



Jerusalem Children and Community
Development Organization
(JeCCDO)



WORKING WITH
CHILDREN, FAMILIES
AND
THEIR COMMUNITIES

NEWSLETTER

SOME JeCCDO Family Stories

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A MEDICAL STUDENT VOLUNTEERS TO TRANSFORM LIVES

“Our involvement changed their attitudes. Seeing that they have brothers among men, who look out for them, helped them to see men and the world in general differently.”

Tewabe Bayeh, with his university student and practitioner friends, actively engages in voluntary activities. As a 5th year medical student at Bahir Dar University, he teamed up with some members of the Bahir Dar Medical Association to establish and run a Community Boosting Organization.

It was during the Covid 19 pandemic outbreak that Tewabe was introduced to JeCCDO's Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Protection of Women and Girls from Commercial Sex Industry Project. Tewabe and his friends started working in the capacity-building programmes and got acquainted with the lives of the former sex workers.

Working in the social intimacy part of the rehabilitation program, volunteers like Tewabe were able to help the sex

workers feel like they have brothers and a family that truly cares for them. In his time volunteering with the project, Tewabe grew exposed to the situations of sex workers,



understanding: how they were forced into that life, how they were exploited, and how afraid they were of the health risk they run on a daily basis.

Tewabe says learning their life story is important because it suggests a viable way of moving forward in helping them change and persist.

“The girls and women in this program identify and have come to see all men as only wanting them for

ABSTRACT

Mr. Tewabe studies Medicine at Bahirdar University. But Medicine is not his only affair in learning. He also studies the delicate subject of Human Life transformation in his voluntary activity under one of JeCCDO's rehabilitation programs. Taking part in a team of volunteers working to pull women out of sex work, Mr. Tewabe observes the subtle process of attitudinal and behavioral changes on the trainees. He observed some former sex workers slowly changing from tense to easy through the span of the rehabilitation and social intimacy program sessions. He is happy to see how the program follows up on the trainees, and how it maintains family-like relationships with them even after they completed their training and had the fund to start their new businesses. Now Mr. Tewabe is concerned with the issue of the many other women in sex work who were not reached by such projects as JeCCDO's.



JeCCDO's social intimacy Program Group Discussion Session

bodily pleasure. Our involvement changed their attitudes. Seeing that they have brothers among men, who look out for them, helped them to see men and the world in general differently,” Tewabe says.

Each volunteer teams with two or three trainees to start a “family” of three or four. These families do all things that normal families do. They support each other; they discuss important issues, celebrate birthdays and holidays together, and be there for one another. In most cases, this family bond continued even after the sex workers graduated and started a new business.

“We do not abandon our relationship after they leave the program. We follow up by paying a visit to their places of work and by making scheduled phone calls. The thing is that they used to make more money as sex workers even though their conditions were worse. So when they find the competition tough in the new business they run, we need to make sure that they keep moving forward and remind them that they have a bright future,” Tewabe says.

As Tewabe, the rehabilitation program is so focused on the trainee's mindset and on what brings a lasting behavioral change. He speaks in astonishment of how far the program follows up to maintain the trainees' mood to change, on the top of allocating startup funds and providing necessary equipment.

“There are so many other sex workers out there who still need this help. Thankfully, projects such as the one JeCCDO is implementing is giving these girls and women the power to choose a different life” he says.



Mr. Tewabe Bayeh

A fifth year Medical Student at Bahir Dar University and a volunteer at JeCCDO's Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Protection of Women and Girls from Commercial Sex Industry Project

A PARENT LOOKS FORWARD TO TESFAHOPE CAMPAIGN

“It is crucial that these students know that someone cares for them. And it is only then that we can expect them to show care to the world,”

Meet Mrs. Genet Dejazmach who sends her two kids to Biruh Tesfa School in Debre Birhan, Ethiopia. The name ‘Biruh Tesfa’ is composed of two Amharic words meaning Bright and Hope. Mrs. Genet sends her kids to the school looking for just that – a bright hope. Sending them was not enough though. She wanted to go and see, for herself, how her kids’ school looks like from the inside. Little did she know she was going to stay in for the long term.

It all started when Mrs. Genet accepted an invitation to join the school’s Parents’ Committee. She went to attend a scheduled meeting that took place between the parents’, students’, and teachers’ representatives. After the meeting was over, one of the teachers took Mrs. Genet to a shade in some corner of the school



Mrs. Genet Dejazmach: A parent at Biruhtesfa Primary School

where several students were sitting, hiding from the overhead sun. Then he casually pointed to them and said, “Those are the kids I told you about – the ones who do not have lunch.”

Mrs. Genet remembers that day with watery eyes. She says “I immediately felt a kick inside my stomach. I couldn’t help picturing my kids under that shade – passing their lunchtime just sitting; maybe facing

the lunchroom and probably imagining the type of meal the other kids were having. The next morning, I decided to do what I can and I sent my two kids with an extra lunchbox so that they share one with some student who was not to have lunch otherwise”. The school community now identifies Mrs. Genet as the mom who sends her kids to school with an extra lunch box.

“The situation is severe,” Mr. Abrham Tesema – the school administrator, holds. As he pointed out, the school staff is highly concerned with this issue. “Some staff members contribute a portion of their salary for a daily feeding program that takes place in the school café. I contribute Birr 700 every month. Other staff members bring some food from their homes. But our

efforts are nothing close to enough. The last time we counted, we had 117 who came without lunch out of the total 1,287 students. We need all the help we can get,” Mr. Abrham says.

Mrs. Genet and some members of the school staff are currently working with JeCCDO’s Breakfast Club, and they are engaged in promising activities to jointly alleviate this meal problem. Another key participant in this activity

ABSTRACT

At lunchtime, any school would wish its students to enjoy their meal. But, Biruh Tesfa Primary School in Debre Birhan, Ethiopia is facing a great challenge in this respect. Every day, more than one hundred of its students pass their lunchtime just seating under a shade because their parents were not able to fix them any lunch. The school community remains troubled by the fact and it is putting some effort to alleviate the problem. Mrs. Genet, who sends her two kids to the school, has been sending one extra box of lunch every day, intending to save one student from hunger. Members of staff, like Mr. Abrham, contribute from their monthly salary to feed some students in the school cafeteria. Other staff members bring some food from their homes for the affected students. But the meal problem persisted as these scattered efforts are too small compared to the size of the problem. Currently, a feeding program is underway by ‘Tesfa Hope’ Breakfast club with the help of JeCCDO and its fundraising partner (Partners for Change Ethiopia/PFC). Now the school community looks forward to the program.



Mr. Abrham Tesema

Administrator of Biruh Tesfa
Primary School



Biruhtesfa Primary School in
Debrebirhan Ethiopia - Main Gate

is Partners for Change Ethiopia (PFC), which does the fundraising for the Breakfast Club; with a campaign called 'Tesfa-Hope'.

Dr. John Binns, Chair and Co-ordinator of Partners for Change Ethiopia (PFC), says the coming Ethiopian year, 2021-2022 is going to be an important year in the fundraising activity. "It is time to work closely with JeCCDO if we are to respond to the growing needs. There are lots of practical things we can do," Dr. Binns Expressed.

PFC started the campaign for the breakfast club with an interesting activity that involved about 100 men and women of all ages from around the world. They prepared a virtual journey of 9,000 kilometers from London to Ethiopia, intending to raise \$9,000. The distance was to be collectively covered by all the participants. So all the kilometers covered by the participants while walking, running, or cycling was added together until it reached 9,000 kilometers in the third week. And that was how the Breakfast Club in Biruh Tesfa School was started.

The following activity of PFC was creating awareness of the campaign through publications and online

discussions. "We want people to arrange their coffee mornings to introduce the work of JeCCDO to their friends. We would like to start selling Ethiopian craftworks, pottery, and more- through our website. And we will be talking to other agencies and funders concerned with Ethiopia. We want people to engage in promoting activities to share



Biruh Tesfa Primary School: Students in Playground

in resolving this meal problem" Dr. Binns says.

Presently the school community is keen to see the launching of the feeding program. Mrs. Genet likes to emphasize the far-reaching aspect of this feeding program. "It is crucial that these students know that someone cares for them. And it is only then that we can expect them to show care to the world," She maintains.

A WOMAN MANAGES TO HELP HER RELATIVES PURSUE THEIR EDUCATION

"It is because of JeCCDO that now; I can speak and act against such acts as early marriage, gender inequality, and denial of education opportunities."

Mrs. Meaza Teshome is a member of Mechal Self-Help Group. She is now financially independent and has the necessary tools to sustain her life in dignity. But that has not always been the case.

A decade ago, Mrs. Meaza was living, in Debre Birhan town of Ethiopia, under great difficulties. She never had any means of income to cover her basic needs. And she was forced to lead her life in seclusion because she was not able to make any contribution to the local associations which she was supposed to join in the communal lifestyle of the town she lived in.

Things started to change 10 years ago after JeCCDO's team approached and recruited her to take part in Mechal Self-Help Group. She started by growing vegetables in her backyard using the initial support JeCCDO provided her. From the small income, she generated growing vegetables; Mrs. Meaza started to make small savings.

"It was JeCCDO who reached out to me when my life was falling apart. The training I had in the Self Help Group not only provided me with



Mrs. Meaza Teshome (front) and her neighbor friend

ABSTRACT

Mrs. Meaza once lived in extreme poverty. She led her life detached from her neighbors as she had no money even to pay the trivial monthly contributions in the local associations which she wished to take part in. But that time is long gone. Mrs. Meaza is now leading JeCCDO's 'Mechal Self-Help Group' (SHG) which she joined 10 years ago. Soon after joining the SHG she took trainings on business development, saving and other important life skills. Presently, she not only earns enough for her basic expenses but also manages to help several of her relatives, which she says is a great source of satisfaction in her life.

practical skills but also helped me look at life differently. In the beginning, we saved 50 cents daily and I was thinking, for what? But before I knew it, my savings grew to a significant amount,” she explains.”

Mrs. Meaza owns just a small piece of land which is not enough for a large scale cultivation. But she tries to keep her backyard as productive as possible. Now she has a continuous supply of fresh vegetables, from her backyard, to add to her family’s meal. She also grows apples, which are a continuous source of delight to her family, including her children and grandchildren.

To sustain her growing number of family members, Mrs. Meaza bakes bread and Ingera for sale. She says the help she is getting from JeCCDO through the Self-help group rises above the money it injects and the saving it facilitates. For her, the fact that she is helping members of her extended family is a great source of satisfaction in her life.

“After my children finished their secondary education, I brought over my husband’s niece and helped her study. I also helped my first cousin escape an early marriage by inviting her to stay with me until she too finishes her university studies. She now has a decent job in Addis Ababa. Currently, I have my niece here with me. She’s going to graduate high school this year,” she says.

Mrs. Meaza is hopeful that the family and relatives she helped would take turn to help others who are still living in rural villages. “I was unaware of the different harmful traditional practices exercised in my community. Now, thanks to JeCCDO, I do. It is because of JeCCDO that now; I can speak and act against such acts as early marriage, gender inequality, and denial of education opportunities,” she claims.

Mrs. Meaza is excited to help her relatives believing that her actions will help to improve the quality of life of not only the ones she helps directly but also the others who still live in rural villages. She believes, when children and young men in the rural village see some who managed to lead a different lifestyle by finding a decent job, they will see that succumbing to the rural way of life is not the only option they have.



MEMBERS OF A SELF-HELP GROUP (SHG) IN DEBRESINA WEAR UNIFORM OUTFITS AS A TOKEN OF THEIR SISTERHOOD

“We dress the same to express that we are united as a family and that we live together in harmony.”

Mrs. Tiruwork is an astute woman who leads Seferegenet self-help group in Debresina town of Ethiopia. Although the idea that formed the group she leads is mutual support, Mrs. Tiruwork and the other members don’t consider themselves as people merely helping each other. They prefer to call themselves ‘sisters in a family’.

Group members wear uniform outfits in different social gatherings and governmental events that the group is invited to participate in. They say wearing uniform outfits is their way of showing their sisterhood. Mrs. Tiruwork states, “It is becoming customary that people from the same family wear similar



ABSTRACT

When misfortune strikes, things may look so cruel that you wonder whether life is worth living or not. Such was the case for Mrs. Tiruwork a few years ago after her 19 years old son was murdered. In the following months, she locks herself inside her house and grieve. Then one-day JeCCDO’s recruiting team knocked on her door inviting her to join Seferegenet Self-Help Group. Everything changed in her life because she accepted that invitation. Presently, she is happily serving the group as the chairwoman. The life-skill training she took and the relationship she nurtured with the group members was life-changing. It helped her regain interest in life and motivated her to get hold of a steady means of income. With the savings she made over the years, Mrs. Tiruwork is now having her house reconstructed.

outfits at weddings and other family events. We dress the same to express that that we are united as a family and that we live together in harmony.”

Mrs. Tiruwork remembers a time when she didn’t have so many helping hands. After the murder of her 19-year-old son, she lived in isolation for a long time. All she did was locking herself inside her house and grieve which put

her in more difficulty – financial and social. By the time JeCCDO’s recruiting team approached and asked her to join Seferegenet Self-Help Group, her look of soul-deep sorrow was still fresh and she never appeared to be the quick-witted woman she is.

After joining JeCCDO’s self-help project, Mrs. Tiruwork took rigorous life-skill training in income generation and financial management which she was quick to put to practice. “JeCCDO gave me what my parents couldn’t and helped me walk up right,” Mrs. Tiruwork acknowledges.

The two sheep that Jecdo provided her have now increased to twelve. And she had a cow that is ready to breed. But her vital source of income is generated from the production of the local alcohol, ‘Areqe’. Even though areqe is a long tradition in her area, its distillation process is not known by many, as it is a delicate one. But it was not too hard, for

the inquisitive mind of Mrs. Tiruwork, to master the skill and put it to use. Presently she is planning to use her savings to rebuild her house.

Mrs. Tiruwork and other members of the group who are engaged in the production of the areqe remain conscious of the dangers of alcohol. “We know drinking alcohol is bad for health, but



it is such a deep-rooted tradition in our area,” she asserts. In addition to the income production of areqe generates; its byproduct serves as a steady source of food for the cattle and sheep. “What we do is keeping our kids as far away as possible while we conduct the production” she added.

Q &A with Dr. John Binns: Chair and Co-ordinator of Partners for Change Ethiopia

How did you get to know JeCCDO and start working together?

I first met JeCCDO - or JACH as it then was - in 1993. It was my first visit to Ethiopia and, as an Anglican priest; I was spending three months with St. Matthews Anglican Chaplaincy in Addis Ababa. Part of the work of the church was to support the five children’s homes managed by JACH which were caring for 1,000 orphaned children. I got to know the homes, the staff, and the children. When I returned to the UK I missed them all but kept in touch through the UK fundraising. This was done by one very remarkable and dedicated volunteer called Gill Elers. Gill arranged for support for the children and I went with her on several occasions when we visited the homes to collect reports. We photographed and interviewed every child – a big job which took many hours.

It’s been over 25 years; such a unique relationship. How would you describe your relationship with JeCCDO?

Of course much has changed since those early days. The children’s homes have become centers for

“I’d describe my relationship with JeCCDO as ‘friendship’. It’s much more than charity or development work. With friends – you get to know them, care about what happens to them. They matter to you.”



Dr. John Binns
Chair and Co-ordinator of Partners for Change Ethiopia

community-based child care, and there are new approaches to overcoming child poverty. I visit most years and every time I come, there are new projects, new ideas, and new people. Many of these are innovative, and other agencies follow our example. I'd describe my relationship with JeCCDO as 'friendship'. It's much more than charity or development work. With friends – you get to know them, care about what happens to them. They matter to you. When I returned to the UK after that first visit, I made myself a mental promise that I would never be too busy to spend time and show commitment for the people of Ethiopia – especially at JeCCDO and I hope I've stuck to that promise.

What did you learn from JeCCDO and how does it impact your work?

Respect. Whenever I have visited the projects, I met people who were welcoming and generous, courageous and resourceful, caring and committed to each other. And out of these qualities came the amazing ideas and activities of JeCCDO. These are valuable qualities that build and empower true communities. They have changed countless lives across Ethiopia – and they have changed my life too. I've learned many things about community and empowerment and well-

being. I've tried to work in the same kind of way in the churches and communities which I serve in the UK, empowering people, building community, discovering a fuller life.

What are the different ways of supporting JeCCDO?

There are many ways. Of course, we need money and there has to be fundraising – you can't see friends in need and not try to help. We need both individuals who donate and support, and also we seek grants from trusts and agencies. We also need to keep in touch, ask questions and learn from each other – when you have a friend you want to know how they are. Then we need to reach out and get to know other supporters in the UK and work together. So I go back to my two keywords – friendship and respect. When you support JeCCDO/PfC you are invited to enter a relationship and that benefits all involved, people in the UK just as much as in Ethiopia. We want to show that relationships between people in Ethiopia and the UK can enrich and benefit all involved. It's not about handouts or charity. It's about understanding, community learning and these are things that enrich all involved.

FORMER SEX WORKER SEES NEW HOPE IN LIFE

“JeCCDO gave me my own business to run. That is something I never dared to do myself”

Many former sex workers are encouraged and empowered by JeCCDO to sustain their lives in a different career. The circumstances that led each to the life of commercial sex are unique. But what is common in all cases is that none choose that path of life.

Ms. Tsehay’s story is no different. She was born and raised in the small town of Chilga located in northern Gondar. Things were straightforward from childhood to her first year

in high school. But while she was a grade 9 student, her mother died and life was not so simple anymore. In her teenage years, she had to flee to Bahir Dar looking for a job. While she was working as a waitress in Bahir Dar, she met her ex-husband – the father of her only son. Then they moved to yet another town – Hawassa. During her stay in Hawassa, the marriage started to break down until one day she decided it was enough and fled back to Bahir Dar with her son.

ABSTRACT

Former sex workers like Ms. Tsehay - once compelled to lead their lives contrary to their childhood dreams, are now encouraged and empowered by JeCCDO to sustain their lives in a different career. Life had put Ms. Tsehay through great difficulties while she was too young. From the loss of her parents to fleeing her hometown; and from a failed marriage to the life of sex work, she went through a lot. Leaving her hometown of Chilga, Northern Gondar, she had been to places in Northern and southern parts of Ethiopia and worked jobs to put some food on the table and to send her child to school. After years of failed struggle, she finally joined the commercial sex business in Bahir Dar where she worked for 3 years until the Covid-19 happening which changed things to make life unbearable once again. The grief went on and on for a couple of months until one-day local police brought her to JeCCDO for help. Soon JeCCDO included Tsehay in its Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Protection of Women and Girls from Commercial Sex Industry Project where she was put under psychological rehabilitation and given vocational and economical support that helped her to start her own business. Proud of the transformed life she is leading and wishing the same to others who are still compelled to lead their lives as sex workers, Tsehay now runs her Beauty Salon in Bahir Dar.

Everything happened too quickly for Tsehay since she left her hometown. She was still very young when she found herself to be a single mom with no savings, no job, and no one to ask for support. “Finding a job in Bahir Dar was not as easy as it was the previous time. And even if I did find one, I never had anyone to leave my son with while working,” Tsehay says. But she had to find a way of feeding her son and sending him to school. “I thought the only thing I could do was offering my body for sale. And that is what I did - staying with my son the whole day and going out to the streets at night,” she adds.

Tsehay says life on the streets was hard to get used to since she had to deal with strangers every time. But as she grew to be increasingly dependent on the income she generated, she never dared to examine other options. Three years passed this way until everything changed when the first Covid-19 case was reported in Ethiopia. Everyone was terrified, and no one went out.

During the first two months of Covid-19 arrival, Tsehay was not able to generate any more income, and she soon run out of her savings. Consequently, she was forced to give back her son to his father which was “the hardest decision” she ever made as she put it.

Under the circumstances, she was in such severe despair that some members of the



local police who found her on the streets assumed she was having some kind of nervous breakdown and decided to help her get in touch with JeCCDO.

Soon JeCCDO put Tsehay in its Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Protection of Women and Girls from Commercial Sex Industry Project. It was since then matters started to change for the better. She was put under psychological rehabilitation and given vocational and economical support.

Today, Tsehay owns a beauty salon in Bahir Dar using the help JeCCDO’s protection program provided her. “JeCCDO gave me my own business to run. That is something I never dared to do myself” Tsehay says. She is proud of the transformed life she is leading and wishes the same to all the women and girls who are still compelled to lead their lives as sex workers.



REHABILITATED AND THRIVING: FROM SEX WORKER TO TAILORSHOP

“It is good to have something of my own to rely on without having to sell my body for sex to strangers!”

A forward-looking attitude that looking ahead to the future has a more positive impact on one's life compared to dueling on the past helped Yalemwork Tilahun, a former sex worker in the town of Bahir Dar. Following the fact that Yalemwork failed the 10th-grade national examination, she made the difficult decision of leaving her hometown Addis Zemen, near Gondar, where she used to lead a stable life with her parents. And she moved to Bahir Dar to work as a domestic worker.

With hope of better pay, the young and ambitious girl hoped to improve her financial situation when she started working in a café as a waitress, which she found with a help of a local broker. But this didn't bring her the change she had hoped for. The financial difficulties of the city life and her need for a better income made the

idea of joining the streets of Bahir Dar to become a sex worker appealing.

After two years, she met a guy and abandoned the sex work to be married and start a new life. However, the marriage did not last long. The life that she hoped would be a rescue



from her former difficult life was found to be full of agony only after she gave birth to her 1st son.

Yalemwork, after her failed marriage, was back on the street struggling with the cold nights and the continuous harassment by the different kinds of strangers she had to sleep with for money. She

ABSTRACT

This is the story of a young and ambitious girl, Yalemwork, who is now a designer and owner of a Tailor Shop business in the same town she was on the streets for sex work. After failing the national examination, Yalemwork leaves her hometown Addis Zemen, near Gondar, and moves to Bahir Dar where she starts as a domestic worker and then as a café waitress. Compelled with the financial difficulties of city life and the need for a better income, she joins the streets of Bahir Dar to become a sex worker. Two years in sex work and then she meets a guy with whom she goes to a marriage that is not going to work out; only to leave her with a child to raise. Once again, life puts her back on the streets. The struggle with the cold nights and the continuous harassment make life appear to come to an ending. Meanwhile, a day comes when she is identified and recruited by JeCCDO to join a project that is going to put her life on a new trajectory. She is soon to take training that will help her become a designer and start her own business. JeCCDO's Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Protection of Women and Girls From Commercial Sex Industry Project Provided a multitude of support to such vulnerable communities in the Amhara Regional State. Now in its fourth round of training, the project plans to expand and scale up its reach to a wide range of such communities.

thought her life was ending. But her life took a turn when she was identified and recruited by a JeCCDO's project that reached out to over 40 girls and women sex workers in the Amhara Regional State.

The Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Protection of Women and Girls From Commercial Sex Industry Project provided the training Yalemwork needed to become a designer and an owner of a tailor shop. Yalemwork fully recognizes the potential of the training the project provided her. “JeCCDO gave me the training I needed to become a designer and bought me the necessary equipment and helped me not to look back. I now know that we can only change ourselves by looking forward,” she says.

With her newfound knowledge and self-confidence, Yalemwork is now running her own business, thriving to compete in the market by providing her designer products to the outskirts of Bahir Dar.

“It is good to have something of my own to rely on without having to sell my body for sex to strangers,” says Yalemwork.

From 09/06/2020 to 12/07/2021 JeCCDO's Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Protection of Women and Girls From Commercial Sex Industry Project provided a multitude of support to such vulnerable communities in the Amhara Regional State. The project is now in its fourth round of training and plans to expand and scale up its reach to a wide range of such communities.

Name changed to protect identity



THROWBACK: JeCCDO'S WORK TOWARDS INCLUSION OF THE EXCLUDED IN BAHIR DAR

“We knew that they were for real when they opened their office in the community. Unlike others, they consulted us on what our basic priority needs were and focused on matters that we really needed help with”

Mr. Tizazu is a member of the NegedeWoitto community, born and raised in Bahir Dar town. It has been two years since he graduated with a degree in electrical engineering. Unlike the early days, many members of the community are found in responsible jobs after pursuing their education at higher levels. But still, in interacting with the rest of the community the fact that they are from the NegedeWoitto community still defines and handicaps them.

“Today, we have NegedeWoitto's in top places like in government administration, academia, entertainment, and

sports representing us at international events and in different professions, but still it makes me sad that we are not defined by our accomplishments,” Tizazu says.

Before JeCCDO started working in the community in 2010, the NegedeWoitto has been a formally excluded social group in Bahir Dar. Although they were physically indistinguishable from the rest of the community, and yet they have been among the original residents of the town.

“Most of the time NegedeWoitto's reside following or around lake

ABSTRACT

Residing densely populated around Lake Tana in Bahir Dar Town, the NegedeWoitto Community was subjected to continual displacement and extreme discrimination by the neighboring community. Despite the achievements of many members of the community to make it to higher education and responsible jobs, the fact that they are from the NegedeWoitto community still defines and handicaps them when it comes to interacting with the rest of the community. JeCCDO's support and training for the community's association and its work in rising awareness of the local government on the community's problem are helping in resolving prevalent issues like community overcrowding and shortage of market interaction with the local community. The NegedeWoitto are now getting more buyers from the mainstream community for the 'Sifet' and Manual Stone Grinders they produce. Although not on a large scale, land with formal land rights has been granted to the community with intense lobbying from JeCCDO and the community association. “Unlike other organizations, JeCCDO was in the community to help and make changes from the heart,” Says Mr. Tizazu, a member of the NegedeWoitto Community, born in Bahirdar and graduated in Electrical Engineering two years before.

and river areas. Based on that we have originally settled in Bahir Dar following Lake Tana. That is why we are densely found in the Tana Sub City of the town,” Mr. Tizazu says.

In a climate of mistrust and widening social distance between the mainstream community and the NegedeWoitto, the latter were subjected to a history of continual displacement and extreme discrimination by the rest of the community.

“The rest of the community do not consider us as human beings. There is a problem in their way of addressing us and their use of terminology. Although we follow a different religion from the rest of them, we still are Amhara people like them and speak Amharic as they do....I think the stigma emanates from how we live, because we have been driven to the margins and only live in specific areas which are apart from the rest of the community,” he says.

Overcrowding was a serious issue for the community before 2010. And this in turn has implications on sanitation, health, and mental well-being. Economically, it has an impact on the small businesses as people from outside the community will not come and use their services and buy their products.

JeCCDO's significant victory in this area was achieved with its support and training for the community's association and its work in rising awareness of the local government on the community's problem. Although not on a large scale, land with formal land rights has been granted to the community with intense lobbying from JeCCDO and the community association.



“Women sew traditional ‘sifet’ and men make manual stone grinders. The mainstream community has started coming and buying these products from us. They have also started using it at our local coffee and tea shops,” MrTizazu says.

According to Tizazu, unlike other organizations, JeCCDO was in the community to help and make changes from the heart.

“We knew that they were for real when they opened their office in the community. Unlike others they consulted us on what our basic priority needs were and focused on matters that we really needed help with,” he said.

Apart from improving access to education, health services, socio-economic status, and livelihood of women and unemployed youth, JeCCDO has also helped strengthen the community association in capacity and income-generating activities.

“All NegedeWoitto's problem will be alleviated when a solution is given to our land right questions and it is the government that has the ultimate say and capacity in this regard,” MrTizazu says.



NegedeWeyto Man: Making a manual mill for grinding grain

ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER CHANGES THE LIVES OF WOMEN IN URA KEBELE OF ZEGE PENINSULA

“Providing safe and clean water and protecting our hygiene was supposed to be the responsibility of the government and its health extension program!”

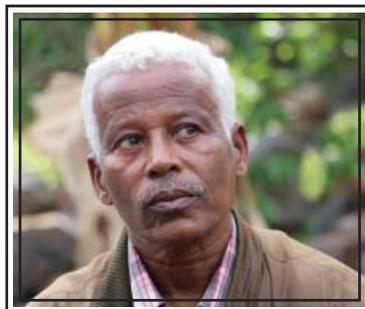
Mrs. Sewalem Simani is a mother living in the Zege Peninsula. Her eyes fill with tears when she remembers the hardship she used to face while traveling long distance to fetch water. Fetching water from Lake Tana meant she had to travel up the hill carrying 15-25 liters of water for more than an hour.

For a long time, low access to clean water, a consequence of poor hygiene, was not only a safety issue for the residents of Ura Kebele in

Zege Peninsula but also a source of contaminated water, causing water-borne diseases like Bilharzia and Ameba.

Mrs. Sewalem and her neighbors still thank JeCCDO saying, “long live JeCCDO” as it was JeCCDO that teamed up with Water Aid Ethiopia and made it possible for everyone to have potable water in their compounds, with the “Ensuring Food Security and Livelihood Project”.

Mr. Gedamneh Admassu



ABSTRACT

Mothers like Mrs. Sewalem do not risk water-borne diseases and bear difficulties related to fetching water from a long distance any longer. What is more, their time and energy is reserved for raising their children. With the “Ensuring Food Security and Livelihood Project”, JeCCDO has partnered with Water Aid Ethiopia to make Mrs. Sewalem and her neighbors access potable water in their compounds. The project in Zege Peninsula implemented six interrelated components on health; nutrition; sanitation, hygiene and water; off-farm IGAs, capacitating CBOs and SHG's; coffee production; and vegetable production.



who served as a volunteer and a facilitator for the project, from its inception to handover, appreciates JeCCDO's intervention saying that the organization acts in response to the expressed needs of the community.

JeCCDO was initially focused on the community's demand for a school nearby, as students used to travel for over an hour to attend the nearest school to their area. It was after building the school that JeCCDO focused on the community's other problem which was access to clean water. With this intervention, the community's hygiene and sanitation problems have been solved.

“The government and its health extension programs do provide safe and clean water in different kebeles and we were expecting the same in ours. But it was JeCCDO that reached out to us sooner. Access to clean and potable water has saved the mothers their energy which they now, instead, use to take care of their children,” he says.

Today, thanks to the awareness created by the intense training given by JeCCDO, Ura Kebele of Zege Peninsula has graduated as an open defecation-free area and every household owns at least one restrooms in their compounds.

Mrs. Sewalem is among the beneficiaries of vulnerable households mostly women-led households, selected based on their

economic neediness. She started her business with eight chickens which she developed to backyard poultry and further to sheep fattening. “I sold the chicken and bought three sheep. I sell the sheep when the market is profitable, use it for holiday celebrations and buy again when the price gets cheap. I do not want to fail JeCCDO's effort and will keep my business running,” she says.

She pays her respect for JeCCDO for giving her the training on planting and cooking vegetables which helped her to diversify her family's nutrition. JeCCDO's “Ensuring Food Security and Livelihood Project” in Zege Peninsula implemented six interrelated components on: health; nutrition; sanitation, hygiene and water; off-farm IGAs, capacitating CBOs and SHG's; coffee production; and vegetable production.

