytebon poultry farm

2,516

calves birthed all- time at Dairy Cattle Breeding Program in ChaCha

Supplemental Video

Scan the QR code to learn more about how mothers in Ytebon are learning about improved health and nutrition for their children:





IMPACT STORY Nutrition

Khadija

Receiving nutrition and health education from Project Mercy has transformed both my family and my community. The training equipped me with practical knowledge about child nutrition, healthy feeding practices, and community health. Instead of keeping this knowledge to myself, I now teach other women so they can improve the health of their own children.

The changes are clearly visible. Children in our community are healthier because families better understand proper nutrition, and they receive regular health monitoring. Here in my home garden, I grow kale (Gurage cabbage), carrots, enset (false banana), beans, and maize, all of which help improve our family's nutritional intake. In addition, the free education and school feeding program at Medhane Alem School, including the provision of eggs, have helped children grow healthier while continuing their education.

Project Mercy's livelihood support has also made a meaningful difference in my life. The five chickens I received provided nutritious eggs for my children and created an additional source of income through egg sales. This support enabled me to invest in goats, demonstrating how a small livelihood opportunity can help families build greater financial stability.





Infrastructure

We build resilient communities by improving access to clean water, sanitation facilities, roads, and new farming methods for better living conditions and sustainable development. While our efforts today focus on the supply of clean drinking water, we have proudly improved support systems, including the development of 25 kilometers of road, facilitating access to community services, critical healthcare, workplaces, and markets, and promoting local trade and job diversity.

Our boreholes increase the amount of water available to the people in the regions we serve. In addition, they have installed water reservoirs at four schools within Yetebon, with additional reservoirs at four health outposts and a medical center. In 2025, we extended the water delivery system by eight kilometers, adding access points at a newly constructed high school while also establishing new distribution points for the communities in between.

To build upon the borehole dug in 2024 to enhance the water supply, a high-powered pump was installed in 2025 with the purpose of expanding water service to four program sites that include three additional schools, a hospital, a clinic, a home for 17 children under Project Mercy's care, a skill center, and more. This program will expand upon the current water delivery service that provides clean water access to 30,000 people in and around Yetebon.

Several maintenance and repair programs were conducted as well, including changing old pipes, repairing a broken water main, rehabilitating and cleaning 25,000-liter water reservoirs, and fixing water distribution points. In addition to maintaining the systems for continued and uninterrupted service, we aim to add five water reservoirs, two in schools as part of an expanded hygiene and sanitation system, and the other three at health posts to provide much needed access to clean water as these facilities deliver primary health care services to the communities.

4
new schools, along with one new health post and one new hospital, serviced by clean water expansion

8
kilometers added to clean water distribution system

Supplemental Video

Scan the QR code to learn more about how the clean water initiative is helping thousands in and near Yetebon live healthier lives:





IMPACT STORY

Infrastructure

Samuel Mitiku

Before Project Mercy's intervention, women and girls often walked 3 to 4 kilometers to collect water from rivers and other distant sources. The journey was physically demanding and consumed a significant amount of time each day. Today, community members can access water from nearby water points and hot spring water systems within 10 to 15 minutes.

“Before these systems were established, the community relied mainly on natural springs and hand-dug wells developed through local efforts,” Samuel said. “Today, the area benefits from improved water infrastructure and a more reliable supply of clean water.”

The impact of Project Mercy extends beyond water. Employment opportunities created through Project Mercy programs have enabled many families to earn a stable income and improve their living conditions. Community members often describe these changes by saying, “The sun rose over Yetebon,” reflecting the hope and opportunities that Project Mercy has brought to the area.

Looking ahead, community members hope that piped water connections will eventually reach individual households, just as electricity has expanded throughout the area.





Economic Empowerment

We equip individuals with vocational training, entrepreneurship support, financial literacy education, and savings methods to foster economic self-reliance, create job opportunities, and stimulate local economies. To create thriving communities, it is essential that barriers are broken and that individuals can access diverse economic opportunities so that they can be productive members of society, support their families, and gain a sense of purpose and heightened well-being.

Our coffee seedling program has been designed to create more diverse economic opportunities for the smallholder farmers in the region of Yetebon, where much of our work is focused. Our coffee farmers association involves 800 farming families across ten kebeles, who have the opportunity to learn about cooperatives, fair-trade practices, and the coffee export business.

19

paid employees in basket weaving program

12,337

inseminations performed all time by AI specialists trained at Dairy Cattle Breeding Program

330

families receiving macadamia nut seedlings through Project Mercy's demonstration garden

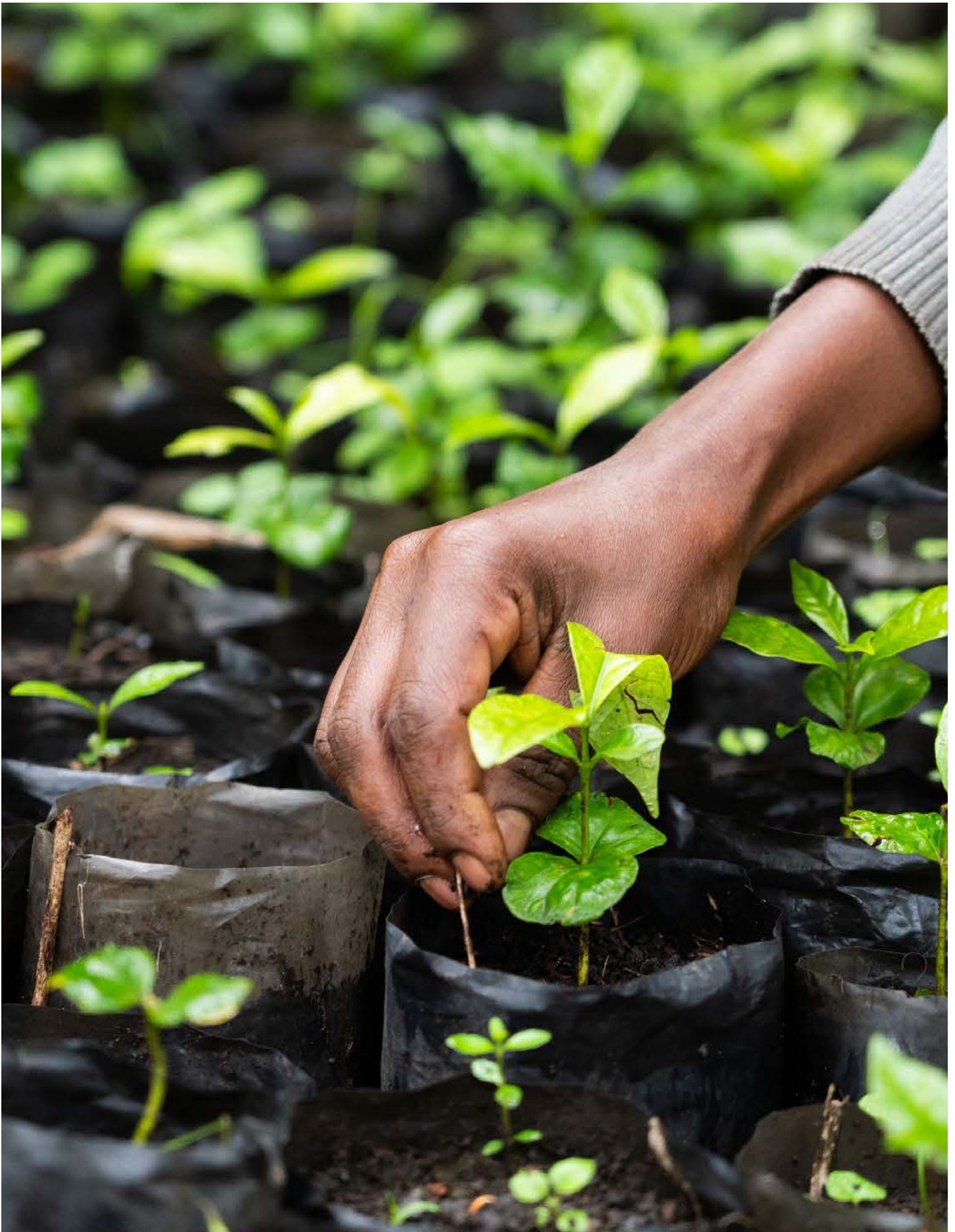
Multiple women's self-help groups were established, with a total number of participants in those measuring 480. The groups have saved a total of 378,000 Ethiopian birr, reflecting growing financial discipline and group cohesion. The groups are also cultivating 16,000 coffee seedlings, grown from seeds provided by Project Mercy, with a potential market value of 50-70 birr per plant. Combined, savings and projected seedling sales represent an estimated 1.178 million birr in group-controlled assets within three years of program launch. Our basket weaving program has 19 participants and there are three enrolled in woodworking.

A total of 566 people (345 males and 221 females) took part in adult literacy and numeracy education, which was taught by a cohort of 62 students from Medhane-Alem High School, seven education experts, five health experts, and two coordinators. Theoretical and practical training was provided for adults in basic literacy, basic mathematical computation, environment and the community, democracy and good governance, saving schemes, using light technologies, and harmful social practices. Participants included people from Yetebon, Mirab Embor, and Goiban Kebeles. Educational materials (books, pencils, erasers, etc.) were provided by Project Mercy, and those completing the coursework were awarded certificates recognizing the achievement.

Supplemental Video

Scan the QR code to learn more about the importance of adult literacy and numeracy training in Yetebon:





PROGRESS UPDATE

Economic Empowerment

Fekede Mesganaw

Before learning to read and write, I depended on other people whenever I needed to understand something written. I felt limited in many aspects of my daily life. Now I can do many things on my own. Reading signs, recognizing numbers, using my mobile phone, and writing my own name have given me confidence that I never had before.

The program has also changed the future of my family. Although I never had the opportunity to receive an education when I was young, I refused to let my children miss that same opportunity.

One of my children is now studying at university, and another is currently in Grade 11. Because I chose to learn as an adult, I have become a better example and greater source of encouragement for my children. My own education has benefited not only me but my entire family.

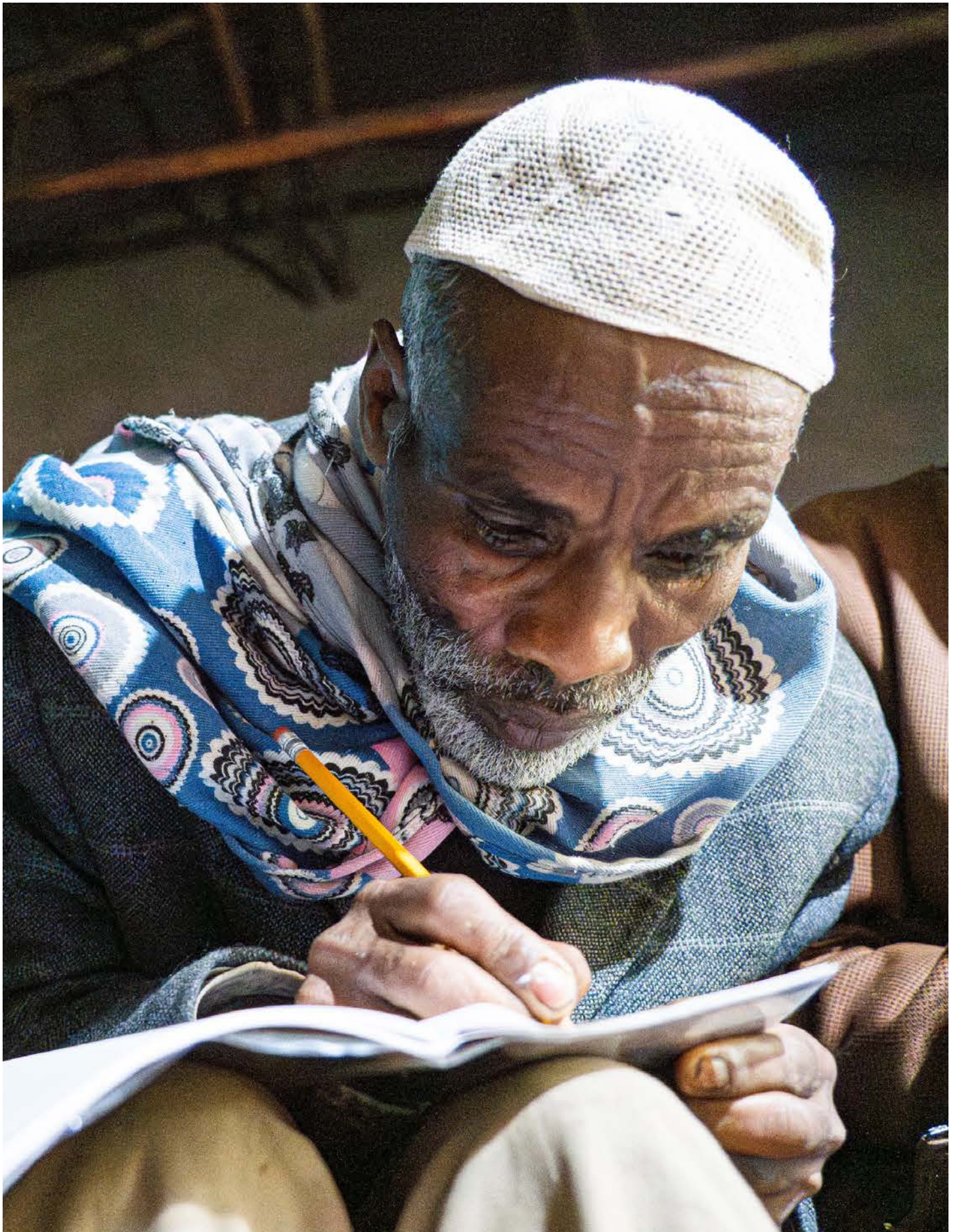
The literacy program also helped improve my livelihood. The skills and confidence I gained enabled me to become a carpenter's assistant, and today I earn a living that allows me to support my family.



Supplemental Video

Scan the QR code to learn more about the positive impact made on Fekede's life thanks to the adult literacy and numeracy program:





Our team



Bete F. Demeke
President & Board
Vice-Chairman

Bete Demeke is the son of Project Mercy's co-founders, Marta and Deme, and serves as the President and CEO of Project Mercy as well as on the Board of Directors. Prior to this, he worked with IBM as Vice President of Worldwide Sales. Bete holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Systems Analysis from Taylor University and a Masters in Management from the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University.



Lali Demeke
Special Projects Manager

Lali Demeke is the son of Project Mercy's co-founders, Marta and Deme, and currently acts as a Special Projects Manager. Prior to joining the organization, he worked in the United States Air Force in logistics and operations at various bases in the US, Europe and Asia. Lali holds a Bachelor's degree in Organizational Leadership from Indiana Institute of Technology. Lali is married to Wanda and they have two daughters.

Ethiopian management team (oversees 400+ employees)

Ato Temesgen Abate
Community-Based Dairy Development

Dr. Tamirat Ayalew
General Surgeon and Medical Director

Dr. Feben Folla
OB/Gyn

Ato Tadele Habtu
Center-Based Dairy Development

Wz Tsige Haile
Human Resources

Ato Alemseged Mehateme
Site Manager, Yetebon

Dr. Degemu Shartaga
General Manager

Ato Adane Shibru
Accounting and Finance

Ato Kifle Tessema
Logistics and Administration

US staff

Kidan Alemishet
Database Consultant

Ann Hightower
Accountant

Megan Knowles
Donor Relations Manager
Volunteer Coordinator

Josh Patterson
Communication Specialist

Lucy Roller
Office Manager

Spencer Roller
Digital Media

Betru Tekle-Wold
Bookkeeper

Committee Members (not currently serving on board)

Bruce Bacon
Development

David McKinney
Development

Dr. Stephen Winter
Succession Planning

Board members



Dr. Michael J. Van Noord
Board Chairman

Dr. Michael Van Noord is a general surgeon specialist and has been practicing for over 25 years. He has served as Assistant Chief of General Surgery, Kaiser Permanente, and is an active member of Bay Area Medical Mission. Michael holds a Doctor of Medicine from the Wake Forest University School of Medicine.



Daniel B. Tymann
Board Director

Dan Tymann brings more than 40 years of experience in non-profit and for-profit executive leadership, non-profit fundraising, process engineering, strategic planning, operations management, and quality principles, including 19 years as the Executive Vice President at Gordon College. Dan is a graduate of Tufts University with a BSEE.



Demeke Tekle-Wold
Co-Founder & CEO Emeritus

Demeke Tekle-Wold is the co-Founder of Project Mercy, whose remarkable story is told in his wife Marta's book, 'Sheltered by The King'. Deme served on the board until his passing in July. Prior to this, he served his country with posts in the Government. Deme holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree from Western Washington University.



Brad Coolman
Board Director

Dr. Brad Coolman is a board-certified small animal surgeon in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Brad has served with Christian Veterinary Mission projects in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Brad holds a doctorate in veterinary medicine from Purdue University, having completed an internship at Auburn University and a surgical residency through the University of Illinois.



Dr. William F. Zuber
Board Director

Dr. Bill Zuber is a retired obstetrician and gynecologist, having served at Kaiser Permanente South San Francisco for 31 years. He is on the board of Bay Area Medical Missions. Bill holds a medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine, New Orleans, Louisiana.



Dr. Colleen Kraft
Board Director

Dr. Colleen Kraft currently holds several appointments at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia including Assistant Professor, Infectious Diseases; Program Director, Medical Microbiology; and Medical Director, Microbiology. She first visited Project Mercy as a 1996 Taylor University Lighthouse participant.



Dr. Tim Teusink
Board Director

Dr. Tim Teusink is a retired missionary and also taught Bioethics across the African continent. Tim holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Washington, a Master's degree from Trinity International University and a Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Washington School of Medicine.



Ester Silvers
Board Director

Ester Silvers, now retired, taught Primary Special Education for 14 years followed by 22 years as a first-grade teacher in Yakima, Washington. She holds a bachelor's degree in education from Central Washington University and a Master's of Education from Walden University.

Annually, we execute over twenty-five programs across the Yetebon and ChaCha communities. One of my favorite programs in the portfolio has to be the shoe distribution. We take the opportunity to wash and check the health of our children's feet before we fit them with the correct size pair of shoes for their feet. The children love it too. Teachers, staff, and sometimes the older students washing the feet of the younger ones is a special moment for everyone.

On the day of distribution, what the children remember is the feeling of clean feet and new pairs of shoes. For the rest of us too, we enjoy the day and humbly reflect on the opportunity to serve others. Ultimately, though, the symbolism of washing the feet of these children isn't lost on anyone.

Every time we serve these children, we are sharing our love and compassion in a meaningful and unforgettable way – not just once, but year after year. Our children will grow up and sow well the seed of love we planted in them when we washed, anointed, and fitted their little feet in brand new pairs of shoes.

We are grateful for every opportunity we have to reach those we serve through the many programs we run, and we are thankful to you for being our partner through every step of the journey! Our appreciation for you continues to grow abundantly for having made 2025 a special year and for your ongoing faithfulness.

Bete Demeke
Project Mercy, President and CEO







“Joy is the serious business of Heaven” - C. S. Lewis

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