



December 2023

Dear friends and supporters of Rainbows4children,

As we reach the end of 2023, we can reflect on a much more encouraging year for our staff and students in Mekele.

It is now over a year since the Cessation of hostilities in Tigray Agreement was signed. There is still a lot to be done, but at least in Mekele, things are improving.

We enjoyed our second visit to the school in November/December this year and you can watch our video report using the link at the end of this newsletter.

Despite many bomb and drone attacks, Mekele was relatively unscathed. However, there has been a huge migration of internally displaced Tigrayans from other parts of the state, for whom it is still unsafe to return home.

At the school, we are supporting an extra 300 students at the request of the local authorities. These children are unable to attend their own schools as they have not yet reopened. We are expecting the situation to improve over the coming months.

We have huge respect and admiration of our staff who are supporting the education of our students. The school is operating an intensive catching-up programme and fitting 2 years of education into 15 months. This is particularly motivating for the older students who have been hit hardest by the events of the past 3 years. Some students take longer than others to recover from the psychological trauma of war, depending how their family and friends have been impacted.

Despite the many challenges, the school has had great successes this year. All the grade 8 students passed their regional exams, allowing them to progress to high school. 97% of our grade 12 students passed the Ethiopian University Entrance exams. The 2 students who did not achieve the pass mark have scored well enough to go to technical college or private universities.

As we left the school on 5<sup>th</sup> December, all of the students were taking their end of year exams. They will start the next school year on 11<sup>th</sup> December and study right through until late June/early July.

We are looking for sponsors for 30 new kindergarten students as they start their education in the best quality school in the region. Please do contact us if you or a friend would like to help one of them.

Everyone at the Nicolas Robinson School, as well as the trustees of Rainbows4children wish our supporters all the very best for the upcoming festive season and the New Year.

Thank you for your continuing support and for giving thousands of young people hope for the future.

Video link <https://youtu.be/EaQKSsmrg5KA>

Our very best wishes,

Max and Kathryn