

Book Title:

Walking Between Worlds: Letters to the Next Generation of the Ethiopian Diaspora

To: Addis Ababa University

Subject: Walking Between Worlds — a memoir for the next generation of the Ethiopian diaspora

Dear Sir or Madam,

I'm seeking a publishing home for my completed memoir, *Walking Between Worlds: Letters to the Next Generation of the Ethiopian Diaspora* (approx. 150,000 words). It's the story of an Ethiopian kid who left home with a suitcase of statistics and came of age as a public servant in California—braiding family, faith, and maps into a guide for children of the diaspora who are deciding how to belong in two places at once.

The book arcs from my childhood in Nekemt and Addis to student years in London and Durham, then through seventeen years in America without permanent residency—teaching all 17 years at Sonoma State University (California) as a volunteer - because I didn't have official papers to be hired - and building a public website, EthioDemographyAndHealth.org, that helped thousands make sense of population and health data. When my Green Card finally arrived, I joined the California Department of Social Services and created the Program Reach Index, a method that corrected how the federal Supplementary Nutritional Assistance Program - SNAP participation (renamed CalFresh in California) was measured. Later, as a Research Scientist in California's Office of Health Equity, I used demography and GIS to turn evidence into action. I also taught at Addis Ababa University for two summers in the Center for Population Sciences (CPS) by making direct trips between California and AAU. Threaded through all eleven chapters are “fireside interludes”—letters to diaspora teens and twenty-somethings about identity, dignity, ambition, and service.

This memoir speaks to readers who love narrative with consequence—*Educated* (Tara Westover) for its intimate coming-of-age; *What the Eyes Don't See* (Mona Hanna-Attisha) for science in service of community; *Factfulness* (Hans Rosling) for making data human; and the moral texture of *Born a Crime* (Trevor Noah). Where it differs is in its sustained focus on the Ethiopian and East African diaspora, on mothers and daughters (a recurring theme in my life and work), and on how maps and measures can heal public arguments.

A few elements that give the book reach:

- Built-in audience. The Ethiopian/Eritrean diaspora in North America and Europe is large, tight-knit, and deeply engaged online and in churches, cultural associations, and campus groups. Many

already know my work through EthioDemographyAndHealth.org (launched 2008; amplified by Ethiomedia) and public talks, including a keynote at the Ethiopia 2050 conference at the Skylight Hotel in Addis Ababa.

- Adoption potential. Chapters pair lived experience with accessible demography, making the book useful in courses on public health, African studies, migration, social policy, and data visualization.
- A practical heart. The “letters” sections offer concrete counsel for second-generation readers navigating college, careers, intergenerational expectations, and civic belonging—turning memoir into a portable mentor.

About me: I’m a medical demographer and geographer by training, a teacher and researcher by profession, and a map maker by passion. I’ve taught and volunteered for decades, published peer-reviewed work on fertility, migration, program reach, and gender-based violence (often collaborating with Dr. Helmut Kloos), and advised state leaders using maps to direct resources. My voice is that of a father and teacher who believes evidence and empathy belong in the same sentence.

I would be honored to share the full manuscript as well as a proposal with chapter summaries. I’m committed to an active launch: diaspora events, university talks, podcasts, faith-community gatherings, and op-eds.

Thank you for considering *Walking Between Worlds: Letters to the Next Generation of the Ethiopian Diaspora*. I believe it offers a story and a toolset—a way of seeing—that can serve readers far beyond my own community.

With appreciation,

Aynalem Adugna, PhD
EthioDemographyAndHealth.org (founder)
Research Scientist, State of California

P.S. I’m happy to tailor a proposal for your list and discuss positioning, comps, and potential classroom/reading-group guides.