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

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##  Rich young man 30s

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Person** | **Relation to HH Head** | **Sex** | **Age** |
| You | HH Head | M | 33 |
| Other | Wife | F | 29 |

### Youth in the community

He said that although there is better educational opportunity at this time, the boys are not using it because they want to go to Saudi due to the poverty at home or due to lack of land. There is lack of jobs even for those who have completed their education. This situation affects the young students so that they lose hope to complete their education. When he compares this time with his time when he was 18/19 years old, this time has better opportunities. He had limited education opportunity. But those who could complete their education could get better jobs because there was shortage of educated human power. There was no land reallocation at that time so that he was depending on his parents who received land during the 1983 ECs distribution. Now, land is reallocated from the holdings of deceased people and those who have migrated. However, the number of landless and the amount land are not proportional. In the past, to find a wife and get married was a simple business; now it is difficult because one needs to buy clothes, gold jewellery and other costs at expensive prices. A poor man can’t afford this. But to have an independent household is better now because many people can go to the towns in search of jobs and get separated from their parents easily. In the past, it was difficult for youth to have independent households because they were dependent on their parent’s land holding. So, unless they received land, they lived with their parents. The health service is now improved because people can get easy access to health centres and health post. This helps people to raise healthy children, despite the costs they pay. The boys have better participation in different development activities and they are improving their lives by doing different paid labour works or doing private business. The awareness of the youth and adults has been improved so that all are visiting the church and attending the religious programmes.

The problems that adolescent girls face are similar to those of men. They face migration and death along their way to cross the border. But for those who want to learn and those who want to work hard and to improve their lives, the opportunities are open. The problem is that the parents’ debt has been too much so as to force the adolescent girls into migration.

### Your life story

He was born at Harresaw kebele, Abiy Dera kushet in 1971 EC. He was living with his parents and two of his siblings (one girl and one boy). He started herding when he was 8 years old. Before that, in 1976 EC, he first went to Adigrat with his family, then to Mekelle and from Mekelle his family was taken to a place called Jumbra by the resettlement programme of the Derg. After two years, his parents took him back home. He helped his parents by herding up to 1983 EC. In 1984 EC, he started to go to school but he stopped soon because he had to help his parents with the farming. After this, he participated in the adult literacy programme for one year; just because he wanted to keep in mind what he had already learnt. He liked to go to school but his room teacher dismissed him because he had missed a lot of classes to help his parents. His parents didn’t want him to go to school but to support them doing their work.

He lived with five of his family members. He was married in 1995 EC to a girl who was chosen by his parents. However, he already had started to have his first sexual experience when he was in Dera. He had a girlfriend in Dera who was from his kushet. There was no problem following that relationship. When he married in 1995 EC, he built a house on his older sister’s land and separated his household. He divorced this marriage in1998 EC and he married his current wife in 2002 EC. His second marriage was arranged by his own initiative but it had to be approved by his parents.

When he was living with his parents, there was a problem of drought in addition to the famine in 1977 EC, his migration for resettlement. His father died in 1999 EC after he suffered from illness and his older brother died during the Ethio-Eritrean war as he was a fighter. His brother died when the respondent was living with his parents; but his father died after he went out from the house. He has not been infected by serious illness.

He was working on the farm land and looking after the livestock when he was living with his parents. After he got married, he started a fattening business in addition to doing the farming. As he has completed grade four, it has helped him to calculate his profit, his expense and incomes when he sells livestock. He divorced his first wife because her parents interfered and insisted on her getting a divorce. But both of them wouldn’t like to get a divorce.

He is a follower of the Orthodox Church and he is an active follower of the church. He has St. Michael’s and his wife has St Mary’s zikir/ mehaber. There are two members in mehaber and they have the round every other month. He said that his neighbours are the most important people for him because they are always available to share his happiness or sorrow with him.

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

As there was access to school when he grew up, he is able to read and write. When he was living with his parents, his father took credit and he misused the money. This had affected the economy of the family and they sold oxen and mules to pay the debt. After his father’s death, he had to take another credit and paid the former debt. As there was irrigation, it had supported his family to get additional production other than the rainfed production. It helped the household to at least get food and not to purchase crops. Although there was a cooperative, his family didn’t benefit at all. The expansion of water service has benefited him to get clean water service. The health service has also been expanded. He said that there is not much change regarding political interventions. The reduction of holidays has helped the community to spend its time in doing jobs.

He owns about 1 tsimad (0.25 hectare) of land and he pays 20 birr for annual land tax. He contributes 5 birr for youth association, 3 birr youth league membership, 6 birr for party membership (in 2003 EC) and in 2004 EC, he paid 12 birr for party membership, 24 birr for the church and one kilo of grain from each household member for the construction of the school. He is a member of the land administration of the kushet, chairman of the kebele youth association and development group leader.

He and other people started to save about 700birr to organise a kind of Iddir so that it could provide credit service; but it collapsed after one year, in 2003 EC, because of disagreement created among the members.

He borrowed 6,500 birr from Dedebit and he has debt of 3300 birr. He said that the credit service is helpful for those who can use it properly; but it is leaving in debt many people who can’t use it properly. There is no youth cooperative. The water service is appreciated and it has helped people to keep their health. Although there is a grinding mill machine, its price is expensive. He added that the other developmental changes are the results of the political interventions of the government. The government has made efforts to reduce the number of holidays and there is significant change.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

He has planned to be engaged in livestock trade and farming and to improve his live by working hard. But he said that as there are natural disasters that occur frequently, he has risks of losses in the future. He also has decided not to take credit after he completes paying his debt because as the interest rate is very high, its disadvantages are greater than its advantages. So, he wants to change his life by saving from what he earns on the farm land and from his trade. He wants the community to improve its life by working on its land and be safe from migration.

## Middle wealth young man 30s

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Person** | **Relation to HH Head** | **Sex** | **Age** |
| You | HH Head | M | 30 |
| Other | Wife | F | 24 |
| Other | Daughter | F | 8 |
| Other | Daughter | F | 4 |
| Other | Daughter | F | 11 |

### Youth in the community

Students put pressure on their parents to buy everything they see; but when the parents fail to fulfil the needs of their young children, the boys tend to migrate abroad. In the past, to be a government employee had great value; now going abroad is more valuable to the young boys. Adolescent girls have a problem of low educational performance.

### Your life story

He was born in 1974 EC at Lim’at kushet and Enda MariamWu’o got. He grew up with 3 of his siblings (1 girl and 2 boys). He had no shock in his household when he grew up. He separated from his family in 1997 EC after he got married. He was married in 1994 EC. When he was separated from his family, there were his parents and siblings. When he was in grade 9, he got an illness locally known as yewof beshita, then he dropped out of school. Although he started to continue his education in 1998 EC, he stopped because his wife started to complain. He still has interest to continue his education if the evening class is started. He started work when he was 5 years old, he went to priest school in 1980-1982 EC, he started the formal school in 1984-1988 EC then he stopped that and continued the priest school in which he received his deacon status. Then, he continued the formal school at grade 6 in 1991 – 1993 when he completed grade 8. He has never started a trade and never engaged in wage labour. But in 1995 EC, he was teaching adults at the adult literacy programme and he was paid 100 birr. He was trained at Atsbi to facilitate the programme. His education has helped him to serve the community in different activities; he works on the rural road construction and earns 600 birr/month which has helped him to lead his life. He had his first sex with his wife. He had no interest to get married because he wanted to concentrate on his education. But his parents wanted him to marry soon because he is a deacon. He moved his household to the house his parents gave him. He had his first daughter in 1996 EC, 2nd child in 2000 EC and the 3rd one was born in 2003 EC. He is a follower of the Orthodox Church. His parents and his younger brother are important people in his life. His brother sends him clothes, shoes and mobile phone from Saudi.

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

The school provision helped him to attend formal education in addition to religious education. He has been able to learn things about the secular life in relation to spiritual life. His education supported him to compete for job vacancies. The government road construction interventions created job opportunities. There is no credit services, cooperatives and political or cultural interventions in his life. The health facility had great role to play in his life when he grew up. He was able to get cured without spending much time and cost.

He borrowed money, 4,700birr, in 1999 EC. In 2004 EC, it became 6560 birr including interest. He paid it by selling his property. He received land during the 2003 EC land reallocation and he pays 20 birr for land tax. Last year, he paid 24 birr for the church, 6 birr for party, 7 birr for the women’s association (for his wife), 5 birr for the youth association, 3 birr for the youth league and in kind he and his family members contributed one kilo of grain each from 5 months. He is community mobilization officer at the kebele (mobilizing the community to pay contributions on time, and collect farmer’s association contributions), member of the kebele cabinet, representative of the youth association at the wereda council (but he doesn’t make decisions, he is just an observer) and he is participating in the league until it is strengthened. He is one of the founders of the Iddir which has been formed by the development group

### Aspirations and plans for the future

He wants to leave his responsibilities at the kebele and to fully be engaged in his private activities, in doing irrigation and fattening. Then, he can improve his family’s livelihood and get out of the safety net programme. In order to achieve this, he has opened an account at Dedebit in his and his wife’s name. He has planned to open a saving account for his daughters too. He has great interest to send them to school. He wants to save money so that he can buy a milk cow. He believes that he is giving a role model for his family and the community and others will do the same. He has been teaching the community members, as a leader and as a religious man, to learn to save money and to use resources properly.

## Poor young man 30s

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Person** | **Relation to HH Head** | **Sex** | **Age** |
| You | HH Head | M | 33 |
| Other | Wife | F | 27 |
| Other | Daughter | F | 7 |
| Other | Son | M | 5 |
| Other | Son | M | 2 |
| Other | Son | M | 1 |

### Youth in the community

Although the boys have better educational opportunity, the school materials are a bit expensive. There are also transport problems for those students who score grades to join universities. Boys also face the problem of migration. When he compares this time with his time, there was limited educational opportunity at his time, but the cost of school materials was less. At that time there was no land reallocation. It was only in 2000 EC, that the land re-allocation was started, so there is better land ownership opportunity this time.

There is better job opportunity at this time and the payment is fair. In the past, there was only daily labour work. Regarding finding a wife, there is not much difference with the past; but in the past there was early marriage. During his time, it was easy to have an independent household on parents’ land; now it is not possible to build a house unless the government allocates land for a house. The difference about having children is that there is some gap (due to family planning) between the children that are born at this time which was not common during his time. There is better participation in the community as well as in religious activities than in the past. For example, the young boys and girls that go to Saudi are sending money to contribute to the churches. This is also because there is better participation of the youth in the towns.

Previously, there was underage marriage for girls; but it has reduced at this time. Adolescent girls are now getting better educational opportunity. They can choose their marriage partners and having an HIV/AIDS blood test before their marriage is common. In the past, they had job opportunities only to be house servants in different towns and cities. Now, they have many other job opportunities. As the government has an affirmative action policy for girls, they get better education opportunities to join preparatory and university. Their participation in the community and government activities has now improved.

### Your life story

He was born at Harresaw kebele, Endagebriel got (at Ma’kel kushet). He started to work as a herder when he was 4 years old until he became 14 years old. He started the priest school when he was 15 and completed it to be a deacon at 18 years old. He served the church for ten years; then, in 1990 EC, he joined the military during the Ethio-Eritrean border conflict. He came back home in 1993 EC, after he stayed in the military for three years. He got his first child in 1997 EC. He received the priest’s status in 1998 EC after he served for 10 years as deacon. Now, he is serving the church as a priest.

When he was a child, he grew up with parents, his older sister and two other siblings. He completed his priest school when he was living in his kebele. He was participating in farming activities side by side with attending his priest school. In 1977 EC, he migrated to a place called Adi Keyih in Eritrea due to the severe famine. They came back home after they stayed for one year. The livestock which remained at home had died when they came back home. There has been no death of parents or divorce in the household. When he got married, there were 5 family members living together. Then, he separated his household after he had his first born daughter in 1997 EC. As he has not yet received land, he is given one of the rooms from his parents. His parents tell him that he was getting sick when he was a kid. He was also had a heart case when he was 17 years old. Although he didn’t stop his education, it affected his farming work and stopped it. He has never been to formal school but he had participated in the adult literacy programme in 1987 EC for one year while he was serving the church. Although he wanted to continue with the formal school, his parents refused saying that he shouldn’t stop the priest school and he can’t learn both at the same time. So he decided to continue with the priest school.

He said that his first sexual relationship was with his wife who is still living with him. As his religious status doesn’t allow him to have multi-partners, he has been faithful to his first wife. His parents did choose his wife while he had no interest to get married. But his parents arranged the wedding because they were happy after he came back from the military safely. They wanted him to continue serving the church. Then, after he lived for three years with them, they gave him a separate room. Now, he has four children. He has planned to use family planning to limit his family size so that he can raise them properly.

 He is a follower of the Orthodox Church and serves it as priest. As he has no farm land, he couldn’t build a house. The important people to support him are his parents, siblings and friends.

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

There was access to school in his kebele when he grew up. He could have learnt to the level of education he wanted; but his parents chose the priest school for him. There were interventions that affected his and his household’s life directly. Indeed, his parents were getting advice from the agricultural experts and kebele officials to benefit from the agricultural inputs and credit services. The clean water service and grinding mill machine access nearby supported him and his family to save their energy and time. The health centre has played a positive role to provide his household with medical treatment and to prevent diseases. He has participated in the political affairs by playing his role in the military to keep peace and security. The actions taken to reduce HTPs such as reducing the number of religious holidays have helped his parents to have more working days on their farm land. Moreover, his older sister was married after she was 18 years old because the law prohibits under age marriage (which has been among the HTPs in the community). This has helped her to get mature enough (physically and psychologically) and to have better preparation for her future married life.

His wife had received 0.25 hectare of land in 2000 EC and the household pays 20 birr for annual land tax. He pays 24 birr for the church, 5 birr for association, one kilo of grain for different development interventions, which is provided by the FFW programme, and free labour contribution for 20 days. As he serves the church, he doesn’t participate in the kebele development groups and network. But he is a member of the youth association. Although there is some activity to start an Iddir in the kebele, as there is nothing at his locality, he has not yet been a member of an Iddir.

He has no farm land; but he has shared in an irrigated land. He said that irrigation is very important and he appreciates the supply of improved seeds, fertiliser and credit service. However, he said that the price of the inputs is very expensive. Although he borrowed 5000 birr in 1997 EC intending to dig a pond, he used the money to buy sheep; they died due to the drought. Then, he borrowed money from his relatives and paid the debt. Despite this, he has not yet paid the debt to his relatives. After that, he didn’t take a loan because he has no land. He said that those who have land are benefiting from the credit services to buy milk cows and fattening livestock. Although he is not a member of the cooperative, he benefits from the cooperative’s shop which keeps items with lower prices than in privately owned shops and the market.

Regarding clean water service, there is better supply but it has shortages. Although there is a grinding mill machine nearby, as it is not functional much of the time he uses the machine at Dera. His household is benefiting from the health extension packages. There is not much difference about the political interventions. He said that it is good for the community to respect the religious holidays depending at local level which is also helpful for him.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

For the coming five years, he has planned to get land and improve his livelihood through farming. He also wants to send all his children to school. Now, his daughter is 1st grade, the other one has started at the child-to-child programme. As there is a plan to reallocate land for housing, he will receive land and build a house. He has also planned to buy an ox. He wishes the community to respect his religion and to improve its life.

## Rich young man mid-20s

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Person** | **Relation to HH Head** | **Sex** | **Age** |
| You | HH Head | M | 26 |
| Other | Wife | F | 23 |
| Other | Daughter | F | 1 |

### Youth in the community

He said that there is better educational opportunity than it was 7-8 years ago. There is a high school nearby. Land has been reallocated only to a limited number of people; the reallocation was started in 2000 EC for landless people who are over 18years old. The job opportunity is also better to be engaged at wage work or family business. The boys in their late teens, at this time, have better opportunity to get married and have children, because although life was cheaper when he was a teenager, there was limited opportunity to get a job. Now, a person has to find different sources of income to lead the family. The youth now has better community and religious participation. The problem is that the youth go abroad seeking better jobs and money and they die along the way.

The opportunity of girls to get a job is very limited but their chance to learn is great. They also have a better chance to find a husband, to get married and have children because they have some opportunity to be engaged in different sources of income. They have better participation in the social as well as the religious activities as they are getting better acceptance in the community. They help each other with the domestic chores and farm activities.

### Your life story

He was born in 1978 EC at Harresaw kebele, Ma’ekel and Endagebriel kushet. He grew up by looking after the sheep together with his siblings (they all were 7) until he was 6 years old. The major shock in his family when he was growing up was his father’s death in 1997 EC. The loss of 2 cows and 1 donkey in the 2000/2001 drought affected the household negatively. The household also sold livestock at low prices due to the drought. But there was no effect that happened to humans because the government was providing sufficient support except that his brother left to go abroad at that time. The government was also providing livestock feed. They were five members of the household when he married out from the family in 2002 EC. He separated his household after he bought land and constructed a house at the centre of the place which is emerging as a new town. When he was 16 years old, he had kind of swelling in his eye. He was looking after the livestock at that time. When he felt pain, he went to Wukro and had surgery. Due to the illness, he was not able to herd for about two months. He had started going to school when he was about 11 years old in 1989 EC. He dropped out in 1991 EC when he was grade 2 because his older brother went to join the military due to the Ethio-Eritrean war and the livestock had no one to look after it. He didn’t go back to school after that time. He started trading in 1998 EC; first he was employed by others then, after three months, he started to do the business privately. He started to do similar work with what he was earning as an employee. He was in jail in Yemen for four months when he tried to cross the border to Saudi. Then, he was deported to his country. After that he sold the cow he had and started to sell livestock skin and hides. Now, he keeps shop and does the skin business too. His education has helped him to calculate his profits and expenses and to register to credits and loans. He started to show interest in girls for the first time in 1997 EC with a girl who was looking livestock at the field with him. He wanted her to marry him but she married another man which made him disappointed. They were fighting if in case, they met along their way. He married another woman in 2002 EC and he is still living with her. He married his wife by his own choice and his family members were happy to see him get married. He has one child who is 1 year old. He is follower of the Orthodox Church and he visits the church on holidays and Sundays. His sister’s husband is the most important person for him because he provides him advice, financial support and moral support. Then, his mother is also important for him.

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

His family had been in debt but his brother paid it back by going to Saudi. So, the debt caused the migration of his brother. The Ethio-Eritrean border conflict also caused him to drop out of school because his brother joined the military leaving the household responsibilities on him. There was no other intervention of the government that affected his life.

He doesn’t get safety net or EA support. As he has no land, he doesn’t pay tax. He prefers to work privately. He contributes 12 birr to church and 5 birr to the youth association.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

For the future he wants to open a restaurant and improve his life.

## Middle wealth young man mid-20s

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Person** | **Relation to HH Head** | **Sex** | **Age** |
| You | Son | M | 25 |
| Other/Father | HH Head | M | 50 |
| Other/Mother | Wife | F | 47 |
| Other | Daughter | F | 18 |
| Other | Grand daughter | F | 13 |

### Youth in the community

If the boys are students they are disappointed when they fail the national exams at grades 8 and 10. Then, they go to Saudi. When he compares the situation with his time as a teenager, he said that the number of students enrolled in school and the number of students who fail has increased. There is better opportunity to own land after the land reallocation was started in 2000 EC. There are better job opportunities in paid labour or private business. For example, as the irrigation activity is expanded, it is possible to work there. The problem with finding a wife, getting married and having children is that the economic capacity now is challenging the youth. In the past, youth were getting married while they were living with their parents. The participation of the youth in the community as well as in the religious activities has been improved.

He said that the problem that females face is more or less similar to the problem men face. They migrate to Saudi if they fail the national exams; but they have a better chance to find a husband, get married and have children.

### Your life story

He was born at Harresaw kebele and kushet Ma’ekel in 1979 EC. He started to herd livestock together with his parents and his siblings. He was living at the same place where he is living. His brother is living in Kombolcha and his sister is a second year student at Debre Berhan University. His family didn’t face any major shock other than the drought that occurred in 2000/2001 EC. At that time the family lost 1ox, 1 cow and 1 donkey that died due to shortage of food. He was not seriously sick when he grew up. He started to go to school in 1993EC, when he was 14; but he dropped out after he failed the grade 8 national examination in 2001 EC. Although his parents advised him to continue his education, he refused. He has registered to take a private exam this year after he stayed out of school for two years.

After he herded sheep when he was 6-9 years old, he started to look after cattle. He was helping his parents by looking after the livestock at the opposite shift with his siblings and at farming. Even after he dropped out, he is helping his parents at farming and irrigation. Sometimes, he goes to a place called Koneba in Afar region to bring plastic shoes and sell them. He has not started to have any sexual relationship so far and he has no girlfriend. He is follower of the Orthodox Church and he sometimes visits the church to attend preaches. As he still depends on his parents to live, he said that his parents and his siblings are the most important people in his life. Besides his uncle (who is a teacher), encourages him to be a good student.

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

He said that the national exam system has caused him to lose hope and feel disappointed. He said that if the government’s educational policy was helpful, he wouldn’t drop out of school and he would strive to change his life through education. According to him, there was no government intervention in irrigation, credit or cooperatives that affected his life. The health centre has been there since the past and benefited him to get medical treatment in addition to the holy water he used when he got sick. He doesn’t remember any political or cultural intervention that affected his life when he grew up

He doesn’t own land, he benefits from the 1/3 tsimad of land which was given to his parents in 1983EC. Although his parents have land, he has no information about how much they pay for land tax. They contribute grain for the construction of the school, 10 birr for guards of the grassland, 24 birr for the annual contribution and 50 birr for buying a generator for the church. He pays 5 birr for youth association membership. He has no other participation other than being a member of the youth association. The irrigation intervention has supported him and his family to lead a better life, to pay their debts and to own cattle. In general, the household has been benefiting from the government interventions.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

For the future he wants to re-sit for the grade 8 national exam privately and continue his education. And his parents want him to learn like his sister does. He wants to play his role in helping his parents to improve their life by completing his education. He wishes the good rain season continues every year so that his parents and the whole community have good production.

## Poor young man mid-20s

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Person** | **Relation to HH Head** | **Sex** | **Age** |
| You | Grandchild | M | 25 |
| Other | HH Head | M | 65 |
| Other | Wife | F | 54 |

### Youth in the community

He said that the young boys have better educational opportunity and the education system is better than in the past; because the teaching-learning process was teacher-centred but now it is a student centred system. When he was a late teen, there was no land access for landless people. Now there is land re-allocation although it depends on lottery/eta one may have. As there are new types of job opportunities which were not there when he was 18/19, this time is better. Getting marriage and having children was better in the past in terms of economic reasons. Now, only those who have land and those who have better-off family can get married and have children easily. The participation of the youth in community as well as religious activities is increasing over time. The students failing in their education and the number of migrations have increased.

Females have better opportunity in schools because of the affirmative action policy and they are given priority to own land and to get hired in a job. Now, the pressure they had at home and their workload is decreasing and they are exercising their rights. They have better opportunity to find a man who has better economic status, to get married and have children. Although they have been supported since the past, now it has increased. The number of girls that are failing their education and migrate is less than that of boys. The number of dropouts and migrants is more for boys. Females have better community participation, especially in the FFW programme. It is similar in religious activities

### Your life story

He was born in 1979 EC in Harresaw kebele, Lim’at kushet. When he was 2 years old, he went to live with his grandfather and he still is living there. Previously, his aunt was also living with them but when she married out, he continued to live with both his grandparents. Three cattle died due to the drought that occurred in 2000/2001EC. The problem that his household faced at that time was that they were unable to pay back their debt. So, they started to sell the grass in their farm land and paid the debt. He was seriously sick with a heart defect in 1997 EC and he went to Dera, Atsbi, Wukro and finally he was referred to Mekelle where was treated. He had to drop out of school for two years due to his illness. He started to go to school in 1991 EC. He went to Atsbi after he passed the grade 8 exam. But he was forced to drop out of school because his grandparents were helpless (they were too old to help themselves). He still likes to continue his education but his grandparents have no one to support them. He hopes that he will continue his education at one time in the future. He started work when he was 4 years old; he was herding together with others. Later on he started to fetch water and firewood and to participate in farming side by side with his education. After he dropped out of school, he has been fully engaged in farming and other activities. When he dropped out of school, he was selling eggs to retailers along the roadside. In addition, he was doing daily labour in Afar region in Koneba wereda. Learning has benefited him to understand things quickly and to benefit from the government inputs properly. He started his first sexual relationship in 2000 EC when he was a grade eight student. He said that he did fall in love at that time and it had affected his performance to some extent. He never had been married before and has no child. He is an active follower of the Orthodox Church. He participates in the religious ceremonies and regular preaching. The most important people in his life are his grandparents and his uncle who support him financially, emotionally and economically.

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

The access to school created an opportunity for him to go to school. It has helped him to get a lot of knowledge to be applied in his daily life. He said that the government officials forced his grandparents to take credit when they didn’t want. So, they failed in debt. They suffered a lot to complete paying the debt. There were no cooperatives or other interventions that affected his life.

His family has land holding. They pay 35 birr annual land tax. His grandparents are beneficiaries of the EA. They contribute one kilo of grain for different development activities. Last year, he paid 5 birr for youth association membership, 24 birr for the church. He has no other role in the community.

He said that the government interventions are playing an important role in his life.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

For the coming five years, he has planned to improve his household’s life by using necessary inputs on the rainfed and irrigation land. He also has planned to continue his education and to publish his poems if he gets sponsorship. Although he asked the wereda youth association and the kebele administration for sponsorship and they promised, he has got no practical support so far. He also said that as he is an active participant in the DWET (Demtsi Weyane Tigray) Radio Programme, the journalists there encouraged him and promised him to do their best to help him. He wishes to see the community live a better life with no migration.

## Rich young man in late teens

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Person** | **Relation to HH Head** | **Sex** | **Age** |
| You | Son | M | 19 |
| Other/Mother  | HH Head | F | 38 |
| Other | Son | M | 15 |
| Other | Daughter  | F | 11 |
| Other | Son | M | 9 |

### Youth in the community

The main problem that happens to boys about 19 years old is failing the exams at grade 10 and lack of jobs. Then, they migrate to Saudi through Afar and Djibouti just not to be dependent on their parents. There is no problem in getting education opportunity. As there is limited area of land, it has not been possible for all people to own land. There is only daily labour work for those who want to work. At this time there is no problem in finding a wife but it is difficult to get married being dependent on parents and before getting personal source of income. This makes it difficult to have a child. The teens participate in different community festivities (like the nations and nationalities day, Yekatit 11) together with the community. Also, the non-students participate in the FFW programme. The youth have active participation in religious activities.

The problems that face the girl teens are similar. But females have better job opportunities than males. For example, the teachers for the 0-classes, the operator of the kebele telephone, shop keeper of the cooperative, secretaries of safety net, etc are females. Moreover, priority is given to females when vacancies or job opportunities come to the kebele.

### Your life story

He was born in 1985 EC, at Harresaw, kushet Lim’at and got Endamariam wu’o. Then, he started going to school in 1994 EC. He went to Abiy Dera School up to grade 8 and he completed 9th-10th at Dera School in 2003 EC. He couldn’t score the grade to join the preparatory classes. He was also not able to pass the exam for TVET. He couldn’t afford the cost to continue his education at the private colleges. He and his parents had interest in school

When he was 6 years old, he was living with his parents and three of his siblings in the same house where he is living. There was no problem of death but there was divorce in his household. There was also famine due to the drought that occurred in 2000-2001 EC when a lot of livestock died due to the drought. At that time, his father went to Saudi and came back home after three years, in 2003 EC. He had not been seriously sick in his life time. But during the drought time, he was advised to stop going to school but he refused. Now, there is land of his mother only. As his father was at the military during the 1983 EC land distribution, he couldn’t get land. And he was not able to receive land during the recent re-allocation. He said that there is a rumour that this year priority will be given to elderly and ex-fighters who are landless.

When he was a student, he was looking after the livestock with opposite shift to his siblings. He started to look after the livestock, when he was 7 years old. He grew up helping with any type of farming work. He had not been engaged in any other paid labour. As he has better knowledge, he tries to support his parents. He tries to teach them about infant feeding, about how to prevent transmitted diseases and treating illnesses.

He has no girlfriend and he never has had sex because his concentration was on his education. So, he doesn’t have fiancé or child. As he is a follower of the Orthodox Church, he sometimes attends church programmes. The people who are the most important ones are his parents, his siblings and his uncles who provide him emotional support not to regret for failing in his education.

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

The educational opportunity helped him and his siblings to go to school. His parents do not have irrigation land. Credit service has saved the life of the family members at bad times. The household had started to keep livestock but the drought caused them to fall into debt. The availability of grinding mill and access to water nearby reduced the labour and time of women. But there was no irrigation intervention and cooperative that played a role in his life when he grew up. The health clinic was there since his childhood and he could get medicines when he was sick. He remembered no political intervention that affected his life except that his father missed the chance to get land during the land reallocation because he was in the military.

His parents own land but he doesn’t know how much tax they pay. His parents contribute in cash as well as in kind to the church. His mother is vice chairwoman of the kebele women’s association and she is leader of development group and she is member of the credit and saving organization which is being formed.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

He has planned, for the coming five years, to participate in associations to do some work or to borrow money from his father (as he lived in Saudi) and then to participate in irrigation by renting land. His parents had been paying their debt so far; but they have completed paying their debt and he hopes that they will save money with which they will improve their life. He discusses with his friends about getting land at the hills and the possibility of doing irrigation farming; but they have not yet planned to implement their ideas. He believes that as long as the community uses the government’s inputs properly and works hard, anyone can change his life. It is also his belief that if the rain comes timely and if drought doesn’t exist, it will not be late to liberate himself from dependency. Everybody is now being engaged in private business and there is not much paid labour.

## Middle wealth young man in late teens

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Person** | **Relation to HH Head** | **Sex** | **Age** |
| You | Son | M | 19 |
| Other/Mother | HH Head | F | 47 |
| Other | Son | M | 25 |
| Other | Son | M | 22 |
| Other | Son | M | 16 |

### Youth in the community

He said that there was better understanding and interest of the teens in education; now they prefer to go abroad and get money by short cuts. They think that completing school and becoming a government employee is not a good source of income and can’t change life. On the other hand, the students are getting opportunity to learn about ICT and other technologies. The main problem for the boys in their late teens is that they fall in love with girls that affects their school performance. The other reason for these boys to go abroad is because of their parent’s debt and the parents encourage their children to go abroad. With regard to land, the youth are benefiting from fattening, keeping beehives in the mountainous area and owning land by reallocation. All those who are 18 years and above can be members of the youth association. He believes that there are different alternatives for jobs if the youth want to work. They can be paid 50-70 birr/day. He said that it is a bit difficult to get married and have children at this time and there are not many youth who get married and have children at this time. There are some young men who participate in community and religious activities; but most do not have active participation.

Adolescent girls have better opportunity in education as well as in getting hired in different work areas. They get support at school and they are given priority to get a job. However, they are paid less than the men in daily labour work. When men are paid 60 birr, females get 30/40 birr only. The work load they had at home is now decreasing because the males have started to help them. Besides, females have better chance to get married. However, they face a challenge in raising their children alone when they are divorced or if their husbands left to Saudi. They have better participation in community and religious activities.

### Your life story

He was born in 1985 EC, at Harresaw kebele, Lim’at kushet and Endamariam wu’o got. He was living with his parents and with three of his siblings at that place until he became 5 years old. Then, his father died in the Ethio-Eritrean border conflict in 1990 EC. His family had economic crises after the death of his father; so his older brother dropped out of school (he was in grade 9) to support the family by doing some work. In addition to this, 1 cow and 6 sheep died due to food shortages during the drought in 2001 EC. He was injured in his leg when he was a grade one student. He had difficulties in walking to school at that time. He had no other serious health problem. He started going to school in 1994 EC. Although he participated in the national examination for grade 10 in 2002 EC, he couldn’t continue because he didn’t pass the exam. He wants to continue his education by re-sitting for private exam or joining a private college. He started working to help his parents by looking after the livestock when he was about 5 years old. Then, he was helping his parents with the farm work and domestic work along with his education. After he completed grade 10 in 2002 EC, he was hired at the safety net programme as secretary in March 2003 EC. The contract is for 6 months and it has probability to be renewable. His education has supported him to get a job in his homeland and saved him from migrating abroad. He started to show an interest in girls and had his first sex when he was grade 10 student in 2002 EC. But has no common sexual partner so far. As he started the sexual relationship when he was a student, it had affected his performance. For example, when he was in grade 9, he scored 4th rank but it reduced to be 11th when he was grade 10. He has not been married so far and he has no child. He is an active follower of the Orthodox Church. His older brother is the most important person for him because he has been supporting him financially and morally to reach his current educational status. His mother is also important for him. The other point is that his family is among the few families that have not migrated abroad.

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

The access to school has helped him to get education at a nearby place and helped him not to go abroad like the other youth did to search for a job. The irrigation intervention has supported the community to produce twice a year. His household took credit in 1995 EC with which they bought a cow. When it gave birth, the calf was sold and the debt was paid. He benefited from the cow’s milk. The access to clean water and grinding mill machine has supported him not to travel long distance to get the services. The health service provided at the kebele was good. There was one health centre and one health post at the kebele. The political unrest with Eritrea caused the death of his father followed by economic crises of his family.

The household owns family land and pays 35birr/year, and contributes one kilo of grain from the FFW food aid from each of the (5) family members for development interventions. It also contributed, last year, about 35 birr to the church and some of its costs such as for salt, red pepper, 15 birr to the youth association (for three of them), 5 birr for his mother’s membership of the women’s association. His older brother is a member of the development group but he is not. But he serves the community as he works in the PSNP as secretary.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

For the next five years, he has planned to be engaged in fattening business and save enough money to continue his education at private colleges. Otherwise, he will target to improve the livelihood of his family by participating in farming and trading.

## Poor young man in late teens

### Your household

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Person** | **Relation to HH Head** | **Sex** | **Age** |
| You | Son | M | 19 |
| Other/Mother | HH Head | F | 40 |
| Other | Son | M | 16 |
| Other | Son | M | 14 |
| Other | Daughter | F | 11 |

### Youth in the community

There is an education facility nearby. Although it is not sufficient for all, land has been reallocated. There is credit service for all who are 18 and above years old. Youth can participate in youth association and exercise their rights. There are different alternatives of income generation activities. But the youth want to be rich in a very short time and go abroad. This causes accident of death for them. Those who are economically better-off can find a wife, get married and have children. But for those who have no capacity and have no land, it is difficult. The youth have good participation in community as well as religious activities. For example, those who are in Saudi are playing a great role by sending money to buy generators to the churches and to pay the debts of their families.

The problem that adolescent girls face is school dropout. Although they have better chance to get married and lead their own families, the men are better in completing their education. Males and females do equally participate in the domestic work. But there are women who must lead their lives alone because their husbands go to Saudi or die in the military. This is a unique challenge to women in the community. Women also have significant participation in community and religious activities.

### Your life story

He was born in Harresaw kebele, Ma’ekel kushet and Ukunta got. He was living with his parents and his older siblings until he was 6 years old. At that time, there were seven family members. The great shock that happened to his family when he grew up was his father’s death in 1993 EC and the drought that occurred in 2000/2001 EC when one ox, 1 donkey and 2 sheep died. They took the remaining livestock to his brother who was living in Afar region. As a result, the livestock survived. He had a sight problem since his childhood until he was a grade 5 student. Although he didn’t stop going to school due to the illness, it was affecting his performance. Then, he was able to get cured by traditional as well as medical treatment. He started going to school in 1996 EC and stayed in school up to 2003 EC. In 2003 EC, when he failed the national examination in grade 8, he dropped out of school because he lost hope and he wanted to support his parents. He has no intention to get back to school, rather, he wants to help his younger siblings go to school. He started working when he was about 6 years old and when he became around 9 he started to participate in farming activities. At age of 13, he started to be engaged in paid labour in Afar region. In 2001-2002 EC, he was repairing shoes side by side with his education. Now, he is the one who does the farming and other activities of his family. He never has had sexual relationship with girls. He is a follower of the Orthodox Church but he has not much involvement. The people who are most important for him are his mother and his friend who has been helping him to do shoe shining and repairing shoes. He also supports him morally.

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

The access to school was helpful for him to get educational opportunity; however, he was not encouraged to continue because he couldn’t pass the national examination. He appreciated the government’s food aid during the drought because it has saved his life and his family’s life. The political security along the borders of his kebele with Afar helped him to do business along the border. He said that there was no other intervention that affected his life.

He owns land which he inherited from his father and his mother also has land. They pay 35 birr as land tax. Last year, his mother paid 7 birr for women’s association membership fee; he paid 5 birr for youth association membership, 1 birr for Tigray Development Association as he was a student, 24 birr for church and one kilo of grain was contributed to the kebele from each family member. He said that the government interventions are playing a great role in his life.

### Aspirations and plans for the future

He has planned, for the coming five years, to improve his life by doing shoeshine and shoe repairing side by side with his farming activities. He has already started the work together with his friend. He also has planned to improve the life of his family. He wishes to be role model for the community that if everyone works hard, it is possible to change life without going abroad.