



SELAMTA  
FAMILY PROJECT

2020 REPORT



**Dear Selamta Family,**

We did not see this coming. We had no clue in January just how radically different our lives and our world would be by March. Through the chaos and confusion caused by Covid-19, our Selamta Families and the extraordinary team of people who serve within Selamta demonstrated resilience. They created new systems. They improved access to technology. They encouraged and supported our family members as there were new twists and turns around every bend. We are pleased to share that even in the middle of everything, two new families were established, engagements took place, and babies were born. We praise God for these blessings and thank Him for the ability to serve in this way. Life and time continue on. Your support and generosity make family, dignity, and hope possible. And we're just getting started. We hope you'll invite your friends into this family that spans the globe. Let's go!

Marisa Stam  
Executive Director

Tamrat Kebede  
Ethiopian Director

Jim Wasz  
Board Chair



# SHOWING HOPE BY RECREATING FAMILY

Selamta Family Project creates Forever Families for orphaned and abandoned children in Ethiopia. Poverty, brokenness, and a lack of domestic adoption resources in Ethiopia create the need for Selamta's programs. Forever Families are a permanent alternative to institutions or life on the street. Children come to Selamta from government orphanages and institutions. Forever Families are transforming lives through these core competencies:

## **Wrap Around Care**

*Professional team focused on education, health & wellness, psychosocial support, and spiritual development*

## **Community Integration**

*Homes spread across a neighborhood with a community center serving as an anchor for Selamta Families and the local community*

## **Permanency**

*Placement within a Forever Family is permanent. Even after a child is grown and establishing themselves, they always have a network of support from their family and Selamta's professional team*

While a culture of domestic adoption is being nurtured in Ethiopia, Selamta's Forever Families stand in the gap for children who need to know the love of a family today.



# FOREVER FAMILY

We unite 8-10 children into a healthy family structure with a Selamta-trained mother in their own home, integrated into their local community.

*"I am grateful for having a big family like Selamta. I always thank God for giving me my children, I am so grateful for them from the bottom of my heart."*

**Wude, Selamta Mom**

Children grow up together as a family over a 10-20 year period before launching from Selamta's care into independence.

*"Family means a place where I can be myself, where I can act freely, where I have someone who I can rely on."*

**Ermiyas L., Selamta Youth**



**93** Children in  
Forever Families

**5** Youth launched  
to independence  
this year

**10** Forever  
Families

# SELAMTA'S SECOND GENERATION

Our professional staff serve each family with an emphasis on education, health & wellness, psychosocial support, and spiritual development.

*"There was all the support, giving us time so that we could be prepared for independence, supporting us through our struggles because of unemployment and with lots of ideas."*

**Betty, Selamta Youth in pre-launch**

Growing up in a stable family, surrounded by the love of Christ, gives children a strong sense of belonging.

*"God is the only one that I tell everything I feel. I believe me and my sisters are here because of God."*

**Ruth, Selamta Youth**

Last year, we were able to celebrate the opening of Selamta's Kids' Center, a transition home for children coming out of government institutions and into the loving arms of a family. We are thrilled to announce Bale House and Harar House, our newest Selamta Forever Families. The impact is already enormous.

*"Family is someone who helps you, who sometimes makes you angry, but who would love you anyway."*

**Basliel, Selamta Youth**

*"Becoming part of Harar House was different from my earlier experiences. The transitions were hard but they all supported me and walked with me. I love my family now."*

**Alemitu, Selamta Youth**

*"Family means having someone who understands you, who is caring for you, and who loves you."*

**Mekdes M., Selamta Youth**





# RESILIENCE



The Mayo Clinic website explains resilience in these terms:

“Resilience is the ability to adapt to difficult situations. When stress, adversity or trauma strikes, you still experience anger, grief and pain, but you’re able to keep functioning — both physically and psychologically. However, resilience isn’t about putting up with something difficult, being stoic or figuring it out on your own. In fact, being able to reach out to others for support is a key part of being resilient.”

Knowing how to ask for help and effectively receive help is a challenge for many people. It rubs up against cultural norms of self-sufficiency and independence. The truth is that we were created to need each other. Never in our lifetime has this been more true than in today’s socially distant world. The intimacy of family has never been more important. Our Selamta families have learned to pause, adapt, and enjoy time together.

*“It (this time together) grows our family attachment and since we have more time for interaction, it allows me to be a solution provider for my family.”*

Mihret A., Selamta Youth

## VERTICAL GARDEN HANGERS



Where there’s a will, there’s a way!

Eyob at Menelik House worked with Selamta’s financial manager, Abreham, to create beautiful garden hangers that hook to the top of their courtyard walls. The planters hang vertically to grow herbs and veggies throughout the year.

# WRAP-AROUND



Selamta's Community Center is in the heart of our neighborhood. It serves our families, offices our professional team, and provides resources for our community. With a computer lab, lending library, counseling room, and first aid clinic, Selamta's families know where to go and who to call for whatever they need. Selamta's wrap-around care focuses on four cornerstones to set a strong foundation for building family: education, health & wellness, psychosocial support, and spiritual development. Empowering and equipping our families is always our first priority. Every family needs a network of reliable support.

*"Aster, my mother, helped me by giving me love and support, Etsegenet helped me by giving me advice and playing with me, Megdelawit, the social worker, supported me by helping me do my homework and study hard, Tesfaye helped me by bringing what I needed for my project."*

**Danny, Forever Family Youth**

*"The team has been supporting me and my family financially, morally, by giving trainings, and arranging time to use the Community Center's resources such as the library and internet."*

**Habtamu, Outreach Program Youth**



*"Etsegenet, taking her own initiation to be there on my graduation ceremony from the very beginning and seeing her keeping her word, standing next to me makes me feel that there always will be someone who stands beside me."*

**Tesfanesh, Pre-launch Selamta Youth**



# EDUCATION



2020 started out pretty typical, but by the end of March, nothing would be the same. Thankfully, our dedicated education team responded quickly to make sure our children had what they needed to continue their studies from a distance. Tools like the Telegram app and digital hotspots became as necessary as a pencil and notebook. Donors responded to these needs with the resources necessary to improve our tools and establish a new tech infrastructure which will last well beyond the pandemic.



- E-Learning for K-12
- Printed Lessons provided to families
- Study Groups to prepare for National Exams
- Virtual English Camp
- English Tutorials
- Home Tutorials for 2nd Gen Kids
- Virtual Career Mentorship Program
- Life Purpose and Employability Skills Training

*"The team has helped me to attend virtual English camp to improve my language ability. Zelalem has been the most influential person because he has been supporting me to improve my education performance."*  
**Ruth, Selamta Youth**

*"My most rewarding experience was having the chance to work for Selamta Family Project and be a part of this amazing journey. Every day has been a thrill and I am looking forward to the coming year. I have met these amazing Forever Families and working with this amazing and inspiring Selamta team is a privilege."*  
**Mercy, Education Social Worker,  
hired March 2020**



# HEALTH & WELLNESS



Health and wellness has been the top priority for everyone in 2020. As the pandemic swept the globe, Ethiopia was not immune. In addition to the ordinary acute and chronic conditions our health team treats throughout the year, the circumstances surrounding Covid would be anything but ordinary. Our families responded by listening, learning, and adhering to the recommendations.

- Sexual and Reproductive Health Trainings
- Dialogues on Preventing Sexual Abuse and Domestic Violence
- Covid Prevention
- Wash: Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
- Healthy Nutrition

*"I thank God because I am healthy again. When I was sick the team helped me to have the best health care and my children were by my side and helped with house chores."*

**Wesene, Selamta Mom**

*"My mother keeps me going, she is there for me so I would not be sick again. She reminds me and visits me to check on my medical followup constantly."*

**Mekides, Launched Youth**



# PSYCHOSOCIAL



A trauma-informed approach to serving children from hard places is a game changer. Throughout 2020, our team has been learning about Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) and applying this empirically promising treatment to our family care. The timing couldn't have been better. Selamta will have 3 certified TBRI practitioners by the end of the year. TBRI brings a balance of structure and nurture with an emphasis on attachment.



- Understanding Healthy Expressions of Emotions
- Phone counseling
- Mentor Groups for Girls age 16-20
- Trauma Healing Training for Moms and Aunts

*"Selamta has given me support and services like understanding, counseling, and educational support."*

**Mekdes M., Selamta Youth**

*"Selamta is becoming a center of excellence in caring for orphaned and vulnerable children."*  
**Etsegenet, Psychosocial Team Leader**

# SPIRITUAL



Spiritual development has been integral through the uncertainties of 2020. Over and over again our families tell us what an important role their faith in God has had on them as this year progressed. Being able to provide weekly Bible studies, small group faith development, and intentional prayer gatherings for all interested has strengthened our families and brought hope and confidence in place of fear.

- Volunteering at Government Orphanages
- Weekly Bible Studies
- Mom Prayer Time and Bible Studies
- Workshops on Gratitude
- Several commitments to follow Jesus



*"My faith is my strength, it pulls us together during this difficult time. We pray together as a family so that God would protect us and protect the weak."*

**Selam, Harar House Mom**

*"I pray, and with Yared's help, I study the Bible every week."*

**Emuye, Selamta Youth**

*"God is everything for me."*

**Tesfu, Selamta Youth**



# VIRTUAL SUMMER CAMP

We couldn't bring teams to Ethiopia, but our team adapted, and over 100 volunteers came alongside to contribute with read-alongs and how-to videos. A curriculum was developed for our kids, kindergarten through university. Each family had a point person that made sure kids were online at the right time with the right resources. Generous donors came around Selamta with the funding to provide updated technology and hot spots for our families. An online mentor program was developed to connect our older kids with professionals in their fields of interest around the world.

*"Instead of just being at home (this summer), we were engaged with Virtual English Camp. I am learning a lot from it on Saturdays and the games we play are my favorite part."*

**Mariamawit, Selamta Youth**



# VIRTUAL TRIPS

Through improved technology and tools like Zoom, we've been able to bring many more people to Selamta this year than ever before. During a virtual trip, we take a walk through our neighborhood, tour our Community Center, meet the team, enjoy breakout sessions with team members, and visit two family homes where we play games and enjoy a coffee ceremony. Visit Selamta's website for more information and dates for upcoming virtual trips.

*"Thanks for the Selamta tour. You did a great job and it was clear that you really know the families well and have a genuine affection for them. It was clear that everyone involved feels the same! So nice to see for ourselves. We've had many pictures of Yager over the years but seeing him on video was wonderful."*

**Robin, Heart & Home Mentor**

# HEART & HOME

JOIN TODAY

\$25/mo or more

Neighbor

\$125/mo \$750/mo

Mentor

Family

Heart & Home Monthly Donors provide the sustainability Selamta families need to thrive. Your monthly gift brings children out of institutions and into Forever Families.

When asked why she continues to support Selamta through Heart & Home, Mentor Sponsor Claudia replied, *"They feel like family. I love the connection between the staff and kids and I love to see how far they've come and see how far they've flourished... because gosh they really have!"*



# VISION FORWARD & LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

## **More Forever Families**

Many things have slowed down this year. Unfortunately, the need for children to know the love of a family has only grown. Working with the Ethiopian government, Selamta hopes to welcome an additional 20 children each year, for the next five years. This paced and steady growth allows for the creation of two new Forever Families annually. Your generosity makes family possible.

## **Kolfe Transition Program - Pilot Project**

Children age out of institutions with no support and often end up on the street. The Kolfe Transition Program will incorporate Selamta's core competencies and provide two Selamta-trained social workers within the Kolfe boys' orphanage. They will build relationships with the boys and determine who will join an 18 month residential program, while utilizing Selamta's wrap-around cornerstones to grow together in family, dignity, and hope.

## **Leadership Circle**

To see the vision of new Forever Families and the Kolfe Transition Program realized, the core mission support of Selamta is critical. Long term programs like Selamta require sustainability. By joining our Leadership Circle and pledging to support our operations you ensure our team can function effectively, providing security and stability to our families year over year. Investing in our infrastructure is strategic, effective and absolutely critical.



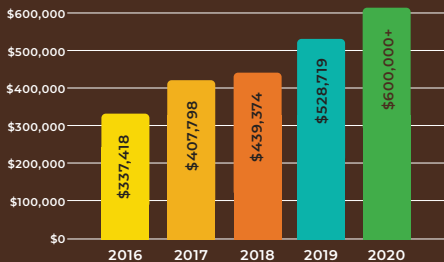


# FINANCIALS

Within the next few years, Selamta's Social Worker, Meron, hopes to see Selamta "serving more kids from hard places and bringing them up to be responsible and productive citizens for the community through nurturing care and education."



## REVENUE GROWTH





S

E

L



M

T

A



## FAMILY

He is a Father  
to the fatherless,  
defender of widows

### THIS IS GOD

whose dwelling is holy.  
God places the lonely  
in families.  
He sets the prisoners free  
and gives them joy.

PSALM 68:5-6

## DIGNITY

God created mankind  
in his own image.  
In the

### IMAGE OF GOD

he created them.  
God looked over  
all he had made  
and saw it was  
very good.

GENESIS 1:27 & 31

## HOPE

May the God of hope  
fill you with all  
joy and peace as you

### TRUST IN HIM

so that you may  
overflow with hope  
by the power of the  
Holy Spirit.

ROMANS 15:13



Selamta Family Project



[SelamtaFamilyProject.org](http://SelamtaFamilyProject.org)



@SelamtaProject



Selamta Family Project  
P.O. Box 1857  
Lake Placid, FL 33862

Thank you to Mehari Haile, Yohannes Meresa, and Addisu Terefe for capturing the beautiful photos inside, and to Tim LaPointe for coaching and editing this photo project.