

This year has, once again, been confusing and challenging: there has been an **ongoing war** in Ethiopia, the **continuing pandemic** and an **inability to travel** (Ethiopia has only recently been removed from the UK's red list). However, the Aysanew Kassa Trust's trustees have remained optimistic regarding the aims of the charity and fundraising activities. In the last few months, we have been able to **organise some events** to raise the profile of our work and, through the generosity of so many friends, we have tried to **minimise the impact of the struggles** of the last year on our individual beneficiaries and projects.

Covid and Conflict

Covid vaccinations are slowly getting around the country but until more are made available by Western governments, only very few people in any one place are able to be double vaccinated. This risks prolonging the impact of the pandemic both within the country and around the world. Schools are facing increasing pressure to minimise class sizes, but this adds extra workload to an already stretched teaching staff.

Unfortunately, Covid has been overtaken by conflict as a principal cause of damage to the lives, education and prosperity of all Ethiopians. Due to the ongoing civil war in the country, the trustees of the Aysanew Kassa Trust have taken the decision to pause all construction projects until there is peace once more.

Despite all these difficulties, our students remain passionate about completing their education and, with your amazing support, we will be continuing our sponsorship activities.

2021 in review

Our students

Covid-19 has impacted education in Ethiopia and created a lot of uncertainty in the school and university calendar, with graduations and exams all delayed. Students had to return home at multiple times during the year, which increased costs. At the moment, we are **sponsoring 132 university students** and **80 high school students** and these numbers will remain similar going into 2022.

St Raphael's School

In addition to the purchase of further laptops for the school and our ongoing support to its work, we have paid for the cost of **hospital treatment of two children** from St Raphael's.

Some positive news!

On a happy note, an ex-Azezo high school student who is a lecturer in Bahir Dar university has **gained a scholarship to do a Masters** in fashion marketing in Manchester. He is now in the UK and really keen to participate in our fundraising activities in the coming year!

IT

Access to IT is now more important in Ethiopia than ever. This has been a particularly difficult time for our students in Azezo due to a lack of good internet connections and access to computer facilities. Any online teaching that was made available was therefore very difficult for our students to access.

To mitigate this, we have used some of your donations to **provide computing classes** for students at Azezo Senior High School. Thanks to Gondar (Ethiopia) Eye Surgery (GEES), its trustees and the wife of the late Sandy Holt Wilson, we have been able to **purchase laptops** for St Raphael's School for blind and partially-sighted children and **continue a series of taught classes** for its students.

Thank you!

Thank you to all of you who have supported us throughout these difficult times! The successes of the AKT are thanks to the many individuals and groups who constantly support our work, as well as the coordinating efforts of our volunteer committee in Azezo, led by Melash, Eshete and Getu.

Thank you to St Mary's Church (Wilshaw), the parishioners of St Mary's (East Finchley), the Gondar (Ethiopia) Eye Surgery, the Rossi family in Italy and all of you who donate and assist us from around the world. You all know who you are!

Below are some pictures taken at fundraising events that we have been able to hold this year: unfortunately, travel restrictions mean that we have not been able to obtain any from Ethiopia itself, so we're afraid you'll have to make do with some older ones...



The continuing uncertainty around the pandemic, coupled with the increasing cost of basic commodities in Ethiopia, exacerbated by conflict and all of the suffering it is causing, suggests that 2022 will be especially difficult for our beneficiaries. We will not, however, be reducing the support we give our students. If you can help us in any way, or have any suggestions, please do so: the students of Azezo will be immensely grateful.

Please support us!

If you're stuck for ideas for Christmas or birthday gifts, you can buy a complete set of school text books (£18), a football for a blind child at St Raphael's (£22) or sponsor a university student for one year (£75, including transport and a monthly allowance). If you are interested, please get in touch and we can send you a card to give to the lucky recipient! Last year we funded 8 footballs, but due to the children's enthusiasm and rough ground they eventually wear out!

Donations can be made by cheque, payable to The Aysanew Kassa Trust, or by bank transfer (account number 80808350, sort code 20-58-51). If you are able to Gift Aid your donation, please complete the Gift Aid declaration you will find on our website, thus increasing the value of your gift at no extra cost to yourself.