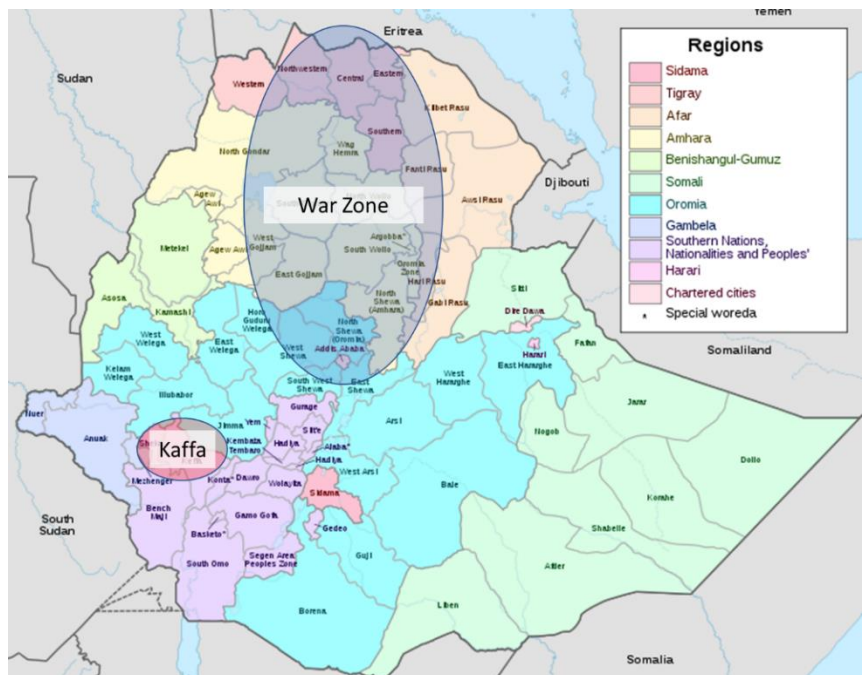




Dear Friends of the Ethiopian Education Fund,

We have heard from many of you and your concern about the students and the civil war in Ethiopia. We are thankful that none of our students are in harm's way. That does not mean all is peaceful for Ethiopia. Every day the tragic events occurring in north of the country weigh on our hearts. The civil war that began a year ago has spread from the north and moved close to capital of Addis Ababa. In its wake millions of people need help especially women and children. Aid agencies around the world decry the violence that is occurring daily and advocate to the powers on both sides to stop the violence and let assistance reach those in need. As I write this, that is yet to happen.

We are fortunate that our work is centered far from the frontlines of war and not on the road from the north to Addis Ababa. The [Kingdom of Kaffa](#) as it was known and the large [forests](#) that surrounded it provided isolation and safety for hundreds of years. Even though Kaffa became part of greater Ethiopia in 1897, its location is far from the major roads, which kept it underdeveloped and ignored for most of the last hundred years. When Stephanie and I first arrived in Kaffa in 2002, the forests were still a source of foraged goods to be traded. Products such as wild coffee, vines, honey, long pepper, and cardamon could be found at weekly markets. Of course there was no electricity or running water in the town of Chiri back then. Multiple local languages were spoken in the area, and the entire micro-economy still benefited from a strong barter system.



While this isolation kept the people of Kaffa from benefiting from the development boom from 2005 to 2018 in Ethiopia, it now keeps them safe from warring factions that are tearing the rest of Ethiopia apart just as it did over 100 years ago.

That is not to say all is "fine." We were able to use our connections and help one of our university students studying in the war zone move to a university closer to Kaffa. She is still too close to the war zone for our comfort, but at least she is safe for now and can continue her studies.



Asegedech, a new graduate from business school, who was profiled in the last EEF newsletter, has found a job back in Kaffa working for the county government. We are proud of her. At EEF, we see education as the vehicle to get a good job, and in the end, we count jobs as our apex indicator of success.

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We also want to highlight two other students, Aynalem and Lidet. These two young women are now in 12th grade and in 8 months will take their placement exams to see if they go to university, college, or technical school. They have been supported by EEF since primary school and have devoted their time to studying and being good members of the community. Unfortunately Aynalem's grandmother, who took care of her and made sure she studied, died this past year. While the loss of her grandmother is heartbreaking, Aynalem is able to continue her studies because of your support and can look forward to completing Grade 12 and the chance for post-secondary education.



Additional programs that support kids in need

The EEF also provides support to non-scholarship students through limited donations to government-run programs in the area. We have built trusting relationships with the local state capital of Bonga and the local village of Chiri to support children in extreme poverty by providing basic supplies such as uniforms and books so they can attend school. Your support gives these kids a chance.

An event on the horizon...

We will be hosting a zoom event in the coming month that will be all about coffee. You'll learn about Ethiopian coffee ceremony from Azi, coffee roasting from Chuck at Olympic Crest Coffee Roasters, and hear a children's story about the discovery of coffee. Stay tuned for date and time.



Your donation makes a difference...

The EEF supports 40 students and their families. We bring hope to a fractured country by enabling young people to gain an education, meet other students from different ethnicities, and together begin to shape the future of Ethiopia. As they say in Ethiopia: Kuss b'kuss...bit by bit. Change will come.

If you would like to bring hope to marginalized youth in Ethiopia through education, please consider making a donation at www.ethiopianeducationfund.org; \$30 per month supports a student in grade school; \$40 per month supports a college or university student. You can also send us a check at the address at the bottom of the page.

If the stock market has been good to you this year, please consider donating stock directly to the EEF. Because we are a 501(c)3 nonprofit, we can directly receive stock as a gift with tax advantages for you and more funds for the students.

If you are interested in purchasing Ethiopian coffee, please contact us for more details.

We wish you a healthy, happy, hopeful, and restorative New Year.

Jeff, Stephanie, Annie and Rochelle (EEF Board)

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