

Renting Newspapers in Africa

(CNN) In Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, Garum Tesfaye is a landlord, of a sort. He rents newspapers.

Surrounded by worn-out copies of old newspapers, stacks of gossip magazines and the crisp print of the latest news, Tesfaye sits attentively, checking his watch every now and then.

Near him, a pedestrian bridge provides shelter from the sun to dozens of avid readers who quickly, albeit meticulously, get their dose of the latest news. For 20 to 30 minutes, these readers can get their hands on a newspaper for a fraction of the price of having to buy it. . . . Among his customers are unemployed university graduates who tend to rent several publications a day as they desperately hunt for work.

How much does it cost to rent a newspaper for a few minutes? Less than the equivalent of one American penny.