

It Takes a Village: From Gondar to Jerusalem- The Remarkable Journey of Ethiopia's Jews *A Photographic Retrospective*



Since 1929, The Jewish Agency has addressed the most critical challenges facing the Jewish people, real-time – anytime, anyplace. We bring Jews from forgotten, often embattled, corners of the earth to Israel. Safeguarding our people is a central pillar of our work.

Ethiopia's Jews have been a priority for us since the first major wave of Ethiopian immigration began in 1984 with Operation Moses and continued in 1991 with Operation Solomon. Today, Israel's Ethiopian immigrant population is estimated at 120,000 – 15,000 of them children born in Israel.

In December 2010, the the State of Israel appointed The Jewish Agency to complete - over the course of 3 years - the immigration of Ethiopia's approximately 8,000 remaining Jews (the Falash Mura) from the poverty, anti-Semitism, disease, and instability characterizing life in Africa to a better life among their people, in Israel.

To meet this monumental undertaking, The Agency assumed the operation of the Gondar facility, where we provide basic care and Aliyah preparation.

Our next challenge is absorbing these new immigrants – many of whom are illiterate and unfamiliar with Western life – into Israeli society.

It Takes a Village: From Gondar to Jerusalem - The Remarkable Journey of Ethiopia's Jews is a photographic retrospective, documenting the process of forgotten Jews taking the final steps along their journey home.

If you or your Federation are interested in bringing this Photo Retrospective to your own community in order to support the Completing the Journey campaign, please contact:

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Gondar, the location of the Jewish Agency's Community Center and office.

Photo by Offer Dahan



Asher Seyoum, the Jewish Agency's Ethiopia Shaliach at home with a family waiting to emigrate.

Photo by Offer Dahan



A woman roasting beans for Buna, a traditional coffee ceremony performed to welcome guests.

Photo by Offer Dahan



An Ethiopian mother in Gondar grinds coffee beans, while her family eagerly awaits guests.

Photo by Offer Dahan



Community members awaiting Shacharit services outside what is now the Jewish Agency's Community Center in Gondar.

Photo by Atalia Katz



Nearly 3,000 community members daven Shacharit at the Jewish Agency's Community Center in Gondar.

Photo by Offer Dahan



Men in prayer at the Jewish Agency's Community Center in Gondar.

Photo by Offer Dahan



As part of their ritual education at the Jewish Agency's Community Center in Gondar, women learn about mikve.

Photo by Atalia Katz



Women in prayer at the Jewish Agency's Community Center in Gondar.

Photo by Offer Dahan



The Jewish Agency provides families in Gondar the opportunity to learn about Israeli history and Hebrew.

Photo by Offer Dahan



The Jewish Agency also offers a nutrition program in Gondar for children, as well as expectant and new mothers.

Photo by Offer Dahan



Children in the Jewish Agency's nutrition program in Gondar awaiting their daily breakfast.

Photo by Offer Dahan



Parents are grateful for the ability to provide proper nutrition for their children during their most crucial years of intellectual and physical development.

Photo by Offer Dahan



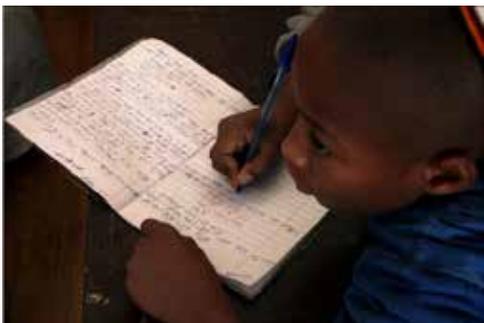
Each Ethiopian family undergoes a rigorous identification and interview process conducted by Israel's Ministry of the Interior at the Jewish Agency offices.

Photo by Atalia Katz



The Jewish Agency operates a Jewish day school in Gondar for children of families awaiting Aliyah.

Photo by Offer Dahan



The curriculum at the Jewish Agency's day school meets Ethiopia's Ministry of Education Standards while preparing its students for the anticipated rigors of Israeli schools.

Photo by Offer Dahan



The school curriculum at the Jewish Agency's day school is intense, but the students still enjoy themselves in their classrooms.

Photo by Offer Dahan



The Jewish Agency's day school also provides Jewish religious education taught by Israeli teachers.

Photo by Offer Dahan



A preserved Beta Israel synagogue in a rural village of Ambover that was completely Jewish at one time. Most of this Beta Israel community have made Aliyah.

Photo by Atalia Katz



An abandoned synagogue in another Beta Israel Village in Woloka, on the outskirts of Gondar.

Photo by Atalia Katz



Jewish cemeteries, such as this one near Woloka, preserve the Beta Israel legacy in Ethiopia and remind us that they too dreamed of returning to Zion.

Photo by Atalia Katz



After families have been approved for Aliyah, they transfer to Addis Ababa where they make final preparations for their journey.

Photo by Atalia Katz



At the Israeli embassy, all future Olim are offered contemporary clothing to help ease their transition upon arrival.

Photo by Atalia Katz



Photo by Atalia Katz



Mother and daughter walking out of a health education class at the Israeli embassy in Addis. Other preparatory classes include instruction in household appliances and present-day personal hygiene.

Photo by Atalia Katz



An Ethiopian Oleh's possessions can usually fit in a single suitcase. The colorful basket seen here on the right, is one of the hallmarks of an Ethiopian home.

Photo by Atalia Katz



Photo by Atalia Katz



Olim singing Israeli folk songs as the Jewish Agency Shaliach Asher Seyoum leads them to their bus bound for the airport.

Photo by Atalia Katz



One final look back.

Photo by Atalia Katz



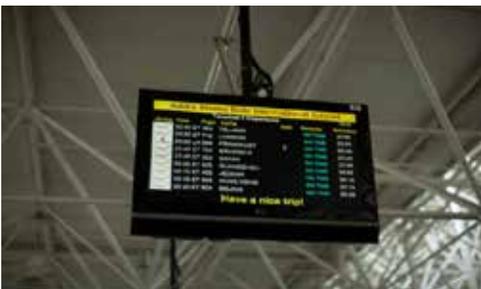
Approaching the journey's end.

Photo by Atalia Katz



Emigration papers are frequently the first official personal documentation that Ethiopian Olim have ever possessed.

Photo by Atalia Katz



Nesiyah Tovah!

Photo by Atalia Katz



Olim take their final steps in the land where their ancestors have walked for thousands of years.

Photo by Offer Dahan



Olim take their first steps in the land they have waited so long to enter: Eretz Yisrael.

Photo by Atalia Katz



B'ruchim H'bayim!

Photo by Atalia Katz



A woman kisses her loved one, quite possibly for the very first time.

Photo by Offer Dahan