

MEDA WELABU

—— 2014 ——

YEAR END REPORT



imagine1day®

In 2014, we started working with 58 communities in the district of Meda Welabu. Over the course of the year, brick by brick, new schools were built, young children stepped foot on a playground for the first time, teachers delved into their science kits and with new skills acquired through training, they brought theories to reality for their bright eyed students. In partnership with parents, elders, and communities at large, we began our work to develop a new generation of leaders to elevate the world.

The progress we made in 2014 would not have been possible without your generous contribution. On behalf of everyone at imagine1day, thank you for your continued trust and support.

 the imagine1day team



A smiling man in a light green shirt and a young woman in a black headscarf with green and white patterns and an orange shawl stand in front of a traditional thatched hut. The man is on the left, and the woman is on the right, looking towards the camera.

WATCH OUR VIDEO

Having recently married, 15-year-old Tayiba Aliyi thought she may never have the chance to pursue an education. But everything changed when Seifu Muhammed knocked on their door.



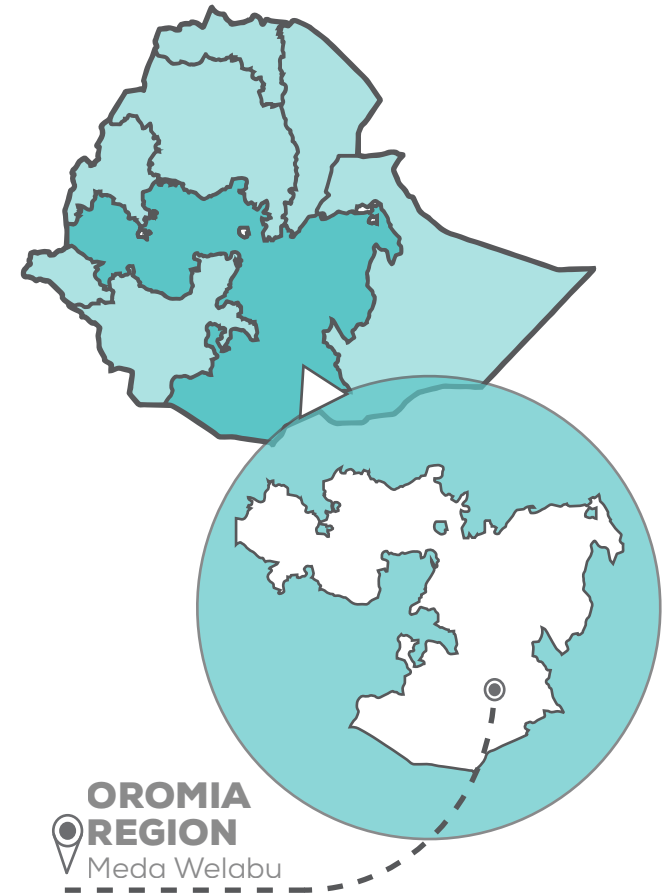
Click here to watch a video about how we work on the ground to help young women like Tayiba go to school

PROJECT OVERVIEW

A six hours' drive along dirt paths from the nearest concrete road is the district of Meda Welabu, home to approximately 116,669 people. Agriculture and cattle are the backbone of the economy here, and most families are pastoralist, which means they spend up to six months in a year moving with their cattle in search of food and water.

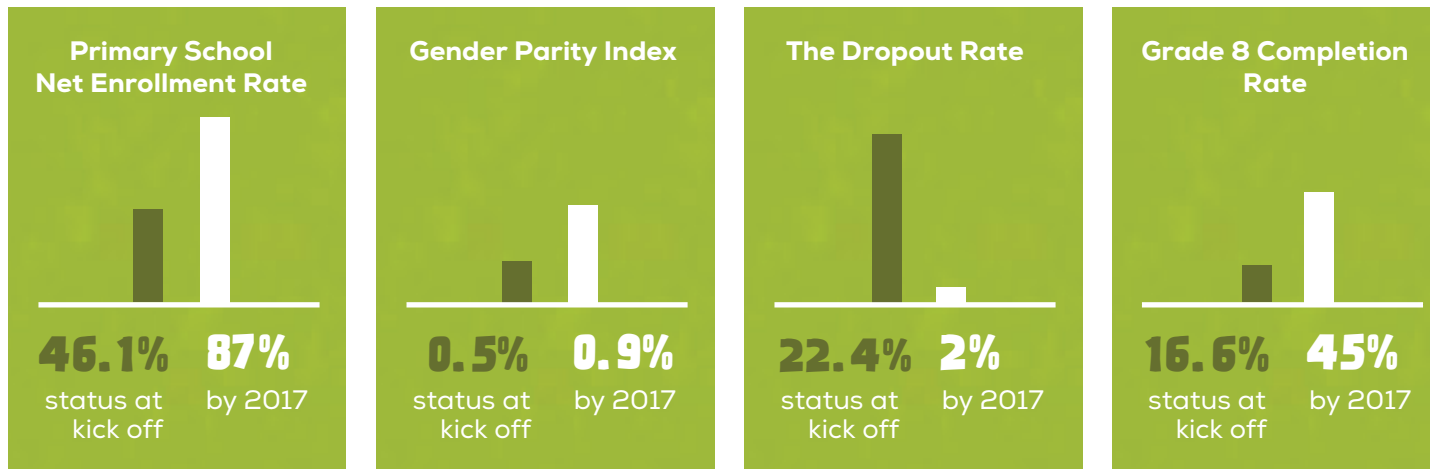
There is a widespread mistrust of formal education amongst the largely illiterate population. Most adults have never gone to school, so they don't understand the value of formal education. Instead, many prefer to send their kids to religious education, and one out of two girls is never educated at all.

As a result, this district has some of the weakest education indicators in all of Ethiopia. When we started our work in Meda Welabu at the beginning of 2014, only 46.1% of school-age children were attending primary school, and the dropout rate was 22%. Through various community awareness training initiatives and infrastructure projects, our objective was to change that reality.



OUR GOALS

What we will achieve by 2017



OUR HOLISTIC APPROACH

New classrooms alone don't provide a quality education; you need motivated teachers with a variety of tools at their disposal, dedicated principals with strong leadership skills, and communities that value formal education. Our holistic approach focuses on three core areas and helps us address all these variables so that the girls and boys of Meda Welabu get the education they deserve. This is how we put our strategy into practice in 2014:

CONSTRUCTION & INFRASTRUCTURE

We built classrooms and private latrines to improve access to quality education for boys and girls in rural communities.

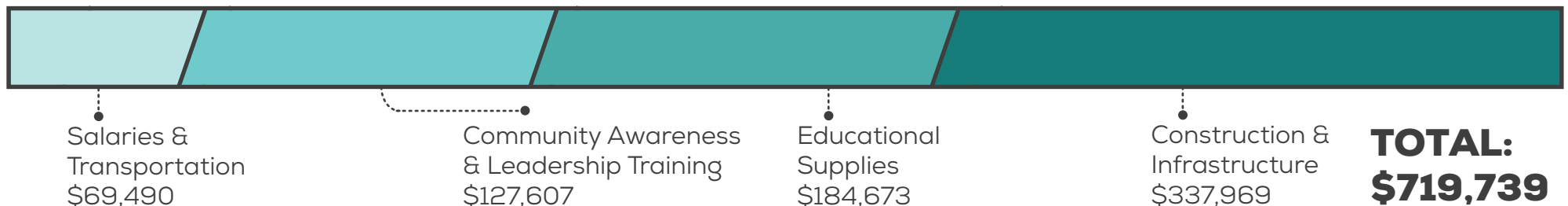
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATIONAL SUPPLIES

We trained teachers and school principals and distributed distributed teaching aids, school supplies and school furniture to improve the quality of learning environments.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS & LEADERSHIP TRAINING

We trained Parent Association members, Parent Teacher Association members, religious elders, government officials and other community leaders to improve leadership, management, institutional capacity and gender equity in schools.

PROJECT SPENDING IN 2014



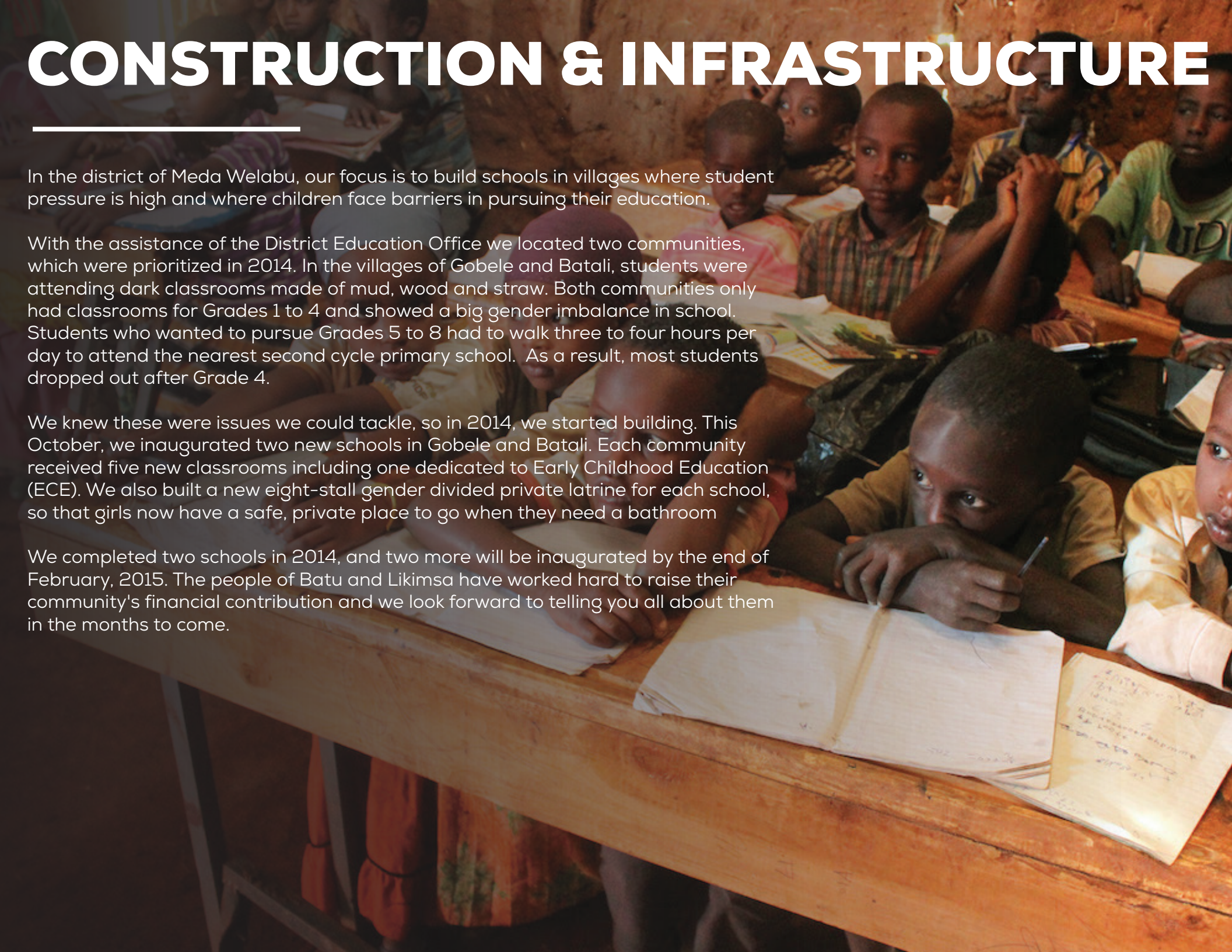
CONSTRUCTION & INFRASTRUCTURE

In the district of Meda Welabu, our focus is to build schools in villages where student pressure is high and where children face barriers in pursuing their education.

With the assistance of the District Education Office we located two communities, which were prioritized in 2014. In the villages of Gobele and Batali, students were attending dark classrooms made of mud, wood and straw. Both communities only had classrooms for Grades 1 to 4 and showed a big gender imbalance in school. Students who wanted to pursue Grades 5 to 8 had to walk three to four hours per day to attend the nearest second cycle primary school. As a result, most students dropped out after Grade 4.

We knew these were issues we could tackle, so in 2014, we started building. This October, we inaugurated two new schools in Gobele and Batali. Each community received five new classrooms including one dedicated to Early Childhood Education (ECE). We also built a new eight-stall gender divided private latrine for each school, so that girls now have a safe, private place to go when they need a bathroom.

We completed two schools in 2014, and two more will be inaugurated by the end of February, 2015. The people of Batu and Likimsa have worked hard to raise their community's financial contribution and we look forward to telling you all about them in the months to come.



WHY ZEYNI CAME TO SCHOOL

This year, Gobele Sharyn Primary School has five new classrooms including one dedicated to Early Childhood Education. Classrooms are bright and airy and every child has a seat. In addition, a new eight-stall private latrine means that girls aren't afraid to go to school when they reach puberty, and a colourful new playground attracts children throughout the community.

Since new classrooms welcomed students this fall, enrollment has snowballed. Last year, there were just 258 students enrolled in school. This year, there are 404 students, a 57% increase in enrollment.

For kids like eight-year-old Zeyni Abdurezak, a new classroom was the incentive needed to start Grade 1. "When I compare the previous school with this school, it is very old. This one has seats. This one has a playground. It is more comfortable than the old classes. Before this school was constructed students sat in the dust. It was better to sit in my home rather than come to school. This year I came to school because we have a beautiful construction and I wanted to be in this beautiful playground."



For eight-year-old Zeyni Abdurezak, a new classroom was the incentive needed to start Grade 1.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS & LEADERSHIP TRAINING

In the pastoralist communities of Meda Welabu, classroom quality isn't the only reason why kids aren't in school. In many cases, a lack of community awareness about the benefits of a formal education is a main barrier to school enrollment. To tackle this problem, imagine1day provided community awareness and leadership training for hundreds of community leaders spanning 58 communities in 2014. All of our training sessions were led by Ethiopians, and each session ended with group discussions so participants could brainstorm their own solutions to low enrollment.

- A total of 112 religious leaders learned that the Qu'ran actually encourages the education of all children, both girls and boys;
- 54 Iddir* leaders learned about the relevance of education and the role it plays in development;
- 402 Parent Teacher Association members learned about school leadership and the importance of Functional Adult Literacy;
- And finally, 21 Project Advisory Council members, Education Supervisors and experts were trained in project planning and monitoring and evaluation.

In the months following these trainings, Iddir leaders in six communities changed their bylaws so that parents who do not send their kids to school are fined. And in all 54 communities, a consortium of parents, teachers, students and elders spent the summer walking door-to-door to enroll parents to register their out of-school children. To meet new demand, PTA members and leaders from eight communities led the construction of 23 new classrooms made of locally sourced materials, and the government of Meda Welabu hired 97 new teachers at the start of the school year. Our community trainings didn't just impact kids either: more than 3,114 adults enrolled in Functional Adult Literacy classes in 2014, and communities across Meda Welabu now conduct regular coffee ceremonies to discuss issues affecting their school and to brainstorm potential solutions. Change is on the horizon.

**An Iddir is an important social welfare organization present in almost all Ethiopian communities.*



**\$56,468 DONATED BY
COMMUNITIES**



**23 COMMUNITY BUILT
CLASSROOMS**



**6 IDDIR POLICIES
REVISED**



**3,114 NEW FUNCTIONAL
ADULT LITERACY STUDENTS**

HOW BIDIMO'S STUDENT POPULATION GREW BY 77%

When Jibril Ahmed was growing up, going to school was never an option. Today, he is an illiterate farmer with 12 children from two wives. Until last year, only one of them ever attended school. "Before I had many cattle and I preferred to send my children to keep the cattle. I had no awareness about the importance of education," he says.

Jibril's perspective changed when a lecturer from Adama University made a speech at the local mosque. "He enforced that religious leaders should not prevent formal education," says Hassan Hussein, Bidimo's School Principal."

Empowered by the support of their religious leaders, Bidimo's PTA members started recruiting new students. "We enrolled out-of-school children by organizing ourselves into groups including elders, women and youth, and then we walked home to home. We convinced parents by telling them how education can improve their lives. We went not only with women and youth but also with religious leaders. We showed them the problems with illiteracy. By using these methods, we recruited new students," says Aliyi Hussein Gobena, a community elder.

At the same time, the local Iddir leaders changed their bylaws so that any parent who does not send their child to school is fined 3,000 ETB. Thanks to these efforts, Bidimo Primary School enrolled 569 students this fall, a 77% increase from last year.

Jibril's three youngest children are amongst Bidimo's newest students. "Years ago I went to the hospital in the nearest town. I had a hard time finding the restaurant, the hotel, and the shop. Because I can't read, I had difficulty," says Jibril. "This summer I discussed with my neighbor about the importance of education. Now that I am aware, I am sending my kids to school. Even now I started in Functional Adult Literacy. After I saw the impact of education on myself, I was happy to send my three children to school," he says.



Jibril Ahmed, right, started sending three of his kids to school last fall thanks to imagine1day's community mobilization.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATIONAL SUPPLIES

To become well-rounded citizens, students need more than just rote learning; they need classroom debates, creative projects, sports teams, and school clubs. In 2014, we made sure schools throughout the district of Meda Welabu were equipped with all the materials students need to learn, play and experiment. A science kit helps students put theory into practice; creative writing materials allow kids to express themselves freely; and sports supplies encourage children to play outside.

Meanwhile we began to pave a path for educators to give students the best quality education. A total of 492 teachers from 58 communities in Meda Welabu received training in Active Learning, Life Skills, Science, Reading and Writing Improvement, Action Research and Early Childhood Education. In Active Learning, teachers learn how to integrate more interactive learning techniques in their lessons; in Life Skills, teachers learn to improve students' self confidence and to improve participation in class; and in Science, teachers learn how to create hands-on experiments with their new science kits.

During School Leadership & Management Training, 58 School Principals learn how to communicate and work effectively with their teachers and Parent Teacher Associations. They also learn how to properly manage school funds and how to evaluate their students and teachers.

Taken together, our professional development training and educational supplies give kids throughout 58 schools in the Meda Welabu District an education centered on fun, discussion and discovery—because a quality education is a well-rounded one.



12,134
BOOKS



232
CHALKBOARDS FOR
CHILD-TO-CHILD
NETWORKING



26
SCIENCE KITS
AND CHEMICALS



26
SCHOOLS RECEIVED
SPORTS MATERIALS

MUHAMMED'S NEW APPROACH TO TEACHING

In December, Muhammed Hassan, a Grade 5 teacher at Likimsa Primary School, participated in imagine1day's teacher training session on science. Two days later, he tells us what he learned:

"I know science education in theory, but from the training I have practical experience and now I know how to create experiments from locally available materials. Even though this is just two days after the training, I have already changed my teaching. Before I would say water has oxygen but now I can practically show students how. It gives them a practical education. Before it was just theory. Now I can develop students' understanding not just in theory, but in practice.

I never attended this kind of training in college. Before this training I didn't have a concept of a science kit. I had no familiarity of materials within the kit. Now I know about all these things. We asked imagine1day to extend the training so that we could practice more with the materials in the science kit. We spent most of the day on practical demonstrations, not talking."

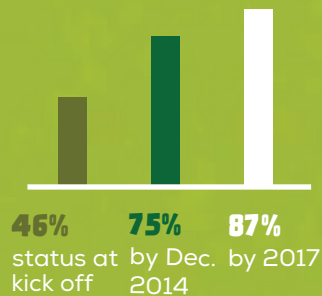


Muhammed Hassan is changing his teaching methods.

2014 ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

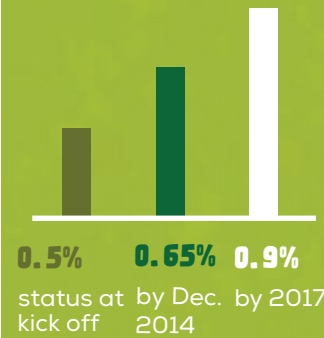
NET ENROLLMENT RATE

In December 2014, the amount of school-age children attending class increased to 75%. We are on-target to achieve our goal of reaching an 87% net enrollment rate by 2017.



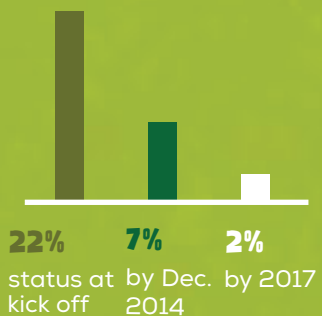
GENDER PARITY INDEX

This December, there were approximately 65 girls in school for each 100 boys. We have some work to do before gender parity is reached in Meda Welabu schools.



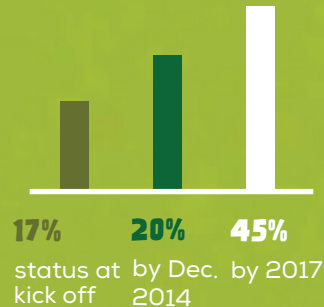
DROPOUT RATE

The dropout rate in Meda Welabu schools fell precipitously in 2014 to just 7%. By 2017, our goal is to see a maximum dropout rate of 2%.



GRADE 8 COMPLETION RATE

Since our project in Meda Welabu just started in 2014 the Grade 8 completion rate was still just 20% as of June 2014. We are confident 45% of students will complete Grade 8 by 2017.



LOOKING AHEAD AT 2015 & 2016



CONSTRUCTION

By the end 2016, we will construct an additional four new Grade 5-8 schools in Meda Welabu.



TEACHING TRAINING & AIDS

In 2015 and 2016, 488 teachers will participate in a variety of teacher training programs, and books, reading corners and other materials will be distributed to 58 communities.



INCOME GENERATION

In 2015 and 2016, seed funding and training will be provided to communities where new schools are built, to help kick-start income generating activities (IGA) for ongoing school maintenance and improvements.



COMMUNITY TRAININGS

In 2015, 812 community leaders will be invited for refresher training courses.



EXPERIENCE SHARING

In 2015 and 2016, 174 people will be invited to visit a model school to learn from best practices.

OUR VALUED PARTNERS

The Meda Welabu Project is supported by the generous investment of hundreds of creative individuals who believe in our mission of developing leaders to elevate the world.

We would like to thank the Government of Oromia, the Bale Zone Government, the Meda Welabu District Government and all their respective offices for their continued guidance, advice and support.

In 2014, the parents, teachers, school principals, community leaders and community members from each of the 58 schools we worked with were also instrumental in the success of 2014.

Finally, we would like to highlight our closest financial partners, without whom this project would not be possible: Educate a Child, a programme of Education Above All, Spence Diamonds, Sharyn Mandel and her friends and family, Russel Hollingsworth and INSEAD Gemba '13 Class. Your ongoing support is having an impact on thousands of children and families throughout Meda Welabu. Thank you.

INSEAD

**The Business School
for the World®**



SPENCE
DIAMONDS

**RUSSELL
HOLLINGSWORTH**

**SHARYN MANDEL
& FAMILY & FRIENDS**

"Education makes me different
from other illiterates.
I can write my name.
I can use a telephone.
This makes me different."

**Sadiya Abdulahi, age 16,
Batali Primary School**





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