# Personal stories of male transitions to adulthood in Aze Debo’a, Kedida Gamele wereda, Kembata

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## Rich young man 30s

### Your household

I am living with my wife, my daughter and two of my sons.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Person | Relation to household head | Sex | Age |
| You | Husband | Male | 29 |
| Other | Wife | Female | 23 |
| Other | Son | Male | 7 |
| Other | Daughter | Female | 4 |
| Other | son | Male | 2 |

### Youth in the community

Regarding education, there is no problem in the teaching and learning process, but school children have no motivation or encouragement due to lack of job opportunities after graduation. He added that there are a number of youth graduates with no job in the kebele. Among these graduates, one is a Veterinary Doctor, and he is still in his parents’ house in Aze Debo’a. In short, such situation discouraged the youths from paying attention to education. Moreover, lack of access to jobs prevents the youths from getting married, bearing children and establishing a new independent household. There is no problem in the service of the church because everybody has equal access for attending the church.

### Your life story

I was born in Aze Debo’a kebele and I am still living there. I started my school in 1986 and I completed grade twelve in 1997. I got married at an early age because there was no one who could help me after the death of my father. Immediately after the marriage, I started to plough the land I inherited from my parents, which is very small. Because my parents didn’t give me oxen, I ploughed my land by hoe for many years. In fact, I do not need to have an ox because I can manage by hoe. My life has improved after I started to engage in the trade of grains and coffee since 2005. Currently, I have one hybrid dairy cow and a living house in Durame town. I rent it for 500 birr per month. I have three children, one daughter and two sons. The year 2008 was very difficult due to drought in the area. But we managed as a result of the income I get from the trade in coffee and grains. If anybody works hard, it is possible to be changed in life. My first child was born in 2004. I am an active Christian and a member of the Kalehiwot church. My major supporters are my church members.

### Government interventions which have played a role in your life

I support my life mainly by petty trade There are no government interventions that affect my life.

I was able to construct terraces in my farmland in a better way after I became aware of its relevance and the training provided to me by Development Agents. On top of that, Health Extension Workers and KMG provided us a number of trainings on HTPs; and we have adequate awareness towards HTPs. Regarding tax, I pay 20 birr for land use tax, 5 birr for Red Cross, 5 birr for sport, 12 birr for party membership and 1 birr for kebele administration. I am a member of 1-5, cell, development team and iddir in the community. I have one hybrid cow and three chickens.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

I am planning to start a poultry farm in the coming year and it would be a cause for the improvement of my life in the future.

## Middle wealth young man 30s

### Your household

I am living with my mother and my wife. I am the head of my household.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Person | Relation to household head | Sex | Age |
| You | Son/head of household | Male | 29 |
| Other | Mother | Female | 62 |
| Other | Wife | Female | 22 |

### Youth in the community

In my community, there is no opportunity to lead a good life for youth, because there is no adequate farming land, access to credit or job opportunities. There were very few youth who got access to credit from the government and a small plot of farming land from their parents and the kebele in the past few years. Nevertheless, most of them sold their land to their parents or other households and travelled to South Africa. In terms of the teaching and learning process, there is no serious problem in schools, but there is no job opportunity for youth after graduation. As a result, the youth could not build up their assets or property to enable them to establish their own household. This in turn prevented the youth from getting married at the right age.

### Your life story

I was born in Aze Debo’a kebele. When I compare my life with others’, my life is better than a number in my age group. I do not remember about my life in the first six years. During that time, five people were living in my parents’ household. There was no serious food shortage or shock that happened in my parents’ household in the last few years. Regarding my education, I did not continue after I completed grade ten. Now I am assisting my parents in ploughing and sometimes by transporting people from Aze Debo’a to Durame and vice versa by a motor cycle I rented from a person in my kebele. I started my school in 1997. Marriage did not interrupt me from education because I was married before I completed grade 10. I started working for myself in 2009. I and my wife were engaged for six months before our marriage, and then we got married five months ago in 2011. My parents accepted our marriage. So far, we have no children. Concerning religion, I am a Christian and an active follower of the Mekaneyesus church. My friends are the most important people in terms of providing support to me.

### Government interventions which have played a role in your life

There are no government interventions that affect the life of my household. But I did not get the opportunity to have fertiliser from the government because they are giving the first chance to model farmers.

There is no problem regarding education because the school is near to my house. The health extension workers provide us training how to use a latrine and bed net to prevent malaria. Nowadays, the magnitude of HTPs has declined sharply because people have got awareness about their adverse effects and health hazards. I pay 20 birr for land use tax, five birr for Red Cross, five birr for sport and twelve birr for party membership, I birr to run the activities of the kebele. I am a member of 1-5 group, cell and youth association. Other than these, I have no participation in the kebele.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

If it is God’s will, and my brother who is living in South Africa assists me, I wish to go to South Africa for work and return within three years. Then, I wish to build a new house in Durame town.

## Poor young man 30s

### Your household

I am living with my mother and three sisters.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Person | Relation to household head | Sex | Age |
| You | Son | Male | 31 |
| Head | Mother | Female | 70 |
| Other | Sister | Female | 17 |
| Other | Sister | Female | 14 |
| Other | Sister | Female | 13 |

### Youth in the community

Most of the youth in my community are jobless. They have no recreation centre in my area. If the youth get a piece of land from their parents, they build their living house. There is no land to start agricultural activities or other alternatives in this area. Accordingly, they are dependent on their families and there is no way to get married unless they are assisted by their parents.

### Your life story

I was born in Aze Debo’a kebele. My father died when I was a child. I started my school in 1982 in Aze Debo’a primary school and I completed grade twelve in 1994. I am trading oxen, sheep and chicken during the holy days. I also perform different agricultural activities in my parents’ house. I am single and support my mother and my sister. I am an active Christian and a member of Mekaneyesus church.

### Government interventions which have played a role in your life

I am a member of the youth association in my kebele. I and my family get clean drinking water. Health extension workers provide us training. I am a member of the health army in the kebele and I teach the community members about HTPs and the prevention methods of HIV/AIDS. I pay 20 birr for land use tax, 5 birr for Red Cross, 5 birr for sport and 12 birr for party membership and 1 birr for kebele.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

I have a plan to build a new house and I wish to upgrade my education to Diploma level.

## Rich young man mid-20s

#### Your household

I am twenty five years old and male. I am living with my wife.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Person | Relation to household head | Sex | Age |
| You | Son | Male | 25 |
| Other | Mother/head of the household | Female | 55 |
| Other | Wife | Female | 20 |

### Youth in the community

There are no problems facing boys in their late teens in the community. But they are not willing to work hard and educate themselves. They rather want to wear good clothes, eat good food and enjoy their life. They always complain about shortage of farming land as if it is the only reason that hinders them from changing their life. Frankly speaking, even parents do not have enough land to give to their children. If a boy does not learn, how could he get a job? If he did not have land what can he do unless he migrates from the area or commits a crime? Getting married is very difficult for youths in our kebele because life is hard at our age because there is no job, land or money. So that there is a big chance of being involved in crime, because the majority of youth have no other alternative to lead their life other than depending on their parents for everything. Moreover, they have less or no participation in the community.

In the church they participate in every area. They serve in youth service, in choir and so on. There are a lot of problems adolescent girls are facing in the community such as lack of work and money. Life is difficult for them so that they are forced to get daily work in order to buy clothes and essential materials. Furthermore, finding a husband and marriage partner is difficult for adolescent girls because they have nothing and they are dependent on their parents. In social affairs, they participate in funerals, weddings and spiritual and cultural ceremonies celebrated in the community.

### Your life story

I am presently living in my own house constructed in the compound of my parents’ house. When I was six years old, I did not know a social life and even what is good and bad. I did not face any serious problem during my stay with my parents. Before I left the house, we were five in number. Even though we all are living in the same compound, I and my wife live in my house. I did not move anywhere else and had no illness in my life. I started attending school in 1995 and completed grade nine, but I am not a student at this time. My goal was to complete grade ten. I stopped my education because of a quarrel I had with my teacher. Then, I joined the military force and lost interest in education. After I returned from military service in 2011, I got married and I started coffee trade in October 2011. My mother pays land tax and we use the land together. I did not have any girlfriend or sexual experience before I got married because I am a committed and Protestant Christian. I chose my partner when I wanted to get married; and my parents approved my choice. I am a follower of Protestant Christianity and an active member of the Kalehiwot Church. My parents and my brother are important people for me in terms of support.

### Government interventions which have played a role in your life

The government built the school in our kebele, but the government contributed nothing to my life. I did not get credit. In fact, our land is flat, but we need irrigation to produce during the dry season. I am not a member of any co-operative. There are several water points in our area, but there is no grinding mill. The health extension workers provided us a slab or a cover for a latrine hole. They also spray DDT and other insecticides for malaria. HTPs have been reduced significantly. But I do not know anything about politics.

I do not participate in the community because I do not have a piece of land and I do not pay any tax to the kebele. There was no payment or contribution of cash, in kind or work last year. I do not know anything about the kebele or sub-kebele. I have no participation in development team, 1-5 group or youth organisation. I rather participate in an equb having twenty two members. I contribute 103 birr per week. We collect two thousand two hundred birr. No government interventions are playing a role in my life.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

I wish to have a driving licence. Before that I would like to learn to complete grade ten. When I was learning before I went to military service, they told us only the result, but they did not give us a card. I also wish to buy a motor cycle. I drive a motor cycle, but I do not have a licence. So that I want to start my class from grade eight. It is better If the government creates access to jobs for youth.

## 

## Middle wealth young man mid-20s

### Your household

Now I am living with my parents and two sisters in my parents’ home.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Person | Relation to household head | Sex | Age |
| You | Son | Male | 20 |
| Head | Father/head of the household | Male | 67 |
| Other | Mother | Female | 67 |
| Other | Sister | Female | 17 |
| Other | Sister |  | 16 |

### Youth in the community

There is no problem to learn their education for both young men and women in the community. But those who had completed their education or even graduated did not get job opportunities in the area. If young people in the community want to work in agriculture, there is no chance of getting a farm land. If we want to marry at the right time for our marriage, there are no basic necessities or our own materials. Such things make marriage impossible and young men or women to wait longer without bearing children. Moreover, they stay longer being dependent on their parents until they establish their own independent households. Young men or women participate in wedding and funeral ceremonies. And both participate in different church services without any differentiation.

### Your life story

I was born in Aze Debo’a kebele and there was no problem in the first six years of my life. I was living with my parents and four sisters and three brothers. There was no major shock in my parents’ household. I had no serious illness in my life. I started my school in 2001 EC and now I have obtained a Diploma, but I am a jobless. Nothing interrupted my education at the time. I am still single and I do not even have a girlfriend because I do not have my own property to marry. I am an active follower of the Mekanyesus Church. In terms of support, World Vision is important for me because it supported me when I learned in the college by paying my school fees.

### Government interventions which have played a role in your life

There is no government intervention that affected my life directly. I do not pay land use tax because I do not have land. I and my friends got a machine from World Vision to produce house blockets in my area and a working place from the kebele. But the government officials promised to give us credit, but still we could not get the credit and started our work. We have given back the machine to World Vision until we get a credit.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

I wish to go to South Africa this year.

## Poor young man mid-20s

### Your household

I am living with my parents, one brother and two sisters.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Person | Relation to household head | Sex | Age |
| You | Son | Male | 21 |
| Head | Father/head of the household | Male | 55 |
| Other | Mother | Female | 56 |
| Other | Sister | Female | 19 |
| Other | Brother | male | 16 |
| Other | Sister | Female | 14 |

### Youth in the community

At the youth age there is no way to own property. Leading one’s personal life is also very difficult. Many youth are not getting the opportunity of farmland from their parents. If somebody is willing to marry, his parents should give him a piece of land. Otherwise, he cannot do anything by himself. Anyhow, one can get married, but bearing and rearing children is very difficult. Moreover, without basic necessities life is a hardship. They cannot participate in the community other than in weddings and funeral ceremonies. There is no problem to participate in church services and worship for both male and female youth.

### Your life story

I was born in Aze Debo’a. In the first six years of my life, I was happy because I did not know much about my life. My parents took all my responsibilities at the time. In my parents’ house there are five family members. No, my family did not experience a major shock when I was growing up. I did not move anywhere, I am living with my parents. I did not have any serious illness in my household. I started my school in 1997 and I completed grade ten in 2007. And I do not have any job, there is a job problem in my area. I do not have a girlfriend and until now I am single. So I do not have any children. I am an active member of the Mekanyesus Church. My parents are important people in terms of support.

### Government interventions which have played a role in your life

No government intervention played a part in my life because I am not a member of any group of people in the community. I do not pay land use tax because I do not have land.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

If I get money I have a plan to open a shop in my area and to improve my life.

## Rich young man in late teens - NA

## Middle young man in late teens

### Your household

I am single and live with my parents and one brother.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Person | Relation to household head | Sex | Age |
| You | Son | Male | 16 |
| Head | Father | Male | 50 |
| Other | Mother | Female | 46 |
| Other | Brother | Male | 13 |

### Youth in the community

The major challenges facing youths are multiple and complex in nature. The major one is lack of land and access to job opportunities. As a result, children are forced to stay longer being economically dependent on their parents. On top of that they have shortage of books, stationery and written materials. In terms of attending their classes, lack of adequate food and clothes are additional problems facing youths from poor families. If someone is from a poor family, he may not get a good marriage partner or may spend his life without being married at all. As a result, they will be dependent on their parents. I have a number of responsibilities and I do every work in the field assisting my father. Especially during planting and harvesting periods, I assist my father and perform a lot of works. I am in grade seven and single. The major factor behind all problems is poverty because they do not have an income source to lead their life.

### Your life story

I was born in Aze Debo’a kebele. There are many things I do not remember about what happened in the first six years of my life. In 2008 our family was exposed to serious food shortage due to drought. Our life was saved by the assistance we obtained from World Vision. Five years ago, I was seriously sick for one week, being infected with TB. My plan is to join the university. I am regularly attending my school and my parents encourage me to learn effectively. I do not have any girlfriend. I am good at all subjects and hope to score a good grade in the examination. My parents are the important people in terms of support.

### Government interventions which have played a role in your life

Nothing

### Aspirations and plans for the future

I have a plan to continue my education up to university.

## Poor young man in late teens

### Your household

I am nineteen years old. I am living with my parents. I do not have brothers and sisters.

### Youth in the community

Problems facing boys in their late teens these days in our community are lack of access to financial resources and farmland to get married and establish an independent household. Even though my parents forced me to marry at an early age because I am their only son and to assist them in farming, I am mostly involved in selling clothes, which is my major source of income. My current wife has grown up in the same village with me and we know each other from our childhood. After I was pressured by my parents to get married, I insisted that she marry me without a wedding ceremony because my parents are poor. Then, based on her agreement I married her through elopement. In this respect, even though I managed to have a marriage partner, most of the youth have a problem getting their marriage partners. Currently, I do not have children because my wife is using contraceptives.

Even though I am married, I live with my parents and depend on them for many things because I do not have land and I could not establish my own independent household. In fact, I plough by hoe and plant crops on the land of other people for sharecropping because I do not have oxen. When there is work in the church, I participate in the work and provide service by singing in the choir.

### Your life story

I was born in Aze Debo’a. I do not know my life in the first six years. I think it was not as difficult as nowadays. My parents were resettled in Benshangul-Gumuz region during the Derg regime. My household experienced the death of two of my brothers. I have a serious illness on my leg. I was treated and took thirty injections, but I still have a feeling of illness. I started my education in 1997 EC and I am in grade eight at the present time. When the class is in the morning, I go to the market in the afternoon, but when the class is in the afternoon, I do not go to the market. In this way I lead my life and I have an ambition to upgrade my education to college level, but there is no one who would assist me. In terms of religion, I am a member of the Kalehiwot church.

### Government interventions which have played a role in your life

I am benefited by the school which was built in my area. I am not a member of any association in my community. Formerly, I was a member of the youth association, but now I am not because it has no benefit.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

I wish to participate in the business of buying and selling sheep if I get a credit.