Migration Review Tribunal
AUSTRALIA

MRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

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Questions
1. Please provide information concerning registration of births and deaths - procedures, general requirements.
2. Please provide information about the requirements or procedure for burials. Is a burial permit required for a person can be buried in a cemetery?

RESPONSE

1. Please provide information concerning registration of births and deaths - procedures, general requirements.

The Civil Code of Ethiopia contains information regarding record-keeping for births, deaths and marriages as follows:

> **Chapter 3. Proof of Civil Status**
>
> **Art. 47. Modes of proof**
> (1) Births, deaths and marriages shall be proved, in case of doubt or of contention, by means of the records of civil status.
> (2) They may also he proved, in the cases provided by law, by means of acts of notoriety or of possession of status.
>
> … **Art. 61. Drawing up of records**
> (1) The records of civil status shall be drawn up by the officer of civil status on his own initiative whenever he has the particulars required for drawing up such records.
> (2) The officer of civil status may, where he thinks fit, summon any interested party, with:the object of completing the information which he requires.
>
> **Art. 62. Periods**
> Records of civil status shall be drawn up within the following periods:
> (a) three manths, for records of birth;
> (b) one mouth for records of death;
> (c) one mouth for records of marriage.

… **B. Rural communes**

Art. 64. Declaration
(1) In those communes in which such duty has not been expressly imposed on him by the governor, the officer of civil status shall not be bound to keep the registers himself.
(2) He shall communicate to the departmental office of civil status such informations as are required for drawing up the records of civil status relation to births, deaths and marriages which have taken place in the commune.
(3) The records of civil status shall be drawn up immediately, on the basis of such informations, by the officials of the departmental office of civil status [sic] ('Civil Code of Ethiopia' 1960, Ethiopian Legal Information website, Chapter 3, 5 May http://www.law.ugent.be/pub/nwr/elw/civilcode/civilcodepage.htm - Accessed 30 April 2009 – Attachment 1).

Births

The Civil Code of Ethiopia cited above outlines specific requirements for birth records and registrations, requiring that such records be drawn up 48 hours after the birth of a child by an officer of civil status:

Paragraph 2. Records of birth

Art. 99. Particulars of record
The record of birth shall show:
a. the day, month and year of the birth;
b. the sex of the child;
c. the first names which are given to him;
d. the names, first names, dates and places of birth of his father and mother;
e. where appropriate., the names, first names, date and place of birth of the person making the declaration.

Art. 100. When record required
A declaration of birth and the drawing up of a record of birth are required when the child has lived for forty eight hours, notwithstanding that he dies before the expiration of the time fixed for drawing up the record of birth.

Art. 101. Declaration of birth
(1) The birth of a child may be declared to the officer of civil status by any person
(2) Such birth shall be declared by the father of the child, or, in his default, by the mother or by the guardian of the child, or, in default, by the person who has taken care of the child.
(3) The officer of civil status shall draw up the record of his own motion if he is aware of the birth.

Art 102. First names of child
(1) Before drawing up the record of birth the officer of civil status shall require the parents or, in their absence, the guardian of the child, to state the first name or names which the child is to be given.
(2) If he does not receive any reply or if the first names proposed are not acceptable in terms of the law, the officer of civil status shall himself choose the first name or names of the child.

> **Art. 103. Foundlings**
> (1) A record of birth shall be drawn up for every new-born child, found in the locality, whose identity is unknown.
> (2) A detailed proces verbal shall be drawn up stating the day and the place where the child has been found, the apparent age of the child, his sex, the names and the first names which are given to him.
> (3) The record of birth, drawn up for the child, shall contain on its back a reference to such proces-verbal [sic] ('Civil Code of Ethiopia' 1960, Ethiopian Legal Information website, 5 May http://www.law.ugent.be/pub/nwr/elw/civilcode/civilcodepage.htm - Accessed 30 April 2009 – Attachment 1).

The procedure for obtaining birth certificates in Ethiopia is outlined in an earlier research response dated 6 September 2006, which includes information and advice obtained from DFAT, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRBC) and the Australian High Commission in Nairobi (MRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response ETH30375*, 6 September – Attachment 2).

The research response provides the following information obtained from the IRBC, which describes the procedure for obtaining a birth certificate or a copy of a previously issued birth certificate:

> Regarding birth certificates, the U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs provides the following information:
>
> [Birth certificates are] available only to those resident in Ethiopia. Requests for copies of previously issued birth certificates should be addressed to the Office of Region 14 Administration, Vital Statistics Service, Municipality of Addis Ababa, P.O. Box 356, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; or to the equivalent office or any other municipality in which the birth was registered.
>
> For children under ten years of age, a hospital birth certificate, court document confirming parentage, or a baptismal certificate and acknowledgement from one's kebele ... are sufficient documentation for [the] issuance of a birth certificate. For children between the ages of eleven and thirteen, the above mentioned documents and school records are required for issuance. Any of the above documents and an identity card are satisfactory for the issuance of birth certificates for persons over the age of eighteen.
>
> Persons applying for original birth certificates should contact the appropriate municipal authorities and present hospital birth records, which have been authenticated by their kebele. Because of the nature of the kebele system, the birth certificate may be issued by the municipality where the person presently resides rather than where the birth actually took place (18 June 2002).
>
> According to the Public Relations Officer at the Ethiopian Embassy in Ottawa, the process involved for an Ethiopian citizen to obtain a previously issued birth certificate is the following: the individual must provide a valid Ethiopian passport and a power of attorney written in Amharic, along with a cheque for CDN$84 (26 Sept. 2002). The Embassy will authenticate the information and return it to the individual who will then forward the application to a friend or relative in Ethiopia who will act on their behalf and submit the information to the appropriate municipality in which the individual was born (ibid.). A birth certificate will be issued by the municipality and returned directly to the individual in the foreign country (ibid.) (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2002, *ETH39603.E - Ethiopia : The process by which*

Ethiopian citizens can obtain identity documents from consulates or missions abroad; birth registration practices and manner by which birth certificates are issued, 1 October – Attachment 3).

In the same research response, the following advice regarding the issuance of birth certificates was cited from the Australian High Commission in Nairobi:

> In May 2002 the Addis Ababa City Government began issuing a new series of documents, including Birth certificates, Death certificates, Marriage certificates, Divorce certificates, and Certificates of Non-Marital Impediment.
>
> They all display the same gold border, are all printed on the same glossy, supple paper (slightly thicker than normal A4 office printer paper) and they display a UV security feature.
>
> They are pre-stamped with a certificate number, and are therefore accountable.
>
> **BIRTH CERTIFICATES**
>
> The new style birth certificates are B4-size, and yellow in colour. The Ethiopian authorities are making efforts to tighten their issue procedures, but face problems as it is only recently they have begun to make official records of birth registrations. All that is required for a birth registration is a baptismal document from a church. The birth certificate is issued over the counter within minutes at a cost of 20 Birr (approx. US$2.50)
>
> Up until May 2002, people could change their birth details at the Registrar with no proof. Now, the Registrar will only accept changes of plus or minus two years. If the change is more than plus or minus two years, a court order is required (Australian High Commission 2003, *Ethiopian documents, [birth certificates, marriage certificates, new Addis Ababa University procedure for verification]*, 1 April – Attachment 4).

In addition, advice received from DFAT on birth certificates and the requirements for the registration of births in Ethiopia was outlined in the research response as follows:

> C. What is the procedure for obtaining birth certificates?
>
> The Addis Ababa City Government (also known as Region 14 Administration) is responsible for the greater Addis Ababa area and is responsible for registering births, deaths and marriages that occur in its area. It will also register births and marriages that occurred outside its area, if the people involved are now resident in greater Addis Ababa. The registry has records going back to 1943, with everything registered since 1998 currently being entered on databases. Anything registered prior to 1978 consists of an entry in a bound register, whereas anything post-1978 consists of a file containing original documents submitted in support of the registration, along with (in many cases) duplicate copies of the issued certificate/s.
>
> *Issuing procedures*
> The basic document required by the registry as proof of identification when registering a birth, death or marriage, is the Kebele identification card. These ID cards are issued by the smallest administrative unit of the City government, the "Kebele". In cases where the applicant is Ethiopian and no Kebele ID card is

available, identity of the applicant can be established to the satisfaction of the registry by:
- For applicants under 18 - if no official hospital birth record exists, a testimonial letter from the Kebele and/or proof of school entry;
- For applicants 18 and over - a letter from the Kebele will be required usually accompanied by three signed testimonies.

To register a birth
1. For minors (below the age of 18) born in Addis Ababa:
(a) valid Kebele cards of parents, or
(b) for guardians, a testimonial document testifying to the date and place of birth from their respective Kebele;
along with two recently taken passport size photographs and a completed form. If one of the parents is not known/declared the respective space on the birth certificate will remain blank.

2. For those 18 years and above - the person making the request should present a valid ID (Kebele card or passport) along with two passport size photographs and a completed form.

3. For a person whose parent(s) is/are not Ethiopian(s) - provide copy of parent's passport along with a letter from their Embassy certified by the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, two passport sized photographs and a birth record from a recognised hospital. The child's father/mother has to appear at the registry in person.

4. For Ethiopians residing abroad - copy of valid passport, copy of residence permit, present by mother, father, sister, brother or other legal representative with valid ID (Kebele card or passport). If the request concerns minors who are too young to obtain passports, testimonial papers from the Ethiopian Embassy where they reside is required.

5. Adopted children - Legal adoption documentation from the courts, certification from the Social Affairs Bureau of the adoption, two passport size pictures.

6. Requesting copy of a birth certificate - original or copy of the previously issued birth certificate or if not available provide the reference number and date of issue (complete date) with covering letter describing full extent of request.

…E. Can a person get birth certificates on the basis of self-reporting the relevant information to be included in the certificate?

Yes. In cases where an applicant does not have any form of official identification, they are required to provide a letter from the Kebele, accompanied by three signed testimonies attesting that they know the applicant, his/her parents, his/her date and place of birth or claimed age (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2006, *DFAT Report No. 516 – Ethiopia: RRT Information Request: ETH30375*, 4 August – Attachment 5).

Another research response dated 11 May 2007 provides similar information regarding birth certificates and registration in Ethiopia, obtained from the Executive Director of the African Child Policy Forum, Assefa Bequele. A 2005 conference paper prepared by Assefa Bequele indicates that the birth certification process is open to falsification of details, due to the widespread practice of certificates being issued by churches, municipalities and hospitals who do not require a birth to be formally registered before issuing a birth certificate.

> What is happening, ostensibly as a replacement for birth registration, is the practice of birth certificates being issued by churches, hospitals and municipalities. None of these organisations consider birth registration to be a prerequisite for issuing certificates. While churches and hospitals may consult baptismal records and delivery notes to issue birth certificates, municipalities rarely require more than some form of identity paper from another source. In all cases, the certification process is exposed to falsification of age, identity of the person and their parents, and birthplace (Bequele, Assefa 2005, *Universal Birth Registration: The Challenge in Africa*, Prepared for the Second Eastern and Southern Africa Conference on Universal Birth Registration Mombasa, Kenya, September 26-30, 2005, The African Child Policy Forum website, p.18 http://www.africanchildforum.org/Documents/Universal%20Birth%20Registration_final.pdf – Accessed 9 May 2007 – Attachment 6; MRT Country Research 2007, *Research Response ETH31783*, 11 May – Attachment 7).

In addition, recent information obtained from the US Department of State regarding registrations of births, deaths and marriages in Ethiopia indicates that such registration is not automatic, and documentation of such events has only occurred in relatively recent times:

> ***Note:*** Civil registration of births, marriages, and deaths is not automatic in Ethiopia. The documentation of these events is relatively new and largely confined to urban areas. A church-issued document, an acknowledgment from one's "kebele", and affidavits from three witnesses, all of which can be had for a price, are sufficient evidence for issuance of certificates. Relationships are rarely investigated for veracity. With the exception of divorce decrees, all certificates are available in Amharic, English, or English-Amharic combinations (US Department of State (undated) 'Ethiopia Reciprocity Schedule' http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/reciprocity/reciprocity_3559.html - Accessed 30 April 2009 – Attachment 8).

An article on the ReliefWeb website emphasises the above information that the registration of events such as births and deaths are not automatic in Ethiopia. The article highlights a workshop held in Addis Ababa in April 2008 which called for the establishment of a national, legal registration system for vital events including births and deaths:

> **THREE MILLION BABIES BORN IN ETHIOPIA EACH YEAR GO THROUGH LIFE WITHOUT AN OFFICIAL IDENTITY**
>
> **ADDIS ABABA, 14 April, 2008 -** A consultative workshop, organized by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Women's Affairs with the support of UNICEF, called for the establishment of a national vital events registration system this year as part of the celebration of the new Ethiopian Millennium.

At present there is no legal system in place to register vital events such as births, deaths, marriage and divorce in Ethiopia. As a result, close to 3 million babies born in Ethiopia each year go throughout life without an official identity.

H.E. Fantaye Gezahegn, Deputy Chairperson of the Legal and Administrative Standing Committee of the House of Peoples' Representatives, called on all federal and regional government institutions and non-governmental organizations to join hands in efforts underway to establish birth, death, marriage and divorce registration systems in the country.

Vital event records are instrumental in realizing and safeguarding the rights and privileges of children, women and the general public as enshrined in the Constitution of the country.

'The provision of legal birth and marriage registration certificates is critical for the protection of young women from the deeply- rooted problem of early marriage and related problem of fistula,' said H.E. Ubah Mohammed, State Minister of the Ministry on Women's Affairs. Proper implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which has been ratified by Ethiopia, is being compromised by the absence of a universal vital registration system.

'Ethiopia is the only large African country with no law that demands for the registration of vital events,' said Bjorn Ljungqvist, UNICEF Representative in Ethiopia. 'Every year, nearly 3 million babies are born but unregistered and hence cannot claim 'the membership card' that is the birth certificate. 'These children are deprived of their basic rights, and with no documentary evidence to prove how old they are - or even who they are -they are likely to join the millions facing discrimination and the lack of access to basic services such as health and education.'

UNICEF reiterated its commitment to support the country's efforts to establish a birth and other vital events registration system.

The Consultative Workshop, which was attended by the Excellencies of the Members of the House of Peoples' Representatives, representatives from federal ministries and agencies, regions, UN agencies, non-governmental organizations and research institutions that have prime responsibility in establishing vital events registration system in the country, endorsed a ten point resolution supporting past initiatives and issues to be addressed in future endeavors (‘Ethiopia: Workshop calls for the establishment of birth, death, marriage and divorce registration system’ 2008, ReliefWeb website, source: United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), 14 April http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/EGUA-7DPPKL?OpenDocument – Accessed 29 April 2009 – Attachment 9).

Deaths

The Civil Code of Ethiopia cited earlier outlines the following regulations regarding death records and registrations:

Paragraph 3. Records of death

Art. 104. Particulars of records of death
The record of death shall show:
a. the day, month and year of the death;
b. the name, first names, date and place of birth of the deceased;

c. the names, first names, dates and places of birth of the father and mother of the deceased;
d. the name, first names, date and place of birth of the spouse of the deceased if such spouse is still alive, and the date of the marriage;
e. where appropriate, the name, first names, date and place of birth of the person who makes the declaration of the death.

Art. 105. When record required
A declaration of death and the drawing up of a record of death are required whenever the deceased is a person in respect of whom a record of birth should have been drawn up.

Art. 106. Persons bound to declare death
(1) Where a person dies, the persons who live with him shall he bound to declare his death.
(2) In default of such persons, such obligation shall devolve on his relatives by consanguinity or affinity, if they live in the same commune, and, in their default, on his nearest neighbours.

Art. 107. Death in another persores house
If the deceased dies outside his home, the person in whose house the death has occurred shall be bound to declare the death.

Art. 108. Hospitals, schools, hotels and prisons
(1) If a death occurs in a hospital, a school, a hotel or a prison, the death shall be declared by the person who is in charge of the establishment in question.
(2) The death of persons executed by virtue of a criminal sentence passed on them shall be declared by the director of the prison where, at the time of his execution, the condemned person was in custody.

Art. 109. Soldiers on active service
Deaths of soldiers on active service shall be declare by the commanding officer of the unit to which they belong, unless the soldier is living with his family or his death occurs during a period of leave granted to him or in a place where his unit is not stationed.

Art. 110. Finding of corpse
(1) If the corpse of a person is found outside a dwelling place, the person who found the corpse shall be bound to declare the death.
(2) If the identity of the deceased person is unknown, a detailed procesverbal shall be drawn up indicating the day on which and the place where the corpse has been found, the apparent age and the sex of the dead person, and the probable date of the death.
(3) The record of death shall contain on its back a reference to such proces verbal.

Art. 111. Corpse not found. 1. Judgment declaring death
(1) Where a person has disappeared in such circumstances that his death is certain, although his corpse has not been found, any interested person may apply to the court to give a judgment declaring the death of such person.
(2) The judgment declaring the death shall take the place of a record of death.

Art. 112. 2. Court having jurisdiction
(1) The court having jurisdiction shall be that of the place, where the person whose death the person making the application wants to establish had his principal residence at the time of his death.
(2) The court may waive its jurisdiction in favour of the court of the Place where the event which brought about the death has occurred or in favour of the court of another place.
(3) The delegation of jurisdiction thus made is binding on the court in whose favour it is made.

Art. 113. Disasters. 1. Collective judgment
(1) If death is due to an event, such as a shipwreck, an air disaster, an earthquake, a land slide, as a consequence of which there is reason to believe that several persons have perished, the death of such persons may be declared by a collective judgment.
(2) The court having jurisdiction in such case shall be that of the place where the event occurred.
(3) However in the case of disappearance of a ship or of an aircraft the court having jurisdiction shall be that of the home port of the ship or aircraft.

Art. 114. 2. Individual extracts
(1) Individual extracts from a collective judgment may be obtained by interested persons.
(2) They shall take tIte place of a record of death.

Art. 115. Date of death
(1) When the court delivers a judgment declaring death, it shall fix in the judgment the presumed date of the death or deaths having regard to the presumptions drawn from the circumstances of the case.
(2) The date thus fixed may not be rectified except in the case where it is proved that it has hem fixed as a result of fraud.
(3) Any application having as its object the rectification of the date shall be dismissed when three years have elapsed from the date of the judgment.

Art. 116. Annulment of judgment declaring death
If the person whose death has been judicially declared reappears after the judgment declaring death, the judgment shall be annulled, at his request or at the request of the public prosecutor, by the court which gave it [sic] ('Civil Code of Ethiopia' 1960, Ethiopian Legal Information website, Chapter 3, 5 May http://www.law.ugent.be/pub/nwr/elw/civilcode/civilcodepage.htm - Accessed 30 April 2009 – Attachment 1).

The registration of deaths in Ethiopia is outlined in a DFAT report provided to the RRT dated 22 March 2006, which indicates that one of either a death certificate, death report from a hospital, evidence of burial, or a signed and witnessed declaration, along with identification, is required to register a death.

What are the documents used to evidence death in Ethiopia? Is there a 'death certificate' which is normally issued or is there another official document?

Death certificates are available from Municipal City Councils and in order to register the death under the civil laws any of the following are required:

- A death certificate/report from a hospital;
- A death certificate/evidence of burial from religion institutions or Labour and Social Affairs Bureau;

- A declaration signed by three witnesses in front of Kebele officials, confirming death.

> When registering at the Municipal City Council, you are required to produce one of the above, as well as the applicant's Kebele card or passport. The spouse, parents, children of the deceased or other legally represented individual may apply for these certificates (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2006, *DFAT Report No. 458 – Ethiopia: RRT Information Request: ETH30036*, 22 March – Attachment 10).

The research response of 11 May 2007 also provides information received from DFAT in 2006 regarding death certificates, indicating that for deaths occurring in a hospital, relatives will be provided with "a form of death certificate", whereas if a death occurs at home and no certificate is available, relatives should "formally register the death with the city administration."

> In cases where an applicant claims that a death certificate for a parent is not available because the relative died at home, officers should request the applicant to formally register the death with the city administration. Officers should not accept a testimonial issued by a Kebele social court as a formal death certificate. Testimonials are unreliable as they are issued based on verbal information provided by declarants without any verification of the information presented (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2006, *DFAT Report No. 570 – Ethiopia: RRT Information Request: ETH31009*, 6 December – Attachment 11).
>
> …In cases where a death occurs in an Ethiopian hospital, the family of the deceased will be issued with a form of death certificate. In such cases, the document should be able to be verified with the issuing authority. In cases where an official record of the death was not issued to the family members, there should be a record of the deceased being admitted in the hospital's admissions register (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2006, *DFAT Report 516 – Ethiopia: RRT Information Request: ETH30375*, 4 August – Attachment 5; MRT Country Research 2007, *Research Response ETH31783*, 11 May – Attachment 7).

The research response of 6 September 2006 cited earlier also provides advice received from DFAT regarding the verification of a person's death in Ethiopia, indicating that deaths are not required to be registered with the city government, and are only done so at the request of the deceased's relatives. The advice from DFAT also outlines the documentation required for obtaining an official death certificate:

> J. How would one verify the death of a person in this jurisdiction?
>
> This would depend on where the death was registered. There is no requirement that deaths be registered with the city government. This is only done at the request of the relatives of the deceased. When applying for an official death certificate from the city government, the applicant is required to provide one of several documents to certify that death has occurred - one of which is the hospital death certificate. People may die and relatives have no documentation to prove so. When asked to provide these documents, they seek to obtain them from the relevant authorities (for example, churches, mosques, the authority that manages the city's 'secular' cemeteries and hospitals).

> If the documents presented by the applicant have been issued by a hospital then the death can only be verified at that hospital. If a hospital death certificate is not available, one option would be to formally write to the hospital requesting confirmation that a death certificate was issued or alternately, an officer can physically attend the hospital to check the hospital's admissions and death registers (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2006, *DFAT Report No. 516 – Ethiopia: RRT Information Request: ETH30375*, 4 August - Attachment 5; MRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response ETH30375*, 6 September – Attachment 2).

2. Please provide information about the requirements or procedure for burials. Is a burial permit required for a person can be buried in a cemetery?

Procedures/requirements

The US Department of State 2006 International Religious Freedom report for Ethiopia indicates that local and regional governments are responsible for assigning burial plots in cemeteries to different faiths.

> Evangelicals claimed that they were not able to bury their dead in cemeteries given to them by the Government because Muslims and Orthodox prevented it. In November 2003, in the Buta Jira area, a Protestant family buried a child in a local cemetery. Muslims reportedly dug up the body at night and dumped it in town. The family reported the incident to the local police and zonal administration, but reportedly authorities took little action to resolve the case. In Harar, evangelicals also were not able to bury their dead in the same cemeteries used by Orthodox and Muslims. Local and regional governments assign burial plots to various faiths. However, isolated incidents occur and in such instances, local government officials generally address the problem (US Department of State 2006, *International Religious Freedom Report for 2006 – Ethiopia*, Section III – Attachment 12).

An abstract of a paper prepared for the 2004 International Conference on AIDS contains mortality data for Ethiopia with particular regard to cemeteries and numbers of deaths and burials recorded, stating that trained officers have been recording all burials occurring in cemeteries in Addis Ababa since February 2001. The paper also indicates that relatives of the deceased perform "the burial requirements."

> Background: Routine mortality data are not gathered in Ethiopia. Such data are essential in estimating the extent of AIDS-related mortality, time trends in such mortality, and the effectiveness of interventions against HIV infection and progression to AIDS. Methods: Since February 2001, trained clerks have recorded all burials occurring in cemeteries within the city limits of the capital of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa. Cremation is not practiced in Ethiopia. Of 77 active cemeteries (51 Orthodox Christian, eight Muslim, one Catholic, one Jewish and seven Municipal-based and two church-based community organizations), 70 existed in 2001, five were established in 2002 and two more established in 2003. From the outset, data on name, address, age, gender and presumed cause of death have been obtained from the relative performing the burial requirements. From 2002, information on ethnicity, birthplace, religion and marital status was also obtained. However, Baytewar, one of the eight municipal based cemeteries, buries unidentified persons' corpses without information from relatives (Araya, T., Davey, G., Reniers, G., Berhane, Y., Kumie, A., Coutinho, R., Schaap, A., and Sanders, E. 2004, 'Three-year all cause mortality at all cemeteries in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia', 15th International Conference on AIDS, 11-16 July, Abstract No. C11190, NLM Gateway website,

http://gateway.nlm.nih.gov/MeetingAbstracts/ma?f=102277275.html – Accessed 1 May 2009 – Attachment 13).

Ethiopia also has a long history of burial societies, called *idirs*, which provide assistance and support with burials and funerals to community members in exchange for monthly payments to a communal fund. These societies arrange and pay the costs of funerals, and provide support for the mourning period.

> Addis Ababa, Ethiopia — Burial societies, which have helped people through the expense and grief surrounding death for centuries here, are expanding their missions to keep people alive as the HIV/AIDS epidemic exacts its toll.
>
> Some 200,000 burial societies, known as *idirs*, are found throughout Ethiopia, and almost every Ethiopian is connected to one, either personally or through family.
>
> ...Typically, idir members make small monthly payments to a communal fund. When a death occurs, the group arranges and pays for funerals and the traditional three- to seven-day mourning period (Kurata, P. 2008, 'Ethiopian Burial Societies Join Fight Against HIV/AIDS', America.gov website, 21 November http://www.america.gov/st/foraid-english/2008/November/20081121143012cpataruk0.7095606.html - Accessed 1 May 2009 – Attachment 14).

The role of *idirs* in Ethiopian society is outlined in the following working paper from the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), reporting that membership of *idirs* is widespread, covering almost 90 percent of rural Ethiopian households.

> Members of *iddir* typically meet once or twice a month, making a small payment into a group fund. When a member dies, the *iddir* makes a payment to surviving family members. Outside of Tigray, *iddir* membership is widespread: nearly 90 percent of households report that they belong to at least one *iddir*. Two-thirds of *iddir* appear to have no restrictions on membership beyond paying dues and fees. In addition to the death benefit, a third of *iddir* provide cash payouts to members when they have experienced other types of adverse shocks, such as drought and illness, and a quarter offer loans (Dercon, S., Hoddinott, J., Krishnan, P. and Woldehanna, T. 2008, 'Collective Action and Vulnerability: Burial Societies in Rural Ethiopia', CAPRi working paper 83, Washington, D.C.: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), CGIAR website http://www.capri.cgiar.org/pdf/brief_poverty-02.pdf - Accessed 1 May 2009 – Attachment 15).

From a different perspective, Christopher Grant's anthropological study of Oromo burial practices and rituals and their historical traditions, Oromo memorial grave art and symbolism, Oromo grave practices and East African burial practices and grave markers may be of some interest (Grant, C. 2006, 'Stones, Slabs, and Stelae: The Origins and Symbolism of Contemporary Oromo Burial Practice and Grave Art', University of Chicago, SIT Graduate Institute/SIT Study Abroad http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1260&context=isp_collection – Accessed 1 May 2009 – Attachment 16).

Burial Permits

The only reference to a burial permit or certificate found in relation to Ethiopia was obtained from the US Department of State in reference to death certificates, indicating that a "church/burial site certificate" is required for the issuance of an official death certificate from a municipality.

> **Death Certificates**
> If the death occurred at home, acknowledgments from three witnesses, a certificate from the deceased's "kebele", as well as a certificate from the church where the body is interred are required for issuance of a municipal death certificate. If the death occurred in a hospital, a death certificate issued by the hospital and a church/burial site certificate are necessary for the issuance of a municipal death certificate (US Department of State (undated), 'Ethiopia Reciprocity Schedule' http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/reciprocity/reciprocity_3559.html - Accessed 30 April 2009 – Attachment 8).

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Amnesty International website http://www.amnesty.org/
Human Rights Watch (HRW) website http://www.hrw.org/
UNHCR Refworld website http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/
ReliefWeb website http://www.reliefweb.int/

Region Specific Links

Ethiopian Legal Information website
http://www.law.ugent.be/pub/nwr/elw/index.html
The African Child Policy Forum website http://www.africanchildforum.org
All Africa Global Media website http://allafrica.com/

Search Engines

Copernic http://www.copernic.com/

Databases**:**

FACTIVA (news database)
BACIS (DIAC Country Information database)
REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)
ISYS (RRT Research & Information database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State Reports)
MRT-RRT Library Catalogue

List of Attachments

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