

Ambo Senior Secondary High School Need Justification

Ambo Comprehensive Senior High School is located 80 miles west of Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. It is one of the oldest high schools in the country. The total population of the school district approximates to be more than a million. The increases in the size of zonal population in the district where the school is located and the rapidly growing number of the city's population caused the increasing demand of social services such as education.

The school has been at the forefront of preparing thousands of Ethiopian students for post secondary education in different technical and vocational specialization. Former students of the school have held various prominent positions at different times during the regime of Emperor Haile Selassie and there after. Former Prime Minister Tesfaye Dinka, and Laureate Poet Tsegaye Gebre Medhin, to mention the few, are some of the graduates from Ambo High School who played a key role in the political and economic life of the country. Numerous other former students of the school also serve as university professors, medical doctors, engineers, medical doctors, university professors, politicians, and scientists in the country and elsewhere in the world. Despite the school's vital role in the society, it has very limited resources, or lacks educational tools and facilities, such as books, a library, and basic computer technologies.

According to the information obtained from the school administration, in 1955 the enrolment rate was about 200 students per academic year. During 2003/04 academic years, the school enrollment rate grew to 1,300. Total students were about 500 in 1955. The number grew to nearly 6,000 students in 2004. While the number of new applicants requesting admission is scaling up far beyond the capacity of the school, some school infrastructures, notably classrooms have already dilapidated to the extent of serving no purpose due to long years of service without proper renovation. The dilapidation of classrooms has exacerbated the problems of lack of school capacity not only for new applicants but also for regular students currently attending the school. It was this glaring gap between the growing demand for education services on the one hand and the stagnant and even deteriorating capacity of the existing facilities of education on the other hand that has brought about an initiative leading to the formation of the local organization that is pleading for help to rescue the high school from closing its doors. As a result, Ambo Educational Assistance Trust is pitching in to help.

One of the critical problems facing the school is inadequacy of library service. The existing library is too small to serve students seeking the service. The library can only accommodate 90 students at a time. As part of combating the problem, the school administration allows only an hour library service per student in a given day. According to this arrangement, if all regular students need library service, a particular student can only obtain an hour library service once in every 8 working days. The library was built in

1955 and has few outdated books and library materials. There are only 43 computers and no Internet access is available. Although science is part of the school curriculum, the laboratory is equipped with outdated equipments that don't serve the training needs of modern science.

Many studies reveal that Ethiopia is one of the poorest nations in the world by any standard. Nearly 20% of the country's population relies on food handouts of subsistence. Ethiopia is also known to be one of the countries in Africa with the least numbers of trained manpower due to brain drain and limited opportunity for learning, especially for post secondary education. Low school enrollment rate, and high school dropouts, low school infrastructures, and poor education qualities are few of the characteristics of the country's educational system. These and other multiple socio-economic factors spell the urgent need of development related supports to the educational institutions of that part of the world.

The cumulative effects of the aforementioned problems have definitely deteriorated the teaching-learning situation at the school under consideration. Significant numbers of children with no other education opportunity were denied to join the school. Senior and better-qualified teachers have been discouraged from joining the school due to the severity of the problems the school is facing. In general, shortage of basic educational resources, overcrowding and deteriorating library and classroom buildings, and shortage of computers and lack of access to the Internet, threatened the very existence of the school itself and the future of thousands of current and future students who rely on the school for their educational needs.

It is because of these compelling facts that Ambo Senior Secondary High School was selected by AEAT to be the recipient of financial and material aid from donors. AEAT is hoping that donations from U.S. companies and individuals to these needy schools in East Africa will help thousands of young students, thereby helping these countries to help themselves by producing trained, qualified, and productive manpower for attaining sustainable social, cultural, and economic development.