

Refugee Story #1

About one half of the Ethiopian population belongs to the Christian Ethiopian Orthodox Church and one third of that church is made up of Muslims. Roman Catholics, Protestants, and Ethiopian Jews also add to the religious diversity of Ethiopia. Ethiopians believe that they give a great contribution to the world by distributing coffee everywhere. Ethiopia is a very poor country with a 50% literacy rate and an average income of about \$120 per person each year. Ethiopians medical care is very poor as well with one doctor for every 100,000 people.

Thousands of Ethiopians were killed trying to escape many of the Ethiopian droughts. Many died of starvation and thirst trying to reach refugee camps. If caught trying to escape Ethiopia, they were imprisoned, tortured, raped, and usually murdered. Most of the people that did make it to a refugee camp suffered from poor and inadequate housing, schooling and medical care.

A young woman named Leteberhan, who is 18, was born in Ethiopia told her story. Leteberhan and her family moved to Sudan together after they grew tired of the violence and fighting in Ethiopia. Leteberhan attended school in the Sudan for six months. After living there they became discouraged by the hard rains that occasionally washing away houses, and her family moved to the U.S. Once they arrived in the U.S. Leteberhan started school in the 8th grade. At first it was hard for her, being bullied and picked on for being the new person. Eventually she got past that and now she is in the 12th grade and has applied to college to study accounting. She hopes that someday people will realize how hard it is for new people. She hopes that people will realize that and begin to welcome and help new people.

Refugee Story #2

A young man named Abby came to the U.S. at the age of 14. He was born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Abby's father worked for the Ethiopian Airlines and sometimes got free tickets so Abby traveled with him a lot. Abby attended a French school for kindergarten and first grade. Then he went to an Indian school where he started learning English. Later, he went to a private Catholic school where sometimes the students were hit for not doing work assigned to them. After a while of war and fighting in Ethiopia a military base exploded and word spread that there was going to be a draft into the Ethiopian army. Abby's parents got scared and sent him to the U.S. to live with some relatives who had also fled Ethiopia. They had to work hard to make a living and he was almost always watching his younger cousin who was also living there. When Abby came to America he was a freshman in high school, he is now a senior. Recently his mother came to America but his younger brother and father are still in Ethiopia. Abby has sent many applications to many colleges. He wants to study civil engineering or medicine. Abby hopes that someday soon his father and brother will come to America so he can see them again. He misses them and all of his relatives who are still in Ethiopia.