# Personal stories of female transitions to adulthood Harresaw, Atsbi wereda, East Tigray

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## Rich young woman 30s

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Person | Relation to the household head | Sex | Age |
| You | wife | F | 33 |
| head | Head | M | 35 |
| Child | Son | M | 16 |
| Child | daughter | F | 12 |
| Child | Son | M | 7 |
| child | daughter | F | 5 |

### Youth in the community

In her time there was plenty of food to eat, there was sufficient milk for people of any age including adolescent girls but now there is shortage in many households. There is good opportunity for adolescent girls to attend schooling because there are schools in the tabia and in Dera. The respondent did not go to school. The absence of underage marriage is good opportunity for adolescent girls to continue their education and not to bear children when they are still children themselves.

It is better now in terms of finding a husband and getting married because they can marry even after they get older.

In the past there was family arranged marriage. Now it is based on the interest of the couples. There is no girl who remains unmarried even when their age gets older. The respondent got married at the age of 16 years.

Having independent households soon after marriage is common now. In her time there was the possibility of staying with parents even after having children and marriage. She lived for two years with her parents after she got married. Now couples choose to live independently by renting or establishing their own household within their parents’ house.

Adolescent girls do not live in independent households before marriage, there is no change when compared to her time. Adolescent girls rent houses when they go to high school in Atsbi.

Currently there is a good opportunity to have healthy children. In her time there were problems with the health of children. In her time there were many births and many deaths. Now there fewer births, and deaths of infants are reduced a lot. Currently married adolescent girls are limiting births using contraceptives.

In terms of work load the current period is better for adolescent girls because in her time there was herding, and grinding by hand. Now there is rest and attention is given to education. These days adolescent girls do not have much work, in her time there was herding and grinding. Now they do get rest and not much to do because there are mill houses. In her time there was no irrigation activity. Now there is irrigation, it is a better income generating opportunity now. Currently adolescent girls are engaged in retailing various kinds of goods. This is also good opportunity to generate income for adolescent girls. This opportunity was not available in her time.

Adolescent girls are engaged in farming activities like weeding and hoeing. This was not common for adolescent girls in her time. The current generation can manage to do it and they are doing it. There is good community participation among adolescent girls at this time. This was not common in her time. They use credit and they participate in government development interventions. Adolescent girls also participate in the women’s association if their age is above 18 years old.

There is good religious participation among adolescent girls. They go to churches on holidays. In her time only priests and old people were going to church. She was not going to church when she was adolescent.

Currently adolescent girls and other people give value to keeping their hygiene using soap. In her time the adolescent girls including herself and others were not giving attention to their hygiene. In the past the women were getting worried of feed the husband but now married couples help each other. It is a good opportunity. There was beating of wives at her age but not among married adolescents at this time. In her time there were only very rare cases of unwanted pregnancy, now there are more unwanted pregnancies among those in the 9th and 10th grades and others but it is not common. There was rape in her time but not now.

The rights of adolescent girls are respected now. Adolescents have the right to refuse what they do not like.

At this time there are better education opportunities for young men. In her time there were not good opportunities in education for men of her age. There are schools in the tabia and in a nearby tabia. In her time there was not good awareness about the benefit of education. Even though there is better access there is a problem when young men achieve 10th grade and they fail the national examination. This also makes children not to go to school with interest and it makes young men drop out of school.

There is serious land scarcity among young men. Landlessness is getting worse at this time, it is a serious issue among the young men and women. In her time parents used to give land to their children during marriage but now even parents are getting food shortages.

Currently young men have good job opportunities in the tabia. They can work in different activities and generate income. Those young men in her time were living with parents doing agricultural and farming activities.

The youth also go to Saudi at this time. There are some deaths on the way. Those who are successful send remittances to their friends. There is migration of youths to Arab countries to work. Some young men who migrate to Arab countries became successful in earning money but many of them are not successful. They face many problems like death on the way and being unable to work even if they arrive there because they are illegal migrants. This migration was not common in young men in her time. The opportunity is good to do retailing activities it was not known in her age.

At this time men do not easily get a wife at an early age because they need to have enough money to get married. There is no land so they earn income in their own way. Sometimes girls also choose those young men who have money which makes them lead life independently. Young men at her age did not face problems in getting a wife because life was cheap, they bought one dress and got land from their parents. Now things have got expensive.

Some young men form independent households by separating their house in their household or they rent by trading certain things. Young men above the age of 20 years get their independent house, they go to towns like Dera and Atsbi. Those with better income go to Wukro. The majority of the young men stay with their parents before their marriage. In her age young men stayed with their parents even sometime after they married.

Having children at early age is not common in young men. Having a child at an early age was the case in the past now they marry at a late age and their wives also use contraceptives until their life gets improved.

The participation of young men in the youth association is better now. There are also youths in important decision making positions. In her age they were not participating. Young men participate in public works,

The religious participation among young men is better now. There is better awareness of their religion. Those young men, even those who live in Arab countries, send money to churches. They have improved churches from local roof *hidmo* (roof of wood, stone and mud) to iron roofs. They made paint for churches. They attend religious teachings.

### Your life story

The respondent was born in tabia Gebrekidan adjacent tabia to Harresaw. She came to Harresaw because she got married to a person who is from Harresaw.

In the first six years she was living with her parents and siblings at tabia Gebrekidan. She had a good life in the first six years. At that age she was having enough food, milk, butter and honey. Her parents’ household was rich at that time. She had three brothers and three sisters.

Her household faced shock in the 1977EC drought and her household got poorer. There was hunger and epidemic at that time. She migrated to Eritrea together with her parents and six siblings. During the drought 4 horses, 3 oxen, 4 cow calves and sheep died due to drought. The deaths of all these animals made the household poorer. Her father passed away in 1977EC, this made the household to get even poorer.

The respondent grew up with her family and she directly came from her family to her current household by marriage.

She faced serious illness six years ago and it was related to her pregnancy. It was on her 4th pregnancy. She had loss of appetite. She could not eat so she was seriously ill as a result of not eating food. This happened after she got married. She could not do household chores because she was getting weak. She was sick for six months until the embryo got stronger. Her illness had no effect on her marriage or household. The respondent’s mother was assisting her when she was sick.

The respondent has never been to school and she has no idea of starting schooling. She did not attend schooling because there was no good awareness about sending children to school. Her mother did not send her to school and her father died when she was a child.

The respondent started cleaning house when she was 9 years old. Since 9 years old she started to work more on other household chores. She was baking *injera*, cooking stew, baking bread and preparing *tihilo* at the age of 15. Since 1986EC she stared to work in farming activities like cutting and weeding. She started her own business in 1987EC but she stopped after her husband went to Saudi Arabia. She started to do government food for work public works in 1979EC. She never worked for other people. Her older brother was teaching things that she asked him in agricultural activities. Her mother was teaching the respondent how to do domestic work.

The respondent started to have interest in boys at 14 years of age. At that time she was thinking about a marriage partner. She had boyfriend at the age of 14. He was her neighbour. She had no sexual relations with the boy. There was no problem due to her relation with the boy.

The respondent got married at the age of 16 years and she is living with him until now. Her husband chose her and she was also happy to marry him. She wanted to get married at that age. There was road construction and she got introduced to her husband while working there. He sent elders to her family and she accepted his proposal because she cannot refuse her parents and also because she wanted to marry him. Her mother was very keen on the respondent to get married. She stayed about 2 years with his mother and she established her own household in 1990EC. The respondent is still married to her first husband.

The respondent has 4 children. She gave birth to her first child in 1988EC. She had some problems related to her 4th pregnancy. The respondent does not know if she is circumcised or not. She has four children altogether and all of them are living with her. The ages of her children are 16 years, 12 years, 7 years and 5 years.

The respondent is follower of Orthodox church. She attends the full prayer ceremony by priests. Sometimes she makes only short personal prayer. The church is near to her house so she actively participates in church. Her siblings are important people for her because they assist her with food and clothing and visit her when she gets sick or when she delivers.

Her neighbours are important people for her because they visit her when she gets sick. They borrow materials from one another. Her friends also assist her when she delivers and when she gets sick. She works in a network of 1-5 in cutting and weeding. They support each other in the network. She is member of Bealmariam mehaber and it is an important social group for her.

### 

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

There respondent has never been to school so the presence of school did not benefit her as she grew up.

The food aid that was given by the government when she was a child and as she grew up was important for her. She used to be treated at the health centre when she got sick so it was important for her. There is no political and cultural intervention that affected the life of the respondent.

The household paid 40 birr land tax. The respondent and her husband have land. Last year there was a contribution that was deducted from PSNP payment. 1 kg of grain was deducted from each person per month. She contributed 6kg of grain for 6 months. The household participated in free labour work contributions.

She did not go to the tabia or sub tabia office.

There are health promoters who teach about health packages but since she came from a better town she was a champion by doing all the packages in the health extension programme without the help of the health volunteers. She is in a development team and 1-5 network. The network is important for her.

She has visited model farmers and their use of irrigation and fertiliser by the model farmers. She was benefited from the visit because she is using her land using compost and ploughing land properly. Visiting model farmers made her be involved in irrigation. She is a member of the women’s association and she contributes money but her participation is minimal.

Recently she has joined a group to contribute 1 birr to buy materials to support those who are ill and facing deaths and weddings. She is not member of the youth association. She does not participate in an *equb*. She participates in Hanta Abay Sen-afe lineage. It is important to attend, there she meets with her relatives. They get together on the 29th of the month and food and drinks are served. The members of the lineage group are more than 70 people.

One of the government interventions important to the residents’ life now is irrigation after the construction of the dam in 1986. Currently she grows cabbage, caulis, spinach and fenugreek. She uses half of the irrigation land for beans and various other crops. She earns good income from the irrigation work. Production from the irrigation helps her and her household to eat a variety of healthy food.

She took credit twice in 1996EC and 1998EC and she returned the debt. She bought sheep and cow. The first credit was 2500 birr and she paid it back. She also received 5000 birr and she paid back. As a result of the credit service she took she owns 2 oxen, 5 sheep and a cow. This big change for her came with the presence of the credit service. It made the household rich. There was no failed credit. She has no dairy cow.

There is a cooperative and she buys coffee sugar and other similar consumption goods at cheaper prices. It does not have big change but it is somehow at cheaper prices. She also buys fertiliser, it is good to increase for production.

A grinding mill was installed in 1990s EC and she is able to grind nearby. It has reduced her workload. So she takes care of her children. There are also water points nearby. She is using clean water now. She and her children are drinking clean water. They are prevented from water-borne illness.

Presence of transport is enabling her to save her time and not to get tired. She takes care of her children in a good way. Shops are also near. She does not need to go far or to buy things with delay. Her children also buy pen or notebooks easily. She also buys biscuit and candy for her children in nearby shops.

The respondent takes her children to the health post and they get vaccinations on time at the health post. This makes her children healthy. The use of the latrine is good it makes her and her children to be in good health status. She was given a bed net, it is useful, it prevents insects. She uses kitchen cupboards which is important to keep her belongings clean.

The teachings and the work of women’s affairs and tabia administration teaches to avoid male violence against women. Her husband was beating her but now her rights are respected because of the lessons given. She appealed for divorce but her husband promised he will behave better. Her children were crying when her husband was beating her but now the children are fine.

She is working in a network and working in an organised way is good in farm activities. It makes the activities to be easier and faster. They do it in development groups. The development group members also assisted her in the 40th day death commemoration of her father-in -law. It made the various activities much easier.

There is no action against harmful traditional practices that is playing an important role in her life.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

For the next five years the respondent wants to work on irrigation using fertiliser and improve her life. She will make her children go to school and help them to have government jobs.

She has a concrete plan, she is going to take credit because it made her grow. She has asked to take a dairy cow this year. She aspires for the community to improve well and get changed.

## Middle wealth young woman 30s

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Person | Relation with household head | Sex | Age |
| you | Wife | F | 31 |
| head | Head | M | 42 |
| Child 1 | Son | M | 11 |
| Child 2 | Son | M | 7 |
| Child 3 | daughter | F | 3 |

### Youth in the community

There is good educational access for adolescent girls in the tabia. There are schools in and near the tabia. Many adolescent girls are attending school. There is good follow up by the government when students become absent. There were many adolescent girls going to school at her age. She learned up to 4th grade. In her time there was no follow up by government on those who stopped schooling. There was also not good awareness among parents about sending their children to school. Now there is follow up from school and there is good awareness among the community. There was even a school fee in 1992EC. Now school fee is free. In the past there was 3-4 birr school fee. Now parents are willing to pay. Previously parents were making male and female students to be engaged in herding animals.

In her age adolescent girls used to be forced to get married. They were forced by their parent to get married. Now adolescent girls marry with their consent. At this time there is a delay in marriage because adolescent girls prefer to learn and marriage under the age of 18 years is not possible at this time. She got married at the age of 19 years. Finding a husband and getting married was easier in her time and was even much easier before that. The income was better in her time because there was land. Now the income of adolescent girls is hand to mouth.

In current times adolescent girls they are making independent households very quickly when they get married. In her age adolescent girls were not establishing their own households very soon. The current situation is not good, if possible it would have been better to stay with parents after marriage and get strengthened economically.

Nowadays having children among adolescent girls without getting married is increasing. In her age there were only a few who were having children out of wedlock. Having children at an early age was more common in her age but now adolescent girls delay birth of children because some take contraceptives. In her age there were not many people using them, in her age it was only tablets then came injection. Tablets had side effects on the heart so they were not acceptable to many. She was using injection after she had children. Now they space children, it is a good opportunity. It is good for the child and for the mother. The number of births is less now than in her age.

In her age she was engaged in fetching water and wood. Education was not given attention. She got educated up to 4th grade. It was not good. Now adolescent girls do cutting, take grains to place of threshing in addition to doing household chores. Currently the adolescent girls do the above mentioned activities in the time they are out of school. Some were involved in trading now they take time to study. In her age until 15 years of age she was grinding flour on stones but adolescent girls at this age do not grind this way any more, there is a grinding mill.

There was not irrigation in her age, now adolescent girls are involved in irrigation activities. This is important because it makes them get more income. Currently adolescent participate in the community in networks and in development groups, this was started this year. The youths work in her network, building latrines for those whose latrines collapsed. This was not the case in her age and she was not participating. The current participation is good, working in a group is better, it increases their knowledge.

The adolescent girls usually make short prayers and come. They do not wait until the completion of the whole prayer process. In her age going to church at adolescent age was not common, now even 15 year old girls go to church. She was not going to church when she was adolescent. Nowadays in towns even 10 year old girls go to church, it is good because prayer helps people.

The key problem is there is labour but they do not have land to work on and improve themselves.

A good opportunity for adolescents is the presence of credit and they can take and use it for trading. In her age it was limited only to certain people, not as wide as now. The benefit of credit is widely known nowadays.

There is good access to education for young men. This is a better opportunity than for youths in her age. But the problem is they fail to pass national examinations and they stop and migrate to Saudi at 9th and 10th grades. In her age there were only a few young men who migrated. There was no telephone at that time when young men were migrating, the communication was not good. If young men cross peacefully it is a good opportunity, they pay credit. Young men in her age were going to herd animals.

Currently there is a land shortage among young men. There was some shortage among young men in her time, but it was not bad like now.

Now young men do labour work for other people as daily labourers in the tabia. For young men in her time labour work for other people within the tabia was not acceptable. Now young men also do PSNP as they grow up. Young men do farming activities on their families’ land, this was the same as what young men were doing while they grew up. In her time they were working without any payment to their family, now some of them work with payment even from their parents.

Now young men do trading in shops, some are trading sheep. In the past buying sheep to sell for profit was not common, buying was only buying for rearing. This is a good opportunity

Finding a wife and getting married is easy and it is the same with young men in her age. Young men who do not have land marry because they get income from business and prefer to live only hand to mouth.

In 1990EC and 1997EC land was land given for house construction but now not any more. Now even when people build at the corner of farm land it is illegal so they are told to demolish it. Even though there is shortage of land now establishing independent households is more common now. In her age as young men grew up they were staying with their parents for longer.

Having children among young men is late and spaced. In her age young men were having children soon after marriage and there was no spacing. Young men have good community participation at this time in the youth association and in tabia meetings.

Young men at this time participate in church. They visit church and give money to the church. The participation of young men at her age was not much.

### Your life story

The respondent was born in tabia Harresaw called Endamariam Wueo, kushet Limat. She grew up with her mother and father. They migrated to Asmara in the 1977EC drought. She was 4 years old at that time. She migrated there with her parents and her youngest brother. There was no food in the tabia in 1977EC. She came back in 1979EC from Adikeyih. Her parents were doing labour works in Adikeyih. They were living in one room given by their employer. Calves, ox and cow died from drought and there was no crop grown. The drought stopped and rain came, they became normal when they came back.

She left her home to get married then she got divorced and started to live alone with her children. Then she remarried her first husband. She got married and stayed for 8 years. When she got divorced she was living in kushet Maekel. She was selling *siwa* and retailing goods in a shop. She stayed this way for two years and six months after this she got married again to her first husband and went back to Mariam Wueo. Now it has been two years since she went back to her husband. She had two children before she got divorced and one child was of born after remarriage. He was supporting her even after she got divorced.

The respondent faced serious illness in 2003EC. It was gastritis. She went to Wukro and was visited by a doctor. She was diagnosed by ultra sound. She paid a total of 200 birr. She was given tablets and she recovered, now she is better. She was not going to school at that time. Her work was affected. She was not able to work for 4 months. Her husband was in Saudi in prison; he was imprisoned for one and half years. Her children were not affected by her illness because her mother was at home for four months. Her mother was taking care of the household during the sickness of the respondent. She is 4th grade and she has no intention to continue. She stopped schooling when she was 14 years. Her parents made her stop schooling so that she could care for children and herd animals.

She started cleaning house at the age of 7 years. At the age of 10 years she started preparing coffee and stew. At the age of 14 she started baking *injera* and weeding. At the age of 16 she started cutting and harvesting crops. At 16 she was involved in daily labour in the construction of the dam. In 1993EC she started to take care of children. She started trading in 1997EC.

Learning up to 4th grade helped because she can read. She is able to calculate using a calculator and it helped her in the retailing and other work.

She started to have interest in boys at the age of 16 years. She had no boyfriend. Her first sexual experience was with her husband at the age of 19. She faced no problem as a result. Her husband was in Asmara.

Her husband was chosen by her parents. At that time she wanted to continue schooling rather than marriage. Her parents were keen on her getting married. She established her own household after a year in 1992. She stayed with her parents for one year. It was until the couple got stronger financially.

She gave birth to her first child 1993EC, she delivered at Dera health centre because she had complications during delivery. She stayed in the health centre for one night and day. The ages of herchildren are 11, 7 and 3 years. She does not know if she is circumcised or not. She has three children and all are living with her.

She is follower of the Orthodox Christian church. She said that her participation is rated as medium because she does not always go to church.

Her brother is an important person for her. He gives her money for medical treatment when she gets sick. Her younger brothers help her in herding animals.

Friends work with her in weeding and harvesting. They borrow money and flour from each other.

The respondent and her mother-in-law support each other in work. Her mother-in-law herds when the respondent goes to the mill house and to market. While the respondent does external activities her the mother-in-law performs activities at home.

### 

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

There was school but she only learned up to 4th grade. Her mother was growing vegetables and the respondent was able to eat varieties of vegetables.

There was credit taken by her parents but it was not helpful for her. She does not remember for what purpose they used the credit. There was TT vaccination which is good for her health. There were no cultural or political interventions that played a part in her life as she grew up.

The respondent has no land but her husband pays 20 birr per year for land tax. She contributed 24 kg of wheat (6x4=24 kg) for Abay dam construction. She is a member of land administration in Kushet. She studies who has land and who does not, who have left the community, then land is given to those landless people living in the community. She communicates with the tabia administration and land administration.

She is chairwoman of 30 households. She facilitates the implementation of government development activities in the group. She follows up health, education, school dropout, agriculture and weeding. For the elderly who have no labour to work they work in 1-5 group. It has been long since she completed all the packages in the health extension programme. She has no experience with model farmers.

She is a member of the women’s association. Annually she pays 6 birr association membership fee and 6 birr and 1 birr contribution. She is women’s league member and she pays 3 birr membership fee per year. She is a party member and she pays 12 birr per year. So far all memberships have no benefit for her.

She does not participate in *iddir* or *equb*.

At this time the presence of school is important for her children. She is sending two children to school. One of her children refused to join kindergarten.

At this time the presence of irrigation advice and service are important because she is getting better income and it is also helping her and the family to eat a variety of food.

The presence of credit service is important for her. She borrowed and paid back. The credit helped her to do selling *siwa* when she was divorced from her husband. She and her brother paid the debt. Veterinary service is good for her. She has 3 sheep and an ox. She makes them get medication and vaccinations, this keeps the animals from sickness and death. The presence of water and the mill house is also good. She does not travel long to fetch water and she drinks clean water. The presence of the mill house makes her not to grind with stone.

The health services that are playing big role in the respondent’s life are vaccination for her children and contraceptives.

There is no political intervention which is playing important role in the life of the respondent. She does not participate in the women’s or youth association. There is no action against harmful practices that played an important role in the respondent’s life.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

For the next five years the respondent does not have a new plan, she will be continuing to do the same things in her life and she expects improvement in her life. Her children will be in higher grades. She does not have a concrete plan. In the next five years she aspires for the community to be wealthy.

## 

## Poor young woman 30s

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Person | Relation to the household head | Sex | Age |
| you | Head | F | 32 |
| Child 1 | Daughter | F | 12 |
| Child 2 | Son | M | 8 |
| Child 3 | Daughter | F | 5 |

### Youth in the community

Adolescent girls have access to education without going to Atsbi, it is closer. In her age there was no education in nearby. Adolescent girls were going to Atsbi then Dera. Even though there is good opportunity many fail in 10th grade. The majority who fail are girls even though there are many males.

Many adolescent girls face shortage of school materials.

There is a delay in marriage because people send girls to school. Sometimes they marry without stopping schooling by using contraceptives.

Not all adolescent girls easily get husbands and marry. Some adolescent girls want to get married and there are some who want to improve themselves and marry later.

The majority of adolescent girls easily establish their own households soon after marriage.

Those who are not economically stronger stay with their parents after marriage. The husbands of some girls migrate to Arab countries and stay 2 years. In her time adolescent girls were staying with parents after marriage. The respondent married through a blessing ceremony called *tush*. In her time adolescent girls used to wait up to 4 years now it is fast.

At this time the majority of adolescent girls bear a child one year after marriage but the smart ones use contraceptives. In her time the use of contraceptives was not common.

At this time adolescent girls do household chores like washing clothes. They also do weeding on farm land in the absence of schooling. The majority of adolescent girls attend schooling. At this time adolescent girls spend much time on schooling rather than other work.

The change is that adolescent girls at this time wash clothes on time, now they are given food on time. In the past hygiene was not common.

Now if the adolescent girls get capital they start retailing goods and they use it to buy coffee. This is usually done by those girls who do not go to school. Those who attend schooling also do retailing of goods on Tuesdays and on Saturdays which are the market days. They do weeding, watering irrigation plants and harvesting if they have extra time from school.

The change from her time is that there was grinding with stone. Now there is no grinding with stone. In her time there were not many who were going to school so they were busy on different activities. Now there is education. Nowadays there is no herding because majority of the animals are tied and fed at home.

In the past adolescent girls were carrying water in a clay pot and the water points were far and it was spring water. Now there is water nearby and it is hand pump water. The hand pump water point is not found in Equnta and Harresaw because there is no water found even by digging deep. People from Equnta take water from Maekel. At this time people are drinking clean water, in the past it was not clean. In her time retailing goods was not common. There are more shops and retailing, now it has become prevalent.

Above the age of 18 some adolescent girls participate in associations and pay for associations.

In her time there was no association.

Adolescent girls at this time have good participation in church. The majority visit church on big holidays but there are not many who stand and complete the whole prayer session.

Girls use contraceptives and it is good.

There is good opportunity for young men at this time in terms of education. There is a high school in Dera, in the past they were going to Atsbi. The problem is that they fail and education does not benefit them. When they fail national examinations or drop out from school they migrate to Saudi Arabia. There is shortage of land, that is why they migrate. In her time young men did not have good access to education. Access to land for young men in her time was better. Now it has got much worse because there is an increase in population. Those who got married first have land from their parents and those who were born after did not get land.

What young men do at this time is farming, doing labour work and trading. Young men at this time get employed on others land and do farming activities.

Those young men involved in daily labour are very few. In her time doing daily labour work on other’s land was not common. Retailing goods among young men was not also common in the past because there was backward perception about working on others’ land. In the past young men were migrating to Eritrea to do labour work instead of working here.

At this time young men do not get a wife easily because they want to earn money first. If young men have nothing they do not want to marry. In her time young men were able to get a wife easily because they got land from their parents, now it is not easy to make a living.

Many young men do not rent a house independently because they usually stay with their family until they get married. They stay some time and establish their own household. After marriage young men establish their own household soon.

Young men marry later and have children later. The number of children is less than what young men used to have in her time. Now they do not have children soon after marriage.

The participation of young men in religion is increasing over time. It was weak in her time. Now young men go to church for prayer.

Young men migrate to Arab starting from the age of 18. For those who are successful the migration is a good opportunity but for others who experience different difficulties it is a problem because they get evicted, they face death, heat and sinking on the ocean. In her time migration of young men to Arab counties was very rare. The migration is illegal and the route is now shorter but problems are still there. Many die due to heat and hunger.

### Your life story

She was born in Harresaw in Equnta *got.* When shewas 6 years old she was with her parents and with her younger sister and youngest brother. At that time there was not much care for children when it was not common like at this time. Her parents had peaceful relations and her father is a priest. Their living status was medium.

The major shock that the household faced was hunger due to the 1977EC drought and they migrated to Eritrea, first they lived in rural place called Adinefas which is near to Dekiamhare town. She went there with her parents and two siblings it was in 1976EC. She was a very small child at that time. She does not remember anything. She came back in 1979EC. Then her father was working as a daily labourer on farms. Her mother was cooking food for the household. They migrated when the drought started. When they came back here it was good harvest season.

She lived with her parents and went directly to her husband when she married. She stayed three years and established her own household.

Sometimes she sold siwa, now she has stopped because the inputs became expensive. Now she is living there with her children heading a family.

The respondent has not experienced serious illness or accidents.

The respondent has never been to school. She has no intention to learn. She may learn if adult education comes to the tabia. She did not go to school because her parents did not tell her to go to school. She also did know about the benefit of going to school.

She started weeding in 1996EC, years ago. At the age of 8 she started cleaning house, cooking stew and fetching water. At the age of 12 she started baking *injera*. At 15 she started washing clothes and cutting crops. In 1994EC she started brewing *siwa*. In 2004EC she started doing labour work.

She started to have interest after she got married. She had no boyfriend. She got married at 17 years old. Her first sexual experience was with her husband and she faced no problem related to it.

She chose her husband and she wanted to get married at that time. Her parents were keen on her getting married. She set up her own household at the age of 18 years.

She got divorced 9 years ago. She has not married after that but she got a child from her ex-husband and another person.

She is living in Maekel town. It has been 8 years since she established her own household by renting a house. Even when she was living with parents she was living in her own household.

She has 3 children and the first child is 12 years old. Since she delivered at Dera health centre there was a problem in delivery and she delivered by operation. She is not circumcised because it is not known in the area. All children live with her.

The respondent is follower of the Orthodox Christian church. She said that she is an active follower because she usually goes to church on holidays unless she is in a menstruation period.

The important person for the respondent is the father of the last child who gives clothes for his child. The one who was her first husband also gives some support and buys clothes for his children. In most cases she is the one who covers his expenditure. Her brother in Saudi helps her financially and he helped her to pay government credit. Her parents are important for her because they help her in keeping children when she goes to market or mill house. When she faces food shortages they give her grain.

She has no friends who support her. She and her neighbour borrow materials and flour from each other.

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

The provision of school did not affect her life because she did not attend. There was no irrigation, dairy cow or irrigation that affected her life as she grew up.

There was a cooperative was when she was a child but it did not play a part in her life.

There was no mill house in the tabia. It was only in Atsbi and Sinkata; for her wedding grain was taken to Sinkata and ground there. There was no intervention in provision of clean water, she was using water from a spring.

There was no vaccination. She remembers that about 80 children died due epidemic in 1980EC.

There is no political intervention or cultural intervention that affected her life.

The respondent pays 20 birr land tax and it is increasing over time. There is no other type of tax that the respondent pays. She contributes grain and cash. The grain is deducted from food aid she is given. They deducted 1kg of grain from each of her family members. When the support comes in cash by the finance from the wereda they do not deduct anything. She is a beneficiary of PSNP support. She was given 24kg of wheat per month when it was grain. She always does free labour contribution. Last year she worked for 20 days before, that it was for 40 days. It is done per household because the rest are children.

She is member of the party so she attends meetings. She is leader of a development group with 30 households, she is leader of a 1-5 network. She mainly coordinates women’s affairs in the absence of the chair person. She leads meetings. They discuss jobs, health, agriculture, water harvesting and education.

Because of equality of rights she is member of the tabia council. She has equal rights to participate in important decisions because it is done through voting.

She is a member of the women’s association, women’s league and, party. She pays membership fee for all. She attends meetings of the women’s association, they teach them about their rights, and to respect others’ rights too. The league and party membership is the same. So far there is no benefit from the membership but she looks forwards to getting the benefit.

She participates in *equb*. She pays 10 birr every week and 5 birr saving. From the 30 development group 18 women are in this equb.180 birr is collected at a time. The saving is 5 birr every week, to be used when it is required. *Equb* is good. There is no *iddir*.

The health volunteer in the group, her sister, is 10th grade. They teach about health, to deliver at the health centre, to drink clean water, clean house, and use latrines. The teaching by the health workers is important in making her and her children healthy. Currently she is living in a rented house so the owner of the house has dug a latrine. It helped her to be clean. She did not visit model farmers. The presence of vaccination is making her children healthy.

The presence of the school is important to her because she is sending her children to it. She took credit but it did not help her because she took 4000 birr and bought a cow and sheep 4 years ago. The cow died during the drought. Now she has a small unpaid loan. Her brother in Saudi assisted her to pay, otherwise she could not have paid the debt.

She has no irrigation or dairy cows. She has access to potable water and this helps her to be healthy. There is a grinding mill in Dera and in Harresaw. It gives her relief from grinding by stone.

Vaccination and bed net are also important.

There is no cultural intervention which is playing an important role in her life now.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

For the coming five years she aspires to have land and build her own house. With her life there is nothing different she plans to do because she has no money. She will make her children continue their schooling.

For the coming five years she wishes for development in the community by doing what the government says. If the rain comes on time the community will improve.

## Rich young woman mid-20s

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Persons | Relation to household head | sex | age |
| You | Wife | F | 24 |
| Head | Head | M | 31 |
| child | daughter | F | 7 |

### Youth in the community

There is an economic problem among adolescent girls in the community. There are more schools in the tabia than previously and adolescent girls go to school. The problem in education for adolescent girls and young men is that they do not complete their education and get government jobs because they fail in 8th and 10th grades. These examinations are difficult to pass. Many girls and boys failed in 8th grade in this year.

Finding a husband and getting married is not easy. It was easier to get a husband in her time. Now the problem is due to shortage of land but still the youth males go to Arab countries and marry. They also search for another means of income and do trading and doing labour works. It still is good. Marrying at the age of 18 was common. Many still marry at the age of 18, there is not much change from her time.

Making an independent household after marriage is common among married adolescent girls. Renting before marriage is not common. It was similar in her time.

The number of children is fewer now when compared to a long time ago but it is similar to her time. Youths limit children due to economic problems, they want to bring up fewer children in a good way.

Adolescent girls at this age do household chores which is the same as in her time. Some adolescent girls retail biscuits and other goods. They do farm activities like cutting, weeding, threshing harvested crops using oxen. It was also the same in her time. Adolescent girls also work on PSNP public works. In her time participation of adolescent girls in PSNP public works was very rare. When her parents could not work on PSNP she was assisting her parents in PSNP public works. When there are more family members parents take some of their children with them to assist them.

Adolescent girls do not participate in the community. This is the same as in her time, she also did not have community participation when she was adolescent.

Some adolescent girls go to church to pray. They make individual prayers or stand and complete the full prayer ceremony of the church but there is no other well organised participation. In her time adolescent girls going to church were not common, now it has become common. In general the current opportunities and problems of adolescents are the same.

Young men have good opportunities in terms of having access to education. Better opportunity for education, high school, 8th grade recently. There is good follow up from teachers.

Failing 8th and 10th grades are the problems that young men and girls are facing at this time. Even though students are clever they fail. She has a brother who is 20 years old and he is clever and hardworking but he failed 10th grade. Other neighbours lost hope after he failed, some even stopped going to school. So the problem is that even those who are hardworking are not passing.

There is shortage of land among young men. Among young men in her time there was shortage of land but they could get land from their parents during marriage. Now they cannot get land even during marriage. Young men have to work and generate their own income. The opportunity for young men that was not there for young men in her time is land distribution even though it was given to some. Those males and females above the age of 18 years were given land recently, this is a good opportunity for those who got land.

The work opportunities that are available currently are migration to Saudi Arabia, PSNP and trading.

In her time going to Saudi was quite rare. It was those with many family members who used to go but now many youths are migrating and improving their life. Some of those who migrate come back in bad condition. Many also die on their way but now the incidence of death has reduced recently.

Finding a wife and getting married is easy. Young men marry but they marry and leave their wives with their parents or with their wives’ parents until they get some kind of income in other places. It is the same for young men of her age.

Young men do not establish an independent household unless they are married and this is similar to young men in her time.

When young men marry their wives usually use contraceptives after having one child. This is the same as in her time. Young men attend various meetings in the tabia. Young men work as development group leaders. Whenever there are weddings and deaths young men participate in the same way.

Young men pray by going to church. They do labour work whenever there is construction or renewal of church buildings. Young men attend religious teaching by priests. Young men usually go to church on holidays, Sundays, 21st, 12th, 27th, 5th and 4th days of each month. Young men experience problems in earning enough money.

### Your life story

The respondent was born in Equnta, one of the *gots* in tabia Harresaw. She grew up with her mother and father. She is the only daughter of her parents. Currently both of her parents are alive.

When she was six years old she had a good life. She used to have enough food and milk. She was getting good care from her parents. She was living in Equnta *got* with her parents and her 3 brothers. Her household did not experience major shocks. Both of her parents are alive.

She was living with her parents before she started to live with her husband. She was living with her parents even after her marriage because her husband migrated to Saudi Arabia. She got pregnant and delivered with her parents, after that her husband was evicted and got back to his home and then she stayed with him for one month before he migrate again. Now they established their own household after that. She was given land in 2001EC. It has been a month since her husband came.

She has not experienced serious illness or accidents during her life. She started her education when she was 7 years old. She attended only for half a semester and dropped out of school because she was becoming absent because her mother was sick. She did not understand the subjects well because she was becoming absent.

During the semester examination she was told that she failed to pass. At that time she stopped.

She has no intention of returning to school. She learned half semester in first grade. Now she cannot continue because she is too old to continue.

She started to work when she was 5 years old by cleaning house. When she was 7 years old she was preparing porridge and *tihilo*. She started baking *injera* when she was 10 years old. She started making *sifet* when she was 15 years old. In 1996EC she got married, at the age of 20 years she started doing PSNP public works. She started doing farm activities like weeding at the age of 20 years. She did not do her own business or work for others.

She has no education so it did not help in her work.

She started to have interest in boys when she was 16 years old. She had no boyfriend. Her first sexual experience was with her husband in 1996EC. There was no problem with it.

She got married in 1996EC. The marriage was arranged by her parents and she did not choose him at the beginning but she liked him. She wanted to get married. Her parents were very keen on her getting married. She established her own household in 2004EC. She is still married to her first husband. She has one child who was born in 1997EC. She experienced no problem she was having ANC. She was referred to Atsbi for delivery and she paid 40 birr, then she was given injection and tablets. She has one child and she is living with her. The child is 7 years old.

She is a follower of the Orthodox Christian church. She is active follower because she always attends church. She always attends the full prayer ceremony at church. She is member of Bealmariam and Kidanemiret mehaber.

Most important people for the respondent are her parents because she was living with her parents after marriage. She was eating from her parents before her husband got a good job and started to work and send remittances.

Her neighbours support each other during sickness and labour works. Neighbours, male and female, they do farming activities together through the network. Her brother fetches wood whenever there is a holiday feast of mehaber.

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

The presence of education did not affect her life. Presence of government credit was helpful in her life. There were no cooperatives when she grew up. When she grew up she did not have access to drinking water. The presence of the mill was important because she did not grind by hand she was taking it to the mill house.

Her parents told her that she was vaccinated for different diseases, she believes that it made her healthy. There were many people dying in the long past in the absence of vaccinations.

There is no political and cultural intervention that affected her life as she grew up.

She pays 20 birr land tax annually. She works on free labour work for 20 days. She also contributes grain when emergency food aid comes. It is deducted at 1 kg from one person. She gets aid from emergency support. She gets support she is given only for one family member. She contributed 6 kg of wheat last year.

She does not participate in tabia and sub-tabia offices. She was selected as a group leader of 1-5 network but she went and it was said that she was replaced.

Her house was constructed 3 years ago. She made a latrine and did all the other health packages. She was told that what she did was good but when they said she was graduated she was given a prize in health. She was given a certificate and T-shirt as a prize for completing the health packages. Doing the health packages is good to prevent illness.

She did not see model farmers. Health promoters are good they teach to make a clean house and use latrines.

She is a member of the women’s association. She pays a membership fee. Sometimes she participates in meetings of the women’s association and they talk about development activities and about the use of compost. She does not participate in iddir.

She is member of *equb*. It was established recently. It is good to use it for some problems like illness. Members also can borrow with interest of 2 birr for one month. So far she is only contributing.

The use of fertiliser is playing big role in her life now. It is increasing her production a lot. It helped the household to increase its income. After marriage the household took 1000 birr credit and it helped her husband to migrate to Saudi. Now he has paid it. The credit was very important because her husband would not go to Saudi without credit.

Presence of improved wheat is good because she got more production. It helped her family to get more income. She has a hybrid cow, for the future she will benefit when the cow gives birth, it has never had calf before.

The presence of veterinary service is good because when they get very sick they recover but she never experienced it. The presence of vaccinations is good for her and her daughter. The teachings by the health promoters also make her to healthy by protecting her from illness caused by lack of hygiene.

There are no political and cultural interventions which are affecting the life of the respondent.

#### Aspirations and plans for the future

For the next five years she aspires to open a shop and sell goods. She wants to live in Wukro and work with her husband cooperatively. So far she does not have a concrete plan on what she aspires to do. She wants the community to work and improve in the coming five years.

## Middle wealth young woman mid-20s

### Your household

Household members

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Person | Relation to the head | Sex | Age |
| You | Wife | F | 25 |
| Head | Head | M | 28 |
| Child | Daughter | F | 2 |

### Youth in the community

These days adolescent girls have good access to education because there is a school in Dera which teaches up to 10th grade. Tenth and 9th grades were added recently. There is also good access to elementary school. There is up to 8th grade school near tabia Harresaw in addition to the school found in tabia Harresaw. In her time they were learning by going to Atsbi and renting a house. Now there is a better opportunity because it is costly to go and learn at Atsbi.

The big problem that is related to education is having no job after learning for ten years. This problem also existed in her time but the problem is getting worse nowadays. The number of adolescent girls and boys who are not getting a job after completing tenth grade is increasing. At her age girls and boys who completed tenth grade were going to agriculture and other offices. The government was placing them.

Adolescent girls were marrying and stopping education in the past three years. Now there is better awareness in the community. Adolescent girls do not usually stop education for marriage. Now adolescent girls marry above the age of 18 years. At her age they were marrying at the age of 15-16 years. Now the law has become tight, this is a good opportunity that protects adolescent girls. In the past three years and before that the law was not tight. She agrees that marriage should be above the age of 18 after knowing what is bad and what is good for them but in her time 15-16 was the time when the girls knew nothing about opposite sex relations. Now they marry at a better age, they can also choose their marriage partner. Adolescent girls can also refuse to marry if they do not want to.

Getting a husband and getting a wife is easy. It is when the husband asks for her and when they love each other that they marry. Getting a husband and getting married was easier in the past in her time. There is a delay because the man wants to earn income. It is the same for the adolescent girls. Adolescent girls wait 3-4 years after becoming engaged. Adolescent girls do retailing.

Adolescent girls stay in their parents’ house if they are not married. When they marry they establish their own house or they rent at the centre of Harresaw, Midere and Atsbi usually if they are going to sell tea or *siwa*. In her time they stayed one or two years with their parents before they establish their own household, now they immediately go to their own household. The respondent married at the age of 18 years. She stayed 2 years with her parents. Her husband also stayed with his parents and visited her sometimes. They did this until they got economically better. He was working as a foreman in small construction works.

Having children early is not common among adolescent girls. They use contraceptives even before bearing one child. Having children before they marry is not common. If she is 18 years and above she is blessed by making a wedding-like ceremony. After such a ceremony a man who got divorced takes her without a wedding ceremony or she simply gets child from him. Nowadays this is not common, it is minimizing. These days even when a young female reaches the age of 20 years they migrate to Saudi Arabia.

In her time girls delivered a child soon after marriage, there was not wide use of contraceptives. In her time getting contraceptives was in a group. Now adolescent girls can go individually. Now there is also spacing of children. Nowadays there is a three year contraceptive, this is a good thing and it was not there in her time. There were more children in her age within a short period of time. The coming of contraceptives is a good opportunity. In the past when she needed contraceptives she needed to have a group of 5 or 6 women, now it is easy to get contraceptives by going individually. It was also not in the tabia, it was in Dera.

Adolescent girls are involved in retailing vegetables and consumption goods. Now this is a good opportunity. Adolescent girls have become able to participate in trading equally with men. They are doing household chores, fetching water, fetching wood, weeding, harvesting, rotating, going to school, and migrating to Saudi Arabia.

Migration of females to Saudi Arabia started in the last two years, previously it was only men. The age of girls is above 18 years. Below 18 years parents do not allow their children to migrate.

At her age it was only men who used to migrate to Saudi Arabia.

The participation of women in retailing did not happen in her time, it came recently, it is a good opportunity for adolescent girls. Nowadays there are even more females than males who participate in retailing. In the past retailing was not an acceptable thing for females.

They sell vegetables and consumption goods.

When she was adolescent there was no hand pump water and she was fetching water from wells and pools. It was far, now it is nearer. In her time it was taking her 1:30 -2 hours and the water was also not clean at that time. Now it is near and clean and in terms of time it takes 15 minutes. The change in access to potable water came in the last two years.

Girls were also working in irrigation in her time. They are also working in irrigation these days.

Adolescent girls participate in development groups coordinating development activities. There is more participation in the community. These days there are also more opportunities to participate in the community like 1-5 group, development group and the like.

Adolescent girls go to church and attend *kidase* (full prayer ceremony by priests); today it is becoming like in towns. The young and old go to church. The priests teach to respect holidays and the youth do accordingly. Adolescents in her time respected holidays, it was the case since the past but going to church is increasing now. It is a good thing to be an active participant. In her time even youth liked to go but they feared people because there was not a good attitude towards youths going to church.

There is good variety of clothes, in the past there was no competition in clothing and shoes, fashion in all aspects. This creates the feeling of not having money. There was shortage of money in the past now since the youths also earn income it is better. If there is one sheep it breeds and helps to buy a lot of things.

There is not good opportunity for young men to learn and get job. They learn up to some grade and they fail or they quit by themselves. Shortage of land is critical problem among young men. This creates shortage in income because the income depends on farming. Shortage of land has increased because parents have already given land to older children. The shortage of land also existed among young men in her time.

These days the number of young men migrating to Saudi has increased significantly. Young men are improving their life by going to Saudi Arabia. The participation of young men in retailing was limited in her time but now it has increased. These days young men do labour work in the community, in her time they were migrating to other places like Mekelle to do labour work. The change came because there is change in awareness about earning income. Young men work in irrigation and there is no change from what young men were doing in her time.

Finding a wife and getting married was easier among young men in her time. These days men have to be economically strong before they marry which takes them some time.

Men can establish households easily after they get married. If they do not get married they stay with their parents.

These days some young men have children without marriage. When they marry they do not get children soon because of the use of contraceptives and they space their children.

Nowadays young men participate more frequently in meetings on government administration issues. The participation has increased from the participation of young men in her time.

The religious participation among young men in these days is increasing. They go to church on holidays. The participation in her time was not as strong as currently.

### Your life story

The respondent was born in Harresaw in a place called Mariam Wueo. In the first six years she was living with her parents in the place where she was born. Her younger sister was also living with her. She had good living status. Her household was middle income. Her parents had good and peaceful relationship with each other. The means of income for the household was farming.

There was no shock that the household experienced when she was growing up.

The respondent came directly from her family to her current household.

There is no illness or accident that she faced during her life.

The respondent is not going to school. She dropped out of school when she was in 3rd grade. The reason why she stopped schooling was that her mother was sick. And she went to Sinkata for treatment and the respondent became absent for 3 days then the teacher dismissed her. Her mother was seriously ill and stayed for a month. She went as far as Adigrat to get treatment. She also went to holy water then her mother died not having awareness, and nobody tried to take her back to school.

She was not serious about education as she is now. She was not much in school because she was a child. Her parents, especially her father, were keen on her going to school. Her stopping was not related to marriage.

At the age of 8 she started herding sheep and cattle. At the age of 10 years she started fetching water and cleaning house. At the age of 15 she started baking *injera*, cooking stew and preparing coffee. At the age of 16 she started washing clothes. At the age 17 she started brewing *siwa*. At the age of 18 she started weeding and harvesting. She has never worked for another household.

The schooling at 3rd grade helped her to write her name and read a bit. It is making her to do things in a hygienic way. She can count and do computing very well.

She started to have interest in boys at above the age of 18 years. She did not have awareness about it. She had no boyfriend. She got married at the age of 18 and she had her first sexual experience with her husband, no problem related with this. Her parents brought the husband to her and she accepted him, she did not hate him. She wanted to get married. At that time she had interest to marry because she had friends who got married. Her parents were keen on her getting married. She established her own household after one year.

The respondent is still living with her first husband. She is living in Harresaw in a place called Mariam Wuo. She has one child. She gave birth in 2002EC. She had complications during delivery and she delivered at Dera health centre. She had a long labour which lasted more than 6 hours. They took her at 1 o’clock then she delivered without an operation. She has a 2 year old daughter and she is living with her. The respondent does not know whether she is circumcised or not.

The respondent is a follower of the Orthodox Christian church. She is an active follower because she respects holidays and she goes to church on holidays.

The important persons in her life of the respondent are her parents because they gave her money or grain. Her younger sister supports her in labour works on holidays. Her sister also assists her by taking grain to the mill house and bringing it to her.

Her friends are her neighbours when she gets problems they support her in labour in holiday works, borrow flour, when guests come to the respondent she takes cooked food from neighbours.

She borrows household materials.

She is participating in a newly established *iddir,* they are contributing money. It is about a year since it got established. The *iddir* members are her neighbours.

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

School provision helped her to learn up to 3rd grade. It made her able to write her name and she is able to compute numbers well. Government credit service improved the status of her household when she grew up. The credit helped the household to buy sheep and cow. The credit helped to make a wedding feast for the respondent. There was government food aid which helped her to get enough food for the household. In her time there was no vaccination, children were dying in epidemics. There is no political or cultural intervention that played a part in her life. Her uvula got cut when she was child.

She pays 20 birr land tax. She made contributions from what she got as food aid, but she does not know how much they deducted. She made no cash contributions.

She did not in meet with tabia or sub-tabia office.

She is member of a 1-5 network. The health extension workers teach her about the use of latrine and liquid and solid waste management. She has a latrine, liquid waste disposal, and kitchen cupboard. She has completed all the packages. She had her child vaccinated. She uses contraceptives, it is important, if not she would have had another child which makes it difficult raise them. Having many children is bad for the child as well as for the mother.

She did not visit model farmers and she has said visiting model farmers does not have any importance. Health promoters teach by going house to house, the same as 1-5 network.

She participates in the women’s association and she is a party member. In the women’s association they give awareness in meetings and teach about health. It is good, there is a meeting twice a week. It increases awareness.

She has started to participate in a new *iddir*. It has been a year and she is contributing 1 birr per month, but so far they did not buy anything, the *iddir* has not started to function. She does not participate in an *equb.*

Provision of education is not playing role in the current life of the respondent; in the future she will send her child to school.

She did not take credit or improved beehives. She takes fertiliser and it is important for thin land. It increases production by 50%. She takes improved wheat and it increases production by 50%. Sometimes the improved wheat is affected by rust. She is getting potable water nearby.

The health service is nearby and she uses it for her child’s vaccination. She uses contraceptives. She benefits from the teaching of health extension workers. She participates in meetings equally with men. Women are given the opportunity to participate equally with men.

She participates in the women’s association. She is also a party member. In the women’s association she attends meetings and she gets information about health and development interventions. She is not a member of the youth association.

There is no cultural intervention that affected the life of the respondent. Her daughter has undertaken cutting of uvula.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

For the next five years she aspires to open a shop and improve her life. She wants to be engaged in retailing goods and selling vegetables in Dera. When her husband comes back from Saudi they have plans to open a shop and to improve together. The plan is not concrete but it is only a wish, not a concrete plan.

Her aspiration for the community is to be rich and get enough food.

## Poor young woman mid-20s

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Person | Relation to household head | Sex | Age |
| You | Daughter | F | 24 |
| Head | Head | F | 50 |
| Sibling 1 | son | M | 18 |
| Sibling 2 | Son | M | 11 |
| person 3 | Grand daughter | F | 1 |

### Youth in the community

These days there is no forced marriage. This is good thing for adolescent girls. In her time there was marriage by force. She got married by her choice not by pressure from family. Now there is no marriage under the age of 18 because parents are asked before the law. Now it is good, the interest of girls about whom to marry is respected.

These days adolescent girls migrate to other towns and Saudi when they complete 10th grade. This is because there is no job opportunity after completing education. This is the same as in her time. She has completed 10th grade but she failed to pass to the next grade.

There is education access nearby and in the tabia. There are 9th and 10th grades in Dera school. In her time 9th and 10th grades were by going to Atsbi and renting a house there. She attended 9th and 10th grades by renting house in Atsbi. Now this is a good improvement. In her time there were some adolescent girls who were not going to school due to lack of money for house rent. Now this has been improved. They learn at Dera and come back to Harresaw every day. In her time parents had a good attitude about sending their female children to school. This attitude increased over time. It was worse in the generation before her, it improved in her time, and now it is much better.

These days the process for marriage and weddings is shorter than previously. There is promise–making, then after months, follows the wedding. In her time they used to wait 1-2 years after they made the promise because they had to wait until the girl completed her education. Now there is not much hope for education so they drop out of school and marry. Adolescent girls drop out in 9th and 10th grades. Nowadays most of the adolescent girls marry at the age of 18 years. This is later than when she was adolescent, they were marrying at the age of 16. She got married at the age of 19.

In the past marriage was only marrying without worrying about improvement in life. Those who have nothing also marry to get a child. Getting husband is easy but some give priority to economic improvement so they delay marriage for economic improvement. So marriage is not as easy as it was in her time. Mostly men decide when to marry.

Adolescent girls do not establish their own households unless they get married. After marriage establishing their own household is sooner now. In her time the male stayed with his father and the female stayed with her parents until they got strengthened economically. The respondent is married but she has not formed her own independent household.

Many adolescent girls who get married do not immediately get a child because they use contraceptives. In her time there was no use of contraceptives at the beginning because there was perception that the use of contraceptive before having children causes infertility. There is more care for children at this time, it was less in her time. The difference is in terms of what they feed them, what they wear and the hygiene of the children. The respondent got a child soon after her marriage.

Adolescent girls do household chores, PSNP public works, farming activities and retailing goods at market. This is the same as what she used to do when she was adolescent except for retailing goods.

There is better community participation among adolescent youths. There is a chance given to the youth. She did not have community participation when she was young.

Adolescent girls at this time go to church more than previously. In her times youths were not going to church because parents refused to let them. She was not going to church when she was adolescent. Sometimes she was going when she was living in Atsbi. There is a saying: ‘if you pray at an early age it means begging to die early’.

Access to education is good for young men because they can get it nearby. The access is a good opportunity, however many young men fail at Grades 10 and 12. When they complete these grades they simply get back to agricultural activities.

There is land shortage among the majority of the young men at this time. Young men depend on parents for land. Those young men who have no land generate income by retailing goods. The shortage of land also existed in her time.

Works that are being done by young men at this time are retailing, farming, labour work and Saudi migration. A majority have migrated, there are even 12 years old boys forced to go to Saudi by parents. 9th and 10th grade students drop out and migrate. On being successful in migrating, chance matters. There are many males and females who died on their way. There are also many who worked and improved their and their family’s life. The majority of the young men are those who became successful. Migration to Saudi was not common in her time. It was very rare at that time. At this time almost everyone in the community has sent someone to Saudi Arabia.

Finding a wife and getting married was easier in her time but now youths prefer to migrate or work before they marry. There are no young men who establish their independent household before they get married. After marriage young men establish a household faster than young men in her time.

In terms of having children, young men are not interested in many children like in her time. Use of contraceptives is common among young couples.

Community participation is better among young men these days but there are not many youths in the community because they are continually migrating to Saudi Arabia. In PSNP there are not many youths who participate in the public works.

There is better church attendance among young men in these times. They contribute money to church and attend religious teachings by priests. Young men in her time did not have much participation in the church.

### Your life story

She was born in 1981EC in Asmara, Eritrea. She was living in Asmara for up to six years with her younger brother and her parents. Her parents were running their own tea room. She came back when she reached 7 years old. When they were in Asmara their life was good they were middle income family. Her father came to Harresaw in 1983EC for the land redistribution and her mother stayed 3 years in Asmara, after that they all the family came back to Harresaw. Her father went to war and stayed from 1983EC to 1986EC and then he came back he went again in 1990EC to war and he died there.

The respondent’s father died in a battle in 1990EC. The death of the father was a big shock for the family because he was the one generating income for the household. There was no one in the household who could plough their farm. The land was given for share cropper and the income decreased. She was able to go to school because support used to be given to war victims’ families. There was a registration fee in the past. Now there is no school fee but it existed until she was a 5th grade student.

There were 10 sheep given to the orphans by the monk but all of them died in the 2001EC drought. The household faced food shortage in 2001EC drought but food aid was given and improved their situation.

Her father was getting income by retailing kerosene so this income also got reduced after the death of her father. If her father were alive they would have lived a much better life.

Her mother was getting support in PSNP public work but as she got older she was given a paper to change her status to direct support but so far after the change she hasn’t got anything as officials say there is no quota for direct support.

She rented a house in Atsbi and learned for two years until she completed 9th, 10th grades and she was coming back home for three months break now she has completed schooling and she is living with her mother. She has never been seriously ill or faced an accident.

She has completed 10th grade but she did not get a score that enables her to join preparatory school. She liked school and she wanted to continue. She had a score to attend private schools but she does not have money. She does not have a college education. Her parents were keen to send her to school. She got married after completing tenth grade.

At the age of 7 she started cleaning house. At the age of 12 she started cooking stew. At the age of 14 years she started baking *injera*, washing clothes, weeding, and fetching wood and water. At the age of 17 she was retailing goods after the completion of school. Her education helped her in calculation. It also helped because her thinking is better than that of the uneducated. She has better hygiene in doing household chores. She started to work as a preschool teacher in 2002EC.

At the age of 19 years she started to have interest in boys and she had a boyfriend. She did not experience sex before marriage. She got married to her boyfriend at the age of 19 after she completed her education. She chose him and she wanted to get married when she did not continue her education. There is no choice other than marriage. Her mother was keen on the marriage. The couple has not established their own household so far because her husband is a student at Semera university. She is still living with her mother. She is still in relationship with her husband.

She has one child who lives with her. The child is her first born. The child was born in 2002EC. The child is 1 year and 6 months old. There was no problem that she faced during delivery. She delivered at home. She is not circumcised.

She is follower of the Orthodox Christian church. She goes to church on holidays, not on a regular basis because it is rural. She does not wait until the whole prayer session is over. She says that she has medium status regarding her participation in church.

The important person for the respondent is her mother. She made her go to school. She is also still living with her. Her mother fulfils her basic needs. She borrows money from her friends. She gets no support from other people.

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

The government intervention that affected her life is the provision of school. She has completed tenth grade. The presence of credit service also helped the household to get start-up capital for her father’s business of selling kerosene. The credit also helped the household to buy ox and sheep. Generally the presence of credit has a positive effect on her life. It made her have enough school materials. The use of irrigation also helped the respondent to have better access to food.

Three family members including her are members of the tabia cooperative but so far there is not much benefit they get from it. Only this year they got a dividend share.

There was no water point nearby but there was a mill house. This made her able not to spend much time on grinding grain.

Vaccination service that she got in the tabia prevented her from epidemics that kill children.

There is no political and cultural intervention that affected the life of the respondent as she grew up.

Her uvula was cut when she was a child. Her gum was burned with hot iron.

The household paid 40birr for land tax. There is no other tax the household pays.

There is deduction from PSNP support for school and hall construction but not this year because they are not given.

She had no participation in tabia or sub-tabia office.

She does not participate as a health promoter or model family but she gets lessons from them. She was participating as a health promoter, now she has quit that, now she is a preschool teacher. Health promoters teach about latrines, compost, liquid waste disposal and kitchen cabinets. They are all important for the family.

Her household is in a 1-5 development group, all teach about health. Model farmers are good to show good changes. She has seen planted apples and they have taken apples.

She and her mother participate in the women’s association and women’s league. She makes annual contributions to both women’s organisations.

There is no meeting, they call only for membership fee collection. In the party there is a meeting three times a year, they discuss farming, health and the work of all sectors. It benefits her to know many things. They teach on the benefits of various things which increases awareness.

The respondent participates in an *Iddir* organised in the 30 households of the development team. She pays monthly. It was started in 2002EC. So far there is no material bought for the *iddir*, there is only contribution.

The respondent does not participate in an *equb*.

She participates in Bealmariam mehaber which constitutes 4 members. They get together monthly and eat and drink *siwa*, *injera* or *tihilo*.

The education provision since 2002EC for preschool age children is good because she started to teach a class of 5-6 years age. It created a job opportunity for her.

The presence of irrigation, improved wheat, improved beans and fertilisers is playing a role in making the household to get better income. The irrigation is far from her house so they do not plant vegetables.

There is no credit taken by the household. Mills have existed since the past and they reduce the workload.

The health interventions are good for having better hygiene and sanitation, that makes her healthy.

There is no political and cultural intervention that is affecting her life now. The women’s and youth association has no important role in her life.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

For the next five years she wants to open a shop and get improved including her household, to make them get better food and clothes. She has no concrete plan, it is more of wish. In the next five years she wishes the community to improve its livelihood as with the teachings given by the government.

## Rich young woman 16-17

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| person | Relation to household head | sex | age |
| you | daughter | F | 17 |
| Head | Head | F | 47 |
| Brother | Son | M | 10 |
| Sister | daughter | F | 7 |

### Youth in the community

The problem among adolescent girls when they grow up these days is there is a shortage of teachers. There is not much problem in passing grades up to 8th grade but there is a problem in 8th grade and above. There is failing in 8th and 10th grades. There is a problem of getting to school nearby in kushet Harresaw. It is usually cold and long to travel from kushet Harresaw to Dera. There is up to 10th grade in Dera school but it is far from kushet Harresaw. Some adolescent girls face economic problems in making necessary expenditure on school materials in their life.

Finding a husband and getting married is not easy because they give their attention to their school but if they like they get a husband easily. Adolescent girls do not establish independent households. Most of the adolescent girls are attending school. When they marry they use contraceptives, some of them use them when they marry, others use contraceptives after they give birth.

Adolescent girls who are married do PSNP works. They do weeding, household chores and craft works called *Sifet*. Some adolescent girls are involved in health volunteer work.

Adolescent girls go to church and make short prayers but do not wait until the whole prayer ceremony is over. The older people complete the whole prayer ceremony but the adolescent girls do not.

The good opportunity at this time is that adolescent girls are not forced to marry if they are under the age of 18.

There is good access to education for young men but failing before achieving the target is a problem.

There is land scarcity among young men because the land is already taken by older people. Young men these days do labour work, farming activities like ploughing and threshing with oxen. Young men also migrate to Afar and Saudi Arabia.

Finding a wife and get married is easy for young men.

Young men do not get an independent household easily they stay with their parents because it is not affordable. Young men get children when they get married, some of them get a child outside of marriage.

Participation of young men is not that much because there are not many youths in the tabia because they have migrated to Saudi Arabia.

The religious participation is the similar to that of adolescent girls. They make short prayers but they do not wait until the whole prayer session of the church gets completed. They go to church on holidays.

Migration to Saudi Arabia is a problem for the young men because they face a lot of problems on the way and they are also evicted when they arrive in Saudi Arabia.

### Your life story

The respondent was born in Harresaw. When she was six years old she was growing up with her mother who was poor. Her mother has a problem with her right arm, it is loosened, it does not function properly. Her mother cannot work. She was with her mother and two siblings at Harresaw. Her father was not in the household because he had a formal wife. Her mother was like a concubine. Her mother’s disability was since her birth.

There was no major shock that the respondent experienced when she was growing up. The respondent has never been out of the household. The respondent has never had serious illness or accident in her life. She started schooling in 1998EC. Currently she is learning in 7th grade. Her educational goal is to continue her education up to 12 grade and beyond that in higher education.

She started to fetch water with a small container when she was 6 years old. At the age of ten she started cooking stew and preparing coffee. At the age of 12 she started baking *injera*. At the age of 14 she started roasting barley. She has never been involved in business and never worked for other people. Her education on sanitation helped her to do her work in a clean way.

The respondent has not started taking interest in boys. She has never been married. She has no child. She is not circumcised. She is follower of the Orthodox Christian church.

The important person for the respondent is her mother because she sends her to school. She buys her clothes, shoes and school material. The girl’s father also assists her by buying notebooks for school. The respondent has no siblings who assist her.

She has some good friends. If she gets absent from school they take a note book and write notes for her. Some of her friends are jealous of her, they tell her to quit schooling. Those who are not happy about her friends who are not going to school say that to her.

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

The presence of school has helped her a lot. She is now learning at Dera School. She is learning in a nearby town without the need to pay for house rent. If there was no education she would have been married and become the mother of children which is not her interest.

She was vaccinated when she was a child, this has made her healthy.

There is no political intervention that affected her life as she was growing up.

Banning of underage marriage is good because it made her to continue her education. Her mother wanted to make her marry but the respondent appealed to the school and the mother was called to school by the women affairs officer in school and the marriage of the respondent was cancelled. This is very important to her.

There is no benefit from the youth association as she grew up.

There is no cultural intervention that played part in her life as she grew up.

She does not participate in the women’s and youth association. She does not participate in *iddir*, *equb* or other community initiated organisations.

The presence of school is very important in her current life.

She is now learning at Dera School.

The household has only three sheep, the land is given for sharecropping. The household does not buy fertiliser, the sharer cropper buys fertiliser. The use of fertiliser is good to increase production. The household never took credit because her mother has a fear of how to repay it.

They do not take the sheep they have to the veterinary service because they are not many, they do not give attention to them. She fetches water from a stream, she has no access to hand pump water because there is none in her kushet. She climbs hills to get water. There is no easy and clean water access in Harresaw. There is no grinding mill in Harresaw kushet, they go to Dera town so still it takes her time. (The mill house found in Harresaw was not working during the interview but started to work at the end of our field work).

In the health post there are heath volunteers who teach how to construct a latrine, make a kitchen cupboard, and clean house and livestock house. This is helpful to her because it makes her environment to be clean and healthy. If she does not clean house and animal dung it will be a cause of illness.

There is no benefit from the youth association in her current life.

There is no cultural intervention that played a part in her life as she grew up.

She does not participate in the women’s and youth association. She does not participate in *iddir*, *equb* or other community initiated organisations.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

In the coming five years she aspires to get higher education, she wants to be in 12th grade. She aspires to get good marks that will enable her to join university. She aspires for the life of the household to get better in the coming five years. She has a concrete plan to achieve her aspiration. She will be studying very hard.

She aspires for the community not to be dependent on government but to be living by working hard and earning their own income.

## 

## Middle wealth young woman 16-17

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| person | Relation to HH head | Sex | age |
| you | Daughter | F | 17 |
| Head | Head | M | 85 |
| Mother | wife | F | 34 |
| Sibling 1 | son | M | 18 |
| Sibling 2 | son | M | 7 |
| Sibling 3 | Daughter | F | 10 |
| Sibling 4 | son | M | 4 |
| Sibling 5 | Daughter | F | 11 |

### Youth in the community

There are schools for boys and girls to go and learn but some adolescent girls including her face financial problems to continue education. Adolescent girls easily find a husband and get married, adolescent girls who do not want to marry are not forced to by their parents. They are not also allowed to marry if they are below the age of 18 years.

Adolescent girls do not establish their own households alone, they stay with their parents until they get married. After marriage they stay a year and less and establish their own household with their husband. These days most of the adolescent girls do not have children very soon after marriage. The use of contraceptives is very common in among married adolescent girls.

The work of adolescent girls in the community is herding sheep, household chores, weeding, digging farms, irrigation, watering plants and harvesting. Adolescent girls do not have participation in the community. They usually stay at home except for going to market and school. Adolescent girls go to church for prayer. The respondent also goes to church for prayer.

Young men who have money attend schooling, those who do not are engaged in trading. Men do farming and livestock rearing and labour work. Young men migrate to Saudi Arabia for work. They go to Afar and work there.

Whenever young men decide to marry it is to find a wife and get married. In making an independent household, the majority stay with the family even after marriage but they separate their house within their family. Young men at this time do not want to have many children. They usually have two children. Young men are leaders of youth associations. The religion found in the tabia is one but there are different churches. Young men pray by going to their nearest church. They also celebrate the Meskel holiday with the community.

### Your life story

The respondent was born in Harresaw. She was living in Harresaw when she was 6 years old. She was living with her parents and siblings. The wealth status of the household was ranked as poor.

The shock that the household faced was in 2001EC. There was a serious drought and they had shortage of food. The food shortage in the household was solved by government food aid which was provided during the drought. The government also brought them husks and straw for the cattle. There were no cattle that died at that time. Her father was very sick and got treated at that time. The respondent has never been out of home, she is still in the same household.

The respondent has a chronic heart problem. It makes her to have difficulty climbing mountains and when she carries wood. She went to the health centre at Dera once and she was given tablets. She is now in a better condition but still she has a problem when she runs. It did not affect her education in any way. She stopped her education when her father became sick. She is exempted from carrying wood and water.

The respondent started schooling when she was 7 years old. Now she has dropped out of school at 6th grade. She has interest in going to school but she cannot learn due to financial problems in the household. She liked to go to school. She did not want to leave. The respondent started herding at the age of 10. She started baking *injera* at the age of 13. She started weeding and cutting at the age of 15. She also started retailing goods at Midere at the age of 5 years. The respondent has never worked for other people. There is no way education helped in her work.

The respondent has not started taking interest in boys. She has never been married. She does not have any child. She is not circumcised. The respondent is follower of orthodox Christianity. She does not consider herself as an active follower because she does not go to church on a regular basis. She goes to church only on annual holidays.

The respondent’s parents are important persons for her because they provide her with everything that she needs. They provide her with food and clothing.

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

The presence of education made her able to read and write even though she has dropped out of school now. Government food aid was important when she grew because there was time that there was no good harvest.

The household pays 20 birr land tax. Her mother made 20 days labour contribution last year. The health promoters teach about health and based on the teachings the household has a latrine, chicken house and kitchen cupboard. She thinks that it protects the household from illness. The respondent does not participate in women’s or youth organisations.

There is irrigation and it is making her to eat cabbage, beans, and onions, they also sell them. There are no cultural or political interventions that affected the life of the respondent.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

For the next five years the respondent aspires to continue her education but it is only if the situation of poverty in her household improves. She does not have a concrete plan. She wishes the household to improve economically. In the next five years she wishes the community to be productive in farming and livestock and earn good incomes.

## Poor young woman 16-17

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Person | Relation to the household head | Sex | Age |
| you | Daughter | F | 17 |
| Head | Head | F | 45 |
| Sibling 1 | son | M | 14 |
| Sibling 2 | son | M | 8 |
| Sibling 3 | son | M | 7 |
| Sibling 4 | Daughter | F | 6 |
| Sibling 5 | Daughter | F | 2 |

### Youth in the community

There are good opportunities for adolescent girls in the community. There are schools nearby. Parents also have good attitudes and they are willing to send adolescent girls to school. The tabia administration also sends adolescent girls to school. There is good opportunity for adolescent girls in terms of education because there are schools near to them. There is also a school in Dera which is near. The education given is hard as they grow to higher education and they fail to pass tenth grade. There are many who failed tenth grade. After failing they marry or they simply stay with their parents.

At this time finding a husband and getting married is easy if the adolescent girls want to marry. These days adolescent girls marry with their consent. They choose whom to marry. Many adolescent girls chose to go to school instead of getting married.

Adolescent girls do not establish independent households, they stay with their parents. They establish independent households when they marry. These days many adolescent girls use contraceptives after marriage and limit the number of their children. After marriage most of the youths use contraceptives, they do not bear many children. There are also many female youths who are beyond the age of 20 years who bear children without marriage. They get children from unmarried men.

Adolescent girls in the community work inside and outside of their houses. Inside the house they roast grains, bake *injera*, wash clothes and clean their house. Adolescent girls are also engaged in weeding, harvesting, doing PSNP public works and selling goods on market days.

Adolescent girls do not have much community participation. Adolescent girls go to church on annual holidays and pray but they do not go on a regular basis. The older women regularly attend church and stay longer hours than the adolescent girls.

A good opportunity for adolescent girls is the provision of credit service. This enables them to be engaged in income generating activities and improves their life.

In some cases there is a problem of unwanted pregnancy among adolescent girls and when this happens they go to a health facility and abort it in Atsbi and Mekelle. This is not openly talked about in the community because it is not an acceptable thing.

There is land shortage among young men in the community. Many young men in the community are landless. Many young men are involved in ploughing, weeding and threshing. Many young men migrate to Saudi Arabia and work there. Migration to Saudi Arabia is seen as a good thing, it is a good work opportunity.

Young men delay marriage because they are engaged in business and they migrate. When they want to marry they easily get a wife to marry. When young men marry they easily establish their own household. There is a delay in having children and their wives use contraceptives. They give good care to their children.

### Your life story

The respondent was born in Harresaw at Ekunta *got*.

In the first six years of her life she was growing up with her mother. Her father was not living with her because he did not have a marriage relationship with her mother. Her father also has other children from her mother. She was living in Ekunta when she was a six year old child. At that time there was also her youngest brother living with her.

The major shock that the household faced is food shortage during drought in 2001EC. There was hunger caused by drought. The government made food support for them. The household did not have animals during the drought. The death of her brother on his way to Saudi caused sorrow to the household members but no change in livelihood. There was no divorce because her mother was not in marriage, she was having children from informal affairs.

The respondent has never left her mother’s household.

The respondent has never faced any serious illness or accident during her life.

She has never been to school. She has no intention of going to school because of economic problems.

She started to work at the age of 7 by cleaning house, preparing coffee and fetching water. At the age of 10 she started cooking *wat* and washing clothes. At the age of 14 she started baking injera, and making craft work called *sifet*. At the age of 16 she started retailing goods by spreading out them in her home. At the age of 17 she started weeding.

She has not started taking interest in boys. The respondent has never been married. She has no child.

The respondent does not know if she is circumcised or not. The respondent is follower of the Orthodox Christian church.

The important person for the respondent’s life is her mother because she fulfils her basic needs like food and clothes. Her father does not support her. Friends sometimes assist her in washing clothes

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

Presence of education did not play a part in her life because she did not attend school.

The government intervention that changed the livelihood of the household is the provision of credit service. It helped the household because they used it for retailing sheep and chicken and it improved the income of the household.

The mill house and water point are still far for her. She benefited from vaccinations because she was vaccinated when she was a child.

Her mother pays 20 birr per year for land tax.

The household contributed 6kg of wheat monthly when food aid came. When the support is in cash it is not deducted. She did not participate in the tabia or sub-tabia office. She did not participate in health promotions or model farmers. She does not participate in women’s or youth organisations.

She does not participate in *iddir*, *equb* or other community initiated organisations.

There is no government intervention which is playing a role in the respondent’s life.

She gets treated when she gets sick so the provision of heath service is good for her.

There is no political and cultural intervention which is playing a role in her life. The women’s and youth association is not playing any role in the life of the respondent.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

In the next five years the respondent wants to be engaged in retailing goods and to improve her life. She also wishes for improvement for all the household members. She does not have concrete plans to start a business.

What the respondent wishes for the community in the next five years is to improve by working in the irrigation of vegetables.