

Welcome to my home by Luele Debash (KG student)



Meet Luele, a six year old with a warm and engaging grin. Luele has changed so much since starting at St Yared last September. His ambition remains steady though - up, up and away!



One of Luele's front teeth has just fallen out, and his eyes light up when you asked him when he lost it. Luele is six years old, and is in Kindergarten at the School of St Yared. Luele's teachers say he is very polite and asks permission three times before borrowing a book to read! Luele loves to read, and he thinks long and hard when asked what his favourite book is - "About the Parachute". He loves all things that fly in the air, which is very well suited to what he wants to be when he grows up, a pilot.

Luele lives in a small mudroom in the foothills of Addis Ababa, in a slum area called Farensay. He lives in a clearing next to a big blue house, and his father, Debash, pays a small amount of money to rent the mudroom. Luele has two older sisters and the four of them all share a bed in the small room. Their mother passed away four years ago, and Debash works several odd jobs to earn money, including selling veggies, being a daily labourer and a priest.

Debash had heard a lot about the school and after seeing how little his daughters were learning at their local government school, he saw a quality education for his only son as a way to improve the future of the whole family. Debash was so surprised when Luele was accepted into St Yared's, that he came to the Kindergarten compound every two hours just to check Luele was really in the classroom!

He says it is a godsend that Luele has the opportunity to learn and grow in a nurturing environment. Luele already helps his older sisters, who are 8 and 11, with their homework. On the weekend, he fills up large jerry cans with water from the river near his house for the family to use for cooking and washing.



In rainy season, it gets very cold in the foothills of Addis Ababa. Debash says that the rain and cold will not stop Luele from attending school, and that he would put Luele on his back and walk him over the rocks and river, to the bus stop to ensure he goes to class every day.

The difference in Luele after his first year at St Yared is astonishing - you can see Luele and his father before he was accepted last year (*left*) - and here is Luele now (*right*)- healthy, happy and growing in confidence.

