

Addis Ababa Bible Training Institute Report

Culture and a “School’s” Name



The photograph above was taken on Friday, December 8th. Several of us had just returned to the Mekanisa School for the Deaf Compound from a visit to the Sidamo region of Ethiopia. This is what we discovered upon our arrival. This was a celebration that occurred in many schools and other facilities throughout Ethiopia. This was “Nations, Nationalities, and People’s Day” in Ethiopia. You may explore further as follows:

[Nationalities Day will be observed to promote values of equality, solidarity: HoF – Welcome to Fana Broadcasting Corporate S.C \(fanabc.com\)](http://fanabc.com)

Follow the above link, or copy and paste the text below in your browser:

<https://www.fanabc.com/english/nationalities-day-will-be-observed-to-promote-values-%E2%80%8B%E2%80%8Bof-equality-solidarity-hof/>

This cultural experience helps emphasize the importance of culture for peoples throughout the world. In Ethiopia's case, this day emphasizes that Ethiopia is a Nation of 80 different tribal groups that live together (or tries to) as a single political identity. The link below is to a 1-minute video explanation by Musie, the Director of the Mekanisa School for the Deaf:

<https://1drv.ms/f/s!AijSNCHnUey3jtgijF8tCcIAI-OI3w?e=WlkStI>

The observations and links above are to establish the background for a change of the name for our school. Joe Boe had received feedback from the students that "School" in Ethiopia implied students below 7th grade. They indicated that if, in the future, they were identified as Graduates of a "School" it would mean a school taught on a grade school level. I confirmed this impression with the class, and we have thus changed the name to "Institute" rather than "School."

Accommodating cultural differences is a large part of reaching the world with the Good News of what God has made possible through His Son Jesus the Messiah. Each of us need to be willing to accommodate culture when appropriate. So, a name change for our "School" is appropriate in this circumstance.

Things continue to go well in the training that is occurring for this group of 19 men. We all were saddened that one of our students, a Muslim convert, has returned to his home area because his wife could not tolerate the separation. It is a great challenge for these men, many of whom have families, to be away from their families and communities for so long. This group will have their first break in the month of January (Ethiopia does not celebrate "Christmas" in December as does the Western world – another cultural difference).

Blessings to all,

Jim Wilson