

10/20/11

Logiya Primary School Library Project in the Afar Region of Ethiopia

Logiya Primary School is located in the Afar region, home of the Afar people of Ethiopia. Afar is located in the north, northeast section of Ethiopia bordering with Eritrea and Djibouti. In Logiya, there are roughly two thousand students from grades 1 to 8 level, and plans are underway to expand the school up to a high school by next year. The town/village population is approximately 75,000 people, and is located 5 km away from the capital Semera. The students travel 2 to 3 km on average to get to school. The major source of livelihood is cattle production, small retail businesses and some cottage industries. Average classroom size is 75, and in some classrooms, it goes as high as 100.

The goal of the project is to raise enough funds to establish a functional library for primary and secondary education. The funds will be used for shipping books from the US, for purchasing local language books, furniture, and training of personnel to run the library. This project is collaboration between US AID and the Ministry of Education in Ethiopia to expand the country's English language curriculum through the TLMP (Textbook Learning and Materials Program). The Ministry of Education has selected 11 promising schools, one in each of Ethiopia's regions, as centers for training in the new curriculum. Ethiopia Reads had already placed a library in one of those schools and have secured funding for four more.

The main beneficiaries of this project are the students and the community at large. Currently, they have a room for a library with no books, no adequate furniture and no trained staff.

In the last 20 years, the enrollment rate for primary school education has gone up significantly. However, the children are not proficient in decoding and understanding what they read. This has been recently proven by the Early Grade Reading Assessment that was funded by US AID, RIT International, and other programs and agencies interested in education in Ethiopia. Nationwide, the percentage of children who could not read a single word correctly was about 34%. This is a disturbing figure even if it is not representative of all regions. Not much of learning takes place without reading at a satisfactory level and these students are at a risk of dropping out and giving up hope on education unless the quality of education is improved with availability of textbooks, other books, training of teachers, parental and community involvement.

You can be a part of this exciting new program to change education in Logiya by your support.

