



20th April 2021



**From Konso:
My language will grow in all directions!**

Dear friends and family,

I, Steve, haven't been to Ethiopia since November 2019. Normally I am there every three months, so I really miss the country, the people, my colleagues and, of course, the great coffee served by the roadside on our long journeys. The Corona situation in Ethiopia is getting worse at the moment, so I will probably have to stay patient for a few more months before I can travel again. But the next visit will come for sure! And even without regular visits, work continues apace from my office at home here in Germany.

Our Projects

Last year, we had to reschedule all of our school projects (each for 5-6 language groups) at least once because of Corona. It was a real challenge to keep things moving and keep us all "on the same page". Throughout all the ups and downs we were amazed at and thankful for God's faithful provision: None of our project sponsors had to cut or even reduce any of the funds they pledged. In fact, in one project we even received additional funds to take preventative action against Corona in primary schools.

And, this January, we were able to start a long-awaited new project to establish a pre-school programme in two languages in and around the town of Konso.



My name is Kapatiya Kafakanto. I am a teacher and have been working as a textbook author for my language, Afaa Xonso, the Konso language, since 2016. I have always been able to speak and understand everything in my language, but I was only familiar with reading and writing in Amharic. When I started working as a textbook author, seeing my language written down was somehow alien to me. I could neither read nor write in my own language. It was very strange and I felt afraid.

Over time I improved, the fear became less and I co-wrote the first books for the first-grade pupils. Now I can express myself better in writing in my language than in any other language. I can share the knowledge I have acquired more easily with others. And by now, primary school children at many of our schools feel the same way. Learning is much easier for them.

It is my wish and hope that my language will grow in all directions. It should become the language of instruction in all our schools. My people and I will benefit a lot as our children can now learn more easily. As a woman and a mother, I am proud to be able to contribute to the growth of the language together with my colleagues. Together we are laying a good foundation for the children and helping them to learn with the language they understand best.

In Corona year 2020

Despite all the Corona restrictions, in the sixteen languages in which we run our the primary school programmes and adult reading classes, we have been able to

- train over 400 teachers in 1 to 4 week workshops.
- Re-open the 62 schools and women's literacy classes in October with a tailored "re-entry programme".
- further develop and distribute the textbooks for the next school year.
- print a new edition of existing storybooks for primary schools. There are still not enough books for all 235,000 pupils who are now learning to read and write in their mother tongue, ...

...but despite all the difficulties: We are clearly making progress!

And family life - all at home

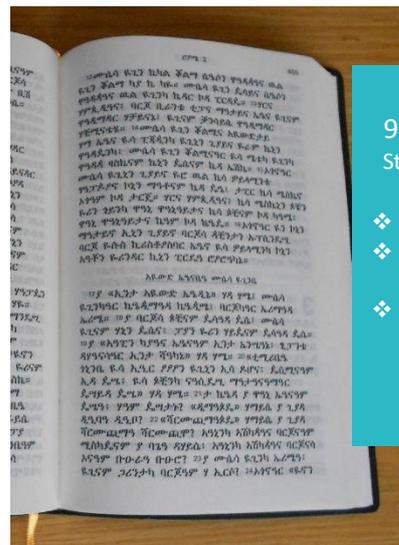
Marit is the only one of us who regularly leaves the house for work, school or study. Nursing on an Intensive Care Unit can't be done from a home office (yet?). Ben came back from Aberdeen for Christmas and has stayed here completing all his courses online this semester. Lisa is also studying online: Hazard Prevention Engineering and is now in her second semester here at one of the Hamburg universities. Dan's schooling has been exclusively online since Christmas and will likely stay that way until summer. Ellen, on the other hand, is enjoying a hybrid solution of school two or three times a week, with the remainder via the computer. So "all things considered" we are all keeping well!

For your prayers

- Thank God that the long-awaited literacy classes among the Ts'emakko have eventually started. There are fewer participants than hoped for, but they are progressing faster in the small groups. 😊
- Thank God that, despite Corona, all our project sponsors have been able to stand by their financial commitments and that the work in the schools remains adequately funded this year.
- Ask for protection and health for colleagues of our partner organisation in Ethiopia. Some have already had Corona and others are currently in quarantine.
- Pray for peace and reconciliation for the people of the Tigray region. Pray for the ongoing "Trauma Healing" workshops we are currently running to support people working in the region.
- Pray for peace and for national diversity and unity in the run up to the general election on 5th June.

With love and greetings from us all,

Marit Steve Ben Lisa Dan Ellen



Ethiopia
 91 Languages
 Status Dec. 2020

- ❖ 11 full Bibles
- ❖ 28 New Testaments
- ❖ 78 ongoing translation projects

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