

A group of elders escape the hot sun under an acacia tree in rural Ethiopia and survey their dusty fields. The rains failed this year and they face a poor harvest. There is hunger in the village. "It's the will of God," said one. "We have neglected our ancestor's sacrifices," said another. A third said, "Where can we find water in this dry land?"

How do communities like this work together to overcome unpredictable rain, wandering goats, poor soil, and other difficulties? How does faith relate to farming and health? October 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> we spent an amazing week wrestling with these questions at a conference held at ECHO Global Farm in Fort Myers, Florida. ECHO partners with rural farming communities and national churches in developing countries to share information, techniques, seeds, and work together to solve agricultural problems.



**At ECHO in the semi-arid farm plot, similar to the land in Langanu.**

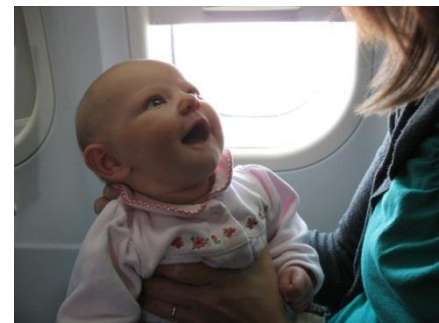


After our week at ECHO we are excited about the opportunity in Langanu to:

- Build relationships with the Oromo people
- Understand their perspective on important health issues
- Together find creative, culturally appropriate solutions
- Show how God desires to restore health to the land and His people

*"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10*

On August 14<sup>th</sup>, baby Mercy Ayantu joined our family! Ayantu is an Oromo name that means graceful. She was 8 pounds 9 ounces and looked exactly like a miniature Charlotte! We love her sweet smiles and baby noises (although we could do without some of the crying!). Charlotte is a great big sister and loves holding Mercy and reading to her. Charlotte became a kindergartener this fall; her favorite things are playing with her friends and doing art projects.



In November we're flying to Charlotte, North Carolina for two weeks of orientation at SIM headquarters. We're excited to learn how to maintain a healthy family in Ethiopia, explore teamwork in a cross-cultural setting, and focus on our personal relationships with God. They even have a kid's program, so Charlotte will be getting ready for her big adventure, too!

Check our website and blog for more info and updates at [www.FloreksInEthiopia.weebly.com](http://www.FloreksInEthiopia.weebly.com). On the "connect" tab, please send us your email address as we'll send updates by email from Ethiopia. If you don't have email, we'll still send you a paper letter!