# Personal stories of female transitions to adulthood in Do’oma, Dera Malo wereda, Gamo Gofa

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##  Rich young woman 30s

### Your household

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Relation to the household | sex | age |
| spouse | F | 30 |
| Hh head | M | 32 |
| daughter | F | 10 |
| daughter | F | 8 |
| daughter | F | 6 |
| daughter | F | 4 |
| son | M | 6 months |

### Youth in the community

The respondent says that when she was adolescent, girls started schooling very late and they dropped out in the first three to five grades. She explained, “Our parents said to us our education could bring nothing. For us, they suggested to be a good wife. They forced us to marry early as an obligation. As the result, we started to give birth earlier. We did not work on the farm because the tradition of the community was against women's farm engagement. We did not participate in community affairs because we had no exposure. Though there were churches, adolescent girls were not free to attend church programmes because they feared violence against women.”

As she explained, “now adolescent girls have a better chance to attend school. They have no problems in finding husbands but they do not want marriage. They want to change their life, working on different activities like farm causal labour and trading. They have a good opportunity to participate in the community. They attend church programmes regularly.”

The respondent says that young men have opportunities to continue their education up to higher level because there is access to TEVT, colleges and university in the neighbouring communities. As she explained, “currently there is a land access problem as compared to the past. Finding marriage partner is becoming difficult as compared with the previous time because they could not force a girl to be their wife. There is no difference in setting up an independent household as compared to the previous time. The probability of having children at early ages is reduced as compared to the previous time. Currently, there is a fast vast choice for the young men to participate at the community level as compared to the past. Coupled with the expansion of churches in the community, young men become interested in religious participation.”

### Your life story

The respondent was born in the sub kebele, Womala. She is the first child in her family. She has 2 sisters and 2 brothers. The respondent says that when she was 6, she did not start working. As she explained, her mother did not like making children work.

The respondent explained, “I left the household when I got married. I did not face any problem in the household. I got married in 2001 and the marriage type was betrothal. I have no health problem except malaria. I joined grade one when I was 8 and dropped out from school after two years. Then after five years, I was readmitted but again dropped out after three years. I wish I could continue learning but I have nobody to take care of my children. I dropped out from school because I accepted the marriage proposal. My mother passed away in 2003 and my father is living with my brother. Once in my life I worked as a casual labourer when the investor dug an irrigation canal around 1998. When I was young, I had assisted my father on the farm. I have started to engage in domestic work since I was 10. After I got married, I had started trading maize but currently for few months, I stopped it because I have to take care of my baby. My education has helped me in my trading; I could count the amount, the profit and so on. My current husband is my first man in my life and I did not face a problem with my first sexual experience. My husband was my boyfriend and we arranged to send elders to my families for the cultural consumption. My family are happy about my husband. I gave birth to five children. I gave birth to my first child in 2002. I got circumcised before I got married but I have no problem with the delivery. I am an active follower of Kalehiwot Protestant church and every morning I go to church to pray. The most important people for me are my husband, father and my relatives-in-law.”

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

The respondent says that she got at least a little literacy from the school when she was adolescent. The respondent explained, “My parents have irrigable lands that help them to feed the household well. My families did not access credit. There was no one in my parents’ home who was affected by cooperatives. There was no health and political intervention. However, there was a little work to make the community aware of HTPs but it did not affected me”

The respondent says that the household owns irrigable land and pays 75 birr land tax. As she explained, last year the household contributed 41 birr for the school project but she did not work on the school site because she was a lactating mother. The respondent says that she is not a health volunteer. As she elaborated, she attended in the meetings that were organized by the wereda women's affairs in the last year. The respondent says that she is a member of the Kalehiwot Protestant church since 2004 and there is no contribution per month.

The respondent elaborated, “I am benefiting from the provision of school as I am sending my children. The household has irrigable land that makes us self-sufficient. The household took credit two times from the wereda credit and saving association. We built a tin roofed and cement house. And after we refunded it , we took 3500 Birr to start livestock fattening. I have been benefited by the water point since it was established in the community. However, grinding mill is still my problem. The health intervention has helped my household members to get malaria diagnosis and treatment in the community. I have been using immunization and vaccination for my infants and myself. In addition, the health extension workers have trained us about personal and environmental hygiene. There is also access to the health centre. Politically, the kebele administration is warning us. They are saying they could take back our farmland if we do not participate in the ruling party. Because of this, I have started to attend party meetings since last year. There is cultural intervention such as against harmful traditional practices though it is not effective.”

### Aspirations and plans for the future

The respondent says that she aspires for the household to have a motorcycle for business making. As she explained, "we have started to produce high market values crops and in the future, I plan to trade the product in the wereda market." The respondent says that she wants to rear her children properly.

For the community, she aspires for the establishment of cooperatives.

## Middle wealth young woman 30s

### Your household

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Relation to the hh head | Sex | Age |
| spouse | Female | 31 |
| HH head | Male | 35 |
| son | Male | 12 |
| daughter | Female | 9 |
| son | Male | 5 |
| son | Male | 4 |
| daughter | Female | 2 months |
| daughter | Female | 14 |

### Youth in the community

The respondent says that in prior time the community members hated to give birth to baby girls. As she explained, “when a woman gave birth to a baby girl, her relatives, including family members, joked on her that she would be better off buried than rearing a woman.” The respondent elaborated that previously women got the chance to go to school if and only if the household had women children. As she argued, those women who got a chance did not attend class regularly because they were obliged to be involved in domestic work of the household including rearing the younger household members. The respondent says that marriage was not a right for females, rather it was an obligation. As she elaborated, those resisting to engage in betrothal marriage could be abducted and raped. Once a woman was abducted, as she explains, they lose their chance of marrying another man so that they had no choice other than setting up a household with the abductor. As she mentioned, there is no problem associated with having children.

The respondent says that in prior time women were not involved in farming and non-farming activities because the community considered them physically weak to do such kinds of jobs. However, the respondent says that women intensively and exclusively engaged in domestic work of all kinds such as fetching water from the river, cooking food, making flour using traditional miller, and so on.

In prior time, when she was adolescent, women did not participate in community affairs or religion. As she explained, exclusively men filled the kebele administration and churches were nearly absent in the past; one has to walk for a long way to get to churches.

The respondent says that the adolescent girls in the community are now better off in all spheres of life. As she explained, parents send their adolescent girls to school without biases to the adolescent boys. Regarding finding husband and getting married as well as setting up independent households, as she says, adolescent girls are free to choose endeavours for their lives including husbands. The respondent says that they have the chance to get married to whom they love. As she explained, although the chance of friendship has started ten years ago, now the chance to know each other has increased because couples do not have to hide their relationship from the community as it is getting acceptance in modern sense of behaving. The respondent says that now it is not common to have adolescent girls having children. This is because they prefer going to education to getting married.

The respondent says that adolescent girls work in farm and nonfarm activities. As she said, they could engage in trading as well as a causal labourer in other farms. As she says, adolescent girls have little to do in domestic work as they spend much time in school and there is access to water points, which are near to the community residential area, and grinding mill.

The respondent says that with the expansion of religious institutions coupled with women's freedom to have free movement without fear, adolescent girls attend church programmes when they like to. As she said, though there is no visible change regarding adolescent girls' participation in community affairs, there is a better space to have a voice in community affairs. As she described, adolescent girls are not interested to participate in the community for reasons she does not know clearly.

As she says, the problem adolescents may face at this time is diseases such as sexually transmitted diseases like HIV/AIDS. As she says, the exposure to HIV/AIDS could be high because there is a mobility of youths from the community as well as to outside the community for different purposes. The respondent says that on one hand, youths from the community go to towns and cities to attend school as well as to visit their relatives. On the other hand, youths enter to the community to visit parents as well as a destination in work such as assistants in public transport.

The respondent says that in prior time young men did not like going to school, as there was plenty of land to plough. As she said, young men did not have a problem with marriage because they had a wide range in the type of marriage as well as wife that they could choose. Land, as she said, was plenty enough in the community. As she described, young men's involvement in the community was so limited because culturally elders had a lion's share in community affairs as decision makers. Young men were not concerned about spiritual life and few went to churches to attend church programmes.

As she described, as compared to the prior time, young men have a better opportunity to go to school. As the result, a few young men have already joined higher education and more are expected to join in the near future. The respondent says that young men could not access land, particularly irrigable land, as the land is already allocated among the community members. As she explains, the arid nature of the community prohibits young men from engaging in agriculture. In connection with this, as she elaborated, young men are becoming dependent on their families because they are landless. The respondent says that young men in the community arrange sharecropping on their families' and relatives' farmland. As she elaborated, there is a problem of getting work because many young men could not pass the national examination of grade 10. Because of this, they stay with their families without doing a job. The respondent says, “Few even do not have the knowhow to plough and they could not work on their families' farmland.”

Although finding a wife is not as easy as before, young men do still have no significant problem in finding a wife. The respondent says that young men household heads are participating in the community such as in community work while those who are single are reluctant to cooperate with the community members in community affairs. Although, as she said, the wereda is trying to mobilize youths to join different organizations, the youths in the kebele are not willing to push the kebele administration to work on their matter.

The respondent says that young men have interest to join religious institutions and attend church programmes regularly.

###  Your life story

The respondent was born in the community; she has 2 sisters and 3 bothers. Her families have medium living standard. She is the eldest daughter of her parents. As she described, at six years old, she had been fetching water from the river, rearing and take caring her younger sisters and brothers, cooking food such as roasted maize, washing her clothes, cutting grass and collecting firewood and take caring of her personal hygiene. As she explained, sometimes she used to make maize flour using a traditional miller.

The respondent explained that she was living with her parents, sisters, brothers and two orphan children of neighbours in the community. The household owned a thatched roofed house.

The respondent says that her younger sister passed away when she was with her family.

The respondent explained that she left the household when she got married in 1997. Before she left the household, one of her younger brothers had already left the household and went to Arba Minch town to find a job. As she said, “my husband and I were friends. We knew each other very well. Nevertheless, our relationship was not open because the community tradition did not accept it. When I was adolescent, I had traded teff and coffee in the market. I met my husband at the market. it was a common practice for young men to go to the market place to look for girls. My husband talked to me and told me that he wanted to marry me. I was interested in the marriage proposal. In addition, he sent elders to my parents. After a year from our first contact, we got married. The marriage type was betrothal. My husband and his parents covered the lion's share of the marriage expenses. They expended around 400 birr. My parents gave me bridal gifts such as woven clothes (Gabi, Netela, Buluko) and shoes. The wedding ceremony was held both at my stepparents [parents-in-law?] and at my parents'. Both households allocated 400 birr and the guests were 500 to 600 in each ”

The respondent says that since 2009, she has faced pain in her leg. As she explained, her leg swells and she does not know why. The respondent says that she never has health service because she could not cover the medication cost. She says, “When the pain becomes severe, my daughter does not go to school because she is the only person who can engage in the domestic work. ”

The respondent says that she dropped out from grade six because her father got health problems. As she elaborated, at that time she had no other choice than dropping out from school, as she was the eldest child of the household, that made her responsible in family matters.

The respondent says that she does not want to continue her education. She says that she wants to send her children, providing all necessities such as food and clothes. The respondent elaborated that she did not like going to school even when she was living with her parents. She described, “I was interested in trading as it makes women to purchase new fashioned clothes and shoes.”

The respondent says that she has started to work in domestic work when she was six and seven years old. As she elaborated, she had been a house help to the household because she was the eldest one. The respondent says that she has never worked on farming except harvesting sweet potatoes. As she says, she had stopped trading since 2 years because of the health problem in her leg.

She said that she had no boyfriend before she got her current husband. As she argued, she did not face any health problem associated with her first sexual experience.

The respondent says that she chose her husband and got married in 1997. As she explained, her parents were not happy with her marriage because they did not want to lose her as a member of the household. The respondent says that her husband had already built a house within his parents' homestead area before they got married. She is still married to her first husband.

The respondent explained that she is living in the community with her husband and children. As she says, she has six children (three daughters and three sons) and she gave birth to her first child in 1998. The respondent says that she did not face any problem with her first delivery of a child. The respondent is circumcised and all her household members are living together in the community.

The respondent says that she is an active member of the Kalehiwot church since her childhood. She described, “I go to church on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday. On Tuesday, there is a praying in the church from 7:00AM to 7:00AM. On Thursday, there is a special praying programme for women. The programme has started since 2009. On Friday, there is a church work to keep environment hygiene of the church surroundings. We work from 6:00AM to 7:30 Am. On Monday, there is a praying programme with a large congregation from 6:00AM to 11:30AM.”

The respondent says that the important people for her are neighbours. As she says, although she does not get any support from them, she is happy to have them as a friend who could share happy and sorrow time with her household.

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

The respondent says that she had benefited from the provision of education as she grew up. As she says, at that time, the primary school at the community taught from grade one to four, which she had completed. As she said, after she got married, she benefited from the irrigation water provision and credit access. As she explained, the household owns irrigable farmlands that help them to produce twice a year. In addition to this, the household took a credit from the saving and credit association of the wereda.

The respondent says that her husband had been benefiting the household by working in the mining cooperative. As she explained, the members of the cooperative had been providing sand. The respondent says that he worked for a year and the cooperative stopped working because the kebele administration prohibited the members from sand mining to check the security of the new established National Park around the river, the sand mining site of the cooperative.

The respondent says that she had not benefited from access to grinding mill and water point, as the latter is a new establishment in the community and the former is still unavailable.

As she mentioned, there was no access to health services as she grew up. Similarly, the respondent says that political intervention was null. As she explained, although there had been some initiation to create awareness, cultural interventions such as against harmful traditional practices were not implemented widely and properly.

The respondent says that the household has 0.5 hectare irrigable and 1 hectare non-irrigable farmland. As she says, the household pays 45 birr land tax.

The respondent explained, in the last year, the household contributed 41 Birr to school projects and 10 birr for the kebele but she does not know what the kebele administration is going to do or has done with the 10 birr. The respondent elaborated that in the last year, no one from the household participated in community work because she was pregnant. In addition, as she explained, her husband is exempted from community work because he is a militia.

The respondent says that she is not a health volunteer, model farmer or model family. However, as she said, though she did not start to work, the kebele administration had elected her to lead the women's league. She is a member of the women's association since the beginning.

The respondent says that she is a member of the Kalehiwot church iddir. As she explained, all members contribute two Birr per month. in addition, the respondent says that in time of death, each member contributes 2 Birr and members are involved in domestic work on the burial ceremony day. As she says, members also provide food and drink to the family of the deceased and their guests in turn. The respondent says that she has never been in equbs.

The respondent says that school provision is not beneficial for her as she dropped out from school years ago. However, as she said, she is deriving benefit from the school provision by sending her children to school.

The respondent says that the household is benefiting from irrigable land and credit access. As she elaborated, the household had borrowed money from the saving and credit association and bought house furniture.

The respondent says that she has benefited from the availability of safe water in the community as it protects the household members from water borne diseases as well as costing less labour to bring water from the water points that are located near to the residential areas.

The respondent explained that she is accessing training in heath packages. As she said, the household has started bed nets and house spraying as well as removing stagnant water in collaboration with the community members to prevent and control malaria. She is a graduate in health packages.

The respondent is the leader of the women's league, though it is not working since it was established in 2011. As she says, she is a member of the women's association since the beginning.

The respondent says that she has accessed interventions against HTPs. However, as she explains, she would like to circumcise her daughters if the government does not have a concrete law to stop the action through punishment.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

The respondent aspires to build a tin roofed house for the household. In addition, she aspires for the household to produce high market value crops, such as hot pepper and sesame. In addition, she aspires to send her children to school having fulfilled their basic needs. However, she did not have a concrete plan.

## Poor young woman 30s

### Your household

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Relation to hh head | sex | Age |
| Spouse | female | 30 |
| Hh head | M | 35 |
| Daughter | F | 15 |
| daughter | F | 13 |
| daughter | F | 10 |
| son | M | 5 |

### Youth in the community

The respondent says that, when she was adolescent, adolescent girls in the community had no equal opportunities with the males. As she said, the community did not believe in women's education and they were reluctant to send women to school.

In prior time, as she mentioned, adolescent girls’ choice of marriage partner was denied and early marriage was common. As she says, setting up an independent household was possible as adolescent girls got married earlier and their mainly livelihood activity was farming, as there was no shortage of farmland. The respondent says that adolescent girls were giving birth within a year after they go married. Contraceptive methods were not common and so they gave birth every year.

The respondent says that, in prior times, adolescent girls did not work on farm or nonfarm activities, rather they were working intensively on domestic work. As she explained, in that time adolescent girls were very shy to attend community level meetings and works because they were not educated even at primary level.

The respondent says that in prior years, adolescent girls respected the rules and regulations of the church though they did not attend programmes regularly.

The respondent says that currently adolescent girls have a better chance and equal opportunity in education with males. As she explained, they have right to choose their marriage partners and set up independent households. The probability of having an extended family is declining because many use contraceptive methods if they get married.

The respondent says that adolescent girls are becoming traders, casual labourers as well as farm assistants in their respective households. As she elaborated, though many adolescent girls have started to attend church programmes regularly, they are very reluctant to abide by church rules and they just go to church but have nothing about the way of behaving in the church and outside too.

The respondent says that adolescent girls have a better opportunity to participate at the community level but they are not interested.

As she mentioned, currently adolescents face the problem of HIV/AIDS, especially those girls as well as boys who have more than one sexual partner.

The respondent says that in prior time young men did not give much attention to their education. As she explained, they preferred to work on parents’ farmland or to have land ownership as access to land was very high. The respondent says that young men were engaged in agriculture, and other non-farming activities such as trading were much unknown as a livelihood activity.

The respondent says that young men had no problem with finding a wife and getting married as well as setting up an independent household. In this connection, as she argued, their chance to have many children was very high. Young men were interested in community participation and they had a better opportunity too. As the respondent said, young men's religious participation was very negligible.

Currently, as she explained, young men spend much time in school and they attend school regularly with considerable interest to learn. The respondent says that access to land is very limited to them as well as they are morally and physically too weak to work on farmlands. She explained, “They have no problem with finding a wife because they have an exposure to get to know females such as at school and market. However, it is not easy for them to get married and set up independent households because the majority have no livelihood activity. They would not have many children if they were able to marry because contraceptive methods have an acceptance in the community. Young men are not interested to participate in community affairs but if they set up their own independent household, they are obligated to participate in community works. They attend church regularly but there is a problem of negligence.”

The respondent says that young men face land shortage problems.

### Your life story

The respondent says that she was born in the neighbouring highland kebele. When she was six, as she explained, she cut grass, collect firewood, herded calves, made maize flour using a traditional miller, washed her clothes and kept her personal hygiene.

The respondent says that her parents passed away when she was a child. As she explained, after her mother passed away, her father got married to another woman but he died after six years of his new marriage. Her stepmother left the household within three months after he died. She explained that she has one brother and one sister, and they were living with their grandmother. She says, “When my father passed away, I left the kebele and migrated to the other wereda town, Selamber. Somebody who knew my father had told me that there was a job opportunity in the town. I did not consult with anybody but I just went to Wacha, the wereda town, to receive money from my father's friend for transport. I stayed there for six years working as a cook in one small cafe. In the seventh year, after I left my home, I started to miss my sister and brother. I decided to go back to the kebele and visit them. I was travelling on foot and on the way the man who currently I am living with abducted me. I begged him to let me go but he refused. He brought me to the kebele, Do’oma. After I had stayed with him five years, I went to see the kebele where I was born to visit my sister and brother. I met my brother but my sister had left the kebele to Moyale. Last year, she came back to the kebele to visit her relatives and I met her. In addition, I am living with the man though I hate him much.”

The respondent says that she dropped out from school at the first year of school experience because her teacher beat her saying she was late. As she said, she had a boyfriend there at Selamber and she faced no problem with her first sexual experience. As she says, she got married and lived with her ex-husband for a year before she got abducted. She got apart from her ex-husband because she was abducted. However, she mentioned that his parents used to dislike her. She has no children from her ex-husband or from the man she currently lives with. The respondent says that she got pregnant three times but two pregnancies failed to come to full term. As she said, she gave birth once, but the infant died after a year. The respondent says that she had been monitored by the health extension workers during her pregnancy and they had been telling her that there was no problem with the pregnancy.

The respondent explained that her husband is a widower and has five children; except one all are living in the household.

The respondent says that she engages in domestic work, and as a farm assistant and trader. As she says, she is a follower of Kalehiwot church but is not interested to go to church. As she explained, she has never attended church programmes for the last one year.

The respondent says that the most important people in terms of support are her neighbours.

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

The respondent says that when she grew up she was not affected by much of government intervention. As she says she was not a student, her parents did not own irrigable land or access credit, there was no cooperative, no water points or grinding mill, and no health, cultural or political interventions.

The respondent says that her household owns 0.75 hectare and pays 30 Birr land tax. Last year, as she explained, she contributed 41 birr for the kebele school project. The respondent says that she brought water and stone and her husband provided wood for the school expansion project.

The respondent explained, “I have no volunteer participation in the kebele. Last year, I attended two meetings that were organized by wereda people to establish women's league and federation in the community. The household is a member of the Orthodox Church followers’ iddir. We contribute 3 Birr per month. In time of death, all members contribute 5 Birr and 0.75 kilogram maize.”

### Aspirations and plans for the future

The respondent says that she aspires to have children and she would like to make her trading profitable. She has no concrete plan. She has no aspiration for the community.

## Rich young woman mid-20s

### Your household

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Relation to the hh head | Sex | age |
| daughter | F | 25 |
| hh head | M | 45 |
| spouse | F | 40 |
| daughter | F | 18 |

### Youth in the community

The respondent says that when she was adolescent, adolescent girls in the community faced many problems. She explained, “Parents did not believe in the importance of sending girls to school. They tended to give priority to boys. Finding a husband was difficult because adolescent girls did not have a say in their marriage partner choice. Many got married early so that they could set up their independent household. They started to give birth earlier. Adolescent girls mainly engaged in domestic work. They did not participate at the community level and religious participation was minimal. However, currently they have equal chance with men to go to school. They have the right to choose their marriage partner. Setting up an independent household is not common because adolescent girls do not want to get married. They have started to work as casual labourers on others’ farmland, assisting their parents on farmland and engaging in nonfarm activities such as trading. Though there is a chance to participate in the community, adolescent girls consider it as the responsibility of the grown up community members. They are more interested to attend church programmes than before.”

The respondent explains that young men were more advantaged than females in the previous time as well as currently. The respondent mentioned, “Young men had been getting education in the community up to grade 8. However, these days, they have access to high school and higher education in other communities. They are also spending much time in school that paves the way to have more discussion with classmates and follow courses effectively. Previously, access to land was easy but now it is very challenging to access it. In prior time, they had been working mainly on farmlands. Now, they start to get hired in the wereda town and outside as well as some being engaged in trading. There was no problem in finding a wife in the past as well as in the present. However, these days they could not marry whomever they want without her consent. The probability of having a child is getting less as compared with the previous time. Although there is an opportunity to participate in the kebele administration, young men are getting bored with community matters as compared with the future. Religiously, they are becoming conservative as compared to the previous time.”

### Your life story

The respondent was born in the community. She explained that when she was six, “I used to fetch water, cut grass, herd livestock and collect firewood. I have lived with my parents and with my sister until now. I did not face a shock when I was growing up. I have no health problem. I completed grade 10, joined Dilla Health College, and got a certificate in health extension. I have started working in the community in 2008. I started to engage in domestic jobs when I was 8. I never worked in another farm and nonfarm activities. I start taking interest in boys when I was 17. I had my first boyfriend when I was 17. I had no problem with my first sexual experience. I have never got married and I have no children. I am the follower of Kalehiwot church. I go to church on Sunday to pray with other followers. The most important person for me is my mother.”

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

The respondent says that “the school provision had helped me to finish my education and get a job. My family have irrigable lands that help to cover our living expenses. Cooperatives did not affect me. There was no water point or grinding mill in prior time in the community. I did not come with heath, political or cultural interventions.”

The respondent says that she has no land so that she does not pay land tax. As she elaborated, she does not participate in contributions because she is still living with her parents. She is a health extension worker, member of the local political party committee and chair of the kebele heath committee. She says that she does not participate in social organizations but she is included in the women's federation and league as a facilitator.

The respondent says that after she grew up, she accessed political interventions as she is participating in the kebele structures. Regarding health, she is the second heath extension worker in the community since 2006.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

The respondent says that she aspires to upgrade her education level. As she explained, she wants to get a job in towns and cities. She aspires for the community the provision of electricity and overall awareness on health extension packages.

## Middle wealth young woman mid-20s

### Your household

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Relation to the hh head | Sex  | age |
| spouse | F | 27 |
| Hh head | M | 35 |
| son | M | 10 |
| daughter | F | 8 |
| daughter | F | 7 |
| son | M | 6 |
| son | M | 4 |
| daughter | F | 1 |

### Youth in the community

The respondent says that when she was adolescent, parents sent their daughter to school for a few years because they believes women's education was irrelevant beyond writing and reading. She explained, “Parents did not allow us to do homework. When we picked up our exercise books, they ordered us to do something. Because of this, we had been working our homework sitting under tree shade either when we went to school or returned home. In that time, our parents forced us to get married earlier though they gave us the chance to choose our marriage partners. And females who resisted marrying were abducted by males. Setting up independent households for those adolescents who got married was not difficult because the kebele had been providing land, at least non-irrigable land, to male youths. Married females start to give birth very early and the probability of having an extended family was very high. At that time, we had been working in domestic works but not on the farm. We had no chance to participate in the community before getting married. Besides this, the majority were shy to work with the community.”

The respondent says, “Currently, adolescent girls go to school without any major challenge. They could read and do homework after they finished some domestic work. They are free to choose their marriage partner but they do not marry early. They have boyfriends though most keep it a secret. Setting up an independent household is not easy because there is no access to land which makes married couples work with parents.

They are starting to work on others' farmland as causal labourers and traders. Although there are organizations in the kebele administration, they do not want to participate. Religiously, they are strong and attend church programmes regularly.”

The respondent says that the current problems for adolescent girls are HIV/AIDS and the probability of not staying married for long. As she explained, girls focus on education as well as trading. If they fail to succeed in both, they need to marry. However, males in the community do not prefer to marry females whose age is above 20. As the result, they may lose the chance of being a first wife.

### Your life story

She was born in another community but she with her family settled here when she was a child. The respondent explained that when she was six, she used to fetch water and collect firewood. As she says, she joined grade one when she was six. The teachers resisted to register her but her mother begged them and they allowed her. The respondent explained, “My father had two wives. He got the second woman, my mother, because his first wife consecutively gave birth to baby girls. He abducted my mother when she came back from a church conference to her home. Before he abducted her, he had sent elders to ask her family if he could marry my mother. She resisted accepting the proposal of marrying him because she did not want to be a second wife. The Kalehiwot church prohibited marrying a man who had a wife. Actually, her families also rejected the proposal. He abducted my mother and took her to the place where his first wife used to live. Then he built a separate house for my mother far from the other wife's residence. His first wife left her children with him and went to her family. My mother gave birth to two baby boys. My mother was not happy to live with my father. When she got pregnant for the third time, she left the household and went to Wolayita Sodo. After she stayed there with her sister for few months, she returned to her family's residence area and gave birth. Her brother had brought her and me to the community. He supported us in all respects. Until I joined grade one, I did not know that the man was my uncle. When she told my father's name to the registrar, I asked her who is he?. She told me the whole history. When I was in grade five, my mother and I went to my father’s resident and I met him for the first time. In 2001, I got married. I met my husband in church and he had been my boyfriend for a year. I have no health problem except malaria. I attended school up to grade seven. I dropped out from the school when I decided to get married. I decided to get married when I saw my peers change their way of dressing and improve their personal hygiene after they got married. In the future, I want to continue my education. I am begging my husband to let me go to school. Now, I spend the day working on domestic jobs, herding livestock, and take caring of my children. My husband is the first man in my life and I did not face problems in my first sexual experience. I gave birth to my first daughter in 2001 and the delivery was easy for me. I was get circumcised. My elder daughter is living with my mother in the community. Except her, all my children are living with me. I am an active follower of the Kalehiwot church. Except Monday, I go to church to attend programmes and to pray with my neighbours. My mother is a very important person in my life. “

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

The respondent says that she was not affected by school provision. As she explained, she had learned at the wereda town. Similarly, she was not affected by irrigation access, credit facility, cooperatives, grinding mill or water points. In addition, she did not access health, political or cultural interventions.

She said that the household owns one-hectare irrigable land and pays 58 birr land tax. The respondent says that the household contributed 41 birr to the school project in the last year. As she explained, she works in the school site such as bringing water and stone and her husband provides wood.

The respondent says that she attend one meeting which was organized by the women's league. She is a member of Kalehiwot iddir and contributes five Birr per month.

As she said, she is sending her children to school. She has been using irrigation land and credit after she got married. She explains, she has accessed water points and grinding mill. As she elaborated, her household has been accessing health services such as health post and centre. Politically, as she says, the kebele officials are organizing females in cells. The respondent says that she has accessed training on cultural interventions.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

The respondent says that she discussed with her husband about the ways to improve their livelihood. As she explained, she planned to work in fattening livestock and her husband would work on farming.

## Poor young woman mid-20s

### Your household

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Relation to hh head | sex | age |
| Spouse | F | 27 |
| Hh head | M | 30 |
| Daughter | F | 6 |
| Daughter | F | 3 |
| Son | M | 1 |

### Youth in the community

The respondent says, “When I was adolescent, adolescents in the community has a better chance to join primary school but not secondary school. Finding husbands was not difficult for them. They knew each other before they got married. Those married females lived near to their husband's parents. After they got married, they gave birth continuously as many of them did not like using contraceptive methods. Most of the time, they did not work on farm and other non-farm works. They had a burden of domestic work. They did not have participation in the community or in religious institutions.”

The respondent explained, “now, adolescent girls have a chance of high school in the community as well as higher education in other neighbouring weredas. They have the right to choose their husbands but do not want to get married as most of them want to complete their education at least to grade 10. Though the kebele administration has been organizing meetings for adolescent girls, they do not attend because it is nonsense for them to work with the kebele people. They have religious participation; they sing songs, pray and so on.”

The respondent says, “most young men were farmers, not students before. Now, they attend school regularly. Access to land was not that much a problem as compared to now. They had been working on farms but now a few have started trading. There is no problem for them in finding a wife before as well as now. They had been participating in the community much as compared to the present. Currently, there are not willing to participate in the community’s affairs. They are participating in religious institutions more as compared to the past.”

### Your life story

The respondent says that she was born in the community. She explained, “My mother passed away when I was two years old. We were 6, including my mother and father. My father got married to his second wife. My stepmother gave birth to two children. My stepmother burdened us with domestic works. When I was six, I used to cook food, going to the grinding mill, fetching water from the river, collecting firewood, cutting grass, and so on. When I was 14 and 15, I had worked on the farm as assistant. I joined school when I was 12. I learned up to grade 4 and dropped out because my stepmother wanted me to work on domestic jobs as my elder sister left the household because of marriage. I stayed there until I got married. The marriage was betrothal type. I decided to marry early because my stepmother used to mistreat me. My two sisters got married earlier and left the household. I left the household in 2005 when I got married. My husband was my boyfriend for three years and I had no problem associated with my first sexual experience. After a year, I gave birth to my first daughter. I was circumcised before I got married but I did not face a problem in time of delivery. I have never engaged in trading. The important person in my life is my husband.”

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

The respondent says that she had education, which makes her at least able to write and read letters. As she said, she was not affected by government interventions on irrigation, credit or cooperatives. The respondent says that although there was a grinding mill in the wereda town as well as the neighbouring kebele, “when I was with my family, we use traditional millers to make flour because my father did not want to eat foods made from flour that got powdered in the grinding mill.” As she explained, she has been accessing health interventions such as the health centre. However, she says that she did not access interventions on political and cultural affairs.

The respondent says that the household is landless. As she explained, her husband works on others' land, i.e. sharecropping. As she says, her father-in-law contributes to the kebele projects on behalf of his own household and her husband. However, as she elaborated, the household participated in the community work that was organized for the school project; she brought water and stone and he brought wood.

The respondent says that she has no participation at the kebele level except that she graduated from the health extension packages, attending training. However, as she says, they are planning to join Kalehiwot iddir.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

The respondent says that she aspires to build a tin roofed house. She has no concrete plan. The respondent says that she would be happy if the community gets electricity service.

## Rich young woman 16-17

### Your household

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Relation to hh head | sex | age |
| daughter | F | 17 |
| Hh head | M | 45 |
| spouse | F | 37 |
| son | M | 22 |
| son | M | 15 |
| daughter | F | 13 |

### Youth in the community

The respondent says that adolescent girls have better opportunity to join school. She explained, “We could access high school in the community. Our parents sent us to school as they did for our brothers. However, there is no tutorial programme to support females in the school. We are free to choose our marriage partner. Getting married is was not easy for adolescent girls because males have more decision power and they could influence to get whatever they want. We could not set up our independent household before we got married because there is no access to land in the community. Adolescent girls do not want to give birth because they prefer to continue their education or engage in other activities such as trading. Mostly, we work domestic jobs but a few girls work on farmland as a causal labourer or assisting their families. We do not have access to participate in the community before we get married. Adolescent girls are interested to go to church.”

The respondent explained, “Young men have better chance to attend school because nobody expects them to support their families. However, a young man whose father passed away has a burden in heading the household. They work on their families' land and they are responsible to send younger children to school. Young men have access to land. They are not interested to participate in the community. Similarly, they are not interested to attend church programmes.”

### Your life story

The respondent was born in the community. She elaborated, “When I was six, I fetched water from the river in a small pot and I called my neighbours to have coffee with our family. I had been living with my household members mentioned above. I face no problem when I was growing up. However, in the last year I faced a problem that messed up my future. In the last year, I went to Wolayita Sodo in my break time. I met a man on the public transport who was working as driver's assistant. We got very intimate and spent two nights together. I was a virgin and that moment was my first sexual experience. After I came back, we used to meet in the wereda town. One day, when I was returning from the grinding mill to my house, he followed me behind and asked me to have sex in the nearby forest. I was not willing but he forced me. Then after, I got pregnant. When he came to the community, I met him and told that I was pregnant. He told me to abort the pregnancy. I refused his suggestion. After that day, he hid from me and I could not find him for two and three months. My pregnancy got visible to everybody when I was 4 months. I told everything to my mother and she advised me to talk to my father. I told him and he was very angry. My father brought him by militias to the elders in the community. The elders and the kebele officials asked us how and when we knew each other. I explained everything to them but he denied everything. Then the elders wanted a break to have lunch. He stayed there in the kebele office. When we returned after lunch, he ran to the wereda and travelled to Wolayita. After that day, I did not meet him. Recently, his friend told me that if I give birth to a baby boy, he is interested to admit it and he wants to take the child after he gets one years old.” Though I got passing grade to preparatory school, I could not join because I have to take care of my baby. In the coming time, I am planning to take the national examination again because my last year's grade was disqualified. I have started to engage in domestic work since 2007. Sometimes, I harvest sweet potatoes from the farmland. I have never tried trading. I started taking interest in boys in the last year. On my first sexual experience I did not face a problem. I got circumcised when I was 9 in 2004 and I did not face a problem in time of delivery. I gave birth to my first baby in September, 2011. Traditional birth attendants supported me at the time of delivery. I was a member of Kalehiwot church I stopped going there after I got pregnant. The leaders of the church warned my father they will prohibit him from preaching if he did not send me out of the household. Then I stayed in the wereda town for three months and I came back to the household when my pregnancy got to full term. The church condemned sexual relationship before marriage. In the last year, my father warned a man whose daughter got pregnant before marriage to send his daughter to another place. The man resisted letting his daughter to go out from the household and the church prohibited him from preaching and attending church programmes until now. When I returned to my parents, the church did not say anything but I fear to go to church until now. The most important person for me is my mother.”

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

The respondent says that she had benefited from the provision of primary school. As she says, she joined school earlier because the school was near to her residential area. She explained, “For a few years, I used to fetch water from the river but I have accessed the water point when I start to engage in domestic jobs seriously. The grinding mill is far from our village, that consumed my time very much. I benefited from irrigation as my family was able to produce twice a year that able to feed the household members well. I did not access health, political or cultural interventions.”

The respondent says that she has no land. As she says, she is not obligated to participate in the community contribution because she does not have an independent household. The respondent says that she has no participation in the community like associations, iddir and so on. The respondent did not access any new intervention above the above-mentioned government interventions.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

The respondent aspires to continue her education and to get married to her child's father.

## Middle wealth young woman 16-17

### Your household

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Relation to the hh head | sex | age |
| daughter | F | 17 |
| Hh head | M | 44 |
| spouse | F | 37 |
| daughter | F | 18 |
| son | M | 17 |
| daughter | F | 14 |
| son | M | 13 |
| son | M | 11 |
| daughter | F | 6 |

### Youth in the community

The respondent says that adolescent girls are facing more problems as compared to adolescent boys. She said, “Though our parents send us to school with our brothers, we have no time to study and do homework with our friend. We spend much time in working on domestic jobs. They were not happy to cover our schooling expenses. They need us to engage in trading and other activities. We do not want to get married but girls when they become unsuccessful in education, they need to marry and there is no problem in finding a husband. A few girls are interested to give birth. However, now it is not common to get married earlier. I engage in domestic work but not in farming because I have elder brothers to assist my father. I have never worked as a casual worker. I am not interested to attend meetings in the kebele because I fear to be with many people. I do not want to go church because I get nothing other than a noisy environment."

The respondent says, “young men have enough time to attend class regularly and study. The kebele also provides them with land. Young men find a job in the wereda town or outside. A few young men work on their families' or their own farmland. They have time for leisure. After school, they stay in the wereda town playing table tennis and football. The problem they face is that they develop bad habits such as smoking Gaya. ”

### Your life story

The respondent was born in the community. She says, “When I was six, I did nothing because there were grown up children in the household. When I grew up, I did not face problems. Except malaria, I have no health problem. I joined grade one in 2002. I have never dropped out and been readmitted. I am grade 10 student. if I score good grades I will join preparatory school , if not I will join colleges outside the community. I have started to engage in domestic work since 2008. I have never worked as a trader. I have a boyfriend and he is my classmate. I am a virgin. I am not interested in attending church programmes. As I am a member of Kalehiwot church, sometimes I go to the church.”

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

The respondent says that she accessed school from the beginning. The respondent says, “My parents have irrigable land that helped them to purchase food and clothes for us. Recently, I was able to fetch water from the nearest water point which saved my time and energy. Previously, there was a grinding mill in the community but now we go to the wereda town to get the service. From the health interventions, I have benefitted because I could get malaria control, diagnosis and treatment from the heath extension workers. I was not affected by political and cultural interventions. As all girls in the community do, I got circumcised in 2008. I faced no problem with the circumcision. It was my interest to get circumcised because others insulted me.”

The respondent says that except the provision of grinding mill, which is unavailable now, all the other interventions have affected her in the same way as they affected her when she grew up.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

The respondent aspire to be a development agent. She does not want to live in the community. As she said, after this year, she will continue her preparatory school or college at Wolayita town. After six years, she wants to get married.

## Poor young woman 16-17

### Your household

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Relation to the hh head | sex | age |
| daughter | F | 17 |
| Hh head | M | 45 |
| spouse | F | 35 |
| son | W | 23 |
| son | W | 15 |

### Youth in the community

The respondent says that though there is school provision, adolescent girls have a work burden that hinders them to follow their education properly. She explained, “Adolescent girls are responsible to fetch water before they go to school. When we return from the school, we have to prepare dinner. Our parents consider the school as a break for us. At night, we could not read because there is no electricity. Parents do not allow us to use lamps for long because the price of kerosene is expensive. Those adolescent girls who live with their stepmothers want to marry soon because of the mistreatment they face at their home. In addition, those adolescent girls who have poor families get married earlier because their families are economically incapable to cover their schooling expenses. My family usually say to me that they would not get any benefit from my education. They said that we are teaching you for your husband. Getting married is not a problem. Adolescent girls start to live with their boyfriends and they act as if they were abducted. A few girls want to give birth but the probability of having children is very low at 15 and 16. I assist my father on the farm and engage in domestic work. A few girls in the community have started trading. I have participated in the watershed management project with my classmates. I attended a meeting that was held in the community by the wereda people. I attend Kalehiwot church programme every Sunday. The opportunity, which adolescent girls get, is access to high school in the community.”

The respondent says, "Young men have a better chance to follow up their education because they have no burden in their household. They get early to the school and return home after they finish working on their assignments and homework. There are young men who take land before they get married. They need to get married because they believe a marriage partner is essential to change livelihood.”

### Your life story

The respondent was born in the community. When she was six, she cleaned the house and its surrounding and fetched water from the river in a small pot. As she says, she had faced no significant problems when she grew up. The respondent explained, "malaria is a basic health problem for me. I dropped out from the school for two years. I joined grade one in 2000. Currently, I am grade 10 student. if I score good grades in the national examination I will join preparatory in natural science. If I fail, I will trade maize. I like going to education though I could not give attention to what teachers say in class because I have a lot to think about. I started to work in all kinds of household works when I was 13 and I have started to assist my father on the farm this year. I have started trading when I was 14. I have no choice that finds a way to cover my basic needs because my families were not willing to purchase clothes for me. They told me to cover my expenses. I do not attend on Thursday because it is a market day. I have a boyfriend and I am a virgin. I attend Kalehiwot church programme every Sunday. The most important person in my life is my mother."

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

The respondent says that she had benefited from the school provision from the beginning. She explained, “The provision of high school has helped me to attend my education. if it was not established, I would not join high school outside the wereda because my family are poor. My family benefited from the credit access that may benefit me indirectly. The water point has helped me to save my time and enabled me to go to school earlier. I still go to the wereda town to get grinding mill. I have benefited from the health interventions as I accessed health services at the health centre and from the health workers. I am aware about the bad effect of HTPs in school. I got circumcised by my own interest because I could not live in the community confidently if I did not get circumcised.”

The respondent says that once she attended a meeting that was organized by the wereda people to establish the women's league. Beside this, she does not have a land and did not contribute in the last year because she is dependent on the household. She is not a health volunteer and she does not belong to any iddir in the community.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

The respondent aspires to open a boutique in the wereda town, otherwise she would like to trade maize and other agricultural products. The respondent says that she does not want to leave the community. She aspires for the improvement of livelihood of the entire community.