

Professor Getnet Tadele: A Biography

Professor Getnet Tadele is a Full Professor in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Addis Ababa University, whose more than three-decade career exemplifies the intersection of rigorous social science research, international academic leadership, and profound community service. He is a distinguished scholar, prolific researcher, and dedicated public servant whose life work bridges the gap between social science and global health. From his origins as a rural shepherd and petty trader, Professor Tadele has risen to become a globally recognized scholar and a transformative agent of change.

Academic Foundation and Educational Journey

Professor Tadele's academic trajectory began at Addis Ababa University (AAU), where he graduated *cum laude* in 1990 with a BA in Sociology and Social Administration. His exceptional performance led to his immediate recruitment as a Graduate Assistant at his alma mater.

With the support of an AUSAID scholarship, he transitioned to the University of Newcastle, Australia, earning a Graduate Diploma in Health Social Science (1997) and a Master of Medical Science in Health Social Science (1998). Upon returning to Ethiopia, he served as a Health Social Scientist at AAU's Clinical Epidemiology Unit. He later secured a scholarship and joined the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research, University of Amsterdam, where he earned his Doctoral degree in 2005.

Global Research and Intellectual Contributions

A leading voice in Health Social Science, Professor Tadele has published over 70 journal articles and book chapters with prestigious international publishers. His research is vast, covering child rights, adolescent sexuality, HIV/AIDS, and the aspirations of rural youth. He is particularly renowned for his extensive work on podoconiasis (non-filarial elephantiasis), and scabies among marginalized groups (street children, refugees etc) contributing significantly to the global understanding of neglected tropical diseases. Key books include:

- *Vulnerabilities, Impacts and Responses to HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) – First Co-editor.
- *Bleak Prospects: Young Men, Sexuality and HIV/AIDS in an Ethiopian Town* (Brill Academic Publishers).
- *Giving Back to the Community: Development Projects Implemented by Academics in Ethiopia* (Eclipse Printers) – First Co-editor.

His research is accessible from : [scopus](#) or [Google scholar](#) or www.azena.info

International Fellowships and Visiting Professorships

Professor Tadele's career is defined by global collaboration and his expertise is sought globally. He has held prestigious fellowships and visiting positions at some of the world's leading institutions. Thus, he has taught and researched in Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana, the Netherlands, UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand, and Norway. His notable international appointments include:

- Fulbright Fellow at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), USA, with invited lectures at Yale, Boston University, and the University of Florida and Illinois.
- Erasmus Mundus Scholar at the Royal Tropical Institute of the Netherlands and the University of Bergen.
- Erskine Fellow at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand.
- Visiting Professor at the University of Amsterdam and the University of Bergen (2019–2022).
- Global Fellow at the Centre on Law and Social Transformation, University of Bergen.

Currently, he is Visiting Professor and Non Executive Director at the Centre for Equitable Global Health Research, University of Sussex, UK (2025-2028). He also serves as Visiting and an Adjunct/Honorary Professor at several premier Ethiopian universities

Research Grants and Mentorship

Professor Tadele has demonstrated an extraordinary ability to secure and lead large-scale, multi-country research projects. Notable past grants include the NUFU, NORPART and Research Council of Norway grant multiple times, NWO/WOTRO (Netherlands), NHIR (UK) and the NIH/H3 Africa ELSI program (US). He is currently leading Four active grants:

1. *Behind the Scenes: Female youth and gender based inequities in Africa's Creative Sector* (supported by International Centre for Research on Women and Mastercard Foundation (2024-2026);
2. 'Development and Testing of Interventions to Control Scabies among Street Children in Ethiopia'. project financed by \NIHR, UK (2024-26)
3. Strengthening social and behavioural Science on vaccines in Africa, Financed by SIDA and IDRC, 2025-2028;
4. Social Sciences for Severe Stigmatizing Skin Diseases (5S Foundation), 2019-2026

Through these projects, he has mentored and provided financial and academic support to dozens of post doc, PhD and MA students, directly contributing to the capacity building and fostering the next generation of researchers .

Institutional Leadership and Policy Engagement

Professor Tadele is a central figure in Ethiopian and international academic governance. He has served as:

- Past President and current board member of the Ethiopian Society of Sociologists, Social Workers, and Anthropologists (ESSWA).
- Deputy Chair of the Board of Governors of Wolkite University and chair of the university's teaching and referral hospital.
- Fellow of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences
- Chair of the Africa Ethics Working Group (NeuroGenE).

- Member of the UK's Medical Research Council Applied Global Health Research Board (AGHRB) and the NIHR's Global Health Policy and Systems Research Funding Committee, UK and member of NORPAR grant Review Committee.

At AAU, he has served as the chair, graduate program coordinator of the department of sociology and on various committees at different levels of AAU and anchored the popular Health and Wellbeing MA stream, emphasizing the interface of social science and multicultural health systems.

National Service and Political Leadership

Beyond the classroom, Professor Tadele serves at the highest levels of policy and administration. Driven by a mandate from his community, Professor Tadele was elected by an overwhelming majority to the Federal Parliament of Ethiopia in 2021. He currently serves on the Standing Committee for Health, Social Development, Culture, and Sport and acts as Vice Chair of the Parliamentary Friendship Committee to the EU and Western Europe, balancing his legislative duties with his academic commitments.

Philanthropy and Community Development

Professor Tadele's commitment to his humble beginnings is perhaps his most enduring legacy and has maintained a lifelong commitment to social justice.. He has spearheaded massive development projects in rural areas, including the construction of:

- A 48-meter steel bridge over a big river known as Ayo.
- Three elementary schools, Five high schools, and a high school library.
- Massive resource mobilization for COVID-19 mitigation and school infrastructure.
- The ongoing development of an Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) Center.

In 2025, Professor Tadele established Live to Serve (L2S), a charitable organization designed to strengthen and extend the impact of his leadership in community transformation. Building on more than 17 years of expertise in education, healthcare, and sustainable development, L2S is committed to advancing equitable access to essential services and resilient livelihoods. Its vision is to empower rural communities in Ethiopia to lead their own development, foster resilience against environmental challenges, and achieve sustainable progress. By strategically mobilizing local communities, government institutions, and international partners, L2S seeks to deliver measurable, lasting change. Further information is available at [Live to Serve](#).

He is a frequent resource person for the government and non governmental organizations including WHO, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNISCO and several other local and international organizations , translating complex social science data into actionable social and public health policy.

Recognition and Awards

His accolades are numerous, reflecting his stature as a "Global Fellow" and "Laureate." In recognition of his excellence in research and community service, he received the AAU's "Best

Researcher of the Year" (2025), "Outstanding Achievement Award" (2023), "Distinguished Research Award" (2016), "the Exemplary Community Service Award" (from P2P USA, 2016), NTD Champion/Ambassador (Ministry of Health, 2025), Higher Honor Laureate from the Abyssinia Award (2019), Yusuf Badari Civic Engagement International Prize from Ahfad University for Women (2018), Good Person of the Year from Yebegosew Award and the Alumni Excellence Award from the University of Newcastle (2023). Local authorities and communities have named two schools in his honor to mark his legacy of giving back.

Vision for the Future

Professor Tadele continues to advocate for the necessity of social science in medical and health systems. His journey from a rural boy (by attending high school traveling 70 kms away from his village because of lack of school nearby) to a global fellow and Member of Parliament serves as an inspiration for the transformative power of education. He remains dedicated to applying his interpersonal, academic, and problem-solving skills to the betterment of global society. Professor Tadele embodies the "scholar-activist" model or engaged scholarship.