

MCC SALT Service Opportunity

MCC is an equal opportunity employer, committed to employment equity. MCC values diversity and invites all qualified candidates to apply.

Assignment Title & Partner Organization: SALT: Pre-School English Teacher –RPC

Term: August 16, 2022 – July 15, 2023

Date Required: August 16, 2022

Location: Adama, Ethiopia

Project Theme: ES Education Salt/Yamen

Job Synopsis:

The SALT er will serve alongside the Remember the Poorest Community (RPC) to help teach basic English skills to vulnerable pre-kindergarten children ages 4 – 6. The participant will also provide English as a Second Language (ESL) assistance to the teachers and offer any other skills to supplement the holistic education program.

Qualifications:

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship; active church membership; and nonviolent peacemaking.

An invitation to an assignment is contingent on the successful completion of a criminal background check.

- Post-secondary degree in Education, English, or another related field.
- Training or degree in early childhood education or teaching ESL preferred.
- Classroom experience is preferred.
- Demonstrated ability and eagerness to work with children, particularly in a setting where English is limited.
- Ability to work in a relatively unstructured setting.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate well in a variety of settings and work both respectfully and professionally with people from a wide variety of backgrounds.
- Ability to adapt to new cultural norms and difficult settings regarding language, living conditions, and classroom resources (or the lack thereof).
- Self-motivated, able to creatively identify/create resources needed to teach young children.
- Ability to exhibit positive and healthy treatment of children.
- Good interpersonal relations and communication skills.
- Ability to work as part of a team and willingness to learn from others.
- Willingness to learn some Amharic or Afan Oromo, two of the languages used in the region.
- Special skills such as music, art, Montessori method etc. is an asset.

Key Responsibilities:

- Organize and make lesson plans for the assigned English classes.
- Prepare, administer, and grade tests (Ethiopian school system is big on testing. Try to make this fun).

- Organize training workshops for the other teachers on subjects such as Montessori Method, teaching ESL, etc., and/or engage in one-on-one English tutoring.
- Source resources to help teach Kindergarten children i.e., songs, stories, visuals, etc., to capture their attention and motivate learning.
- Be flexible to take on and engage in other opportunities for involvement with students based on the skills of the candidate and the needs of the school.

Assignment Narrative:

Remember the Poorest Community (RPC) is a local Ethiopian non-governmental organization (NGO) that works in education as well as community development. The pre-Kindergarten (pre-KG) classes (generally ages 3 to 7 in four different classes—2 Upper KG and 2 Lower KG) are for children of extremely poor and vulnerable families that cannot afford to send their children to public schools but want to give their children a head start. These pre-KG classes are feeder classes for the public-school education starting in grade 1. The RPC preschool program is sponsored by MCC. The school size is 250 students.

For the past 15 years, MCC has been supporting the RPC Kindergarten in Adama, run by RPC, with land set aside by the community for educating the poorest of the poor. They get the names of orphans and the most vulnerable children from the government (and verify the vulnerability of these students with the help of a parents' committee) and then admit them into a preschool program for kids 4 – 6 years old.

The teaching staff is incredibly dedicated to providing high quality early education to these kids to give them a leg up when they enter public school at grade one. Over 15 years, they have seen kids who grew up in poverty graduate from high school and even university which has allowed them to support their families. In fact, this NGO run school is the best preschool in the area – this is recognized by the government, who have given RPC small preschool outbuildings at 4 public schools to start up and run public access preschools, using their methodology. But the Kindergarten for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) remains the flagship preschool for RPC.

The participant would be assisting the classroom teachers from 3 levels in developing basic English skills to speak and listen and will begin with teaching reading and writing. The participant will assist in teaching classes and/or support and train teachers as determined by the Director of RPC pre-KG school. Depending on the skills of the participant, they might also teach a class in a special subject such as music and encouraged to participate in any faculty meetings and activities. Note that the non-instructional languages commonly used are Amharic and Afaan Oromo.

The SALTER will be accountable to the Principal of the RPC pre-KG school. The faculty is composed of Ethiopian women, support staff, and the principal. Relational, emotional, and other support will be provided by the host family and the MCC Ethiopia team.

Location Description:

This assignment is located in Adama (known as Nazaret until the end of the 90's), a city in central Oromia region, Ethiopia. It is approximately 100 km (62 miles) southeast of Addis Ababa where the MCC Office and the MCC Ethiopia Representatives are located.

Based on the 2007 Census, Adama has a total population of 220,212 making it the third largest city in Ethiopia. The largest ethnic groups are the [Oromo](#) (39.02%) and the [Amhara](#) (34.53%). [Amharic](#) is spoken as a first language by 59.25% of the population with the language of [Oromiffa](#) spoken as a first language by 26.25%. The majority practice [Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity](#), while 24.7% of the population are [Muslim](#), and 10.57% [Protestant](#).

The city is located in central Ethiopia along the main highway that leads to [Djibouti](#) via [Dire Dawa](#). Buses to Adama depart from the Nazareth bus central station in Addis Ababa, however, they do not follow a strict timetable. Generally, the driver waits for the entire bus to fill with passengers, though usually this means that buses leave at least once an hour. The journey takes about two hours. The Addis Ababa-[Djibouti](#) railroad runs through Adama. It is a popular weekend destination for residents of Addis Ababa and hosts many governmental and non-governmental conferences.

Being at 1600 meters altitude (750 meters lower than Addis Ababa) in the middle of the Rift valley, Adama is significantly warmer than Addis and other parts of the Ethiopian highlands. It is also much drier due to the location between two mountain ranges, with many sunny days even in the middle of the rainy season. The resulting climate is quite pleasant, with daytime temperatures of 25 to 30 degrees Celsius and nights at around 15 degrees year-round.

There are many products available in Addis including a variety of locally grown and imported food, technology, and hygiene products. Imported items are quite expensive. There are several malls and English movie theaters. Bowling, laser tag, and a skate-board park are available. There is a riding stables nearby with decent horses. Gyms are available although the membership is high. There is a vast botanical garden and arboretum at the edge of town, as well as lovely hiking possibilities in the hills that circle the city, although caution is always necessary when leaving downtown. Vandalism to vehicles and robberies have been reported in the mountains so it is important to go with local friends. Personal safety in the city is generally good, although pickpocketing and petty crime are increasing.

There are a number of English-speaking congregations in Addis Ababa with a variety of worship styles. Meserete Kristos Church (MKC) services are held in Amharic. Medical care to a Western standard is available at two recommended clinics in Addis. Dental care is adequate. Nairobi is a two-hour flight away and is recommended for major surgeries and/or medical issues.

Challenges:

- COVID-19 remains unpredictable both at home, and around the world. MCC strongly recommends vaccination against COVID-19. Safe and effective vaccines against COVID-19 are a vital part of prevention, by reducing individual risk of disease and risk of transmission to others. Vaccination is particularly important for those who are interacting closely with members of the community, those staying with host families, who are traveling, who live in contexts with limited healthcare resources, or who are at higher risk of serious disease. Proof of vaccination may be required in individual cases to fulfill job expectations, for example, if it is required for travel by an airline, a government requirement to enter a country, required by a local partner organization, etc.
- To prioritize wellness and limit risk to our participants and the local community from COVID-19, assessments of each task will continue on a regular basis. If an assignment is found to be no longer viable, we will do our best to help you secure an alternative assignment.

- Even with new 4G networks, internet is often very slow, and sometimes not available at all. Ethiotel is the government-owned provider but has recently sold minority shares to external companies which should improve the situation. Currently the government can and does occasionally shut off communications in the interests of political security.
- Water often comes to a neighborhood for several days a week, but not all the time. Most residences have a water tank so water to the house is continuous. If water runs out, it can be bought very cheaply and can arrive in quantity by truck or in small containers.
- Electricity infrastructure is old and inadequate in many places, and power rationing sometimes occurs during the dry season. Many places of work and residences have generators.
- While the countryside has good air quality, high levels of pollution (vehicle exhaust) exist in the city streets. Plastic trash is abundant.
- Gastrointestinal issues are common, especially in the first months as bodies adjust to new flora and fauna. Medicine is readily available.
- Amharic is a very difficult language to learn but is necessary for communication outside of the office environment. Most Ethiopians speak a bit of English, but not many are fluent.
- Political instability is a greater risk than theft or violence. However, Addis is generally safe even when other parts of the country are experiencing turmoil. The well-publicized violence in Ethiopia is still located far from Adama and central Ethiopia, though the impact of conflict is being felt in terms of economic hardship and massive internal displacement.
- Professional counseling and mental health are available but limited. If needed, on-line services with an MCC-recommended counselor might be a better fit than finding someone here.
- Ethiopia can be hard on a tender heart. Street kids and beggars are a common sight, and there is no shame in begging. Recently Ethiopia passed legislation to make living on the street illegal. If that is enforced, who knows what the fate of the street people will be. Large cities are full of animals, some for food, some for labor, and many simply strays. Often, they are abused or neglected. There are many NGOs that offer options to street kids and employment to beggars including RPC, but there is not much assistance for the animals. Exceptions are The Donkey Sanctuary in Merkato and the Addis Animal Project.
- Significant cultural/religious differences exist regarding gender roles, interfaith relations, stereotypes, etc.
- In Ethiopia, perceptions of LGBTQ+ individuals are almost universally negative, and more strongly so in Christian communities. An openly LGBTQ+ Christian would face significant challenges with acceptance in this context.
- Managing frustration when things don't turn out as expected can be hard. While we do our best to determine and outline job responsibilities with our local partners, assignments really come alive based on the passions, skills, and giftings of an individual. Responsibilities may change or be refined over time in communication with supervisors to meet the ongoing changes and needs within a local context. As such, the greatest characteristics a participant can bring to an assignment are adaptability, flexibility, patience, a willingness to get your hands dirty, and humility to complete even mundane tasks.
- For those who are very task oriented, it can be a challenge to recognize the importance of "being" instead of always "doing" as building healthy relationships and mutually transformative learning is an important part of the participant experience. We hope participants will come with a desire to walk alongside our local partners, rather than see the assignment solely as a way to "get things done".

Benefits:

For all SALT assignments, MCC provides:

- All basic needs related to assignment i.e., travel to and from assignment, food & household costs, housing, in-country transportation, etc.
- Modest monthly personal allowance
- Modest monthly worker care allowance
- Full medical coverage—no co-pay
- Educational loan reimbursement
- Vacation days
- Orientation and Re-entry Retreat costs
- MCC in-country meetings and retreat costs
- End-of-term benefits

For more information, see mcc.org/salt