# Geblen site-specific topic: HIV/AIDS

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## People with Aids

MEN’S VIEWS: The kebele chairman estimated that 7% of the population of Geblen are People Living with HIV/AIDS. But, almost no one from among them makes their status official to the public.

WOMEN’S VIEWS: There are identified six people who lives with HIV/AIDS in Geblen.

## Extent of the problem of AIDS orphans

MEN’S VIEWS: According to the kebele vice chairman, a seriously sick woman heading a house hold to whom they give her advices to conduct VCT died last year living behind an infant. The child is now under the care of his grandparents. The administration included him in the group of under nourished children, thus he has been given nutrient food.

WOMEN’S VIEWS: There is no any data speak of the extent and the orphans.

## HIV infected

MEN’S VIEWS: The Health Extension worker in Geblen reported that so far there are three people who have talked to her about their case that they are living with HIV virus.

WOMEN’S VIEWS: There are six people according to the health worker information. From these people the two are husband and wife.

## Access to retro-virals drugs

MEN’S VIEWS: Yes, they do have. But so far only two people were reported to use retro-viral drugs.

WOMEN’S VIEWS: Yes, those four are taking medicine and one of them is exempted from food for work.

## Community awareness of how the virus is transmitted

MEN’S VIEWS: The level of community awareness is low; In fact most of the people are conducting voluntary Counselling and Testing service. Some of them conducted it for more than 5 times since 2000E.C. The problem among the people seems to be lack of awareness to openly discuss about it.

WOMEN’S VIEWS: It is hard to consider the level of community understanding since they are not willing to give information about these issues. But as the health worker explained it is not a concern of the community.

## Changes in sexual behaviour

MEN’S VIEWS: Low

WOMEN’S VIEWS: As the health extension worker and health promoter explained the sexual behaviour it is very common in the community to have three or more than three sex partner. In addition to this, there is polygamy in the community. The women by themselves need the experience of polygamy. And as they reason out it polygamy increases access to income of their consumption.

## Condom use

MEN’S VIEWS: Condoms are accessible in the Health post. There are some people using condoms as contraceptive

WOMEN’S VIEWS: According to the health worker and health promoter information, though it was not simple to change the attitude of the community we have succeeded in distributing condoms to the user. And we try to cross- check how is the use working. And we got a clue of some of the adopter are using it.

## Interventions to prevent the spread of the virus

MEN’S VIEWS: Since 1980s measures have been taken by the government to create awareness about ways of transmission of HIV/AIDS and VCT service. In 1986, an anti-HIV/AIDS club was set up. But, it was not functional. The researcher observed a poster near the kebele centre upon which a statement illustrating the danger of HIV/AIDS, and the need for the people to tack care of themselves and to others from it. The letters however are faded, discoloured and illegible. It is very difficult to observe.

While the researcher was in a field work, he observed the health workers who came from the clinic [not sure if they are from the health centre] or from other area] were providing Voluntary Counselling Testing Service to people [members of the kebele council] who were in a meeting near by the health post.

Since 1997E.C, NGOs such as Adigrat Catholic Church and world Vision Ethiopia, had been conducting awareness creation campaigns in Geblen using people living with HIV/AIDS from other areas. But, as to the researcher’s observation, the issue of HIV/AIDS is not being discussed among the villagers. Yet, stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS seems to be prevalent. Neither the kebele officials nor the farmers who were approached by the researcher in an informal and friendly way to talk about people in Geblen living with HIV/AIDS were very reluctant to do so.

WOMEN’S VIEWS: There are awareness creating program, condoms are being distributed, and RVD for those who are identified and have a willing to take.

## Effectiveness of interventions to prevent spread

MEN’S VIEWS: Awareness creation campaigns are not active these days but VCT service is being provided by service providers who are coming from the health centre. But, both the awareness creation activities and the VCT service are not effective. Most people, particularly the young people, seem to have practice unsafe sex.

## Interventions to treat people infected by the virus

MEN’S VIEWS: Nothing in Geblen; and I did not follow up the activities done with regard to it in Edaga Hamus town and Kebele Saesie health centres. The kebele manager reported that the kebele administration has a rule and the authority to help people living with HIV/AIDS in such as exempting them from laborious works in the FFW programs while receiving their rations, Soil and Water Conservation activities and others. He said that no one living With HIV/AIDS report his/her case and be advantageous.

WOMEN’S VIEWS: The health extension worker responded “the health centre is trying to work on treating of infected people”. And she mentioned what hindrance is going with the involvement while they are trying to handle the infected people. The infected people do not want to expose themselves fearing the community attention that might cause discrimination and stigma.

## Effectiveness of interventions to treat infected people

MEN’S VIEWS: VCT service provided to people in Geblen seems to be active, but not effective.

WOMEN’S VIEWS: As the health worker explained the awareness of the infected people is very less that could not help the intervention to go well. There are retro-virals drugs accessed to the infected people but they are not adopter of it as they expected. So, this situation is obstacle for the health service not to go as planned and come to be effective.