



**General information of Ethiopian Evangelical church Mekane Yesus  
Western Wollega Bethel Synod (EECMY-WWBS) -- Ethiopia**

**1. Ethiopia:\***

- Area: 435,184 sq. miles, some what smaller than Alaska
- Population: 60,000,000 -- the second populous country in Africa
- Population growth: 3.1% per year
- Religion: 60 % Christian
- Per Capita income: 133 USD
- Family size: 6-7 person/family
- Infant and under five mortality rate per 1000 births were estimated (1994) to be 118 and 173, respectively
- Accessibility to health services, safe water and sanitation were 46, 25, and 19 percent, respectively.
- Gross enrollment ratio (GER) in primary, junior and secondary schools were 21.70, 19.85 and 9.58 percent, respectively.
  - =>Unemployment, health problems poor infrastructure development, chronic food insecurity are the main features of the country.
  - =>These social and economic indicators determine the level of the country's self reliance and/or dependency syndrome

\*Source: The 1994 census of Ethiopia and The New York Times 1998 Almanac

**2. The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) was formed in 1959, as the result of work by German, Norwegian, Swedish and north American Lutheran missions**

=>Mekane Yesus means "dewelling place of Jesus" in Ge'ez, Ethiopia's old church language

**3. Western Wollega Bethel Synod (WWBS) is located 635 kms away from Addis Ababa in Western part of the country**

=>The inception of WWBS was marked by Evangelical and medical work started in 1919 by Presbyterian missionary Dr. Tom Lambie.

=>In 1922 Berhane Yesus Elementary school started officially as the first school in this part of the country by Presbyterian missionaries. Eventually, BESS came out of it.

=>In 1974, WWBS joined the EECMY to strengthen her cooperation, withstand persecution of communist regime and carry out her holistic ministry .



4. In 1998, EECMY had 2, 593,163 members  
=>the fastest growing church in Africa, since it had only 20,000 members during its formation (1959)
5. In 1999 Western Wollega Bethel synod had
  - 182,362 church members
  - 52 employed pastors
  - 197 ordained elders
  - 4,300 volunteer workers
  - 197 established congregations and 66 out reach places
  - 10 presbyteries in 10 administrative districts
 ⇒ shows the pressing need for trained manpower, low cost church building
6. The clear motto of EECMY/WWBS is to serve the whole person which is called Holistic Ministry; i.e. spiritual and physical service  
=>Spiritual is the proclamation of the gospel where as physical services encompasses the Social and economic development of our community.

## 7. Retrospect and present activities /challenges of WWBS

### 7.1. Past communist regime challenges

Although, the WWBS has been undertaking holistic ministry for over 80 years , our synod was the most affected Church unit as the effect of the past communist government persecution which we have not been relieved and rehabilitated yet from its carry over effect.

Though, it is not possible to list all the problems encountered during the persecution by communist government on our church, some of them were the following:

1. 131 Congregation buildings were closed and their properties were plundered, confiscated and destroyed.
2. 9 presbytery office buildings, furniture were plundered ,confiscated and destroyed
3. 5 church cars looted
4. 5 church clinics and 1 hospital were confiscated
5. The two Bible schools were closed and their properties were plundered and confiscated
6. 11 residence buildings were confiscated ( 9 from presbyteries)
7. 1 elementary school and 131 basic education church schools were destroyed and closed down.
8. Trained man power evacuated from the area ( 5 persons with MA degree and above)
9. All missions left with the budget and their assistance
10. No partner agency was available for our synod
11. Opportunity of training man power in country and at international level was very limited for over 10 years.



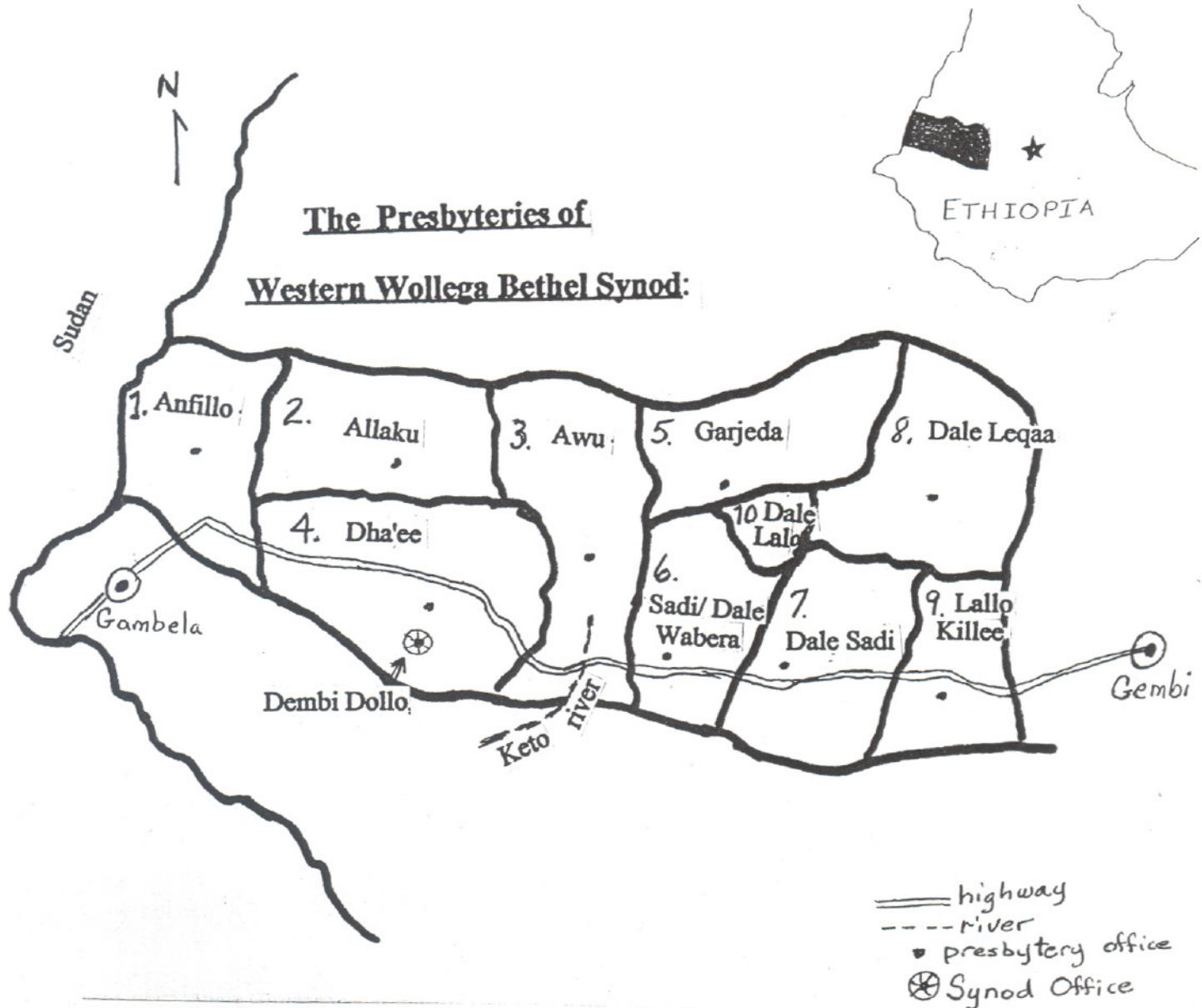
12. Evangelists and pastors used to serve home to home with out earning salary for at least 5 years
13. There were shortage of trained man power in all department being evangelism, Development, finance, Administration and support giving sections.
14. Generally there were spiritual, social and economic crises in our synod which resulted the activities of our synod to be dormant.

**7.2. Present activities/Challenges**

1. Capacity building at synod and presbyteries level
2. Training of human resources at EECMY Seminary schools, Gidada Bible school as well as international level training eventhough the opportunities are very rare
3. Establishment of congregation centers, low cost church buildings and expansion of the Gospel ministry to the new out reach places
4. Development activities
  - # School services at BYES and BESS schools
  - Dale Wabera (Tulu Goppo) clinic and AIDS prevention
  - Hostel services for orphanages and semi -orphanages at Haro Sebu and Dembi Dollo Hostels
  - Water development program to render potable water for rural community
  - Dale Wabera Integrated Rural Development project which encompasses bridge , clinic construction , credit schemes for women, grinding mill, horticulture, supply of clean water, afforestation, soil and water conservation and extension service.
  - settlement of Mejengir community and women Horticultural projects

**7.3. Future plan of WWBS**

1. Working for Economic, social and spiritual self reliance of our synod
2. Restructuring of BYES and BESS to meet the current required government policy and sustaining of its long years academic reputation , as they have been role model schools in this part of the country
3. Construction of Kake multipurpose training
4. Establishment of congregation centers, construction of low cost church building and promotion of evangelism out reach to unreached places along with holistic approach
5. In country and international level training of human resources for evangelism, development, finance departments and administration
6. Capacity building in our synod office and presbytery offices in terms of man power, furniture, materials and communication equipment
7. Rehabilitating of marginalized Mejengir community
8. Awareness raising of gender issues and increasing of women involvement in church management, evangelism and development work.



### The Presbyteries of Western Wollega Bethel Synod:

Allaku - tef fields, well-organized visit, prayers for youth ministry  
 Anfillo - green coffee-producing mountains, Muggi, near Sudan; young and rebuilding  
 Awu - "frontier" of development and gospel, Keto river  
 Dha'ee - Dembi Dollo, Majengir outreach  
 Dale Leqaa - remote; focus on women's roles  
 Dale Sadi - Haro Sabu, strong literacy program, workers not a problem  
 Garjeda - biggest presbytery; many mountains and rivers  
 Lallo Killee - warm greetings, big churches, termites  
 Sadi/ Dale Wabera - Integrated Rural Development project, Ch'ang'a  
 DALE LALA - BRAND NEW PRESBYTERY

Most names refer to the region; "Dale" (dah-lay) is a kinship term, "including many clans", they say. Lallo Killee combines a clan name with the Killee River (which means "deep as Hell"). Spellings will vary widely because their sounds don't have exact equivalents, and they're in the process of changing to our alphabet.